

On February 23rd, USA Today published an article regarding the tight renters market in the United States. According to the article, cities in most parts of the country are boasting vacancy rates of less than 3% and large rental companies plan to increase rents by as much as 5% in the coming year.

With the situation now firmly to the advantage of the landlord, the practice of offering renter incentives is vanishing and with it, pet-friendly rental opportunities are dwindling. Coupled with rising monthly fees and security deposits, and more frequent credit check and reference requirements, the renter's environment is becoming increasingly competitive.

As society adapts to this shift, it's important for us to realize the impact on animal welfare. The emerging rental situation may hinder adoptions and cause relinquishments to rise as renters are forced to give up their pets due to changing policies, rising costs, and the need for more affordable housing where pets may not be allowed.

To help reduce these effects, you may want to consider proactive solutions and programs to support pet owners searching for the right apartment. Providing pet-owning renters with creative solutions and making them aware of their tenant rights can help keep more people and their pets in homes together.

Programs and services you can offer pet owners to help gain acceptance from their landlords include

1. **Medical Records:** Proof of spay/neuter surgery and a current vaccination record not only demonstrate responsible pet ownership but also provide assurance to landlords that the pet is healthy.
2. **Proof of "Good Behavior":** The Canine Good Citizen Certificate issued by the American Kennel Club association offers widely recognized proof of good behavior for dogs. Whether you encourage participation in this or your own behavioral assessment and training programs, training is an important part of responsible pet ownership and a training certificate is a great way to impress a potential landlord.
3. **Renter's Insurance:** Renter's Insurance: A common fear among landlords is property damage caused by pets. You can help pet owners calm these fears by making them aware of pet insurance programs which in addition to major medical also cover 3rd party property damage.
4. **DNA Testing:** One of the saddest threats facing dog owning renters today is breed-specific discrimination against Pit Bulls and Pit Bull type dogs. Encouraging pet owners to try DNA testing before relinquishing their pets can save lives by oftentimes disproving breed claims.

Armed with the paperwork listed above, renters will stand a better chance of convincing current and future landlords they are responsible and reliable pet owners who can also be loyal, long term tenants.

Did you know?

24PetWatch offers a unique insurance policy with the needs of renters in mind. Created in consultation with one of North America's largest residential landlords and designed specifically for pet owners living in rental accommodations, **24PetWatch TenantCare** covers damage caused by pets to the rental unit, in addition to accidents and illnesses for both cats and dogs.

Ask us how 24PetWatch TenantCare can help protect your clients' pets.

Sincerely,

Connie Howard
Director Animal Welfare Relations
Pethealth Inc.
Office: 1-866-630-7387 ext 617
Mobile: 1-720-459-0959
Email: connie@petpoint.com