



your guide to
PETS IN A BODY CORPORATE





about THIS GUIDE

Pets have a way of making a place feel like home, but in a body corporate, that home is part of a shared space. So, whether it's a wagging tail in the lift, a curious cat on a balcony, or the occasional bark that carries a little too far, pets bring both joy and responsibility to community living.

That's where this guide comes in.

With changes to Queensland legislation, including clearer pathways for approvals and stronger rights for both owners and tenants, the conversation has shifted. It's no longer about whether pets are allowed, but how they can be responsibly managed within a shared environment.

This guide breaks down what you need to know - from understanding your by-laws and navigating the approval process, to recognising what can (and can't) be refused, and what happens when things don't go to plan.

Whether you're applying for a pet, living next door to one, or making decisions as part of a committee, this is your practical guide to keeping both pets and communities happy.



The legislation in QUEENSLAND

Understanding the legislative framework around pet ownership is essential for anyone living in a body corporate, whether as an owner-occupier or a tenant. The rules governing pets are shaped not only by body corporate by-laws but also by state legislation, which sets the boundaries for what is and isn't allowed.

A major shift occurred in 2022, when Queensland introduced laws granting tenants the right to keep pets in rental properties. While this change primarily affected tenants and landlords, it reflects a broader government stance supporting pet ownership. This legislation change highlighted the growing recognition of pets as valued members of the household, giving tenants the same privilege as owner-occupiers, who have long held the right to keep animals within body corporate schemes.

The requirement for approval to keep a pet, however, has not disappeared, but the focus has evolved. The question is no longer whether pets should be allowed, but rather how to navigate the approval process to ensure they can be kept without causing issues. Tenants now enjoy the same rights as owner occupiers, and bodies corporate can only refuse pets under very specific, legally defined circumstances.



21 DAY APPROVALS

Changes to the Body Corporate and Community Management Act have introduced a clearer and more streamlined approach to pet approvals. Body corporate committees are now required to consider and respond to pet applications within 21 days of receiving them.

If a decision is not made within this timeframe, the application is automatically deemed approved. This is a considerable reduction to the previous 6 week approval period, providing certainty for both owners and tenants considering a pet.

In response, many bodies corporate are rethinking their approach. Rather than requiring individual approval for each pet, some schemes are updating their by-laws to be pet-friendly by default. This allows residents to keep pets without a formal application, provided they comply with any pet related by-laws or practical conditions like dogs on leashes in common areas or restricting animals from facilities like the pool or gym. Specific, legally defined circumstances.

applying FOR A PET

Many schemes still require approval under their by-laws, and providing accurate information helps the committee make a fair decision.

For BCsystems' clients, applications are made online via the [BCsystems Pet Application Form](#). We then forward your request to the body corporate committee for your scheme. We **DO NOT** decide or influence its approval.

CHECK YOUR BY-LAWS

Before applying for a pet, review your scheme's by-laws carefully. They outline what approvals are needed and any applicable conditions around keeping a pet.

With the recent changes to Queensland legislation, blanket bans on pets based solely on breed, size, or number are no longer valid. As long as a pet is well-managed, meets all the local council and reasonable conditions of the scheme, and does not cause problems for other residents, approval cannot be unreasonably withheld.

PET APPROVAL CONDITIONS

Even when pets are allowed, approval may come with conditions designed to minimise disruption. These are specific to each scheme, so check your by-laws.

Common conditions include:

- Pets must be kept off common property except when entering or leaving the scheme.
- Pets should be leashed or restrained on common property.
- Animals must be healthy and free of parasites.
- Owners must prevent nuisance and dispose of waste responsibly.

