

Can Landlords Discriminate Against Dog Breeds?

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It's no tall tail that people love their pets and will do anything for them. Some pup-parents have a special connection to specific breeds, which can be challenging for renters with a dog that's often classified as an "aggressive" or "dangerous" breed.

Finding a no-breed-restriction apartment is a trying task – not to mention dealing with the usual agony of calculating all the pet-related expenses you end up owing. Many renters with dogs want to know why landlords categorize some breeds into an "aggressive breed list" – is it even legal to discriminate against dogs based on their breed? It's a thought we've all had at one point or another during the apartment search. We've dug up the answer to your question below:

As hard (and unfair) as it is to hear, a landlord is within their legal right to reject dog breeds from their community – and it all has to do with insurance reasons. It’s disheartening for any pup-parent to be told their dog is not allowed in the community because it falls on the breed-restricted list. But dogs, unfortunately, are not a **protected class** under the Fair Housing Act (FHA).

Those three dreaded words, “breed restrictions apply,” are never fun to read or hear when looking for a new home. It’s important to note that emotional support dogs – no matter what the breed – are an exception and cannot be denied from an apartment, even in a no-pet community. Because they aid in the quality of life of a group protected by the FHA, emotional support pups are also exempt from **pet fees, deposits, and rent**.

DOG BREEDS OFTEN FOUND ON AGGRESSIVE BREED LISTS:

1. Pit bull
2. Doberman pinscher
3. Rottweiler
4. German shepherd
5. Chow Chow
6. Great Dane
7. Presa canario
8. Akita
9. Alaskan malamute
10. Siberian husky
11. Wolf-hybrid

WHY LANDLORDS ARE CONCERNED ABOUT DOG BREEDS:

To be frank (or Fido, however you look at it), landlords have to be concerned about the breed types on their property because of liability reasons. Each year more and more dog bite claims are filed with insurance companies, which mean landlords’ liability coverage becomes stricter and often yields higher premiums.

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 1 in 5 people require medical attention after a dog bite. As the amount of submitted medical claims soar, insurance companies are constantly amending their “banned breeds” list. This list is then detailed in a landlord’s liability coverage policy and are omitted from coverage.

Apartment communities and their landlords might not have any control over banned breeds, as many cities and counties have begun enacting breed specific legislation (BSL) laws which restrict certain dog types from the area.

If you’re currently **touring** apartment communities for a new home, or are considering adopting a dog in the near future, a landlord or apartment manager will need to disclose to you the community’s restricted breeds – and they may apply the ban to dogs mixed with any of the mentioned breeds. You can find said list in the Pet Policy section of your lease agreement.

A pet interview is a great start – it allows your landlord to meet and see for themselves exactly what you see in your furry friend. They can see the wiggly, snuggly, lovable character of your beloved dog in person, and not characterize based on what they've heard about the breed.

If you do have a pet interview lined up at an apartment community, here's what you need to bring to be fully prepared.

1. Doggy Resume

Your dog's resume should include standard details like the pup's name, breed, age, weight, vaccination dates, and a current photo. Also, it would be a good idea to include a short snippet about your dog's personality, what they like to do in their spare time, as well as their favorite treats. Write it in first-person narrative so it sounds like its coming from your dog!

Example:

Hi, I'm Rover,

My mom says I'm a goofball because I chase my tail – I like to think that I'm agile, just burning off energy the way I was taught with my puppy siblings. I like children and they like me, especially when it comes to my floppy ears. My favorite toy is my stuffed squirrel which I would love to show you pup-to-person. When I'm good, I get a chicken-flavored Milk Bone as a treat (yummy!). My mom and I watch The Office together...though I don't really get the show. Please meet me!

2. Pet Medical Records

Immunization dates for core vaccines like rabies and parvovirus should be a part of your pet's medical records. Landlords will sometimes keep a copy on file, so they can keep tabs on your pet's vaccinations.

Other pet medical information they might need:

- Date of spay/neutering procedure
- Date of vaccination for distemper, canine hepatitis, and bordatella
- Name of heartworm and flea/tick preventative

3. Letter of Reference

Bringing a letter of reference written by your dog groomer, pet sitter, or even a neighbor is an excellent way to get a thumbs-up from the landlord on your pet. Be sure the person who writes it includes how your dog behaves when you're away, how he/she does on a leash, and how he/she interacts with other dogs and kids.

4. Sweet Pup Photos and Videos

You can't go wrong by showing off the photos and videos of your sweet pup. You might even consider adding a funny photo, like a photo of your dog catching Zzs on the couch with the caption: I literally do this all day. A little humor can go a long way in a pet interview.

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WHAT DO YOU THINK?

32 Responses

😊 LOVE

😎 COOL

😊 HELPFUL

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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Hello! I'm Lauren Ross, a copywriter here at Apartments.com. I love dogs, cupcakes, and lifestyle trends! In my free time, you can find me traveling or sipping my favorite cab-sauv wine. Tweet me @larossingaround!

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