



SENATOR
MARIA ELENA DURAZO
LEGISLATIVE FACTSHEET

SB 1296 – Pet Policy Transparency Act

Summary

SB 1296 ensures prospective renters receive information about a property’s pet policies through rental listings and application materials, so they do not pay non-refundable application fees only to later discover their pet is not allowed. This bill establishes a transparent framework for pet policies that benefits both landlords and tenants.

Background and Problem

In California, landlords of rental properties are not required to provide upfront disclosure of any pet policies in their units when prospective tenants apply for a rental unit and pay any associated fees. As a result, pet owners often only find out about existing pet policies, including pet restrictions, fees, and exclusions, until after applying for a unit and paying a non-refundable application fee. The lack of pet policy information forces pet owners to spend even more time and money looking for a rental unit that welcomes them and their pet.

The lack of transparency in rental property pet policies only exacerbates the already difficult process California renters have in securing housing for themselves and their pets, leaving them prone to housing instability. Many pet owners struggle to find a rental unit to call home because of pet policies that exclude pets altogether. Others face barriers because of rising rental costs and the affordable housing crisis in California. To illustrate, in 2024, housing-

related hardships led to 1,538 animal surrenders in Los Angeles County, an increase from the prior two years. Housing continues to be a leading cause of owner surrender, particularly for dogs who are over 25 pounds.

The difficulties pet owners face in finding a home are further compounded without a requirement for rental properties to disclose their pet policies ahead of the application process. The issue becomes costly, as pet owners may pay multiple application fees only to discover the rental property will not accommodate their pet.

Solution

SB 1296 requires rental properties to disclose their pet policies to prospective tenants on property websites, digital advertisements and rental listings, rental application materials, and a visible on-site location for prospective tenants (as applicable). Rental properties must disclose any existing pet policies including any breed, weight, or size restrictions, limits on the number of pets allowed, pet-related fees, and vaccination and insurance requirements. The measure does not require rental properties to create policies, but rather simply disclose any existing pet policies they may already have.

Prospective tenants shall acknowledge receipt of the rental property’s pet policies by signing an animal addendum or a lease agreement that includes all pet policies. If an application fee is charged prior to the

disclosure of pet policies, the landlord or property agent shall return the fee to the applicant.

Sponsor

- Michelson Center for Public Policy

Contact

Stephany Herrera

(916) 651-4026

Stephany.Herrera@sen.ca.gov