

Pet-Inclusive Housing Policy Change Checklist

A Step-by-Step Guide for Animal Welfare Organizations

Use this checklist to help your organization advocate for more pet-inclusive housing policies, ordinances, and laws in your community.

1 Define the Problem in Your Community

- ☐ Identify how housing barriers impact pets and people locally
- ☐ Frame the issue as both an animal welfare and housing stability issue
- ☐ Gather examples of housing-related surrenders and adoption barriers from staff, adopters, and community members using clear categories like:
 - Temporary loss of home
 - Breed restriction
 - Restriction on the number of pets
 - Size restriction
 - Can't find housing that allows pets
 - Can't afford pet deposit, pet rent, or pet fees
 - Can't afford rent or mortgage

2 Build Your Local Talking Points

- ☐ Use clear, solutions-oriented language
- ☐ Distinguish “pet-friendly” from “pet-inclusive” housing
- ☐ Emphasize that restrictions and fees reduce adoption success and increase preventable surrenders
- ☐ Connect pet-inclusive housing to reduced shelter intake and better community outcomes
- ☐ Focus on practical solutions—not blame
- ☐ Use Pet-Inclusive Housing Initiative (PIHI) resources like:
 - [Language Matters](#)
 - [What Is the Difference Between Pet-Friendly and Pet-Inclusive?](#)
 - [Pet-Inclusive Housing Pitch Deck](#)

3 Prepare Resources & Data

- ☐ Gather PIHI reports, research, and data resources
- ☐ Use myth-busting statistics and housing data to support conversations
- ☐ Prepare shareable materials for policymakers, housing providers, and the public
- ☐ Use existing PIHI tools like:
 - [Breed ≠ Behavior](#)
 - [Myth-Busting Statistics](#)
 - [Pet Personality Profile](#)
 - [Sample Animal Addendum](#)
 - [Insurance Discovery Tip Sheet](#)

4 Identify & Engage Key Stakeholders

Housing Stakeholders

- ☐ Property owners and operators
- ☐ Apartment associations
- ☐ Housing providers and managers
- ☐ Affordable housing organizations
- ☐ Tenants' rights groups

Government Stakeholders

- ☐ Mayors
- ☐ City managers
- ☐ City council members
- ☐ County commissioners
- ☐ Local housing departments

5 Lead Productive Conversations

- ☐ Seek to understand housing provider concerns
- ☐ Speak their language and understand their business priorities
- ☐ Be prepared to discuss concerns like:
 - Property damage
 - Insurance barriers
 - Liability concerns
 - Resident complaints
- ☐ Present solutions and incremental steps

- ☐ Stay collaborative and avoid adversarial messaging
- ☐ Use existing PIHI research and information, like:
 - [Making the Case for Pet-Inclusive Policies](#)
 - [Pets, Properties, and Policies: Understanding Insurance Barriers to Pet-Inclusive Housing](#)
 - [2021 Pet-Inclusive Housing Report](#)
 - [More Pet-Inclusive Housing Initiative reports](#)

6 Develop a Policy Goal

- ☐ Identify which housing policies your organization wants to improve:
 - Breed restrictions
 - Size/weight restrictions
 - Pet fees or deposits
 - Transparency requirements
 - Broader pet-inclusive housing standards
- ☐ Prioritize achievable local changes first
- ☐ Use existing policy examples and talking points:
 - [Policy on Pets and Housing](#)
 - [Pets and Housing Policy Talking Points](#)

7 Mobilize Your Community

- ☐ Share Pet-Inclusive Housing Initiative resources in:
 - Adoption packets
 - Social media
 - E-blasts/newsletters
 - Community events
- ☐ Encourage supporters to speak with local officials
- ☐ Build partnerships with housing and community organizations
- ☐ Keep stakeholders informed with ongoing updates and education

8 Sustain the Effort

- ☐ Track conversations, partnerships, and policy progress
- ☐ Continue educating policymakers and housing providers
- ☐ Share success stories and community impact
- ☐ Stay engaged through newsletters, social media, and partner networks
- ☐ Remember: policy change often happens incrementally