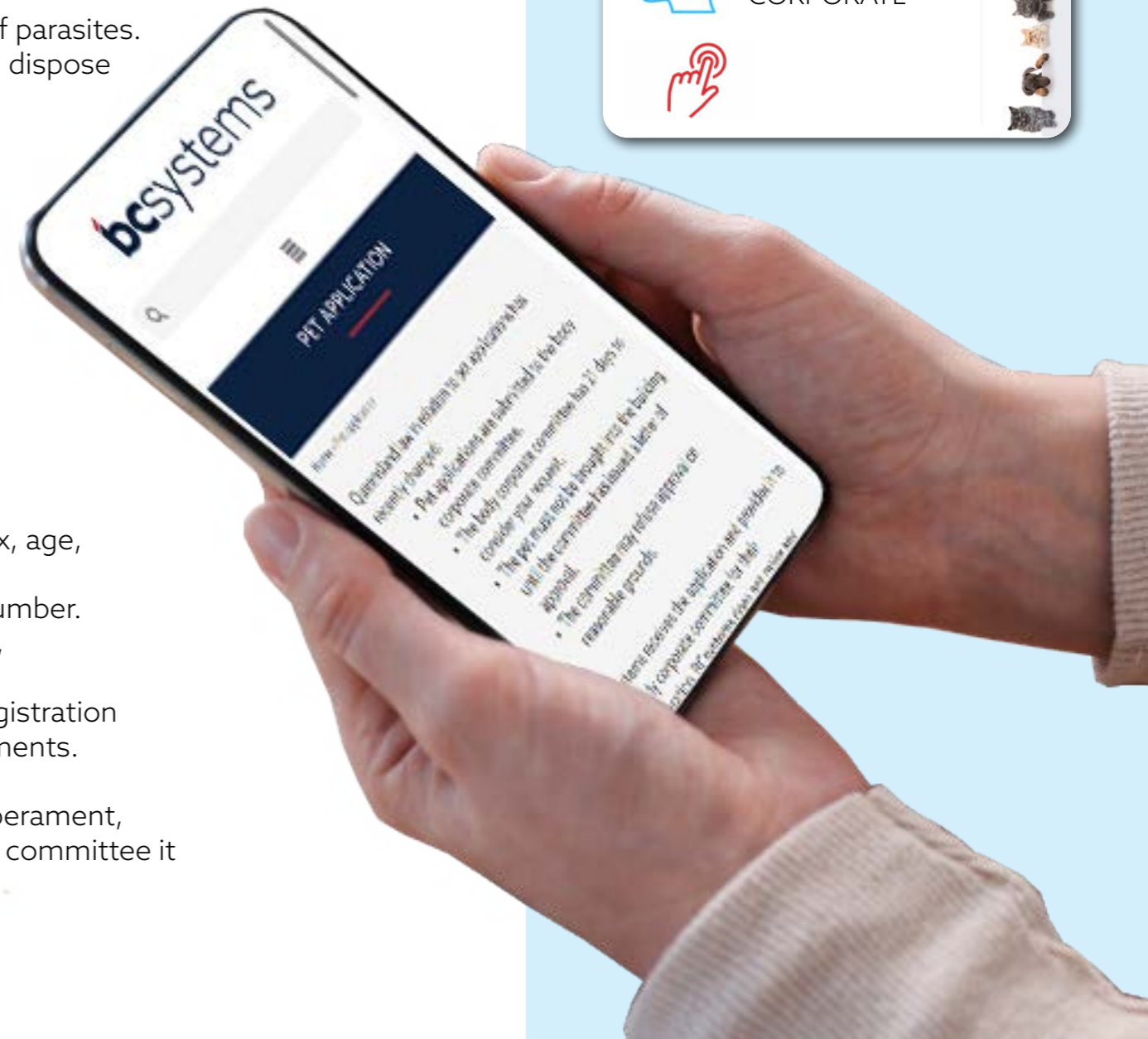
YOUR APPLICATION

When applying, provide full details to strengthen your request.

Typical information includes:

- **Pet details:** name, type & breed, sex, age, and weight.
- **Registration:** council registration number.
- **Health & care:** desexed, vaccinated, microchipped.
- **Supporting documents:** photos, registration certificates, or other relevant documents.

Including details about your pet's temperament, training, or behaviour can reassure the committee it will be well-managed.



