

Pets & Housing Data

2025 EDITION



**Pet-Inclusive
Housing Initiative**

PRESENTED BY

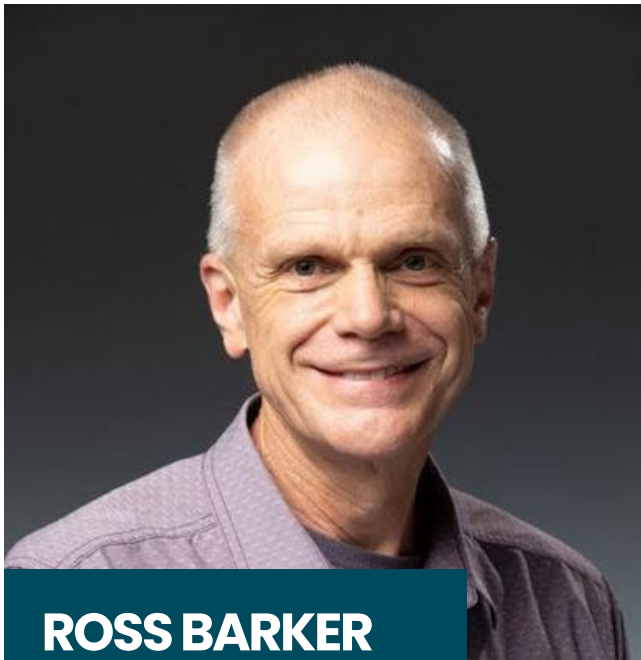
**Michelson
Found Animals**



Table of Contents

From the Pet-Inclusive Housing Initiative	3
Properties that Allow Pets by State	4
Pet Policies National Overview	5
The Gap Between Pet-Friendly and Pet-Inclusive	6
“Pet-Friendliness” Among U.S. Rental Properties	7
Pet-Owning Renter Experiences	8–12
Emotional Support Animals (ESA)	13
Accelerating Toward Impact	14
From Dr. Gary K Michelson	15
Contact Us	16

