

Residential Life Full-Time Employee Pet Policy

The following policy applies only to Faculty-in-Residence (FIRs) and to Residence Directors (RDs) by whatever title they are known, who by virtue of their position are full-time employees and are required to live in residence halls and other University owned residences as a condition of employment. The employee assigned to the residence must assume the responsibility of the “Pet Owner,” as the pet policy is a privilege of the position. The responsibilities of the Pet Owner cannot be assumed by a spouse/partner or other apartment occupant.

Allowed Pets

Each Pet Owner is permitted one pet. This pet may be a dog, cat or other non-exotic, non-venomous animal housed in either an aquarium no larger than 25 gallons or cage no larger than 3 cubic feet. Dogs must be size appropriate for the apartment and therefore cannot be taller than 25 inches at the shoulder or weigh more than 40 pounds in adulthood.

Pets are not service or assistance animals. Staff with service or assistance animal needs should review information about housing accommodations on the Residential Life website.

Registration Process

The Pet Owner must complete and submit the Residential Life Full-Time Employee Pet Registration Form a minimum of 10 business days prior to the pet occupying the apartment. Registration forms are to be submitted to the Director of Residence Education. The Director of Residence Education or designee will review and respond to requests within 5 business days. Requests meeting all pet type and registration expectations will not be unreasonably denied.

Once the Residential Life Full-Time Employee Pet Registration Form is approved, the Pet Owner may bring the pet into residence. Within two business days of the pet being in residence, the Pet Owner must submit the Veterinarian Assessment Form to the Director of Residence Education. The Pet Owner must submit the Veterinarian Assessment Form upon initial acquisition of the pet and every August 1st thereafter for the duration of the pet’s occupancy. Note that Pet Owners of dogs must also provide the Town of Amherst licensing documentation by April 1 of every year (<https://www.amherstma.gov/398/Dog-Licenses>).

Pet Owners must notify the Director of Residence Education once the pet is permanently removed from the residence. Acquisition of a new pet will require a new registration form.

All forms will be maintained by Residence Education and may be shared with appropriate parties including, but not limited to, Residential Life Facilities Operations, Residential Life Finance and Human Resources, Environmental Health and Safety, UMass Amherst Police Department, and Amherst Fire Department.

Standards of Care & Responsibility

By completing the registration process, the Pet Owner agrees to abide by the following standards.

Residential Life can require the removal of a pet if the Pet Owner does not adhere to any of these standards.

Required Documentation (Please see the Pet Registration Form for all required documentation.)

- The Pet Owner verifies that all information on the Residential Life Full-Time Employee Pet Registration Form is truthful and up-to-date.
- The Pet Owner must demonstrate proof of renter’s insurance that covers bodily injury by a pet.
- The Pet Owner must provide a current picture of the pet.
- The Pet Owner must demonstrate that required vaccines (including rabies) are up-to-date.

- A pet that can be collared must wear a collar with a current rabies tag at all times.
- Dog Owners must provide proof that the animal is licensed with the Town of Amherst.
- The pet must be altered (spayed or neutered) at the appropriate age and provide veterinarian documentation.
- The Pet Owner must provide emergency contact for care of the pet in the event the Owner is unable to provide care.

General Care Expectations

- The Pet Owner must properly maintain the hygiene and health of their pet.
- The owner must effectively control the animal at all times. The pet will be maintained under standard restraints such as a collar or leash or carrying case when outdoors, in common areas, or in transit, and will be confined to the Pet Owners' apartment when not in transit. The pet must be taken out of the building by way of the staff member's private exterior entrance, or if not available, by way of the shortest and most direct path. Pets are not allowed in any other university buildings.
- The owner is responsible for assuring that the animal does not interfere with the routine of the residence or cause difficulties for individuals who reside in the unit. Sensitivity to residents with allergies and to those who fear animals is important to ensure a positive residential community.
- The pet must be fed and watered inside the apartment. Pet food and water is not to be left outside the apartment at any time. All pet related items must be kept inside the apartment.
- The pet must be housebroken. Inside, the pet may urinate or defecate only in a litter box, aquarium or newspaper-covered cage which must be cleaned regularly in order to minimize odor problems. In addition, the pet's feces must be disposed of properly and will be the responsibility of the owner. The Pet Owner must dispose of any animal related waste directly to an outdoor trash receptacle and never into the building's interior garbage cans. Facility Operations staff will inform Pet Owners of the proper exterior waste container site. It is the Pet Owner's responsibility to collect feces from University grounds, dispose of it in a plastic bag, and then place that bag in an outside dumpster. This expectation applies year-round, as feces may not be left on the grass or in snow. Under no circumstances should litter, shavings or other animal waste be flushed down the toilet.
- The pet must be maintained in a manner that does not disturb other residents due to noise, odor, etc. The Pet Owner must be responsive to complaints from residents. In the event that a formal grievance is filed with Residential Life, the privilege of maintaining the pet may be revoked (based on the validity and severity of the complaint).
- To minimize the possibility of pest and allergy problems, the Pet Owner is required to utilize a veterinarian-recommended flea control program. (It is recommended, but not required, that the Pet Owner regularly use a carpet steamer or vacuum with anti-allergen chemicals.)
- The pet cannot be left alone outside the Pet Owner's apartment. Pets may not be tied to any fixed object anywhere outside the apartment.
- If the pet is to be left alone for more than 12 hours at a time, the Pet Owner must make accommodations for the pet. Accommodations include having the pet boarded, kept off-campus, or monitored at least twice a day. The Pet Owner cannot pay or seek volunteer assistance from a student resident or student staff member as this poses a potential conflict of interest and security issue.
- If animal neglect or cruelty is suspected, Residential Life maintains the right to investigate and/or contact an outside agency such as MSPCA.

