

Friday, 8th November 2024, 07:30 AM

APIA Successfully Advocates for Making Pet Ownership Without Landlord Consent an Unlawful Act

AUCKLAND, 8th November 2024 — The Auckland Property Investors Association (APIA) today welcomed the inclusion of a new provision in the Residential Tenancies Amendment Bill making it unlawful for tenants to keep pets without landlord consent, following extensive advocacy work by the organisation.

"Making unauthorised pet ownership unlawful builds crucial accountability into the rental system," says Sarina Gibbon, APIA General Manager. "New pet rules should complement, not compromise, fundamental property rights. This isn't about preventing pets in rentals - it's about ensuring tenants respect property owners' decisions about their own properties."

The new provision, which wasn't present in the original bill, aligns with APIA's commitment to creating a balanced rental market that serves both landlords and tenants while respecting property rights.

"Our advocacy focused on creating a framework that encourages rather than mandates pet-friendly rentals," says Gibbon. "The survey we conducted of more than 3,200 landlords showed that forced compliance would have been counterproductive. Instead, we pushed for a balanced approach that incentivises landlords to see the benefits of allowing pets."

While welcoming the success in making unauthorised pet ownership an unlawful act, APIA will continue to advocate for stronger provisions. "We believe the Bill should go further and make it an unlawful act when tenants breach reasonable conditions set for pet ownership," says Gibbon. "This additional protection would ensure both proper pet management and property protection, with a recommended penalty of up to \$1,500 in line with other pet-related breaches."

The success of APIA's advocacy is reflected in several key provisions:

- Making it an unlawful act for tenants to keep pets without landlord consent
- Establishing clear frameworks for pet bonds
- Maintaining landlords' rights to set reasonable conditions for pet ownership

"Our members recognise the importance of pets in many households, with 64.8% already allowing pets in some or all of their properties," notes Gibbon. "Our survey found that 99% of landlords agree that tenants

should secure their landlords' consent before keeping pets at the rental property, with 93.4% supporting this being made an unlawful act. The new provisions reflect this strong consensus."

APIA's submission emphasised that successful pet-friendly rental policies must balance tenant desires with landlord rights. "We've consistently maintained that the best outcomes occur when both parties work together collaboratively rather than through mandate," Gibbon adds. "The new provisions create a framework for this collaboration while providing necessary protections for property owners."

For media inquiries, please contact: Auckland Property Investors Association media@apia.org.nz

About Auckland Property Investors Association (APIA) The Auckland Property Investors Association (APIA) is a leading advocacy group representing the interests of property investors throughout Auckland. Committed to promoting education, advocacy, and networking opportunities, APIA actively shapes policies impacting the property investment landscape. APIA strives to cultivate a supportive environment for property investors while advocating for policies that uphold the rights and responsibilities of both landlords and tenants.