

## **Policy: Pets**

**Updated April 2024**

### **External constraints:**

Where a property is managed on behalf of another organisation or is leased or rented, the stipulations in the agreement from the other organisation will need to be observed. Where the agreement stipulates that no pets are permitted then Ready4Home must abide by this.

### **Official Service dogs:**

Where a client has a specific need or disability which might be assisted by an officially trained service dog then this will be considered as long as it does not contravene any external constraints. Examples of service dogs which might be considered include:

- Guide dogs
- Seizure response dogs
- Dogs for the disabled / mobility dogs
- Hearing dogs

### **Shared accommodation:**

In shared accommodation clients will generally not be permitted to keep pets although in some circumstances it may be possible for them to have a small pet such as a small caged bird, a small caged animal such as a hamster (no more than two) or fish. Roaming animals (e.g. cats or dogs) will not be considered in shared accommodation.

Any client in shared accommodation should first discuss their plans to acquire such pets with their Support Worker who will seek the approval of the Supported Housing Manager. Permission must be obtained *before* acquiring the pet.

### **Self-contained accommodation:**

Where clients live in self-contained accommodation, they might be allowed to keep pets. However clients must always receive permission before acquiring any sort of animal. If the pet is a fish or a small, caged animal, which is not roaming, then permission must be sought from the Support Worker. If the pet is larger or roaming (such as a cat, dog, rabbit etc.) then this will require the permission of the Supported Housing Manager. Requests should be made in writing to the Support Worker and the Supported Housing Manager, stating the case for a pet. The Housing Support Manager will give a decision within two weeks, based on the following grounds.

- The size and nature of the animal relative to the accommodation and garden.
- The ability of the client to adequately care for the animal and finance food, veterinary bills and other costs.
- Potential nuisance factor to others, possible damage, smells or hygiene problems.
- Any other factors relevant at the time (e.g. proximity of accommodation to a busy road).

Permission must be obtained *before* acquiring the pet and the Housing Support Manager's decision is final.

### **Responsibilities:**

Where permission is granted for a client to keep a pet, then the client must assume full responsibility for the well-being and behaviour of their pet, including:

- Ensuring the pet is properly fed and cared for
- Ensuring the pet's behaviour does not negatively impact on others (e.g. noise, smell, hygiene etc.)
- Ensuring the pet does not cause damage to the property and, where damage is caused, paying for repairs.

In addition, Ready4Home would encourage owners of dogs or cats to have their pet spayed / neutered.

### **Neglect or mistreatment of pets:**

If any member of staff feels that a client is neglecting or mistreating an animal in their care, the Support Worker should be notified and the matter reported to the appropriate animal welfare agency at the earliest opportunity (e.g., RSPCA, RSPB).

### **Non-compliance:**

Non-compliance with this policy may lead to eviction procedures being taken under the terms of Ready4Home's license or tenancy agreement.