

Pet Policy

Questions & Answers



When does this policy come into effect?

January 1, 2020

How big of a dog will you allow?

GEF Seniors Housing will only consider applications for dogs that are under 50 centimetres (20 inches) in height at the shoulder and weigh less than 16 kg (35 pounds) at adult size.

Why are we now allowing for the potential of cats/dogs to live in GEF buildings?

GEF Seniors Housing acknowledges the importance pets have in the lives of seniors—often providing social and emotional support, and unconditional love.

We also recognize that a person's life journey from flexibility and choice in living options, which includes the choice to have and care for a pet, to having to explore living options that can and often become more restrictive in those choices, particularly for seniors who may need to access affordable housing can be difficult, often adding additional stress and anxiety in their search for appropriate housing.

With the above in mind, we have made the decision to accommodate applications from seniors who may be looking at affordable housing and who may have had a cat or dog that has been a part of their life for at least three years, recognizing the importance of this relationship and its impact on the seniors' quality of life. Therefore, a cat or dog—subject to the policy's criteria—may be allowed at the site with the approval of the Site Manager or designate.

Why are we not allowing our current tenants or residents to get a cat or dog?

An established relationship must already exist between the tenant or resident and the pet. Therefore, the pet must be at least three years old and have been owned by the tenant or resident for at least three years.

Not all GEF Seniors Housing units are designed – or designated – for tenants or residents who may have previously had a cat or dog. However, if a tenant or resident has recently moved in and did have a pre-

existing, long term relationship with a pet which was given to a family member to care for, and a designated unit that can appropriately accommodate a pet is available, the Site Manager could review the situation. However, as would be expected with any new application, all the policy's eligibility criteria must be met.

Why is there a \$250 non-refundable fee charged if we approve a pet application for a cat or dog? Can our tenants or residents afford this fee?

As GEF Seniors Housing is a not-for-profit organization, this fee is charged on a cost-recovery basis. There are initial and ongoing administration and maintenance/housekeeping costs to having pets in our buildings, including monthly inspections and added maintenance/housekeeping expenses when the tenant or resident and their pet move out of the unit.

There is also an assumption that tenants or residents who want to bring their cat or dog with them would also be responsible pet owners and would have budgeted for the other ongoing costs/financial responsibilities of having a pet.

Why are we charging \$20 per month for a cat or dog to live in a GEF building?

GEF is a not-for-profit organization and having a cat or dog in a unit requires monthly inspections. This fee is charged to help defray ongoing administration, maintenance and housekeeping costs.

Why does the cat or dog have to be at least three years of age and owned by the primary applicant for the same period of time?

It is important that the applicant and their pet have an established relationship as behaviour will be more predictable. The pet must be at least three years old as they will have reached full maturity; this will have taken them out of chewing, marking and accidental toileting stage of life, and there has been the establishment of a strong bond/relationship between the tenant or resident and their pet.

Why can the cat or dog only be left alone for not more than eight hours at a time?

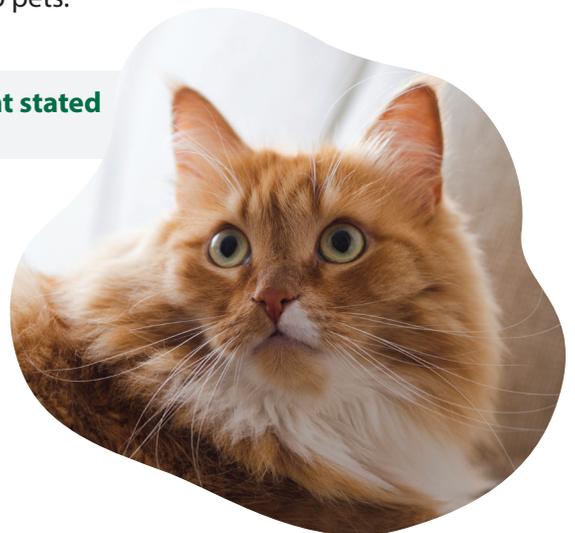
Pet ownership is both a privilege and a responsibility, and tenants and residents who choose to request that a cat or dog be able to live with them in their unit must be responsible pet owners. This time limit underscores GEF Seniors Housing's expectation that pet owners will ensure appropriate quality of life for their pets and ensure that dogs, who are quite social animals by nature, are not left alone for extended periods of time.