VIDEO:
PET APPROVALS
IN A BODY
CORPORATE
SCHEME



ARTICLE:
GETTING YOUR
PET APPROVED
BY THE BODY
CORPORATE



LEARNING HUB:
PETS IN A BODY
CORPORATE



grounds FOR REFUSAL

A body corporate committee can only refuse a pet application for valid, legally recognised reasons.

A pet may be refused if:

- 1. It is a risk to residents, wildlife, or property** – the animal poses a danger that cannot be mitigated, including aggressive or threatening behaviour.
- 2. Is non-compliant with laws or regulations** – this includes:
 - Dogs declared dangerous or menacing under the Queensland Government's Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008. Council may declare a dog dangerous or menacing if it has attacked, caused fear, or otherwise behaved aggressively toward a person or another animal.
 - Banned dog breeds listed by your local council.
 - Exceeding the number of pets allowed without a permit, as set by your local council.
 - Animals that are not considered domestic pets, such as pigs, goats, horses, chickens, or cows.
- 3. You refuse to comply with reasonable conditions** – including requirements for vaccination, microchipping, registration with the local council, or other conditions the committee has set.
- 4. It is a commercial business** – applications for commercial pet businesses, such as breeding or daycare operations within the complex, may also be refused.

Submitting a thorough and accurate application and understanding your scheme's by-laws demonstrates responsible pet ownership and makes for a smoother approval process.



WHAT A COMMITTEE CANNOT REFUSE

The committee cannot refuse a pet based on:

- The weight of the animal, even if outdated by-laws impose restrictions.
- Breed, unless it is specifically banned by the local council.
- Perceptions that the pet is unsuitable for apartment living due to size, exercise needs, or potential noise.
- Personal preferences against having pets in the complex.



VIDEO:

CAN A DOG
OVER 10kg BE
REFUSED?



ARTICLE:

ACCEPTABLE
GROUNDS FOR
REFUSING A
PET



body corporate BY-LAWS

By-laws are the rules that govern everyday life in a body corporate. They cover things like noise, parking, use of common property ... and pets.

Pet by-laws set the expectations for keeping animals within a scheme. They may limit the number or type of pets allowed, outline where pets can go on common property, and address behaviour such as excessive barking or aggression.

