



LOS ANGELES COUNTY

CONSUMER & BUSINESS AFFAIRS

Board of Supervisors

November 20, 2025

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From: Rafael Carbajal
Director

Chief Deputy
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REPORT BACK ON KEEPING PETS AND FAMILIES TOGETHER: INCREASING PET EQUITY IN HOUSING (ITEM 15, AGENDA OF DECEMBER 17, 2024)

On December 17, 2024, your Board directed the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA), in collaboration with the Los Angeles County Department of Animal Care and Control (DACC), and the Los Angeles County Development Authority, in consultation with County Counsel, to report back on the feasibility of drafting a potential ordinance addressing pet equity in housing that would be applicable to rent-stabilized units within the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County.¹

Your Board also requested that this report include, but not be limited to, the following:

- An analysis of best practices, existing policies, and enforcement mechanisms from other jurisdictions, if any, along with equity considerations and an evaluation of the feasibility of implementing and enforcing such an ordinance, including needed resources;
- Recommendations for adopting an ordinance addressing pet ownership for rent-stabilized rental units located in unincorporated Los Angeles County that may include requiring residential rental agreements to allow at least one common household pet, setting a cap on monthly “pet rent” for new rental agreements or existing rental agreements, and the elimination of pet weight restrictions for common household pets in residential dwelling units;



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- Recommendations on requiring that pets are licensed, as applicable, by DACC prior to the tenant initially moving in or within 30 days if pet is acquired by an existing tenant; and
- A provision of a clearly written pet policy, in at least English and Spanish, in each residential rental agreement and provided directly to current tenants.

DCBA's report responding to your Board's directives is attached, which covers:

- An overview of pet impacts on household well-being and its impact on vulnerable populations and communities;
- A comparative analysis of pet equity in housing policies from the State of Colorado, the District of Columbia, and City of West Hollywood;
- A summary and analysis of stakeholder engagement and an online survey conducted to gather input on the potential impacts of pet equity housing protections;
- An assessment of the operational impacts pet equity in housing protections would have on the DCBA Housing and Tenant Protections Bureau, which implements the Rent Stabilization and Tenant Protections Ordinance (RSTPO) set forth in Chapter 8.52 of the Los Angeles County Code;
- Potential strategies to consider in determining pet equity in housing protections;
- A proposed framework for revisions to the RSTPO to incorporate pet equity in housing protections; and
- Recommended next steps.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

The Need for Pet-Friendly Housing

Los Angeles County (County) recognizes that many families include pets, which are increasingly viewed as vital family members. However, a shortage of accessible and affordable pet-friendly housing has contributed to rising shelter populations and rates of pets being surrendered to shelters, especially as more tenants continue to face challenges finding housing accommodations that allow animals. Although the County's RSTPO provides some tenant protections, it does not require landlords to allow pets and there are no such protections for tenants and their pets currently active in the County—although such protections did exist in the County in recent years via specific housing programs or temporary tenant protections enacted during the COVID-19 pandemic. Natural disasters and immigration enforcement have recently worsened the situation by displacing pets and owners alike. Research shows that pets improve well-being and reduce loneliness, stress, and depression—especially for older adults, veterans,

survivors of domestic violence, and people with disabilities. Research also showed that community safety also benefits from higher rates of pet ownership.

Research and Findings

In response to the Board's directives, DCBA studied how updating housing policies to support pet equity in housing could impact tenants, landlords, and County operations. While implementation would require operational changes, DCBA found strong evidence that pet-friendly housing aligns with public health, equity, and community goals.

Stakeholder Engagement

DCBA held seven virtual stakeholder engagement sessions and conducted an online survey to gather input to help inform the development of a potential pet equity housing ordinance. The sessions included tenants and tenant advocates, landlords and landlord advocates, and animal welfare organizations, with language access in Mandarin and Spanish to ensure inclusivity. While attendance was modest, the online survey received 659 responses. Tenants emphasized the limited availability of pet-inclusive housing and called for caps or the elimination of pet rent to improve affordability. Landlords voiced concerns about rising insurance costs, potential property damage, and the financial burden of upgrading and maintaining facilities to accommodate pets—especially under rent control. Data showed clear divides between tenants and landlords: tenants favored fewer pet restrictions and lower costs, while landlords preferred stricter policies and higher pet rents to cover expenses, such as maintenance and capital improvements. These insights will help shape revisions to the RSTPO to incorporate pet equity in housing protections, aiming to balance tenant needs, landlord concerns, and animal welfare.

Policy Analysis

Furthermore, DCBA conducted a comparative policy analysis of pet equity housing laws in Colorado, Washington D.C., and West Hollywood, all of which require landlords to allow at least one pet per rental unit, with varying rules on rent caps and weight restrictions. DCBA's review found that two of the three jurisdictions utilized pet rent caps that are based on a percentage of monthly rent and two of the three also implement policies that have no weight limits. Using these models, DCBA estimated that a percentage-based pet rent cap (e.g., .5–2.5% of the average \$1,863.36 monthly rent) would range from \$9.32 to \$46.58. In contrast, set dollar amounts could lead to disproportionately higher rent increases. DCBA also analyzed shelter data and found that strict pet weight limits—such as 25 pounds—would make less than half of shelter animals eligible for adoption into pet-friendly housing; a 50 pounds limit would be needed to make most of the population eligible for housing. Although the City of Los Angeles has not adopted a pet equity in

housing ordinance, they have expressed interest in developing their own pet equity in housing policy based on the County's findings.

Pet Licensing Review

With respect to licensing, DCBA determined that current County pet licensing rules are sufficient to ensure pets are properly registered and that no tenant-specific licensing policy is needed. The County should consider strengthening its outreach and education on existing pet licensing requirements. This approach builds on current policy that already requires that pets are properly licensed and would avoid creating additional registration requirements and costs for tenants.

Operational Impacts and Resource Needs

Lastly, DCBA has already identified a funding need to stabilize administration of the Rent Stabilization and Tenant Protections Ordinance (RSTPO) and meet existing ordinance requirements. Adoption of pet equity housing protections would add to that cumulative obligation and require additional ongoing resources to support enforcement, compliance monitoring, and service delivery. Revisions to the RSTPO would require updates to procedures, databases, and the Rent Registry system, along with increased staffing and operational costs. As is consistent whenever new protections are added to the RSTPO, DCBA anticipates increases in landlord requests to withdraw units from the rental market, tenant complaints; including allegations of harassment and retaliation and applications related to capital improvements and rent adjustments. These additional demands would further strain already overburdened services, such as the Tenant Protections Hotline, and could impact response times and statutory enforcement timelines while other housing ordinances are simultaneously being implemented or updated.

To implement the proposed protections, DCBA would require targeted staff expansion, specialized training (which would include trainings on service animals and emotional support animals), and continued collaboration with DACC. Technology and database enhancements would also be necessary to support expanded compliance tracking and case management. Based on current workload modeling, DCBA estimates an aggregate need of \$382,600 to fund four Enforcement staff and related operational expenses. DCBA does not currently have the capacity to absorb these costs. In addition to one-time implementation costs, a fee study and potential adjustments to rent registration fees would be needed to ensure long-term program sustainability and cost recovery.

Key Takeaways:

- *Building Well-Being and Supporting Resiliency*
 - Allowing pets in rental housing supports tenants' emotional resilience, physical health, and reduces social isolation which contributes to overall community well-being.
- *Enhancing Animal Welfare*
 - Removing or easing pet size restrictions would increase adoption rates by allowing more shelter animals, especially large breeds, to be housed with tenants.
- *Advancing Housing Equity*
 - A percentage-based pet rent cap, aligned with tenants' ability to pay, would help prevent lower-income renters from being priced out of pet ownership or further burdened by housing costs.
- *Sustaining Economic Vitality and Cost Recovery*
 - Pet equity policies should include cost recovery mechanisms for landlords to sustain the economic viability of their businesses and investments, addressing concerns about insurance, maintenance, and potential property damage.
- *Thriving Communities*
 - The effective rollout of pet equity protections will require additional staff, public education, community engagement, and expanded support services to meet increased demand for enforcement and tenant counseling.

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

Collectively, research conducted, community input collected, and the best practices from policies in other jurisdictions have provided DCBA valuable insight into the unique challenges, needs, and impacts related to the local implementation of pet equity in housing protections. As such, DCBA has developed the following set of policy options for your Board's consideration:

Option 1

A tenant-conscious option that allows pets of any size and eliminates pet rent to support pet equity in housing and reduce financial burdens on tenants. The trade-off with this option is that it does not prioritize landlord cost recovery as allowing pets of any size and a ban on pet rent may lead to additional expenses for housing providers.

Option 2

A measured compromise that allows pets in rental housing that weigh up to 50 pounds (small and medium sized animals) and sets a lower-tier cap to balance considerations for pet equity in housing while facilitating some landlord cost recovery.

Option 3

A flexible compromise that allows pets in rental housing that weigh up to 75 pounds (small, medium, and large sized animals) and sets a middle-tier pet rent cap to balance considerations for pet equity in housing with a more substantive mechanism for landlord cost recovery.

Option 4

A blended option that removes all pet weight limits while adopting a higher-tier pet rent cap to account for the costs of larger pets. While it supports animal welfare and landlord cost recovery, the trade-off with this option is that a higher pet rent cap may create significant financial burdens for tenants—especially those with lower incomes.

Table 1: Overview of the Proposed Policy Options

Policy Option	Household Pet Requirement	Pet Rent Cap	Pet Weight Restriction
Option 1	Allow at least one pet per rental unit	Pet rent barred	No restriction on weight
Option 2	Allow at least one pet per rental unit	0.5 percent of the monthly rent	No more than 50 pounds
Option 3	Allow at least one pet per rental unit	1.0 percent of the monthly rent	No more than 75 pounds
Option 4	Allow at least one pet per rental unit	1.5 percent of the monthly rent	No restriction on weight

Should your Board wish to advance one of the options, DCBA recommends that you:

1. Direct County Counsel, in collaboration with DCBA and DACC, to amend the RSTPO to incorporate pet equity in housing protections for the unincorporated areas of the County that reflect the policy option(s) selected by your Board.

2. Enhance resources available to DCBA and DACC to conduct outreach and education to the public on the County's existing pet licensing requirements in lieu of establishing a specific, mandatory pet licensing requirement for tenants as existing County policy achieves the goal of ensuring pets are properly documented in a timely manner.

DCBA also recommends that your Board consider further exploring the following strategies to further address pet equity in housing:

3. Advocate for state policy that bars insurance providers from considering breed when evaluating the insurability of a property.
4. Enhance existing DCBA staff resources and service level capacity to meet the additional demands of implementing a pet equity in housing protections, while ensuring continued support for both landlords and tenants.

Should you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact me or Christian Olmos, Deputy Director, Community & Consumer Services Bureau, at (213) 712-5456 or colmos@dcba.lacounty.gov ; or Mary Safaryan, Chief, Rent Stabilized Units, at (213) 712-5546 or msafaryan@dcba.lacounty.gov.