How many cats or dogs will GEF allow in a building at the same time?

This number will vary from building to building and will ultimately be at the discretion of the Site Manager to determine, based on several factors. Certain units will not be suitable for a pet – for instance because they are not easily accessible to the outdoors, they do not have flooring and finishing that are suitable for pets, or there is another resident or tenant close by with health issues related to pets.

Why can you not have a dog larger than the height and weight stated in the policy?

As a general rule, specific height and weight restrictions rule out having certain types of dogs in the building – usually larger breeds. Smaller dog breeds are generally more appropriate for communal environments such as GEF apartments and lodges, which have smaller living spaces.



What happens if another tenant or resident, or a staff member is allergic to a cat or dog and you allow someone with a cat or dog to move into the building?

The Site Manager will generally already know if someone else in the building – whether a tenant, resident or staff member – has pet allergies. The Site Manager will discuss this concern with the affected person or people and assess the potential for any sort of conflict between the two before making a final decision on whether to approve a tenant’s or resident’s cat or dog application.

What will happen if there is noise - such as barking - coming from a unit with a dog?

To some degree, it is inevitable that a dog will bark from time to time. However, repeated episodes of prolonged barking are usually indicative of other issues, so management will address these issues as they arise. Generally, the expectation is that tenants and residents will be respectful of their neighbours, and will keep the noise from their pets to a minimum.

What happens if someone is bitten by a dog or scratched by a cat you have allowed into a building?

The responsible pet owner must notify the site management team immediately when they become aware of any personal injury to any member of their family, guests, other tenants or residents, or staff that occurs on GEF Seniors Housing property. The site management team will investigate and determine the best course of action.

What happens to the cat or dog if the tenant or resident can no longer properly care for their pet?

All pet owners must have a minimum of two back-up people who can take responsibility for the pet, should the owner be unable to do so for any length of time. Depending on the circumstances, site management will make the determination on next steps, up to and including whether the pet will be required to be surrendered to animal welfare authorities.

How many of GEF’s buildings will accept a cat or dog?

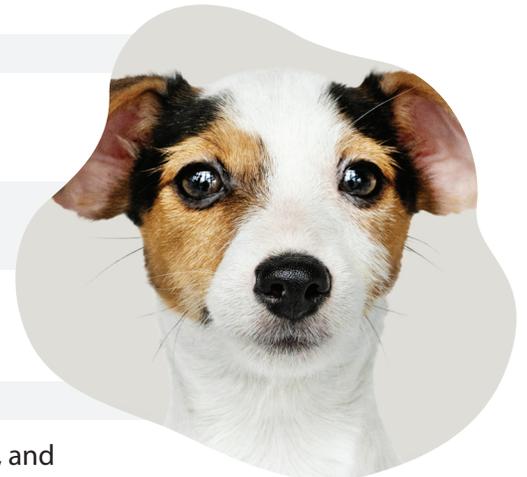
All of GEF’s buildings have the ability to accept pets.

Who makes the final decision as to whether a cat or dog will be allowed to live in a GEF building?

The Site Manager or designate.

Who is responsible for the care of the cat or dog?

The pet owner is solely responsible for the care and welfare of the pet, and all costs of maintaining a healthy pet.



Is GEF responsible for the safety of the tenants/residents and visitors to a GEF building that allows cats/dogs, if a dog bites or frightens another tenant/resident, visitor, or staff member?

GEF Seniors Housing is responsible to ensure all of our buildings are safe, and this is a responsibility we take very seriously. The health and safety of all our tenants, residents, staff and visitors is of paramount importance to us.

The pet owner is solely responsible for ensuring their pet is handled and behaves appropriately. As per our policy, the pet owner is and fully agrees they are solely responsible for any claims, demands, actions, and costs resulting from any injury or damage their pet causes, and GEF Seniors Housing is in no way whatsoever responsible.

What happens to the cat or dog if the tenant or resident gets sick and cannot properly take care of their pet?

Each pet owner must have a minimum of two back-up contact people in place who are ready and able at all times to care for the pet, should the owner be unable to do so. Should the pet owner be unable to resume taking care of the pet, the Designated Guardian will be asked to assume caring for the pet on a longer-term basis.

