

**Cottonwood, Inc.
Policies and Procedures**

SECTION: Residential

POLICY NO: 30-032

SUBJECT: Pets

EFFECTIVE DATE: March 1988

Policy:

In keeping with Cottonwood, Inc.'s philosophy of providing person-centered supports to people at home, consumers may have pets in group homes and apartments if the following criteria can be met:

1. Landlord allows pets.
2. Owners are financially able to provide for the total care of the pet including veterinarian fees, food, supplies, etc.
3. Owner demonstrates a responsible and caring attitude towards the pet. Any indication of abuse or neglect of the pet by the owner or other people living in the same residence will be cause for removal of the pet to a safer environment.
4. Owner agrees to provide for and schedule regular trips to a veterinarian in order to assure that the pet is immunized as needed and that the animal does not pose a health threat to people. Owner will provide any documentation needed for agency licensing.
5. Any animal will be removed immediately if it poses a psychological, safety, or health risk to any consumer. Fear of animals, allergies, or actual injury caused by the animal could be cause for removal. SIL consumers are ultimately liable for their pet. If the pet poses a threat, staff may not be able to provide services in the house.
6. Owner will agree to pay any damages incurred. This includes exterminator costs in the event of a flea infestation.
7. All other individuals living in the same house or apartment must give consent before the animal is placed in the home.
8. Due to the amount of time, space and attention needed for the proper care of a dog, acquisition of a dog will require special consideration. No exotic animals will be allowed as pets. More than one pet per house or apartment may not be allowed.

Procedures:

1. When a consumer asks to acquire a pet, he/she will be directed to the Residential Coordinator, who will review the above criteria with the consumer.

2. If it is determined that the above criteria can be met, the information will be given to the Residential Director for review.
3. The Residential Director will then ask that the request be routed through the weekly house conference meeting for approval by all housemates. In an SIL situation the roommate(s) will be consulted informally.
4. Residential staff will assist and teach the consumer as needed in the care and maintenance of the pet. However, it is the owner's ultimate responsibility to provide that care.
5. Pets must be secured in a safe and appropriate container during transport. This does not apply to service animals.
6. If the owner consistently does not follow policy and procedure, the owner will be required to remove the pet from the premises (staff will assist if needed).