From The Pet-Inclusive Housing Initiative

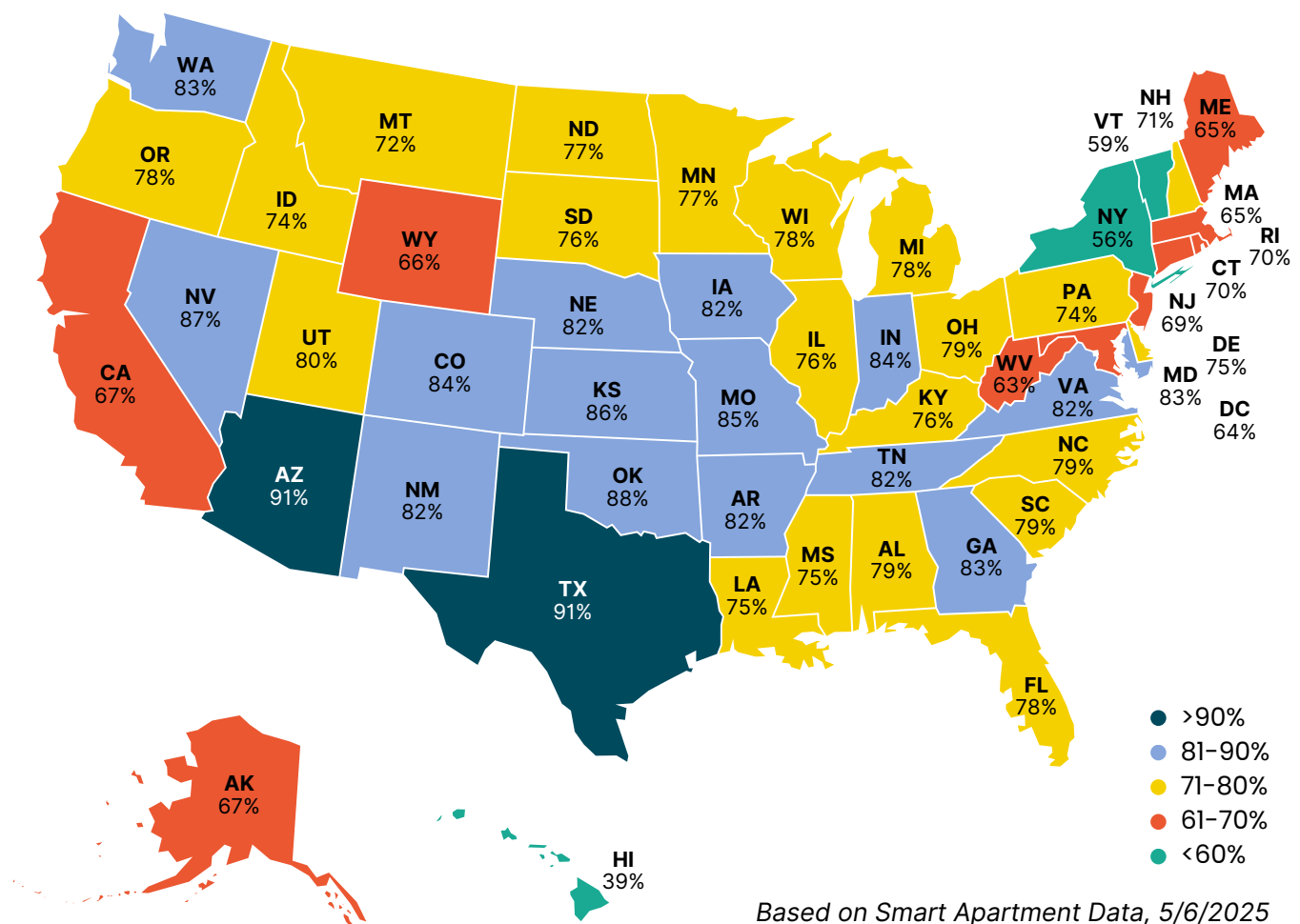


ROSS BARKER

Director, PIHI

Across the country, renters with pets continue to face unnecessary barriers when trying to find safe, affordable housing. This report highlights the policies, gaps, and lived experiences that shape that reality. While many properties call themselves “pet-friendly,” our data tells a more complex story - one that calls for thoughtful reform. We hope this data expands our collective thinking and sparks meaningful dialogue about the best path forward. The Pet-Inclusive Housing Initiative remains committed to advancing solutions that work for both housing providers and pet-owning residents.