If there is no one able to take care of the pet, it will have to be surrendered to animal welfare authorities.

Why is a tenant or resident only allowed to have one cat or dog in their unit?

The lodge and apartment units in GEF communities are only large enough to accommodate one cat or dog.

Why does the cat or dog need to be spayed or neutered?

The pet must be spayed or neutered because there can only be one pet per owner, and also because the expectation is that pets in GEF buildings would be older and more mature. As well, spaying and neutering of pets is a hallmark of a responsible pet owner.

Why does the cat or dog need to be vaccinated and licensed?

Up to date vaccinations are critical for the health of the pet and for the people who may come in contact with the pets. As well, up to date vaccinations are a hallmark of a responsible and caring pet owner. The City of Edmonton requires pet licenses as indicated, and it's important for responsible pet owners to follow all applicable laws and bylaws relating to pet ownership.

Why can't the cat or dog be allowed to visit other tenants or residents in the building?

While other tenants and residents are certainly free and welcome to visit the pet in its owner's unit, there are several reasons why pets cannot be allowed to visit other tenants or residents. The primary reason is because there may be other seniors or others in the building who are allergic to pets, and it's important to lessen the possibility of any adverse reactions.

As well, some seniors and others may not be comfortable around cats or dogs, so out of respect for these concerns, GEF Seniors Housing has set the policy that pets are to remain in their owner's unit – except when a dog is being taken outside for walks or for toileting purposes.



Tenants are not permitted to house pets on GEF Seniors Housing property without prior written approval by the Housing Placement Coordinator or designate. Any Tenant who wishes to have a pet or who requires the use of a service dog must fill out this pet application and submit it to the Housing Placement Coordinator or designate.

This is in accordance with the Schedule “A” Rules and Regulations which is signed upon move-in:

Pets The Tenant can make an application to have a Pet, including a cat or a dog, by completing the appropriate Pet Application Form, but will only be able to have a pet in their unit or on the premises (including visiting pets) with the approval of the Landlord.

Tenants may request to house two (2) birds, fish, one (1) small dog, or one (1) cat. The dog or cat must be a minimum of three (3) years of age and have been owned by the Tenant for three (3) years or more. All pets must meet the eligibility requirements as outlined.

Service dogs are not considered pets under legislation and are allowed in any building with proper documentation/training. Emotional support/therapy animals are not recognized as service animals under Canadian law and do not have the same public access rights as service dogs. Emotional support/therapy animals (including dogs) cannot be housed in the Apartments or Lodges.

Before submitting a completed Pet and Service Dog Application, the **Tenant must read and agree to abide by the regulations below.**

Regulations

1. Only one (1) approved pet (dog or cat) will be permitted in a Unit. Two (2) birds are permitted in the Unit.
2. Should the approved pet pass away, the Tenant cannot replace the pet without first filling out another pet application and obtaining written approval from the Site Manager or designate. This applies to birds and fish; dogs and cats cannot be replaced.
3. Pet approval is only valid for the Unit in which the Tenant originally applied. Should the Tenant wish to transfer to another Unit/Site, they must fill out a new pet application and obtain written approval from the Housing Placement Coordinator or designate.

4. The Tenant will be responsible for the behaviour of the pet and will at all times ensure that the pet does not interfere with the rights of the other Tenants or with the pet(s) of other Tenants. The Tenant will not allow their pet to make noise that disturbs neighbours.
5. For fish, the Tenant will be permitted one (1) aquarium or fish tank, not exceeding ten (10) gallons.
6. The Tenant will be responsible for obtaining and maintaining appropriate liability insurance for the acts of the pet.
7. The Tenant will be required to obtain the necessary pet licence(s) and tag(s) in accordance with local bylaws.
8. The Tenant will clean up pet feces or excrement immediately. They will place any pet waste in a plastic bag and dispose of it in a proper manner.
9. The Tenant will be required to ensure that the pet is vaccinated against diseases including, but not limited to, rabies. They will ensure that the vaccinations are kept current.
10. Prohibited animals include, but are not limited to: ferrets, rodents, excessively noisy or loud birds, large reptiles, snakes, spiders, insects, and/or other animals deemed to be dangerous or vicious in nature. These animals will not be permitted under any circumstances and GEF Seniors Housing's discretion in this matter shall be absolute.
11. The Tenant is responsible for the pet's emotional, physical, and financial needs. This includes regular exercise, grooming, veterinarian care, food, as well as other necessary supplies and equipment.
12. If the pet is not cared for properly, the regulations are not being correctly followed, or the pet poses a danger/threat/harm to others, then permission to have the pet will be rescinded and the Tenant will be required to remove the pet from the Premises within the timeline stipulated by the Site Manager or designate. If the Tenant does not remove the pet, the City of Edmonton Animal Care and Control will be contacted to facilitate the removal. The Tenant will be in breach of the Residential Lease and will be required to vacate the Premises in accordance with the Residential Tenancies Act. GEF Seniors Housing's discretion in this matter shall be absolute.

