

PET PEEVES OR PET POLICIES

In any situation the role of policies and rules is to provide for order set expectations and to ensure that things run more smoothly or perhaps more safely.

When it comes to pets, most condominium corporations have rules and policies around pet ownership. Perhaps the best place to start is with the individual condominium corporation's declarations, by-laws and rules. There are rules around the number of pets, the type of pets and even the size of pets. Some condominiums have 'no pet' rules. It is important to note that such rules apply equally to all residents whether they be unit owners or tenants. More importantly all need to familiarize themselves with the rules. It behooves anyone moving into a condominium or anyone contemplating new pet ownership to become familiar with these rules.

These documents also contain provisions about pet behaviour. A common item dealt with would be barking. A pet that disrupts the quiet enjoyment of others can be deemed a nuisance. In the case of a pet creating noise disturbance that interferes with the quiet enjoyment of others, the pet may be required to be removed from the property.

Regardless of any rules and regulations the Human Rights Code trumps the condominium act and accommodations are required for persons with disabilities. For example, in the case of a large seeing-eye dog the size rule would not be enforceable.

It is also important to note that service animals are defined by the Manitoba Human Rights Code as animals specifically trained to assist a person with a disability. The work or task(s) performed by a service animal must be directly related to a person's physical or mental disability. Animals that provide comfort and companionship that are not trained to assist with a person's disability are not service animals. A corporation is within its rights to request documentation to support the request for an exception to condo rules for a service animal.

One rule that many pet owners are surprised at is that which prohibits pets from common areas. We all love our pets dearly and may even see them as family members so it might be shocking to

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us to find out that our beloved Rover can't come to the party room for his human mom's birthday! We may forget that for others pets raise concerns about allergies, cleanliness and even fear. Many people are quite afraid of pets be they dogs or cats.

Another concern is the damage that pets can cause to common elements. Based on what my cat has done to my sofa I can personally attest to the potential for damage by pets. Inflicting damage to your own property is one thing but the lobby or common room furniture is off limits to Fluffy and Fido. You are responsible for the damage that your pets do.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the issues around being a thoughtful pooper scooper. Let's face it, nature must take its course but no one wants to have to deal with or pay a third party to deal with other people's pet droppings.

As they say there are no bad pets only bad pet owners. So do your pet and your neighbours a favour and be a purrfect pet owner. 🐾

PAMELA PYKE