RC:JA:CO:MS
MR:DZ:EV:ph

Attachment

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
Chief Executive Office
County Counsel
Animal Care and Control
Development Authority



KEEPING PETS AND FAMILIES TOGETHER: INCREASING PET EQUITY IN HOUSING REPORT

November 20, 2025

Prepared by:

Los Angeles County Department of Consumer and Business Affairs
Rafael Carbajal, Director

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INTRODUCTION

On December 17, 2024, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board) approved a motion on *Keeping Pets and Families Together: Increasing Pet Equity in Housing*.¹ For many people, pets are more than companions—they are family. In Los Angeles County, one in four residents owns a dog or cat. During the COVID-19 pandemic, pet ownership rose alongside growing awareness of pets' positive impact on mental health.² The Los Angeles County Department of Animal Care and Control's (DACC) *Pets Are Family* program reflects this reality, offering support to help residents keep their pets during times of crisis.

Despite the emotional and mental health benefits, pet owners often face housing-related challenges that force them to surrender their animals. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2023–24, 19 percent of dogs in DACC shelters were euthanized—1,535 of them due to space and time constraints. Housing continues to be a leading cause of owner surrenders, especially for dogs over 25 pounds.³ Rental restrictions based on pet size or outright bans have contributed to shelter overcrowding and rising euthanasia rates.

This report explores solutions to help keep families and pets together by via the implementation of pet equity in housing protections. It examines the feasibility of amending the Rent Stabilization and Tenant Protections Ordinance (RSTPO) set forth in Chapter 8.52 of the Los Angeles County Code by incorporating pet equity in housing protections for rent-stabilized units in unincorporated areas (UIAs) of Los Angeles County, with the goal of reducing preventable surrenders, improving animal welfare, and supporting equitable access to pet companionship for tenants.

BACKGROUND

Families in Los Angeles County (County) come in all sizes, compositions, and structures, and for many households, a family unit often includes pets. A 2023 Pew Research study found that most Americans (63%) own a pet, including about a third (35%) that have more than one.⁴ This same study found that about half of pet owners (51%) not only consider their pets to be part of their family but say they are “*as much a part of their family as a human member*.”⁵ In the County, according to the Department of Public Health, about one in four County residents—which includes both tenants and homeowners—have a pet. As such, pets are increasingly seen as family members and the number of pet owners looking to find housing that accommodates their family has been growing in recent years. To underscore this trend, as recently as 2021, the National Realtors Association reported that 68 percent of their clients reported that the existence of a pet policy was important in their housing selection.

¹ https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/sop/1174768_121724.pdf

² <https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/198558.pdf>

³ <https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/198558.pdf>

⁴ <https://pewrsr.ch/3JPtwoR>

⁵ *ibid*

The County's RSTPO is a local law that applies to eligible properties in unincorporated Los Angeles County, limits annual rent increases (fully covered rent-stabilized units only), and enacts just-cause eviction protections, including anti-harassment and retaliation protections. Fully covered rental units covered by the RSTPO are both rent-restricted and subject to eviction protections, while partially covered rental units are only subject to eviction protections. Currently, there is no permanent requirement in place that landlords of rent-stabilized units must allow tenants to have a pet, although the County did adopt temporary eviction protections during the COVID-19 pandemic for tenants with unauthorized pets.⁶ While many landlords do allow pets and are pet-friendly, they do so at their discretion. However, the County did enact a Pet-Friendly Housing Ordinance in 2020 that entitled tenants of new or rehabilitated multi-family housing that are fully or partially funded by the County and/or the Los Angeles County Development Authority to have at least one pet.⁷ Despite this pet housing policy, a growing number of pets are being surrendered to shelters with the lack of accessible and affordable pet-friendly housing contributing to an increase in shelter populations and, tragically, in pets being surrendered due to housing. The DACC reported that in 2024 there were 1538 animals surrendered that were housing related. This was an increase from 2023 and 2022, when 1188 and 1141 animals were housing-related surrenders, respectively.

Furthermore, recent federal immigration enforcement actions and natural disasters have not only impacted County residents, but also their pets. These events have had detrimental ramifications on both County tenants and the supply of housing. The Eaton and Palisades wildfires destroyed thousands of homes and led to an influx of stray and displaced pets.⁸ The Pasadena Humane Society reported receiving over 1,000 animals after the fires.⁹ Similarly, the immigration enforcement actions taken by the federal government have correlated with an uptick in pets being surrendered to shelters.¹⁰ In some cases, due to the nature of these enforcement actions, pets have been left abandoned.¹¹ Together, these events have disrupted housing stability for both County residents and their pets, resulting in an increased demand for pet-friendly housing.

Despite these recent distressing and unprecedented events, County residents continue to have a high rate of pet ownership, recognizing the mutual benefits for owners and their pets. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has found that pet ownership positively impacts overall well-being and may contribute to some of the social determinants of health.¹² It should be noted that current federal policies recognize the benefit of pets, particularly for vulnerable populations. For example, federal law requires landlords to accommodate service animals for residents with disabilities.¹³ In California, housing

⁶ <https://dcba.lacounty.gov/noevictions/>

⁷ <https://animalcare.lacounty.gov/information-on-pet-friendly-housing-in-the-unincorporated-areas-of-los-angeles-county/>

⁸ <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2025-01-16/mapping-los-angeles-damage-from-the-eaton-and-palisades-fires-altadena-pasadena>

⁹ <https://abcnews.go.com/US/hundreds-displaced-pets-find-refuge-after-displaced-la/story>

¹⁰ <https://www.latimes.com/environment/story/2025-07-12/ice-raids-deported-los-angeles-cats-and-dogs-left-behind>

¹¹ <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2025-07-16/dog-caught-up-in-ice-raid-owner-deported-is-found>

¹² <https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2018/02/power-pets>

¹³ <https://www.ada.gov/resources/service-animals-2010-requirements/>

policy also permits the use of emotional support animals under similar accommodations.¹⁴ These policies acknowledge the critical role that pets play in supporting health, stability, and quality of life of their owners.

DCBA RESEARCH, ENGAGEMENT, AND KEY FINDINGS

Throughout its research, DCBA identified various benefits, needs, and challenges anticipated by stakeholders should the County adopt revisions to Chapter 8.52 of the County Code to incorporate pet equity within existing housing protections for tenants. DCBA actively engaged stakeholders through a series of targeted stakeholder sessions and an online survey. Several recurring themes emerged from these engagements, along with insights that will be important for the County to consider in the development of an ordinance. Additionally, DCBA conducted interviews with subject matter experts to obtain expert guidance on topics and feedback identified by stakeholders during the sessions. Lastly, DCBA conducted a comparative analysis of pet policies, both nationally and locally, to best understand how to implement potential County pet equity in housing protections.

To complement the research outlined above, DCBA conducted an internal assessment of the operations of its Housing and Tenant Protections Bureau (Bureau), resulting in key findings regarding the potential impact of new pet equity protections on existing practices. Through this internal assessment, DCBA determined that the adoption of pet equity in housing protections for tenants would necessitate a redesign of operations and procedures, increase staffing needs, and would conflict with the schedule of other Bureau demands and projects due to its limited resources. This assessment also highlighted the need for organizational development that includes addressing staffing, resources, and operational processes because of the expanded scope of work for the Bureau, should these revisions to the ordinance be adopted.

Lastly, DCBA staff explored potential strategies to establish a framework and series of recommendations regarding a revision to the RSTPO to incorporate pet equity in housing protections. This framework considered the financial implications for tenants, the advancement of animal welfare, the economic stability for landlords, and the overall well-being of both pets and people. These values and goals allowed staff to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the policy options for a potential ordinance.

Pet Ownership Impact on Well-Being

A large body of academic research supports the positive impact of pet ownership on human well-being. Peer reviewed studies published in the National Center of Biotechnology Information (NCBI) have shown that pets can help reduce stress, anxiety, and depression by lowering cortisol levels and increasing serotonin and dopamine. For example, one study found that individuals who owned pets experienced lower blood

¹⁴ https://calcivilrights.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/32/2022/12/Emotional-Support-Animals-and-Fair-Housing-Law-FAQ_ENG.pdf

pressure and heart rates during stressful situations.¹⁵ The companionship provided by pets can also help combat loneliness and social isolation, while the routine of caring for an animal can give structure and a sense of purpose.¹⁶ The positive impacts of pets are consistent with addressing various social determinants of health.¹⁷ In fact, research shows that healthcare professionals find that pets have a positive impact on their patients and provide opportunities to better understand their patients' needs and overall well-being.¹⁸ These benefits are particularly pronounced for a variety of vulnerable populations, including older adults, veterans, domestic violence survivors, and people with disabilities.

Older Adults

Older adults benefit significantly from pet ownership, particularly when it comes to reducing loneliness and isolation. Recent estimates indicate that pet ownership rates tend to peak in midlife, with nearly 70 percent of Americans aged 50–59 owning a pet. The rate of pet ownership slightly declined with age, dropping to around 60 percent for those aged 60–69, and falling below 50 percent for those aged 70 and older.¹⁹ While older adults are more likely to report higher levels of loneliness and isolation, those who own pets consistently report lower levels of both.²⁰

Veterans

Veterans, especially those with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), often benefit greatly from the companionship of a service or emotional support animal. These animals can be trained to perform specific tasks that mitigate PTSD symptoms, such as interrupting panic attacks or providing a sense of security to reduce hypervigilance. A study found that veterans with service dogs exhibited lower overall symptoms of PTSD, reduced levels of depression, and higher levels of life satisfaction compared to those on a waiting list for a service dog.²¹ However, access to stable housing can be a challenge when pet ownership becomes a barrier to placement. According to the Department of Veterans and Military Affairs, many veterans' experiencing homelessness are unlikely to accept housing unless they are allowed to keep their pets. This insight is especially important given that the County has the largest veteran population of any county in the nation.²²

¹⁵ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/11641292/>

¹⁶ Kretzler, Benedikt et al. "Pet ownership, loneliness, and social isolation: a systematic review." *Social psychiatry and psychiatric epidemiology* vol. 57,10 (2022): 1935-1957. doi:10.1007/s00127-022-02332-9

¹⁷ https://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-025-23464-y?utm_source=chatgpt.com

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ Applebaum, J. W., Peek, C. W., & Zsembik, B. A. (2020). Examining U.S. pet ownership using the General Social Survey. *The Social Science Journal*, 60(1), 110–119. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03623319.2020.1728507>

²⁰ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1744388120311737>

²¹ <https://www.avma.org/javma-news/2018-04-01/study-service-dogs-associated-less-intense-ptsd-symptoms>

²² https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/dmh/1125670_2021-VPAN-Annual-report_Final.pdf

Domestic Violence Survivors

Survivors of domestic violence who own pets often report that their pets are subjected to animal abuse.²³ This causes distress for survivors as they consider leaving intimate partner violence because they are often unable to take their pets into housing with them. To underscore the connection that survivors have with their pets, 55 percent stated that they consider their pets as family. These pets provide support for survivors who often will not pursue housing if they are required to abandon their pets. Data from the DCBA American Rescue Plan Act Small Dollar Grants for Domestic Violence Survivors (Empower_U) program showed that 89 percent of program participants sought assistance with short-term and long-term housing. This data highlights the challenge of housing and how it is further challenged by pet ownership. These survivors largely benefit from the emotional support their pets provide and assist them in recovering from the intimate partner violence they experienced.