Percentage of Rental Properties That Allow Pets by State

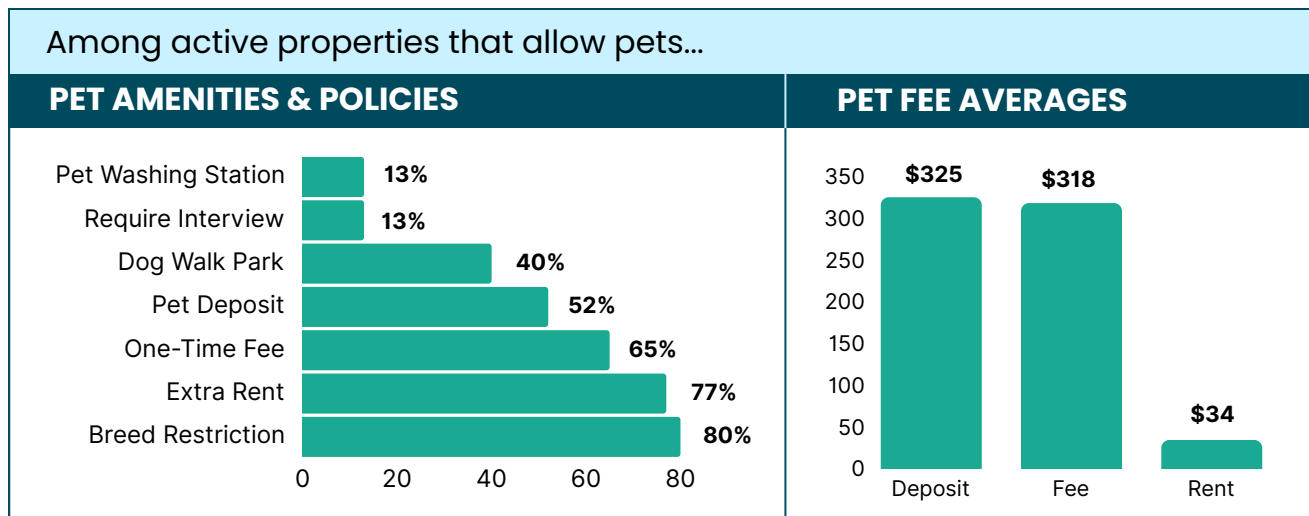
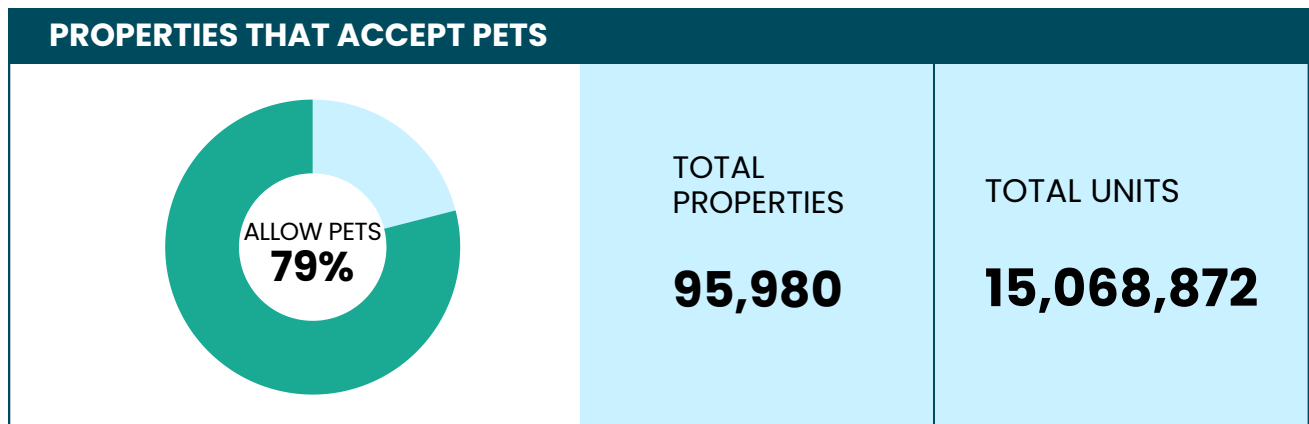


Based on Smart Apartment Data, 5/6/2025

Why This Matters

Access to pet-friendly housing varies widely by state, with some renters facing far greater challenges than others simply because of where they live. Understanding this geographic disparity is key to targeting advocacy and policy solutions where they're needed most.

