

WEST SPRINGFIELD HOUSING AUTHORITY

PET GUIDELINES POLICY

Introduction:

The West Springfield Housing Authority allows for pet ownership of one (1) dog **or** (1) cat with written pre-approval in accordance with this policy. Any resident requesting the required pre-approval for a companion pet, one (1) dog or one (1) cat, must complete the Request for Companion Pet form and provide the requested information. Request for companion and therapy pets will be reviewed and a decision rendered on a case-by-case basis. Any issues or disputes will go through the Housing Authority in accordance with Reasonable Accommodation Policy and Grievance Procedure.

This policy does not apply to a service dog used to assist persons with disabilities. These animals are allowed with no restrictions other than those imposed on all residents to maintain the unit and associated facilities in a decent, safe and sanitary condition and to refrain from disturbing neighbors.

The security deposit and rental insurance requirements do not apply to WSHA approved companion and therapy pets.

Dogs of vicious or aggressive disposition will not be permitted. All female dogs over the age of six months and all cats over the age of five months must be spayed. All male dogs over the age of eight months and all male cats over the age of ten months must be neutered. Residents are expressly prohibited from feeding or harboring stray animal. The feeding or harboring of a stray animal will constitute having a pet without the approval of the Authority.

- ◆ Pet owners are responsible for flea and tick treatment and control. **Every year at the time of your recertification you must bring in a copy of the current Town of West Springfield pet license tag, yearly exam and shot record.**
- ◆ Security deposit of \$160.00 or one month's rent (whichever is less) will be required. Security deposit to be returned to the resident only if the unit is left in the same condition as when the tenant occupied the unit. Normal wear and tear is excluded.
- ◆ All pet owners shall secure \$100,000.00 personal liability or other insurance and indemnify the Authority against pet related litigation or attorneys' fees. A copy to the Authority shall be provided. Each year at renewal, you will be required to provide proof this insurance is still in effect.
- ◆ The anticipated mature size (certified by a veterinarian or dog officer) of a newly acquired dog shall not to exceed 45 pounds. Excludes State and Federal regulations pertaining to Service Dogs.
- ◆ An adult must accompany dogs and cats when outside of the apartment. **The adult must maintain strict control on the animal. The animal must be on a**

leash not to exceed six (6) feet. In the hallways and elevator, dog and cats must **be accompanied by an adult and be on a short leash (3 feet).** The hand of the person accompanying the pet will hold the leash within **3 feet** of the collar **or the pet must be carried.** Pets are **not** permitted to loiter near the mailboxes or the lobby area on the first and second floor near the elevators. At no time while the pet is in the building should the leash be any longer than **3 feet.** **Pets are not permitted in any common area of the building.** Pet owners must understand that some people are allergic or afraid of animals. Therefore, pets cannot remain in the hallways of the building for any prolonged period of time. Pets are **not allowed in the administrative offices, any community room, laundry room, community center or playground areas.** In the event the pet owner wishes to enter any of these areas with a dog or cat the pet owner must ask if any person (s) present has an objection to the pet being there. Pets are not allowed in any area where food is being prepared or served. Pets are not allowed to be tethered outside of the apartment.

- ◆ Cat litter shall be bagged in a plastic bag and deposited **only** in the dumpster if available or pet owners trash can. Tenants will be charged for any blockage in toilets caused by the disposal of pet litter.
- ◆ Dog droppings must be picked up at the time the animal relieves itself, bagged in a plastic bag and deposited in the dumpster if available, or the pet owners trash can only. Pet owners must always take their pet to the WSHA designated areas.
- ◆ Pet owners failing to clean up after their animals as required will receive a first offense written warning from the Housing Authority's staff. For any subsequent offense or violation of the Pet Policy the pet owner will be referred to the Pet Committee. The Pet Committee will review the complaint and take appropriate action.
- ◆ Any animal in the building must be pre-approved in writing by the Housing Authority and owned by a resident.
- ◆ Visitors may not bring pets onto West Springfield Housing Authority property.
- ◆ The tenant is required to restrain and prevent the pet from gnawing, chewing, scratching or otherwise defacing doors, floor covering, walls, windows and other parts of the unit and any part of another unit or of the common areas, inside or outside, including lawns, shrubs, trees or other landscape or landscape features.
- ◆ Pet owner shall agree to monthly inspections until management is sure pets in the units are being cared for properly.
- ◆ The tenant shall shampoo rugs if odor exists from the pet. If odor/stains cannot be removed, tenant will pay for the replacement of the carpeting. During occupancy and upon vacating, if fleas are suspected, an exterminator will be called and will provide documentation of their findings, at the resident's expense.
- ◆ The management reserves the right to deny or revoke the pet applications.
- ◆ West Springfield Housing Authority will maintain a Pet Committee consisting of two (2) pet owners, two (2) non-pet owners along with the Town Animal Control Officer or Town Canine Liaison Officer or a non-resident neutral person. The Committee will meet with any pet owner who has been reported to be violating any of the pet guideline policy. The committee will meet to review complaints

and/or violations of the pet guidelines. They will meet with the pet owner and document the meeting by completing the attached form.