People with Disabilities

While people with disabilities are entitled to housing accommodations for service or emotional support animals, many also benefit from simple pet ownership, even when the pet is not formally trained or covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act and/or Fair Housing Act. The simple act of owning a pet can help alleviate anxiety, stress or loneliness. This is especially true for children with disabilities or special needs who often respond positively to the presence of animals.²⁴ In fact, pet therapy is a widely recognized approach to reduce anxiety in children with disabilities or special needs.²⁵ However, despite these benefits, people with disabilities—both adult and children—often face difficulties finding pet-friendly housing, which limits their ability to live in an environment that fully supports their emotional and psychological well-being.

Public Safety

Pets positively impact on their owners but also increase safety in the broader community. A recent study from Ohio State University found that communities with a higher density of dogs were correlated with lower crime rates.²⁶ Research from Ohio State University determined that neighborhoods with a higher density of dogs have lower violent crime rates and property crime rates than those lower density of dogs.²⁷ Similarly, a study of the City of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, showed that property crimes were lower in areas with

²³ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1359178916302002>

²⁴ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1744388122000421>

²⁵ *ibid*

²⁶ Nicolo P Pinchak, Christopher R Browning, Bethany Boettner, Catherine A Calder, Jake Tarrence, Paws on the Street: Neighborhood-Level Concentration of Households with Dogs and Urban Crime, *Social Forces*, Volume 101, Issue 4, April 2023, Pages 1888–1917, <https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/soac059>

²⁷ *ibid*

higher numbers of licensed dogs.²⁸ The National Police Association has also highlighted these findings as consistent with the real-world experiences of law enforcement officers.²⁹

These case studies demonstrate that pets play a meaningful role in supporting individual and community well-being. From mental health to public safety, pet ownership intersects with key social determinants of health, particularly with vulnerable populations. This reinforces the necessity for policies that expand access to pet-friendly housing.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

DCBA conducted a series of stakeholder engagement sessions to collect input from key groups that would be impacted by the implementation of pet equity in housing protections. A total of seven virtual stakeholder engagement sessions were held, including three sessions for landlords and landlord advocates, three sessions for tenants and tenant advocates, and one session for relevant animal welfare community-based organizations (CBO). To ensure accessibility and inclusivity, language access was implemented in Mandarin and Spanish during stakeholder engagement sessions. Marketing materials were translated and one session each for tenants and landlords included live interpretation in both languages. A schedule of the stakeholder sessions can be found in the table below (Table 1). These sessions received a total of 1,121 registration page visitors, 106 registrations, and 64 attendees. The stakeholder sessions included representation and attendance from various organizations including Michelson Found Animals Foundation, Heart LA, Apartment Association of Greater Los Angeles (AAGLA), California Apartment Association, Marina del Rey Lessees Association, and American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, to name a few.

Table 1: Overview of Stakeholder Session Schedule and Participation

Session	Stakeholder Group	Date	Time	Languages	Attendance
1	Landlords	May 22, 2025	6:00pm	English	24
2	Renters	May 27, 2025	6:00pm	English	7
3	CBOs	May 29, 2025	11:00am	English	9
4	Landlords	June 9, 2025	11:00am	English, Spanish	11
5	Renters	June 11, 2025	11:00am	English, Spanish	0
6	Renters	June 16, 2025	3:00pm	English, Mandarin	7
7	Landlords	June 17, 2025	3:00pm	English, Mandarin	6

Furthermore, to obtain additional stakeholder feedback, DCBA conducted an online survey for stakeholders that was open for a four-week period, receiving a total of **659 responses**. These stakeholder engagements highlighted several recurring concerns: pet inclusive housing availability, insurance costs, building facilities, and housing affordability. The data also provided data-driven insights that can inform the development of revisions to the RSTPO to incorporate a pet equity in housing framework.

²⁸ Grooms, Wes, and DJ Biddle. "Dogs and Crime: Reduced Rates of Property Crime in Homes with Dogs in Milwaukee, wi". *Society & Animals* 26.1 (2018): 34-53. <https://doi.org/10.1163/15685306-12341465> Web.

²⁹ <https://nationalpolice.org/canines-in-communities-have-a-direct-effect-on-crime-reduction/>

Pet Inclusive Housing Availability

During the stakeholder engagement sessions, both tenants and tenant advocate groups raised concerns regarding the limited availability of housing that accommodates pets without any restrictions and that do not impose high pet rents. Pet owners shared that many sought out housing options that would accommodate their pets. Many of these stakeholders expressed that the need to keep their pets housed with them was essential. A participant stated, “I’m heartbroken since I’m in an unincorporated area and I cannot have a dog” during a stakeholder engagement session.³⁰ A survey provided by the Michelson Found Animals Foundation found that 5.8 percent of properties in the County were pet inclusive, meaning they allowed pets without restrictions and did not require fees.³¹ However, this same survey found that 67.5 percent of properties were pet-friendly, meaning they accommodate pets to some degree with restrictions and/or additional fees.³²

This survey highlights that, despite a majority of properties offering pet-friendly housing, there are still barriers and challenges for tenants wishing to take advantage of these market offerings. Additionally, these barriers and challenges that tenants highlighted may correlate with the County having a lower rate of pet ownership (~25%) than the national average (~63%).³³

Insurance Costs

Landlords and landlord advocates expressed concerns regarding the impact that a requirement to allow pets may have on a landlord’s ability to obtain and retain homeowners’ insurance and the associated affordability challenges. The rise in insurance costs over the past five years was a recurring concern raised during the stakeholder engagement sessions and via survey responses. Of the total responses, 79 (~12%) specifically raised concerns about insurance costs that may be associated with a requirement to allow pets on a rental property.³⁴ These concerns are particularly acute given broader trends in the insurance market, where costs have already been rising rapidly and available coverage has been shrinking for all property types.³⁵

³⁰ Stakeholder Session Conducted by DCBA Staff June 16, 2025.

³¹ <https://www.petsandhousing.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Pet-Friendly-vs-Pet-Inclusive-8.5x11in.pdf>

³² <https://www.foundanimals.org/>

³³ <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2023/07/07/about-half-us-of-pet-owners-say-their-pets-are-as-much-a-part-of-their-family-as-a-human-member/>; <https://laist.com/brief/news/housing-homelessness/los-angeles-county-renter-pet-protections-board-of-supervisors-vote-tenant-landlord-housing>

³⁴ <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/PCU9241269241262>

³⁵ <https://www.minneapolisfed.org/article/2024/homeowners-insurance-costs-are-growing-fast-but-coverage-is-shrinking>

DCBA found that pet owners are primarily held responsible for their pets' actions and only in rare cases may property owners be held liable.³⁶ While DCBA could not conclusively determine through its research whether ownership of pets or the presence of specific pet breeds significantly impact insurance policy prices, it did identify two primary contributors to the overall rise in insurance costs: increased risk of natural disasters and inflation-driven construction expenses.

First the number of natural disasters exceeding losses of one billion dollars nationally has increased over the last five years.³⁷ As a result, more property owners, including landlords, have been forced to purchase Fair Access to Insurance Requirements plans. These state-backed “insurers of last resort” are designed to provide coverage when private insurers are unwilling or unable to provide profitable plans in high-risk areas.³⁸

Second, inflation has sharply driven up the costs of building materials. The National Association of Home Builders found that the costs of building materials increased at a far faster rate between 2020 and 2024 than they did over the four-year period between 2016 and 2020.³⁹ The increasing costs of building materials, like drywall, concrete, and steel, have increased from 33 percent to 77 percent during the last four years.⁴⁰ These factors highlight a challenge for both landlords in terms of insurance costs, but also tenants who may see increases to their rent in response to rising insurance prices. The California Department of Insurance shared during a discussion with DCBA staff that despite these challenges, there were options in the insurance market for landlords to procure differences in conditions policies that allow for additional coverage for items such as pets in the event their current provider did not cover them.⁴¹

Building Facilities Capacity and Damages

During stakeholder engagement sessions, both landlords and landlord advocates, expressed the need for financial assistance to help them accommodate pets for their tenants. They noted that rental properties covered by the RSTPO are subjected to limitations on the amount they may charge and increase rent on an annual basis and increased demands on their properties could not be accounted for without additional cost recovery mechanisms, such as charging pet rent. Landlords and landlord advocates also shared that many landlords would need to upgrade their current facilities to accommodate pets in communal and shared spaces. For example, an upgrade could include creating or retrofitting an outdoor space for pet walking use. Landlord advocates expressed interest in the County both allowing the implementation of pet rents and creating programs to foster pet friendly buildings.⁴²

³⁶ <https://www.animallaw.info/article/detailed-discussion-landowner-and-landlord-liability-dangerous-animals>

³⁷ <https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/access/billions/state-summary/US>

³⁸ <https://www.jchs.harvard.edu/blog/insurance-crisis-continues-weigh-homeowners>

³⁹ <https://www.nahb.org/blog/2024/07/how-soaring-prices-building-materials-impact-housing>

⁴⁰ *ibid*

⁴¹ <https://www.cfpnet.com/difference-in-conditions-dic/>

⁴² <https://members.aagla.org/news/news-alert-la-county-considers-pet-ordinance-and-posts-survey>

Additionally, landlord and landlord advocates believe that potential damage caused by allowing pets may be significant in rental properties. They indicated that their facilities would be subjected to more “wear and tear” than would be expected normally due to an increased number of pets or allowing pets if they had not done so before. They also expressed concern about the need to be better equipped for a potential influx of animals on their properties.

A 2021 *Pet-Inclusive Housing Report* by the Michelson Found Animals Foundation found when damages occur, including damage not caused by pets, a plurality of renters pay for the repairs directly. Specifically, 45 percent of renters cover the damages themselves, 27 percent pay the property manager to handle the repairs, and 28 percent have the costs deducted from their security deposits.⁴³ Furthermore, the report’s key survey found that the average damage cost (including all types of damages)—as reported by tenants—was \$289 for tenants who own pets, compared to \$139 for those who do not.⁴⁴

Housing Affordability

Tenants and tenant advocates expressed the need for the County to place limitations on pet rent (pet rent caps), and many stakeholders shared challenges high pet rents pose to the affordability of housing. Survey results showed that most tenants would support the elimination of pet rents altogether. Tenants expressed feedback that housing costs were already high and having the ability to house a pet in their rental unit should be included. This sentiment of high costs related to renting is consistent with a 2021 study from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) which found that over half of all County renters are considered “rent burdened.”⁴⁵ The 2021 UCLA study found that among all individuals in the County living in a rented home, 26 percent experienced a moderate housing cost burden, defined as spending more than 30 percent but below 50 percent of their household income on rent and utilities. An additional 28 percent of renters experienced a severe housing cost burden, spending 50 percent or more of the household income on rent and utilities.⁴⁶

Stakeholder Surveys and Data

Data collected from the DCBA Pet Equity in Housing Survey (survey) illuminated differences in preferences amongst landlords, property managers, tenants, housing advocates, and animal advocates. The data reinforced sentiments expressed during the virtual stakeholder engagement sessions. DCBA staff were able to obtain data on preferences for weight restrictions, pet rent, and pet allowances per rental unit. The survey questions and text are shown in detail in Appendix A.

