

Father Joe's Villages
St. Vincent de Paul Village

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| TITLE: | Animals: Pets: Policy |
| Policy Statement: | <p>Father Joe's Villages (FJV) welcomes pets in the residential programs of the Bishop Maher Center (BMC), Joan Kroc Center (JKC), Paul Mirabile Center (PMC), and Golden Hall (GH) provided space is available. NOTE: On 9/30/2021, FJV received confirmation from the San Diego Housing Commission that pets are allowable at GH.</p> <p>For the purpose of this policy, pets are limited to cats, dogs and other domestic companion animals that may be kept legally in San Diego. Wild animals, domestic-bred farm animals, and venomous animals are not allowed. Pets must be in possession of the client at program intake. New pets or pets joining the household after intake to the residential program are not allowed without prior approval from the Director of Residential Services.</p> <p>Ownership of a pet, the species (dog, cat, guinea pig, etc.), and size of dog (small, medium, or large) is included in the relevant program's waitlist notes so that residential staff members can ensure the appropriate space is available prior to coordinating intake. Due to space restrictions and the need to preserve space for service animals and emotional support animals, pets are currently limited to 10% of households in each program (e.g. in a program serving 350 single adults there can be no more than 35 pets total, in a program serving 28 families there can be no more than 3 pets total, etc.). At Golden Hall, pets may be limited further based on guidance from the Fire Marshall and/or other City officials. When the maximum number of pets has been met in a program, a pet-owning client is skipped on the waitlist and receives the next available appropriate room/bed when a pet intake is available. Note: In the PMC and at GH, space is limited for large dogs, which may further delay a client's ability to move into the program.</p> <p>California law requires all dogs older than three months to be vaccinated with the rabies vaccine. Proof of current rabies vaccination is requested at program intake for dogs and must be submitted to residential staff by the client's tenth day in the program in order to continue residing in the program with the pet.</p> <p>A pet may be excluded from intake if determined, based on an individual assessment, that the animal poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others or the animal is out of control and the owner does not take effective action to control it. A dog may not be excluded based on stereotypes regarding its breed or size.</p> <p>Pets are restricted to pathways of travel (e.g. Courtyards, hallways, lobbies, etc.), outdoor areas, and the client's room/bed area.</p> |

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| | <p>In order to prevent hazards to health and safety or any unnecessary interference with the use and enjoyment of other residents, pets must always be under the physical control of the owner unless humanely confined to an appropriately sized crate/cage.</p> <p>FJV provides standard dog and cat food as needed, food storage containers, and crates for use while in the program, as well as access/referral to veterinarian and behavior support services. Limited funds may be available for specialized diet food, cages or other supplies needed for non-dog/cat pets, veterinary services, and behavior support services. FJV is not responsible for care or feeding of the animal. Clients are expected to clean up after their pet and have their pet use the designated areas to relieve themselves.</p> <p>This policy is specific to pets and does not change any policy related to service and emotional support animals.</p> |
| Relevant History: | <p>Father Joe’s Villages has welcomed service animals and emotional support animals at its facilities, but pets had not been allowed. The experience of working with clients and their service animals and emotional support animals and FJV’s commitment to providing low barrier shelter, equipped the organization to successfully transition to also serving pets, thereby removing the barrier to shelter for pet owners who are experiencing homelessness.</p> |
| Responsibility | <p>Program Directors and Managers</p> |
| Definitions: | <p>Appropriately Sized Crate: a crate that is large enough to allow the pet to stand up, turn around, lie down comfortably, and that is sufficiently long so the animal’s nose and backside do not touch each end of the crate.</p> <p>Humanely Confined: kept in a comfortable, clean, dry appropriately sized crate, with access to food, water, and litter (for cats) for a duration of time that does not exceed the animal’s ability to hold its bladder or bowels and that is respective of the animals’ age and physical condition. For instance, the Humane Society of the United States says a dog under 6 months should not be confined for longer than 3-4 hours at a time.</p> |
| Desired Outcomes: | <p>Reduced barrier to shelter entry by pet-owning households experiencing homelessness.</p> |
| Related Documents: | <p>Animals: Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals: Policy Animals: Animal Owner Acknowledgement: Form</p> |
| Contributing Authors (version): | <p>Jesse Casement, Division Director of Client Services (v.1)</p> |