Under Massachusetts law an owner or custodian of an animal must provide (1) proper food and water, (2) shelter or protection from the weather, (3) veterinary attention needed to reduce or end suffering from disease or injury, and (4) a sanitary environment. An owner or custodian of an animal is prohibited from (a) willfully abandoning an animal, (b) carrying or causing an animal to be carried in or on a vehicle in a manner that endangers the animal including transport of an improperly secured animal, or (c) willfully permitting an animal to be subjected to unnecessary torture, suffering, or cruelty. Violators may be forced to forfeit their animal and/or be subject

to a sentence of up to five years in state prison, or up to 2.5 years in state prison and/or a fine of up to \$2,500.

Pet Owner Implications

- The Pet Owner will be required to have a Pet in Residence door sign. This sign will be supplied by the Residential Life staff member managing the pet documentation. The staff member is responsible for keeping the pet contained when expecting maintenance or other University personnel to enter the apartment for improvements or repairs. No University employee entering the apartment on University business is responsible for the containing, monitoring or ensuring the safety of the pet.
- Residential Life requires the Pet Owner to provide emergency contact information. However, if the Pet Owner experiences an emergency that interferes with care for the pet, it is the Pet Owner's sole responsibility to make all necessary arrangements.
- In the event the animal causes harm to an individual, Residential Life may require the pet to be removed from campus immediately pending a meeting to decide a formal solution.
- The University shall not, under any circumstances be held liable for any personal injury or damages caused by the pet. The Pet Owner hereby agrees to indemnify and hold University of Massachusetts Amherst harmless from all payments, expenses, costs, attorney's fees, and all claims and liabilities for losses or damages to property or injuries to persons caused wholly or in part by, or resulting from the pet. In an emergency and in the absence of the Pet Owner, the University accepts no responsibility to handle the pet or manage those that escape the apartment upon emergency staff entry to apartments.
- In the event of a temporary or permanent apartment move, the Pet Owner is responsible for relocating the pet.
- If a Pet Owner's apartment has an emergency such as a Facilities issue (i.e. an apartment gets flooded), and the staff member is required to relocate to emergency accommodations such as the Campus Center hotel, it is the Pet Owner's responsibility to find emergency lodging (kennel, etc.) for their pet. The University will not pay for pet accommodations in the event on an emergency that impacts a Pet Owner's apartment.
- Yearly inspections of the Pet Owners apartment will be completed by Facilities Operations staff and the owner's direct supervisor during the spring. Any and all damages assessed will be billed to the owner following the inspection. An end of occupancy inspection will also be performed. Any and all damages caused by a pet beyond normal wear-and-tear from apartment living will be the responsibility of the owner, who will be assessed related fees for repairs or replacement. Any and all damages assessed will be billed to the owner following the inspection.
- At least one month prior to the vacating of an apartment (or as soon as known) by a Pet Owner, Facilities Operations and the owner's direct supervisor will assess the apartment. Facilities Operations will determine whether or not the apartment can be returned to its pre-pet living environment as the result of a normal apartment turnover process. If Facilities Operations determines that additional services are required (i.e. steam cleaning of carpets, furniture, drapery), Facilities Operations will assist the Pet Owner in securing the necessary services prior to their expected date of departure. The Pet Owner will be solely responsible for the costs incurred.