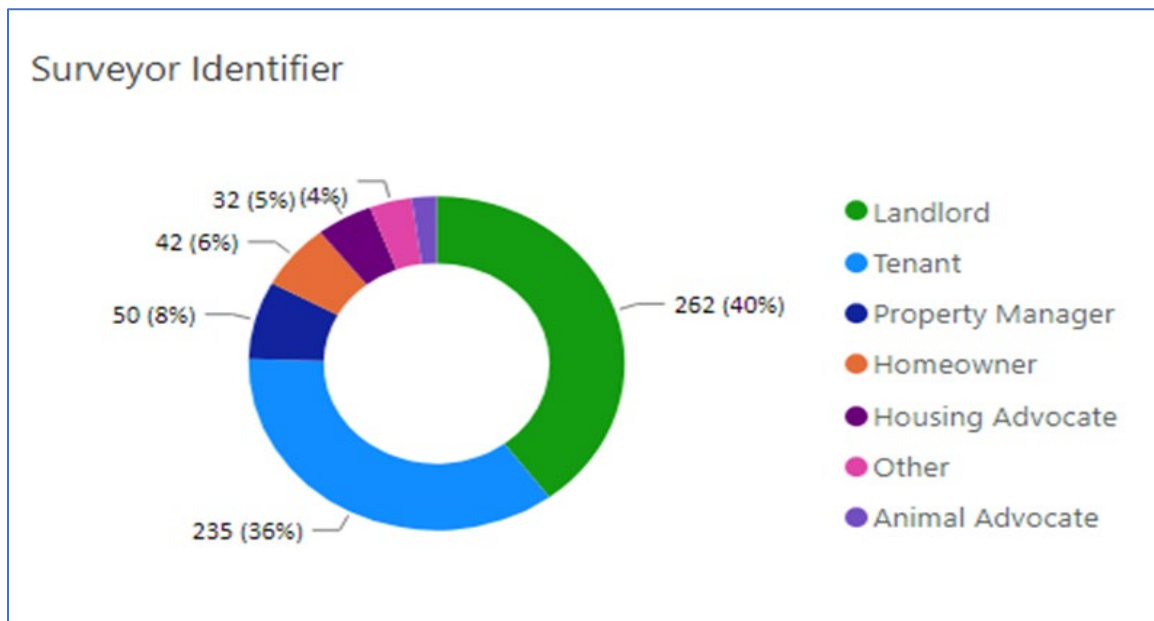
⁴³ <https://www.petsandhousing.org/2021-pet-inclusive-housing-report/>

⁴⁴ *ibid*

⁴⁵ <https://latinodatahub.org/#/research/facts-about-latino-renters-in-los-angeles-county>

⁴⁶ *ibid*

Figure 1: Overview of Survey Respondents Demographics



As illustrated above in Figure 1, survey respondents included tenants, landlords, property managers, housing advocates, and animal advocates. Most survey respondents identified as either landlord (40%) or tenant (36%) and these two groups together accounted for three out of four responses.

Figure 2: Overview of Survey Respondents Common Household Pet Amount Preferences Totals

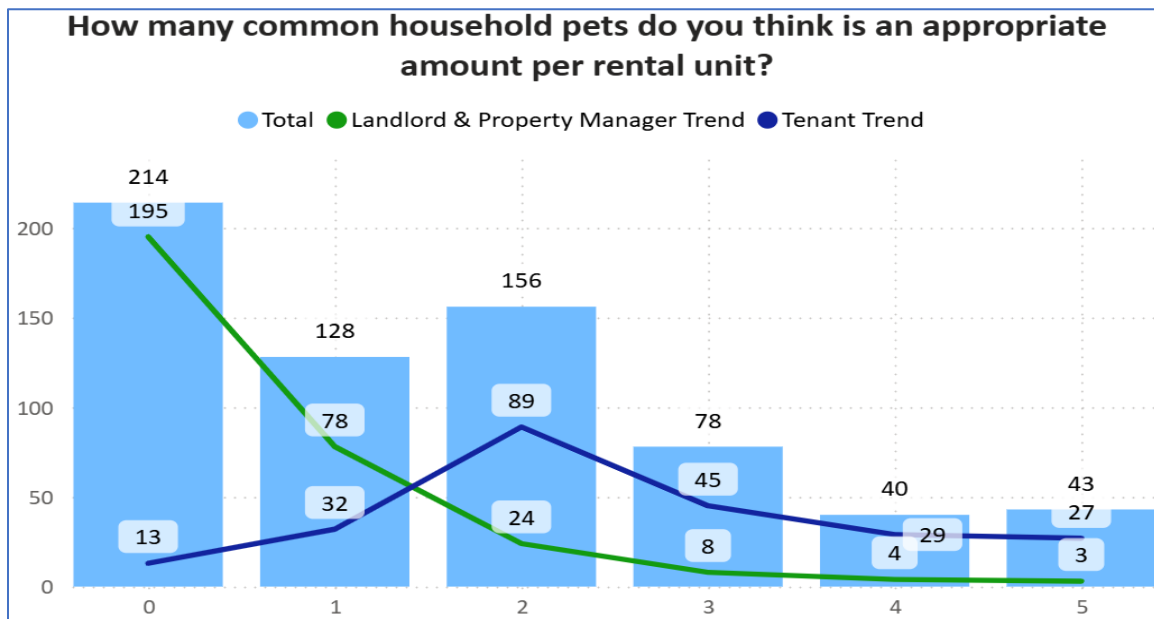
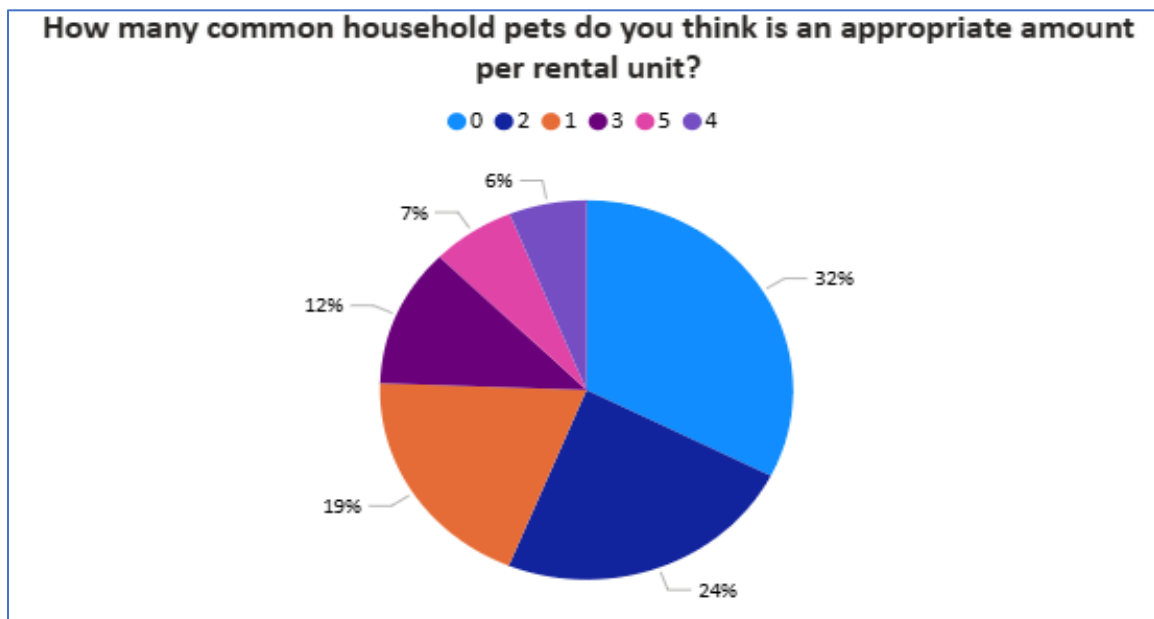


Figure 3: Overview of Survey Respondents Common Household Pet Amount Preference Percentages



On the question of the appropriate number of pets per rental unit, most respondents (68%) supported at least one pet (based on the aggregate number of responses) as shown in Figure 3 above. However, the data also showed a divergence in preferences between tenants and landlords and property managers as visualized in Figure 2 above. Tenants tended to support allowing at least two pets. In contrast, landlord and property managers tended to support no pets.

Figure 4: Overview of Survey Respondents Pet Rent Amount Preferences Totals

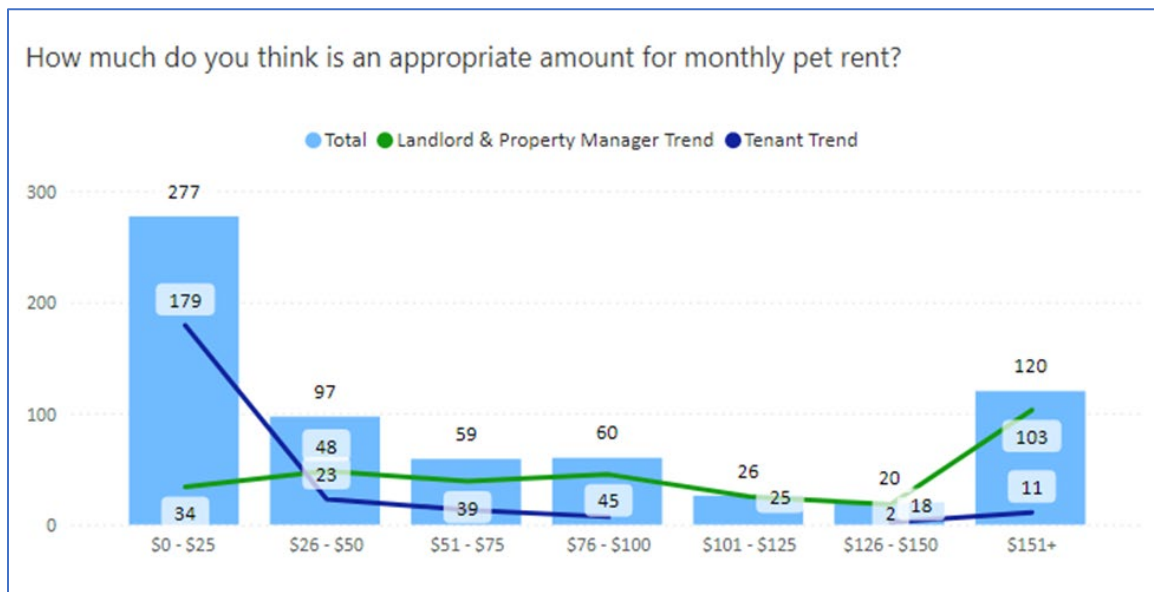
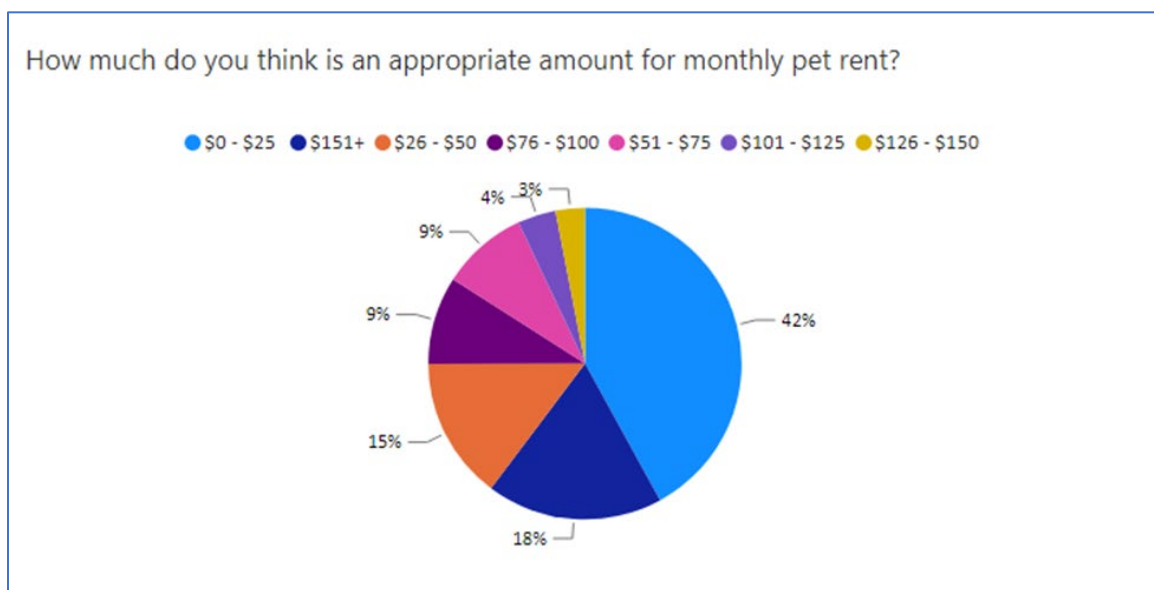