Pet Policies National Overview



Based on Smart Apartment Data, 5/6/25

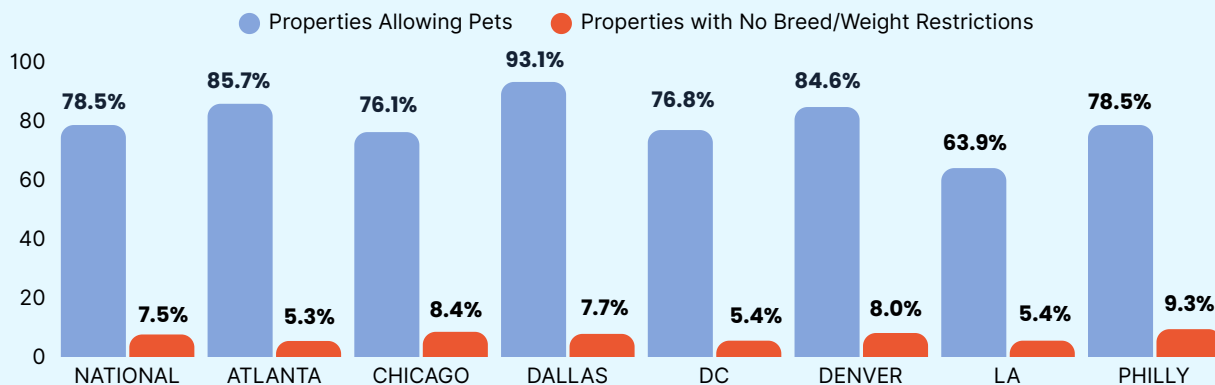
Why This Matters

Understanding current pet policies is critical to shaping inclusive housing. While 79% of rental properties accept pets, many impose costly fees and restrictive policies, like breed bans and extra rent, that create unnecessary barriers for renters and limit housing access for pet-owning families.

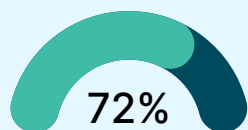
The Gap Between Pet-Friendly & Pet-Inclusive

THE GAP Pet-Friendly vs. Pet-Inclusive

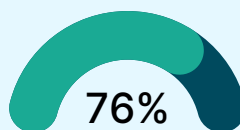
Pet-friendly rental housing is not the same as pet-inclusive rental housing. Here's what this gap looks like in different rental markets.



Based on Smart Apartment Data, 5/6/25



of residents said
pet-friendly housing
is hard to find



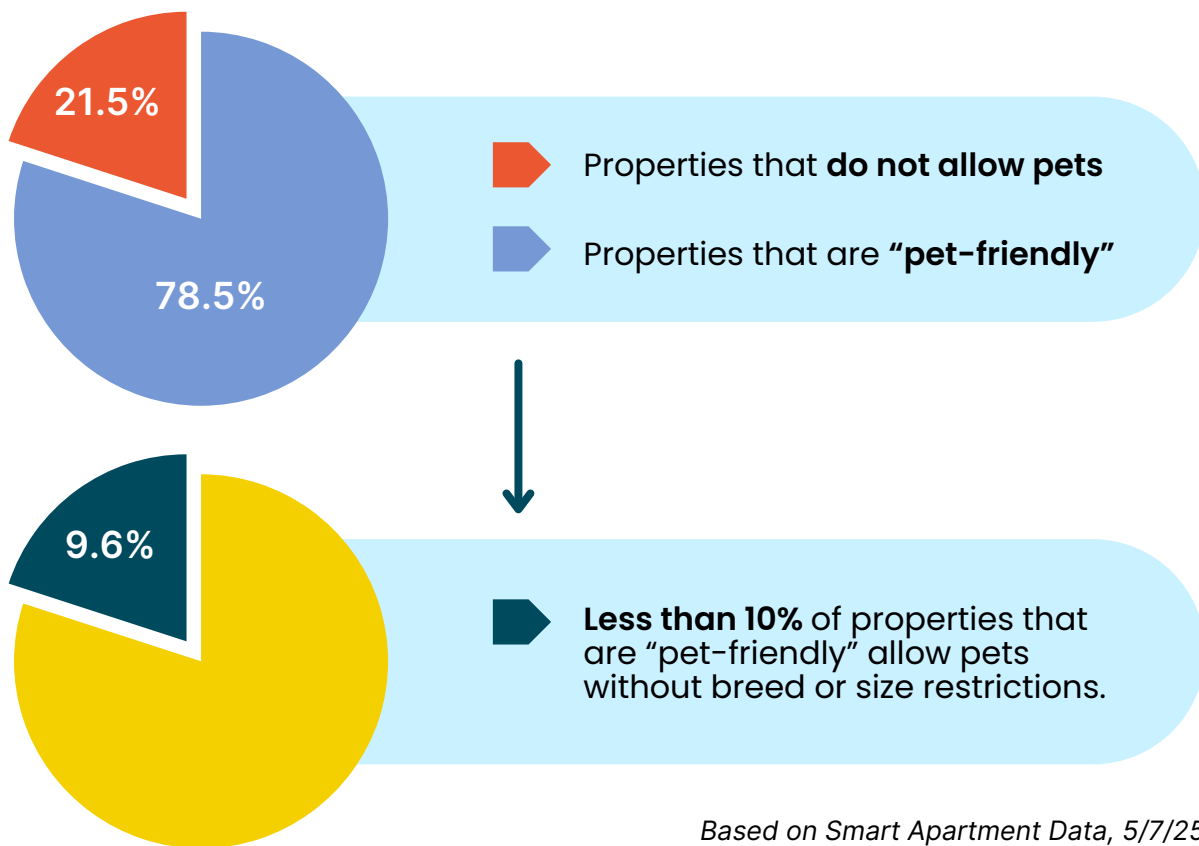
of rental property
owners/operators said
their properties are pet-
friendly