13. GEF Seniors Housing will not be liable or responsible for any bodily or personal injury, or property damage of any nature, that may be suffered or sustained by the Tenant, members of their household, or their guests. The Tenant must notify site management immediately when they become aware of any personal injury to any member of their family, guests, other tenants, or staff that occurs on GEF Seniors Housing property.
14. The Tenant is financially responsible for any damages incurred as a result of the pet.
15. The Tenant will indemnify and hold harmless GEF Seniors Housing and its staff from any and all claims, demands, actions, and costs whatsoever that may arise out of the Tenant's performance of this Agreement.
16. The pet (dog or cat) must have a responsible person named as guardian of the pet (dog or cat), who will be available to take and care for the pet (dog or cat) should the Tenant be away from their Unit for a period of longer than eight (8) hours. If the Tenant has a pet (dog or cat), they cannot be left unattended in the unit overnight and must be removed from the premises.

Pet (Dog or Cat) Fee Non-Refundable (excludes service animals)

17. The Tenant agrees to pay GEF Seniors Housing a non-refundable pet fee of \$250, including GST, for an approved pet (dog or cat). The Tenant also agrees to pay an additional monthly fee of \$20, including GST. The monthly pet fee will be paid, along with the Tenant's rent, on the first day of each month by automatic withdrawal. The Tenant acknowledges that GEF Seniors Housing will not refund any of this money to the Tenant.

Dogs and Cats

18. The pet must be spayed or neutered and the Tenant will provide management with a copy of the certificate from a veterinarian.
19. The pet must remain inside the premises and be on a leash, in a pet carrier, or otherwise restrained whenever outdoors. The pet may not be allowed to run free or unrestrained in the building or on GEF Seniors Housing property. Pets are not allowed in any dining rooms, with the exception of service dogs.
20. For a dog, the pet will be under 50 cm (20 inches) in height at the shoulder and weigh less than 16 kg (35 lbs.) at adult size.
21. The pet must be a minimum of three (3) years of age and have been owned by the Tenant for three (3) years or more.

22. A photograph of the pet must be included with the initial housing application. The Housing Placement Coordinator or designate may request that the pet attend the housing interview or a requested follow-up interview.

Service Dogs

23. The Tenant must provide GEF Seniors Housing with a letter from their physician to verify the need for a service dog.
24. Tenants who require the assistance of a service dog must produce acceptable proof that the dog has been trained and is qualified as a service dog. More information is available on the Alberta government website at <https://www.alberta.ca/get-service-dog.aspx>. Acceptable proof is one of the following:
 - a. Written confirmation from an Assistance Dogs International (ADI) accredited program;
 - b. Written confirmation from an organization on the Ministry of Community and Social Services qualified list;
 - c. Written confirmation from an International Guide Dog Federation registered program; or
 - d. A Government of Alberta service dog team or guide dog team identification card.

Application

Name of Applicant	
Animal	
Type/Breed	
Description (weight, height, colour, sex, size, age, name)	

Designated "guardian" for the pet in case of emergency	
Name of "guardian"	
Relationship to Tenant	
Home Phone Number	
Mobile Phone Number	

I, _____ understand the pet and service dog policy and
(Tenant name)
 regulations. I accept the terms and conditions as outlined.

 Tenant Signature

 Date

 Guardian Signature

 Date

- Permission to have the pet described in above is **granted**.
- Permission to have the pet described in above is **denied**.

 Housing Placement Coordinator
 Signature

 Date

Please ensure a copy of this document is given to the Tenant and the original paperwork is put in their file.