Figure 5: Overview of Survey Respondents Pet Rent Amount Preferences Percentage



On the question of an appropriate monthly pet rent, 42 percent of respondents supported limiting the charge to no more than \$25 per month (Figure 5). However, tenant and landlord/property managers views diverged sharply: about 65 percent of those favoring a \$25 cap were tenants, while most of those supporting rents of \$151 or more (with no upper limit) were landlords and property managers (Figure 4).

Figure 6: Overview of Survey Respondents Pet Weight Limit Preferences Totals

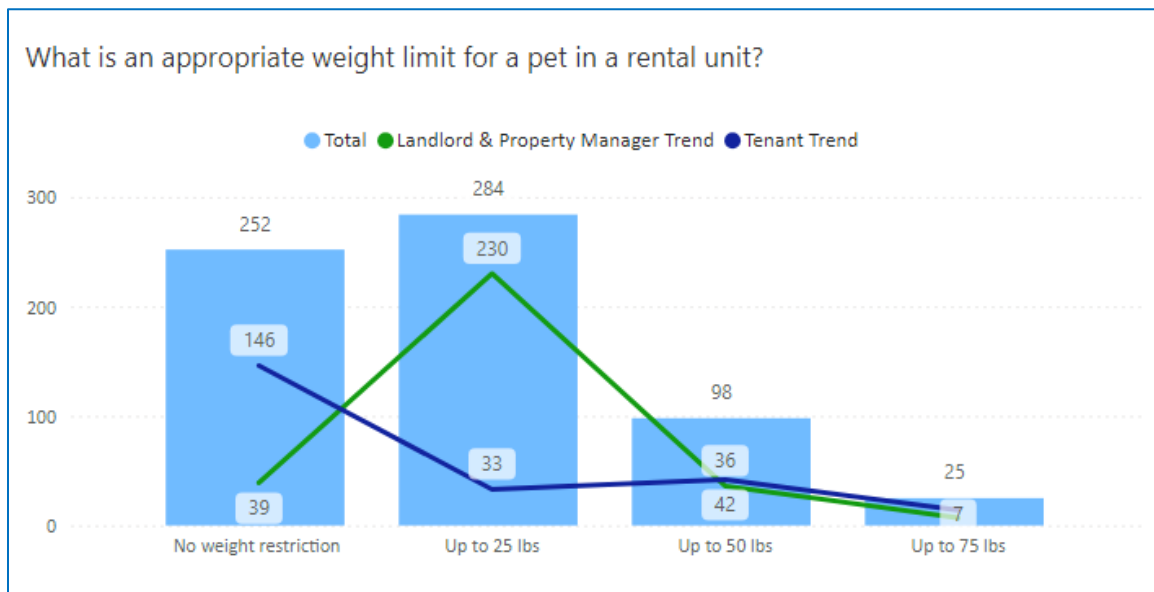
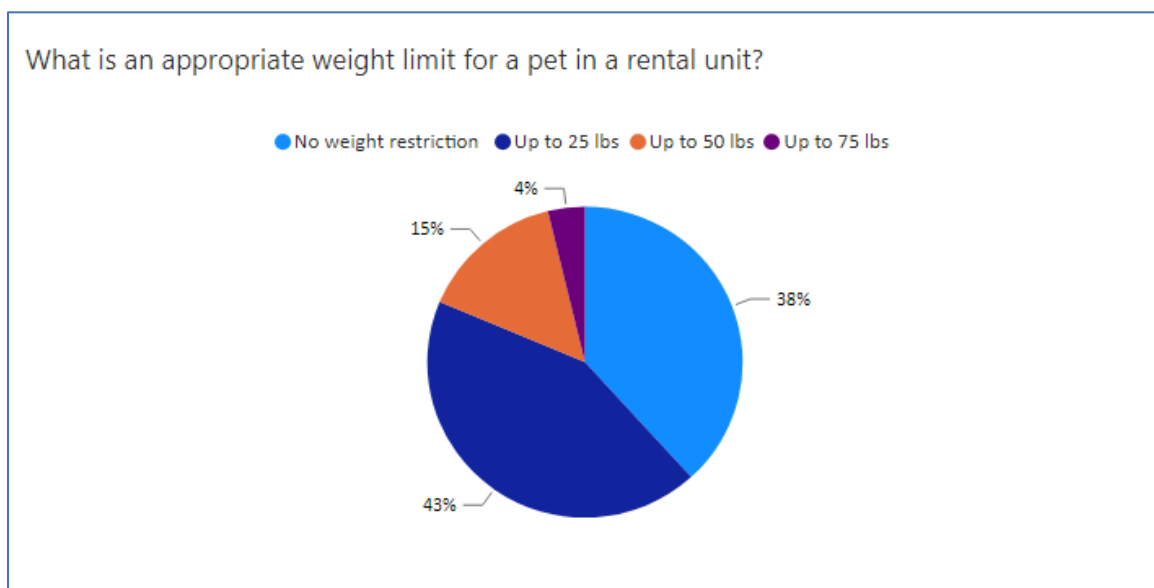


Figure 7: Overview of Survey Respondents Pet Weight Limit Preferences Percentages



On the question of the appropriate weight limit for a pet in a rental unit, 81 percent of respondents either favored no weight restriction or the most restrictive option, limiting pets to 25 pounds (Figure 6). Among those supporting no weight restriction, about 58 percent were tenants (Figure 5). In contrast, roughly 81 percent of those who responded in favor of the most restrictive option of up to 25 pounds were landlords and property managers (Figure 5).

Overall, these findings aligned with the testimonies shared by participants during the virtual stakeholder engagement session. Tenants generally supported a policy that enabled them to have pets with little restrictions and minimal costs. Landlords generally supported a policy that allowed them to recover costs and limit potential pet related property damage.

COMPARATIVE POLICY ANALYSIS

DCBA conducted research and a comparative analysis of national and local policies regarding pet equity in housing and found three jurisdictions that would serve as useful case studies that can inform the development of a similar policy in the County. The State of Colorado, Washington, D.C., and the City of West Hollywood have implemented pet equity in housing ordinances requiring landlords to accommodate tenants' pets to varying degrees. All three jurisdictions set parameters on weight and the financial costs while defining the minimum number of allowable household pets per rental unit.

The following table provides an overview of the policies from these three jurisdictions.

Table 2: Overview of Other Jurisdictions Pet Policy

<i>Jurisdiction</i>	<i>Date Policy Enacted</i>	<i>Pet Requirement</i>	<i>Pet Rent Cap</i>	<i>Pet Weight Restriction</i>
<i>State of Colorado</i> ⁴⁷	1/1/2024	Allows one pet per rental unit	1.5 percent of the monthly rent	No restrictions on weight
<i>Washington, D.C.</i> ⁴⁸	3/21/2025	Allows one pet per rental unit	1.0 percent of the monthly rent	No restrictions on weight but does allow for landlords to impose additional requirements on restricted breeds
<i>City of West Hollywood</i> ⁴⁹	3/24/2022	Allows one pet per rental unit; tenants who are 62+, disabled, or are living with HIV/AIDS are allowed two pets per rental unit	No cap on pet rent	No more than 35 pounds

