

# DO YOU HAVE A NO PETS POLICY?



**SERVICE &  
ASSISTANCE  
ANIMALS ARE NOT  
PETS**

## The Fair Housing Act

The Fair Housing Act (FHA) prohibits discrimination in the sale or rental of housing because of a person's disability. The FHA requires a housing provider to make "reasonable accommodations" in rules, policies, practices, or services when such accommodations may be necessary to afford a person with a disability full use and enjoyment of their dwelling. An assistance animal can be a reasonable accommodation to pet related policies.

### Assistance Animals in Housing

Under the FHA, an assistance animal can be any animal and not limited by size or breed. "No pets" policies do not apply to assistance animals, nor may a housing provider require an individual to pay pet deposits or fees for the assistance animal. If the animal causes damage to the apartment or house, a housing provider may hold the animal's owner responsible.

### "Service Animals"



## Assistance Animal Defined

An assistance animal is not a pet. It is an animal that works as an assistive aid for a person with a disability. The definition of an assistance animal under the FHA differs from that in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA limits the definition of “service animals” to dogs and excludes emotional support animals. Unlike the ADA, the FHA does not require an assistance animal to be individually trained or certified. The ADA’s requirements do not apply to assistance animals under the FHA.

## Housing Provider Rights & Obligations

A housing provider has a duty to comply with the regulations of the FHA and ADA.

Disability-related information may be requested, including:

- Verification of the qualified disability
- Description of the needed accommodation
- Relationship between the disability and the need for the accommodation

This information should only be requested if either the disability, or the need for the accommodation, is not known or obvious.

In most cases, a housing provider may not ask an individual to provide medical records or inquire about the nature or severity of one’s physical or mental impairment.

A reasonable accommodation is not required if it causes:

- An undue administrative or financial burden; or
- A fundamental alteration of the provider’s operations

Call or visit the local fair housing office at:

City of Lancaster

Community Development Department

Fair Housing Agency

104 East Main Street  
Second Floor

Lancaster, Ohio

740-687-6663

email address: [cdd@ci.lancaster.oh.us](mailto:cdd@ci.lancaster.oh.us)

Or you can contact [hud.gov/fair housing](http://hud.gov/fairhousing)  
or call the HUD Hotline at

1-800-669-9777 (English/Espanol) 1-800-927-9275  
(TTY)

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Specific questions should be addressed to the:  
City of Lancaster, Community Development Department.