Based on the 2021 Pet-Inclusive Housing Report

Why This Matters

There's a critical gap between perception and reality. Although 76% of operators consider their properties pet-friendly, widespread restrictions tell a different story - one that prevents renters from finding safe, stable housing with their pets and perpetuates housing insecurity for pet-owning households.

“Pet-Friendliness” Among U.S. Rental Properties



Based on Smart Apartment Data, 5/7/25

Why This Matters

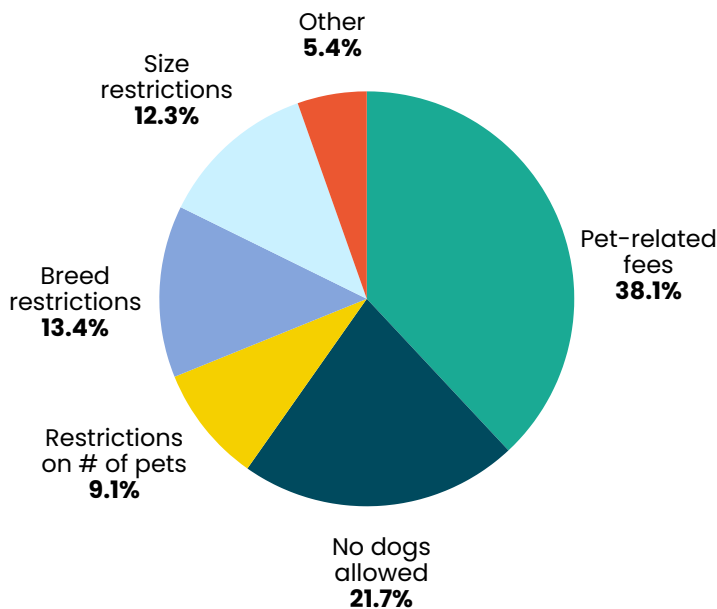
Less than 10% of properties allow pets without restrictions, despite claims of being “pet-friendly.” This stark statistic shows how misleading the term can be without true policy reform.

Pet-Owning Renter Experiences

Over 80% of dog owners surveyed reported difficulty finding housing with their dogs. Below are their top reasons.

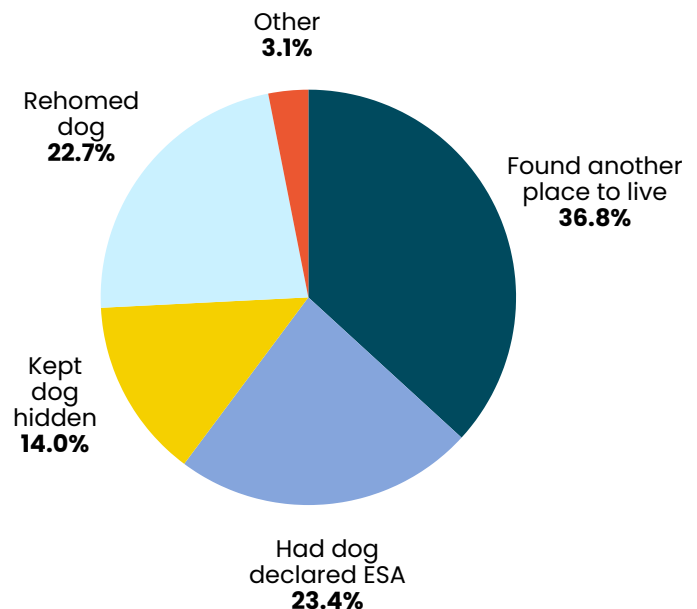
When dog owners can not rent with their dogs, here are some of the decisions they are forced to make to stay housed.