⁴⁷ <https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb23-1068>

⁴⁸ <https://code.dccouncil.gov/us/dc/council/laws/25-308>

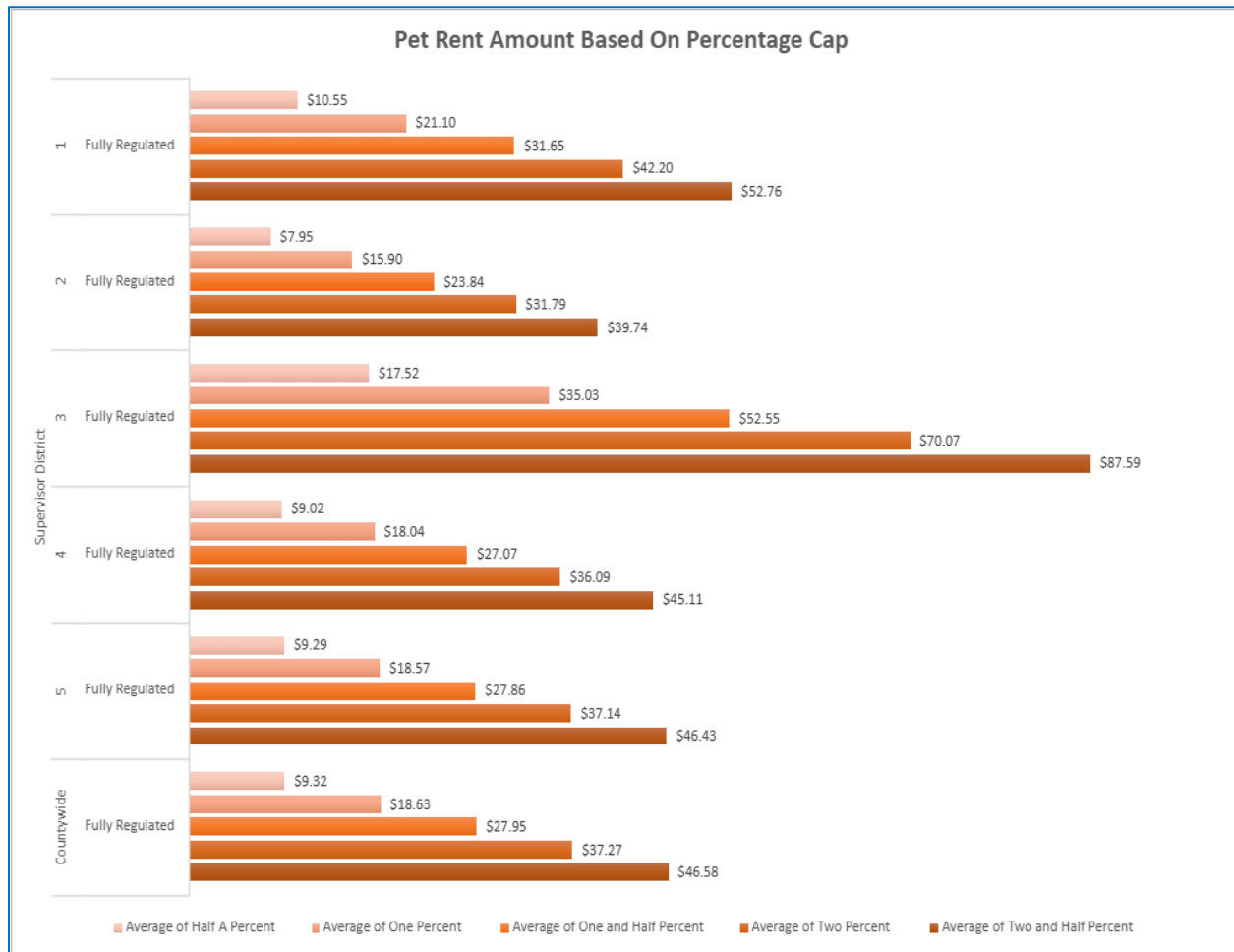
⁴⁹ <https://ecode360.com/43912251>

Each of the local and state policies mentioned above mandate that tenants be allowed at least one pet per rental unit. Additionally, two out of three jurisdictions impose a cap on pet rent, while two out of the three eliminate any weight restrictions on pets. These measures are intended to facilitate pet ownership for tenants living in covered units, ensuring that the costs associated with pet ownership are not excessive and that all pets, regardless of size, can be housed. A potential UIA pet equity in housing protection policy could adopt this framework as a best practice.

Additionally, DCBA attempted to assess the impact of these policies on addressing pet equity in housing within the jurisdictions in which they were adopted, but due to these policies being recently implemented data was unavailable or inconclusive. Currently, there is insufficient data and research on these policies to correlate any long-term impacts to these new protections.

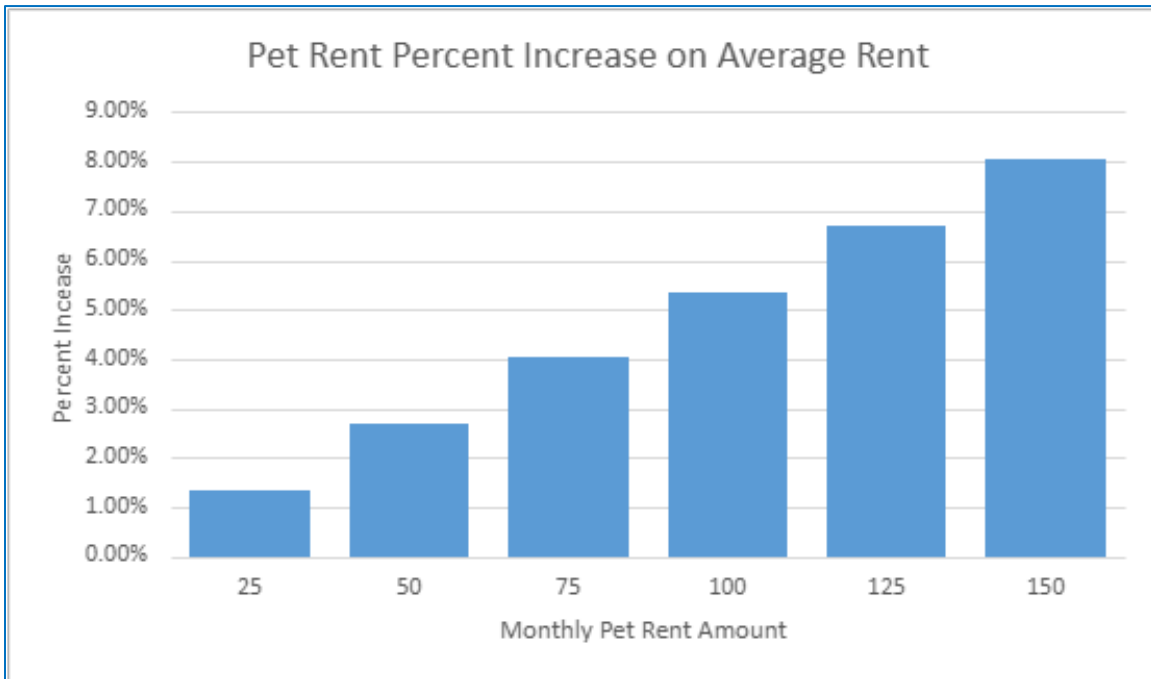
To assess potential impact of incorporating pet equity in housing revisions to the RSTPO and evaluate the various policy options, DCBA utilized data from the County's Rent Registry to estimate the potential pet rent caps based on a percentage (.5%, 1%, 1.5%, 2%, and 2.5%) of the total average monthly rent (\$1,863.36) for fully regulated rental units in the UIAs. Figure 8 below highlights these estimates for fully regulated rental units broken down by Supervisorial District and Countywide (UIAs only). The Countywide projected pet rent caps range from \$9.32 per month (0.5% cap) to \$46.58 per month (2.5% cap).

Figure 8: Pet Rent Amount Based on Percentages for Fully Regulated Units both Countywide and by Supervisorial District



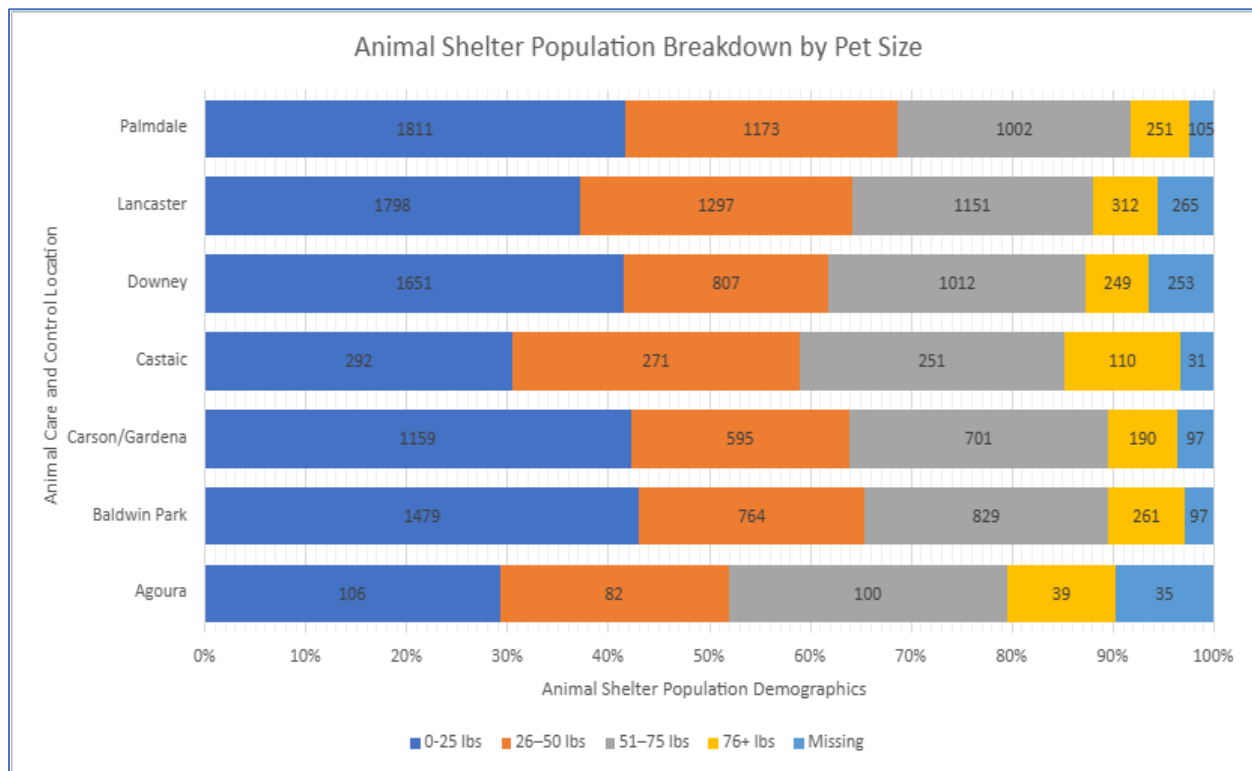
To contrast, if the County were to implement an alternative pet rent model that used set monthly pet rent caps instead of percentage-based caps, set monthly caps would lead to potentially higher increases when compared to percentage-based caps. By applying set pet rent caps to the same average rent for rent stabilized units, DCBA staff calculated the equivalent percentage rent increases (Figure 9). This model for fixed amount caps results in higher percent increases than leveraging a model that uses a percent of rent to determine the pricing of pet rent.

Figure 9: Estimate of Percent Rent Increase Due to a Set Pet Rent Amount



As part of its analysis of revising the current ordinance to add pet equity in housing, DCBA tried to gauge the potential effects of implementing pet weight on the number of sheltered animals in the County. As such, DCBA collected data from the Department of Animal Care and Control (DACC) on the population demographics of pets available at each of the County's shelter sites. This data was broken down by the categories DACC uses to track their standard animal size classifications: small (0-25 lb), medium (26-50 lb), large (51-75 lb) and extra-large (76+ lb). DCBA conducted an analysis on the DACC data that showed that weight restrictions would significantly affect the proportion of pets eligible for adoption by renters living in units covered by a pet equity in housing ordinance (Figure 10). For example, a weight restriction of up to 25 pounds would make less than 50 percent of the pets at each shelter eligible to be housed. In contrast, without a weight restriction, all animals in the shelter would become eligible to be housed. To ensure a majority of the animal population at each shelter location is eligible to be housed, a weight restriction of up to 50 pounds would be necessary.