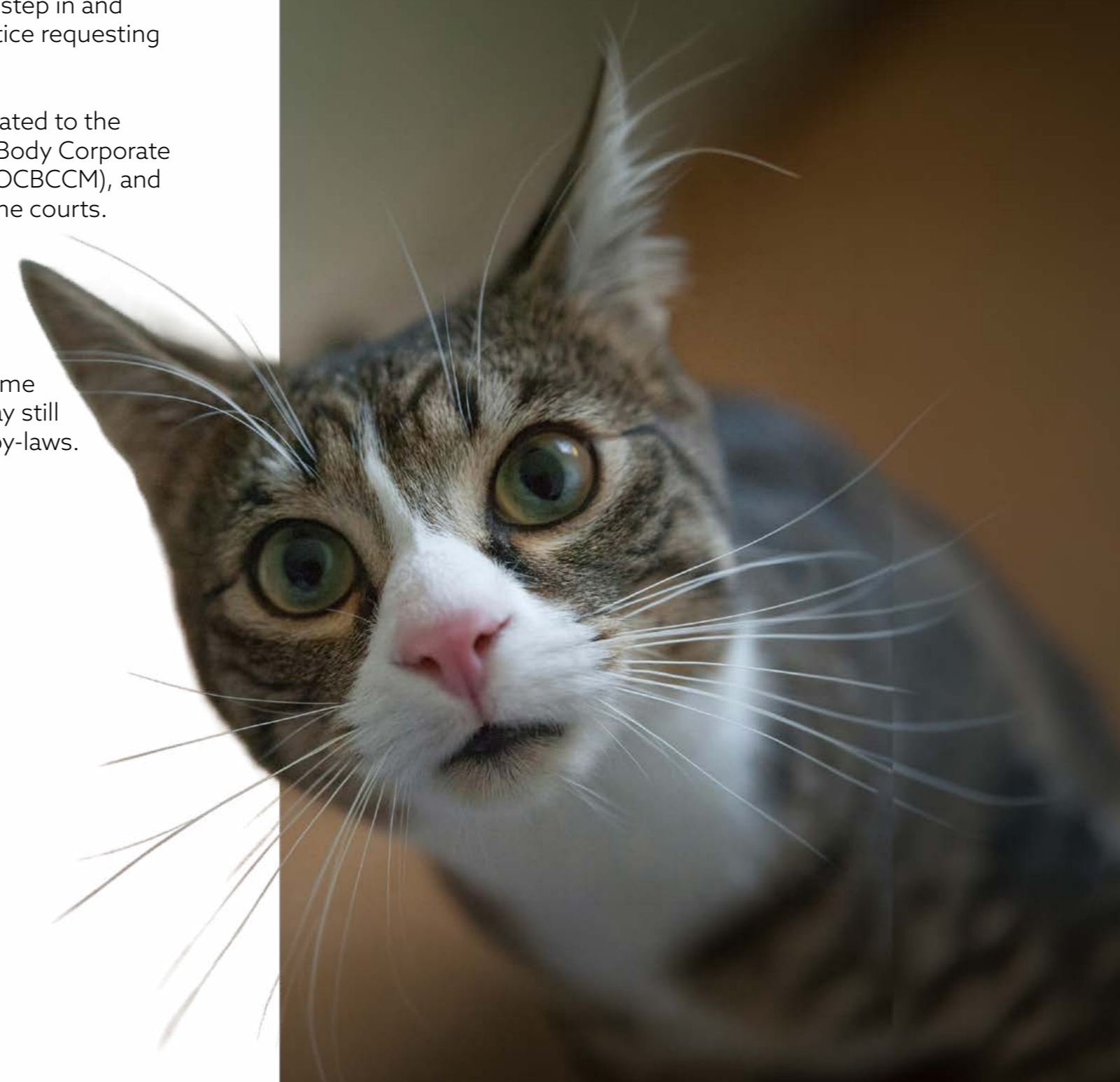
Even well-behaved pets can cause issues, so owners are legally responsible for ensuring their animals do not disturb others or create a nuisance.

Excessive barking, for example, generally refers to ongoing or repetitive noise that unreasonably disrupts other residents. Similarly, pets roaming in restricted areas or behaving aggressively may also breach the by-laws. Bodies corporate in Queensland are required under the Body Corporate and Community Management Act to enforce by-laws in a reasonable and fair way. In many cases, concerns can be resolved informally with a simple conversation, as owners may not be aware there's an issue.

If problems continue, it's important to keep a record of incidents, including dates and times. The committee can then step in and issue a formal contravention notice requesting compliance.

Ongoing breaches may be escalated to the Office of the Commissioner for Body Corporate and Community Management (OCBCCM), and in some cases, local council or the courts.

It's also important to remember that responsibility isn't limited to your own pet. If you're caring for someone else's animal, or a visitor brings a pet into the scheme and it causes a problem, you may still be held accountable under the by-laws.



visiting PETS

Even a short visit from a friend's dog can raise questions in a body corporate. While Queensland law no longer allows schemes to ban pets outright, by-laws can set conditions for animals, including visitors.

Visiting pets may need committee approval, and by-laws can restrict where the animal is allowed, such as pools, gardens, or other common areas. If a visiting pet causes excessive noise, behaves aggressively, creates a mess, or damages property, you as the resident are responsible.