REASONS



Based on data from February 2025 Pet-Inclusive Housing Initiative research with 318 dog owners in the U.S.

OUTCOMES



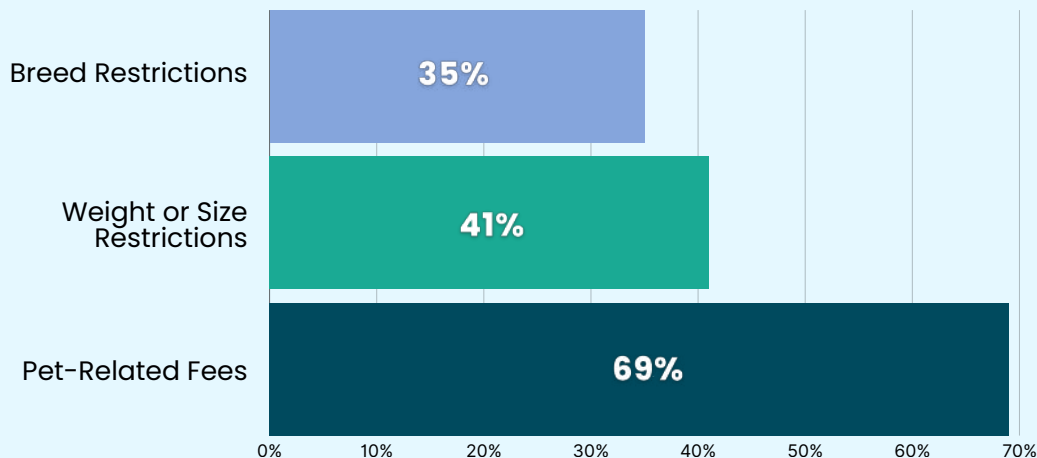
Based on data from October 2024 Pet-Inclusive Housing Initiative research with 580 dog owners in the U.S.

Why This Matters

Renters often face hard choices due to restrictive policies, like rehoming pets or misclassifying them as ESAs. These decisions impact lives and shelter populations and underscore the urgency of pet-inclusive housing reform.

Pet-Owning Renter Experiences

Which **barriers** have made finding housing with your pet(s) difficult?



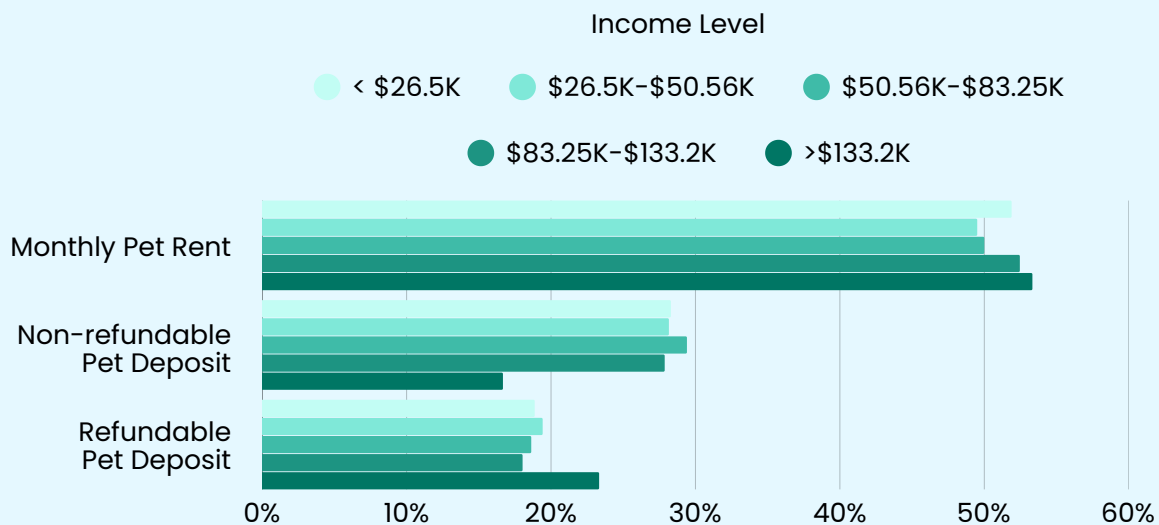
Responses total more than 100% because respondents were allowed to select more than one answer. Based on data from March 2025 Pet-Inclusive Housing Initiative research with 523 pet-owning renters in the U.S.