Figure 10: Animal Shelter Intake Population Breakdown by Pet Size for Each DACC Site Over a Year (2024)



City of Los Angeles

DCBA staff engaged City of Los Angeles (City) staff to obtain their perspective and seek potential alignment in the recommendations set forth in this report. The City's staff indicated that they do not currently have any policies in place related to pet equity but expressed that there was some interest internally in pursuing their own policy after they have an opportunity to see the results of the County's feasibility assessment. City Staff also expressed an interest in how the County determines their pet rent cap. They did not have a recommendation on what an appropriate amount could be, but they did express an interest in ensuring affordability when considering a set amount. Despite the City not having a pet equity in housing policy, they have implemented policies to address pet equity in housing during specific moments of heightened interest, such as their COVID-19 pet protections that allowed tenants to have pets during the national public health emergency.⁵⁰ These protections were made permanent for any pets that were subject to the COVID-19 protections but not for pets that were acquired after the temporary protections expired.⁵¹

⁵⁰ <https://housing.lacity.gov/highlights/renter-protections>

⁵¹ https://cityclerk.lacity.org/online/docs/2021/21-0042-S6_ord_188108_2-5-24.pdf

PET LICENSING REQUIREMENTS

DCBA assessed the impact of requiring that pets are licensed, as applicable, by DACC prior to the tenant initially moving in or within 30 days if pet is acquired by an existing tenant. The licensing of pets in UIA occurs on an annual basis for a fee with reduced fees available to seniors and people with disabilities. In consultation with DACC, DCBA found that the County's current policy of pet registration is sufficient and that implementing a tenant specific policy for pet licensing is not necessary. The County's current policy requires that pets be licensed either: 30 days after first acquiring a dog or cat; or 30 days after bringing the dog or cat into the DACC's jurisdiction.

PET POLICY RENTAL AGREEMENT PROVISION

In response to the Board's motion and directive to provide clearly written pet policy for use in residential lease and rental agreements should protections for pet equity in housing be adopted, DCBA staff have drafted a pet policy provision that must be provided by landlords in all residential lease and rental agreements, as well as in any verbal agreements with the tenant(s) with the following:

“The rental property is subject to the pet equity policy requirements outlined in Chapter [insert applicable chapter], which allows tenant(s) to have at least one common household pet. Additional requirements as specified in section [insert applicable section] of the County Code also apply.”

This written statement must be printed in at least 12-point boldface font and provided in the primary language of the tenant(s), translated at the landlord's expense.

OPERATIONAL IMPACT

DCBA assessed the impact a potential pet equity in housing ordinance revisions would have on the Housing and Tenant Protections Bureau, which implements and enforces several critical tenant protection programs in the County, particularly the RSTPO. Staff evaluated the impact as follows.

It is also important to note that the Housing and Tenant Protections Bureau is currently operating at or above capacity. The cumulative adoption of new tenant protections via amendments to existing ordinances and post-implementation assessments have required ongoing adaptation of workflows, systems, and staffing. Presently, the Bureau is in the process of evaluating its operational model that includes enforcement and compliance capacity, technology systems, and internal processes to identify gaps, strengths, and opportunities to realign and right size resources based on lessons learned to date. Adding new pet equity protections at this stage would increase workload and enforcement complexity while the system is undergoing stabilization to meet existing mandates. Without additional staffing and operational resources, the expanded enforcement scope could affect response times, statutory turnaround requirements, and service levels for tenants and landlords.

Operational Processes

Should protections for pet equity in housing be adopted, a thorough evaluation and amendment of the existing RSTPO (Chapter 8.52 of the County Code), including its procedures and guidelines, will be necessary to ensure alignment and effective implementation. Current processes, particularly those involving DCBA staff responsible for implementing and overseeing the RSTPO, will be significantly impacted. Staff anticipate a potential increase in property owners seeking to remove their rental properties from the rental market or requesting unit exceptions for owner occupied units, further decreasing inventory for tenants. Staff have noticed these trends in the past when new regulations or ordinances have been implemented. The potential amendments to the RSTPO may also have downstream effects on related initiatives, such as the Rent Registry Division, which will impose additional costs and require updates to the system to track reporting and application of the pet rent caps, including data gathering. These updates would be needed to adequately track implementation of potential needed amendments and are imposed requirements on landlords in the RSTPO. Additionally, there is likely to be a surge in applications from landlords for capital improvement and primary renovation pass-throughs, and tenant applications for adjustment, seeking reduced rent for invalid pet rent increases. When applications for capital improvement and renovations are approved for landlords, they can lead to tenants experiencing hardships due to financial constraints. Additionally, DCBA anticipates an increase in complaints related to harassment and retaliation violations from tenants for exercising their rights under the new protections, if adopted. Furthermore, DCBA manages the Tenant Protections Hotline that educates the public on their rights and responsibilities on the County's RSTPO and other housing-related policies and protections. Newly adopted protections may additionally burden a call center that is already at capacity with its existing programming.

Impacts to Net Operating Costs

DCBA has already identified a funding need to stabilize RSTPO administration and meet existing ordinance requirements. Adoption of pet equity protections would add to that cumulative obligation and require securing additional ongoing resources to support enforcement, compliance, and service delivery. DCBA anticipates increased costs associated with hiring additional staff, purchasing materials and resources, and enhancing services and departmental databases. Should pet equity in housing protections be adopted, DCBA estimates an aggregate need for \$382,600 in funding for four additional Enforcement staff and related operational expenses. DCBA does not currently have the funds to absorb these costs. In addition to one-time implementation expenses, DCBA will need to potentially undergo a fee study and evaluate adjustments to rent registration fees to support ongoing workload.

Limited Resources & Competing Enforcement Timelines

Time-bound obligations to enforce existing DCBA administered tenant protection ordinances present further challenges and conflicts that need to be considered. Enforcement timelines dictated by the RSTPO and its guidelines must still be met, even as a new amendment to the existing chapter could disrupt current service and program delivery schedules. Concurrently, the implementation of the recently adopted Maximum Indoor Temperature Threshold Ordinance, LA County Rent Registry, and the anticipated Fair Chance Tenant Screening Ordinance will demand substantial attention and DCBA staff resources, risking further straining resources that would be needed for the effective implementation of the amended RSTPO to support pet equity in housing protections.

Staff Development and Capacity

To prepare the organization for this expanded scope of work, targeted staff training will be essential. This includes education on policies governing service animals and emotional support animals and the application of housing accommodations. A formal partnership with DACC will likely be necessary to support DCBA operational needs and potential field enforcement duties may warrant specialized code enforcement training for DCBA staff.

This cumulative workload highlights a critical need to reassess staffing capacity and levels to match the expanded service, and impacts to the Counseling, Enforcement and Rent Registry Divisions within the Rent Stabilization Program (RSP). The RSP is managing sustained high volume of inquiries and caseload, with resolution times impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, Emergency Tenant Protections following the 2025 Windstorm and Wildfires and peak rent registration inquiries and calls. As resident demand grows and external inquiries from surrounding jurisdictions increase due to likely interest in adopting their own pet equity in housing ordinances, expanding the RSP team and redefining roles will be crucial to meeting the potential ordinance's demands and maintaining service quality. New positions will be needed for Counseling Division to address public inquiries received through the divisions various public facing platforms, Enforcement Division to investigate alleged violations of the RSTPO and Rent Registry Division to assist landlords to submit rent registration annually and navigate through new system changes, should new protections be adopted.

STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

Through its research and assessment of County operations and engagement of community-based organizations, industry leaders, and stakeholders, DCBA identified a set of pillars necessary to develop and implement successful pet equity in housing protections. The following strategies, synthesized from the research and analysis outlined in the preceding sections of this report, are being highlighted as key considerations for framing potential amendments to the RSTPO.

Building Well-Being and Supporting Resiliency

As mentioned earlier in this report, studies conducted by a variety of entities and institutions have shown that pets improve the well-being of their owners, and their communities. The County should take this into consideration when determining the value of mandating the allowance of pets in rental units that would be covered through pet equity in housing protections. In facilitating pet ownership in the unincorporated areas, the County would help individuals and communities build general physical well-being, emotional resilience, and would help limit social isolation and reduce anxiety.

Enhancing Animal Welfare

In recent months the region has experienced several events that have increased the number of animals in shelters for adoption in the County. There has also been a growing number of pets being euthanized because of low rates of adoption and population management of shelters.⁵² Data provided to DCBA by DACC showed that there are currently (as of the date of this report) over 1,119 animals across all County shelters available for adoption and in need of permanent homes. To maximize animal welfare and housing for the current population in County shelters, size restrictions included as part of a pet equity in housing ordinance revision should facilitate the housing of a large proportion of pets. Most of the animal shelter population is categorized as either small or medium in size (0 - 50 lb), but to achieve a higher threshold (over 75%) of eligibility for adoption and housing by tenants that would be covered by pet equity in housing protections, large size animals would need to be included in that grouping (Figure 7).

Advancing Equity in Housing

Rental affordability is a concern for many tenants who want to house their pets. The inclusion of a pet rent cap in a proposed pet equity revision to the RSTPO would be essential to avoid individuals being priced out of the rental market should they want to own a pet. A potential pet rent cap should take into consideration what would be considered reasonable pet rent for tenants living in the UIAs of the County. A study conducted by HR&A Advisors in March of 2024—related to rental increase limits in the UIA—found that a significant number of tenants living in fully regulated rent stabilized units in the UIAs of the County are rent burdened.⁵³ This study found that a potential annual rent increase of greater than one percent—which could be analogous to the implementation of percentage-based pet rents—would lead to an increased rent burden for the typical UIA tenant living in a typical fully regulated rental unit if wages do not go up by a commensurate amount (see Figure 11). Thus, a proposed pet rent cap would only be able to advance equitable access to pet ownership for lower income renter households if it aligns with the findings in the cost formula for affordable annual rent increases to rent stabilized units outlined by HR&A in their study.

⁵² <https://ktla.com/news/local-news/los-angeles-county-animal-shelters-in-crisis-from-overcrowding/>

⁵³ https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/bc/1157515_BM_PiAB_RentStabilization_PhaseII_final_.pdf

Figure 11: HR&A Advisors Study on Impact of Annual Rent Increases on Percentage of Income Spent on Rent

Figure 6. Percent of Income Spent on Rent after 10 Years for Median-Income Renter Household in Median-Rent Fully Regulated Unit

Annual Income Growth	Annual Rent Increase								
	0%	1%	2%	3%	4%	5%	6%	7%	8%
1%	29%	32%	35%	39%	43%	47%	52%	57%	62%
2%	26%	29%	32%	35%	39%	42%	47%	51%	56%
3%	24%	26%	29%	32%	35%	38%	42%	47%	51%
4%	21%	24%	26%	29%	32%	35%	38%	42%	46%

Source: ACS 1-Year Estimates, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Los Angeles County Rent Registry Data (2021-2023)
 Note: Cells shaded in blue indicate that the renter in this hypothetical unit would be housing cost burdened, spending more than 30% of income on housing costs. The lightest blue color represents no change to the current level of cost burden. The darkest blue color indicates that the renter would be severely cost burdened, spending more than 50% of income on housing.