- ◆ The Pet Committee shall be responsible for resolving complaints about pets. The Committee shall be the first line of complaint resolution. Following receipt of a complaint about a pet, the committee will confer with the person making the complaint (the complainant), the tenant with the pet and the Housing Authority about the complaint and attempt to reach a resolution satisfactory to all. Any written complaint shall be delivered to the Housing Authority and the pet committee by the complainant to the West Springfield Housing Authority, 37 Oxford Place, West Springfield, MA 01089. The Pet Committee will determine whether good cause exists for any complaint and, if so, resolve the complaint. The Pet Committee, subject to review of the complaint and finding of good cause, may recommend to the Housing Authority to revoke the approval of the tenant to keep the pet. Failure to comply with the Pet Committee's resolution shall be grounds for eviction.
- ◆ A tenant or a complaining party desiring review of a Pet Committee resolution may file a grievance regarding a pet under the housing authority grievance procedure.

Attachments:

Application for waiver for pet ownership for West Springfield Housing Authority residents.

West Springfield Pet Rules Incident Form (Pet Committee Form)

Pet Rider (Agreement between Management and Pet Owner and the listing of two (2) Caretakers

As a resident I have read and understand the Pet Guidelines and agree to abide by rules as stated above.

Signature_____ Date_____
Resident

Signature_____ Date_____
West Springfield Housing Authority

4/11/12

**APPLICATION FOR WAIVER FOR PET OWNERSHIP
FOR ELDERLY/DISABLED TENANTS**

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

West Springfield, MA 01089

1. The tenant is responsible for providing management with the following information and documents, which are kept on file in the tenant's folder.

- a) A color photo and identifying description of the pet:
- b) Attending veterinarian name, address and telephone number
- c) Veterinary certificate of spaying or neutering, rabies, distemper combination, parvovirus, feline leukemia testing, feline VRC and other inoculation when applicable.
- d) Dog licensing certificate in accordance with local and state laws:
- e) Two alternate adult caretakers, their names, addresses and telephone numbers, who will assume immediate responsibility for the care of the pet should the owner become incapacitated; these caretakers must verify in writing by signing the Lease Pet Rider; acknowledging their responsibilities as specified.
- f) Emergency boarding accommodations;
- g) Name of adult ultimately responsible for pet

2. Please state reason for acquiring a pet at this time:

3. Submit any documentation to support your request for a companion pet.

4. Description of new pet (dog, cat, bird, age, etc)

5. Description of current pet (type, age, weight, etc)

6. Previous pet ownership/experience:

APPLICATION FOR WAIVER CONTINUED

7. Current Veterinarian: Name _____

Address _____ Tel# _____

8. Name of two (2) alternate caretakers (not residing at the development) who will assume immediate responsibility if needed: (include address and phone number)

1. _____

2. _____

The Authority reserves the right to check references, such as prior landlords and neighbors, regarding (a) the resident’s previous pet ownership history, and (b) the pet’s behavioral history. If the Authority concludes that maintenance of the pet by the resident in an Authority housing unit would, in the Authority’s opinion, be inappropriate or ill advised, the Authority will inform the tenant in writing, stating the specific reasons for the denial. Permission for a specific pet will not be unreasonably withheld.

I hereby agree to adhere to all pet rules and regulations as directed by the Authority.

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Signature _____

Approved: _____ Denied: _____

West Springfield Housing Authority

Date

You have the right to appeal within 14 days of denial to: DHCD
100 Cambridge St., Suite 300
Boston, MA 02114

4/11/12

**APPLICATION FOR WAIVER FOR
COMPANION PET OWNERSHIP**

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

West Springfield, MA 01089

1. Please state reason for acquiring a pet at this time:

2. Submit any documentation to support your request for a companion pet.

3. Description of new pet (dog, cat, bird, age, etc)

4. Description of current pet (type, age, weight, etc)

5. Previous pet ownership/experience:

6. Current Veterinarian: Name _____

Address _____ Tel# _____

7. Name of two (2) alternate caretakers (not residing at the development) who will assume immediate responsibility if needed: (include address and phone number)

1. _____

2. _____

APPLICATION FOR WAIVER CONTINUED

Upon approval for ownership of a companion pet I agree to provide the Authority with the following:

- a) A color photo and identifying description of the pet:
- b) Attending veterinarian name, address and telephone number
- c) Veterinary certificate of spaying or neutering, rabies, distemper combination, parvovirus, feline leukemia testing, feline VRC and other inoculation when applicable.
- d) Dog licensing certificate in accordance with local and state laws:
- e) Two alternate adult caretakers, their names, addresses and telephone numbers, who will assume immediate responsibility for the care of the pet should the owner become incapacitated; these caretakers must verify in writing by signing the Lease Pet Rider; acknowledging their responsibilities as specified.
- f) Emergency boarding accommodations;
- g) Name of adult ultimately responsible for pet

The Authority reserves the right to check references, such as prior landlords and neighbors, regarding (a) the resident’s previous pet ownership history, and (b) the pet’s behavioral history. If the Authority concludes that maintenance of the pet by the resident in an Authority housing unit would, in the Authority’s opinion, be inappropriate or ill advised, the Authority will inform the tenant in writing, stating the specific reasons for the denial. Permission for a specific pet will not be unreasonably withheld.

I hereby agree to adhere to all pet rules and regulations as directed by the Authority.

Signature _____

Approved: _____ Denied: _____

West Springfield Housing Authority

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