Why This Matters

Pet-related fees, followed by breed and size restrictions, are the leading barriers for pet owners in the rental market. Reducing these hurdles is crucial for equitable housing access.

Pet-Owning Renter Experiences

Which of these pet-related costs has been the biggest problem for you?



Based on data from March 2025 Pet-Inclusive Housing Initiative research with 523 pet-owning renters in the U.S.

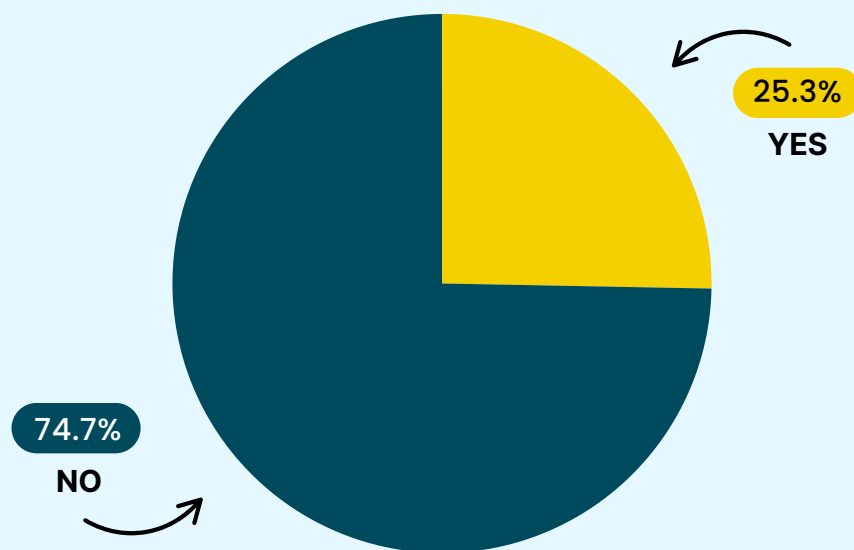
*Monthly pet rent is the number one pet-related fee burden for renters **at all income levels.***

Why This Matters

Monthly pet rent is the most burdensome cost for renters across all income levels. Fair fee structures are central to true pet inclusivity.

Pet-Owning Renter Experiences

Has your pet ever caused damage in a rental unit?