It is important to note that over the last 12 months real wages have not gone up by more than one percent.⁵⁴ This is primarily due to the high rate of inflation that has absorbed recent wage increases. Despite wages growing, the growth to real wages hasn't.⁵⁵ A benefit of implementing a pet rent cap based on a percentage of rent instead of a flat rate is that it would create a proportional pet rent cost instead of a set monthly pet rent amount that may disproportionately and negatively impact low-income tenants.⁵⁶

Sustaining Economic Vitality and Cost Recovery

Landlords' economic vitality is essential to ensuring they remain in the market and are able to provide affordable rental housing. To prevent pet equity protections from causing the unintended consequence of accelerating the rate of rent stabilized properties being taken off the market, safeguards should be implemented that would allow landlords to recover some costs and mitigate potential damages to their properties. There are also additional pressures on property owners and landlords, such as the increasing costs of insurance and building materials, that would justify the inclusion of mechanisms in a proposed ordinance that would allow landlords to recoup some of these costs. Pet equity in housing protections should provide landlords with the ability to maintain their net operating income in response to the added demands pets may have on their facilities.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/eci.nr0.htm>

⁵⁵ <https://data.bls.gov/pdq/SurveyOutputServlet>

⁵⁶ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/antoniopequenoiv/2025/07/24/inflation-outpacing-wage-growth-for-over-40-of-americans-report-says/>

⁵⁷ https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/bc/1157515_BM_PiAB_RentStabilization_PhaseII_final_.pdf

Thriving Communities

To facilitate the successful implementation of potential protections for pet equity in housing that promote community wellbeing, it will be essential for the County to make available additional staff resources to deliver education to the public on this new policy. As such, DCBA believes that staffing levels and support services will need to increase to sustain the added workload this policy would create for DCBA staff. DCBA's past experiences with implementing new County policies and ordinances have provided the department lessons learned that warrant the consideration of expanding support services to coincide with additional enforcement and counseling needs. A holistic implementation approach of public education, support services, enforcement action, and counseling will allow DCBA to effectively roll out this policy and allow for communities to thrive under its benefits.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

DCBA has conducted a comprehensive review of local, state, and federal policies and regulations, engaged in stakeholder engagement sessions and conducted a community survey. Through this research, DCBA has gained insight into the unique challenges, needs, and impact of a pet equity in housing ordinance.

Methodology for Recommended Options

Informed by comprehensive research and stakeholder engagement, DCBA is presenting four policy options for the Board's consideration, each designed to promote the strategies and policy outcomes outlined in this report. To provide the Board with flexibility in choosing an approach, a grouped set of options is provided to balance tenant interests, landlord business considerations, and the needs of the broader community.

To evaluate the various policies that address pet equity in housing, DCBA staff assessed both quantitative and qualitative data. DCBA's approach consisted of a mixed methodology. DCBA staff, during the research phase, leveraged secondary research data to gather background knowledge and comprehend the current pet equity in housing landscape. This secondary research was sourced from data and information collected and produced by third-party sources, as cited through the report. In addition, DCBA staff conducted a survey and held stakeholder sessions to obtain primary data to gain an in-depth understanding of the issues, challenges, and needs of stakeholders. The evaluation of both primary and secondary data serves as the foundation for the recommended policy options outlined below and in Table 3 in the following section.

The first option strongly aligns with tenant and tenant advocate feedback and pet equity principles—it is the most tenant-conscious approach. It recommends policies consistent with preferences identified in the survey data from tenants and tenant advocates, insights from stakeholder sessions, and relevant research. This option emphasizes enhancing

animal welfare by allowing pets of any size to be eligible for housing. It also advances equity in housing by not adding a cost on tenants and further burdening them by imposing a pet rent. However, the trade-off with this option is that it does not prioritize policy considerations for the potential financial impacts to landlords, as the ban on pet rent and the allowance of pets of any size may result in additional expenses for these businesses.

The second option takes a measured approach that weighs landlord concerns while accounting for the interests of tenants. It proposes a restrictive compromise based on both tenant and landlord survey data, feedback from their respective stakeholder sessions, and relevant research. This option proportionally emphasizes advancing equity in housing, sustaining economic vitality and cost recovery for housing investments, and enhancing animal welfare. It allows most pets—up to 50 pounds—to be eligible for housing but excludes large (51 lb – 75 lb) and extra-large pets (76 lb and above). Additionally, it establishes a relatively low pet rent cap designed to account for the restrictive limitations placed on allowable pet weights while supporting landlord cost recovery for the impacts of small and medium sized pets on their properties.

The third option allows for greater flexibility on weight restrictions and pet rent while taking a balanced approach that considers the additional costs to landlords. It proposes a more flexible compromise based on data from both tenant and landlord surveys, feedback from their respective stakeholder sessions, and relevant research. This option, similar to option 2, proportionally emphasizes advancing equity in housing, sustaining economic vitality and cost recovery, and enhancing animal welfare. It allows most pets to be eligible for housing but excludes extra-large pets (76 lb and above). Additionally, it establishes a middle-tier pet rent cap designed to account for the less restrictive limitations placed on allowable pet weights while supporting a stronger landlord cost recovery mechanism for the impacts of small, medium, and large pets on their properties.

The fourth option strongly aligns with tenant and tenant advocate feedback on eliminating pet weight restrictions while accounting for landlord and landlord advocate feedback on pet rent caps to cover the additional costs associated with bigger pets. It proposes a blended approach consistent with preferences identified in the survey data from landlords and landlord advocates, stakeholder session feedback, and relevant research. This option emphasizes enhancing animal welfare as well as sustaining the economic vitality and the cost recovery ability of businesses. It allows pets of any size to be eligible for housing while permitting a higher-tier pet rent cap to account for the lack of limitations on pet weights. A noteworthy trade-off of this approach is that the imposition of a 1.5 percent pet rent cap may create an additional, significant rent burden on tenants with pets and would potentially disincentivize the ownership of pets for certain households, particularly for low-income tenants—which would pose a challenge to the goal of advancing equity in housing.

Policy Options and Recommendations

All the proposed options offer a measured and research-informed pathway to advance pet equity in housing. As such, DCBA is recommending a set of options that your Board can consider to help the County fully realize the strategies outlined in this report back:

- Direct County Counsel, in collaboration with DCBA and DACC, to incorporate pet equity in housing protections into the RSTPO for tenants living in the UIAs of the County and make necessary amendments to Chapter 8.52 of the County Code that follow the parameters outlined in one of the following policy options/recommendations:

Table 3: Overview of the Proposed Policy Options

Policy Option	Household Pet Requirement	Pet Rent Cap	Pet Weight Restriction
Option 1	Allow at least one pet per rental unit	Pet rent barred	No restriction on weight
Option 2	Allow at least one pet per rental unit	0.5 percent of the monthly rent	No more than 50 pounds
Option 3	Allow at least one pet per rental unit	1.0 percent of the monthly rent	No more than 75 pounds
Option 4	Allow at least one pet per rental unit	1.5 percent of the monthly rent	No restriction on weight

- Enhance the resources available to DCBA and DACC to conduct outreach and education to the public on the County's pet licensing requirements in lieu of establishing a specific, mandatory pet licensing requirement for tenants as existing County policy achieves the goal of ensuring pets are properly documented in a timely manner.

DCBA also recommends that your Board consider further exploring the following strategies to further address pet equity in housing:

- Advocate for state policy that bars insurance providers from considering breed when evaluating the insurability of a property.
- Enhance existing DCBA staff resources and service levels to meet the additional demands of implementing a pet equity in housing protections for tenants and providing support to landlords and tenants.

Appendix A: Stakeholder Survey

Keeping Pets and Families Together: Increasing Pet Equity in Housing Survey

The Los Angeles County Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA) is gathering feedback to better understand the **needs, challenges, and potential impacts** of a potential **pet equity in housing ordinance** for rent stabilized units in the **unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County** subject to the Rent Stabilization and Tenant Protections Ordinance (RSTPO).

In response to a recent motion by the Board of Supervisors, DCBA is assessing the feasibility of a new ordinance that could potentially:

- Cap monthly pet rent
- Eliminate pet weight restrictions in units
- Require landlords to allow at least one common household pet per unit

Your input will help shape policies that balance the needs of both renters and property owners. For additional information about the motion, visit <https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/198840.pdf>

Survey deadline: July 6, 2025 at 11:59pm.

Thank you for taking a few minutes to share your perspective.

* Required

Tell us about yourself

1. What is your first and last name? *

2. What organization do you represent?

If you are **not** part of an organization, this question may be left blank

3. What is your email address?

Please enter an email

4. Would you like your email address to be added to our newsletter list?

☐ Yes ☐ No

5. Which of the following are you? *

- ☐ Tenant
- ☐ Landlord
- ☐ Property Manager
- ☐ Housing Advocate
- ☐ Other

6. How many rental units are located on your property(s)? *

Please provide a count of the rental units located in Los Angeles County

- ☐ Single Unit
- ☐ Two Units
- ☐ Three Units (Any Combination)
- ☐ Four Units (Any Combination)
- ☐ Five Units or more

7. Is your rental property registered with the LA County Rent Registry? *

For information regarding the rent registry visit <https://dcba.lacounty.gov/rentregistry/>

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

8. What is your address?

Your address should be located in Los Angeles County.

9. Are you a tenant of a rent-stabilized unit (rent controlled)? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Sure

10. Do you identify as any of the following?

Please select all that apply.

- ☐ Veteran
- ☐ Disabled
- ☐ Older Adult

11. What is your ZIP code? *

The value must be a number

12. Which supervisorial district is your home or property(s) located in? *

For help finding your supervisorial district, visit <https://www.lavote.gov/apps/precinctsmaps> and choose "District Map Lookup By Address" from the dropdown menu.

- ☐ Supervisorial District 1
- ☐ Supervisorial District 2
- ☐ Supervisorial District 3
- ☐ Supervisorial District 4
- ☐ Supervisorial District 5
- ☐ Don't Know

13. Which supervisorial district do you represent or work in? *

- ☐ Supervisorial District 1
- ☐ Supervisorial District 2
- ☐ Supervisorial District 3
- ☐ Supervisorial District 4
- ☐ Supervisorial District 5
- ☐ None

Help us understand your needs, challenges, and impact

14. How many common household pets do you think is an appropriate amount per rental unit? *

Common household pets includes cats and dogs.

- ☐ 0
- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5+

15. How much do you think is an appropriate amount for monthly "pet rent"? *

Please select the range that best fits what you believe is an appropriate monthly amount.

- ☐ \$0 - \$25
- ☐ \$26 - \$50
- ☐ \$51 - \$75
- ☐ \$76 - \$100
- ☐ \$101 - \$125
- ☐ \$126 - \$150
- ☐ \$151+

16. What is the appropriate weight limit for a pet in a rental unit? *

Please select the maximum weight a pet can be in a rental unit.

- ☐ Up to 25 lbs
- ☐ Up to 50 lbs
- ☐ Up to 75 lbs
- ☐ No weight restriction

17. What are your thoughts and feedback on allowing at least one common household pet in a rental unit?
18. What are your thoughts and feedback on setting a cap on monthly "pet rent" for new and existing rental agreements?
19. What are your thoughts and feedback on eliminating pet weight restrictions for common household pets in residential dwelling units?