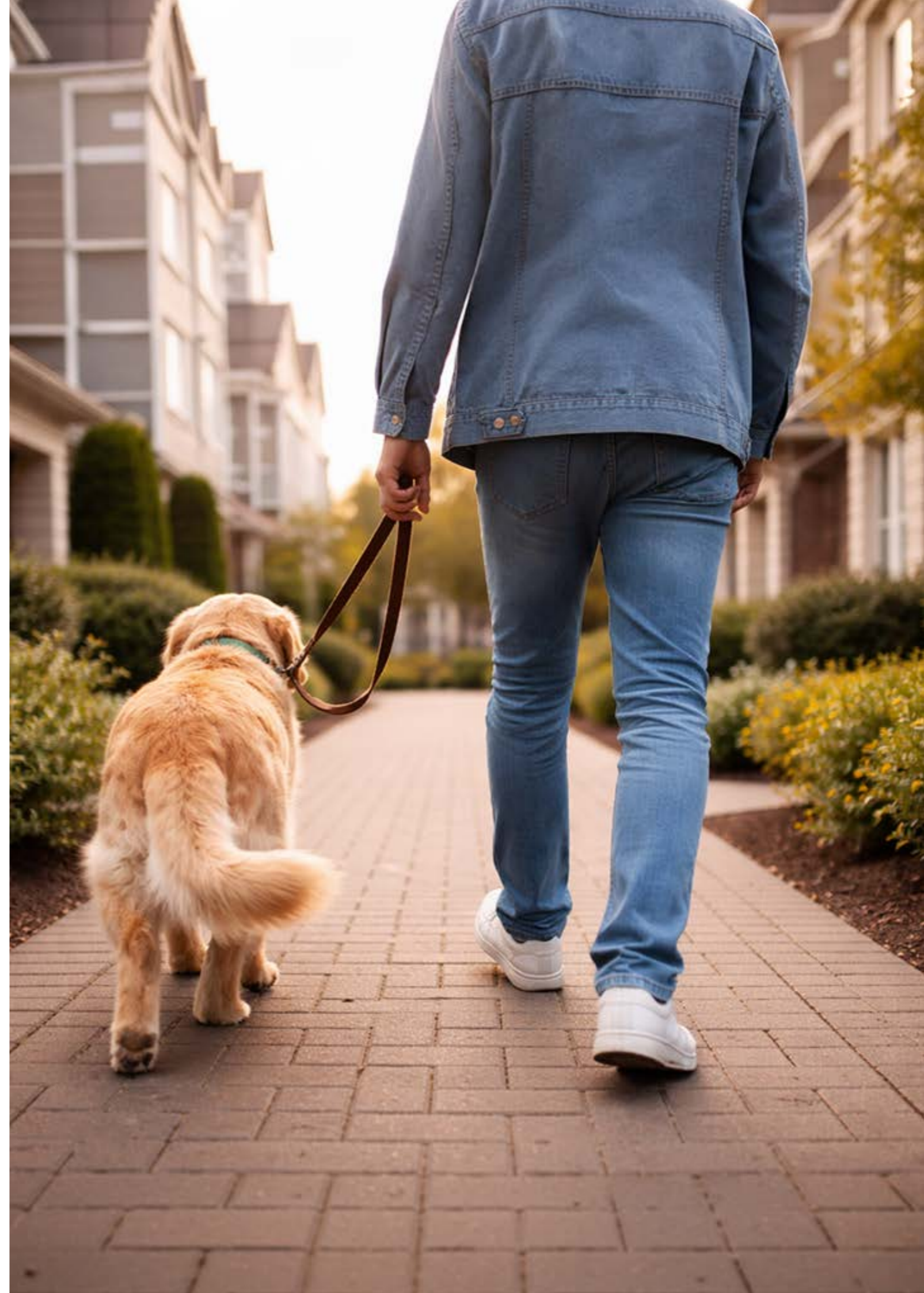
pets in holiday APARTMENTS

If you're taking your pet on holiday, remember that many holiday apartments are part of a body corporate scheme. This means they're subject to by-laws, which set the rules for all residents and visitors.

Unlike long-term residential complexes, holiday apartments often have more relaxed pet rules, sometimes you just need to disclose your pet when booking.

Before you go, always check the booking terms and the building's by-laws. Some properties may limit the number or size of pets, require pets to be leashed in common areas, restrict access to shared facilities, or forbid leaving pets unattended. If anything is unclear, contact the property manager ahead of time.

In short, pets may be welcome, but only if the rules allow it. Checking first ensures a smooth, stress-free holiday for everyone - paws included.



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