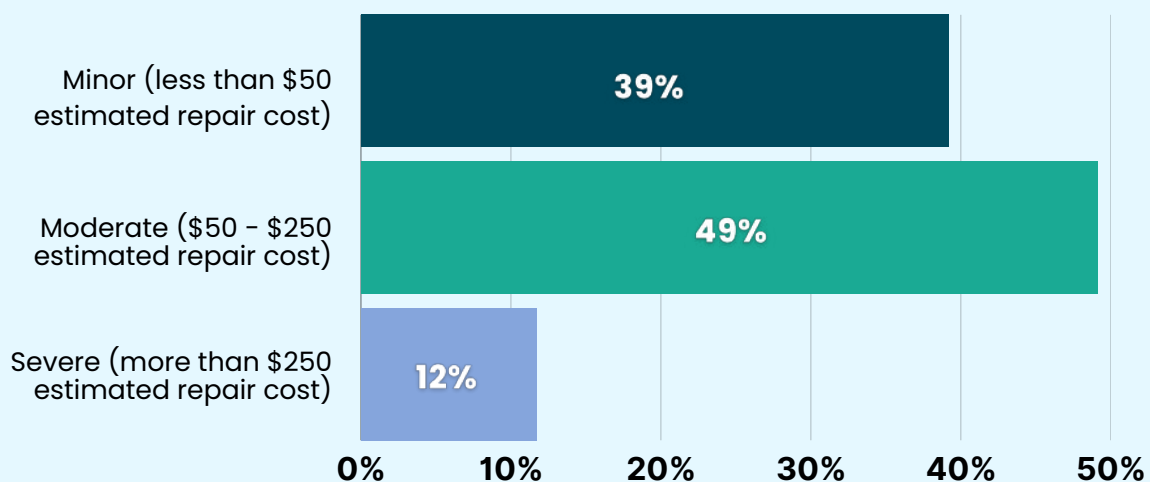
Based on data from March 2025 Pet-Inclusive Housing Initiative research with 523 pet-owning renters in the U.S.

Why This Matters

Despite common fears, the vast majority of renters report no pet-related damage in their units. This evidence challenges assumptions and supports policy change that's grounded in reality, not stigma.

Pet-Owning Renter Experiences

Which of these best describes the damage your pet caused?



Based on data from March 2025 Pet-Inclusive Housing Initiative research with 523 pet-owning renters in the U.S.

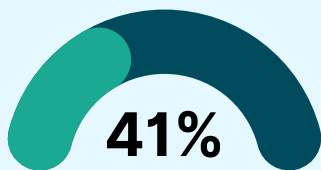
Why This Matters

When damage does occur, it's typically minor and manageable. These findings weaken the argument for punitive fees and breed bans based on assumed risk.

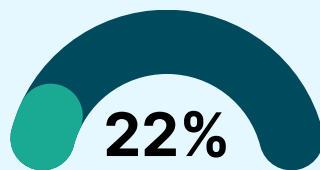
Emotional Support Animals (ESA)

To better understand issues around ESAs, PIHI asked pet owners and emotional support animal owners about their experiences.

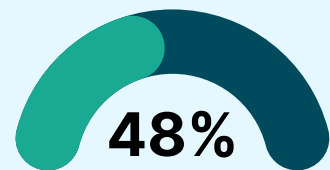
Respondent Highlights



said **housing reasons were factors** in having a pet declared an ESA



said **a housing reason was the most important factor** in having a pet declared an ESA



said **size limits or breed restrictions** were the most important housing-related reason for having a pet declared an ESA

Based on data from May 2024 Pet-Inclusive Housing Initiative research with 419 pet and service animal owners in the U.S.

Why This Matters

Many renters turn to ESA status to overcome restrictive housing policies, especially size and breed limits. Rethinking these restrictions could reduce misuse while improving access for renters and their pets.



Accelerating Toward Impact

The data in this report is more than a number - it's a roadmap for action. It reveals where we are, where we fall short, and where change is urgently needed. Every barrier we remove brings us closer to a future where no one has to choose between housing and their pet. We invite housing providers, policymakers, advocates, and renters to use these insights, and to connect with the PIHI team at info@petsandhousing.org. Visit petsandhousing.org for free, ready-to-use resources that can support and accelerate your impact.



DR. GARY K MICHELSON

Founder & Co-Chair
Michelson Found Animals

From Dr. Gary K Michelson

We believe strong data is one of the most powerful catalysts for compassion and lasting change. At MFA, we know that one of the most impactful ways to create a more pet-inclusive world is by removing barriers to housing for pet owners, increasing access to housing and preventing pets from unnecessarily entering shelters. This report shines a light on where those barriers continue to exist and how we can work together to remove them.



Contact Us

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