

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2025 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 896

(Senator Love)

Judicial Proceedings

Real Property - Residential Rental Property - Pet Policy Disclosure (Pet Policy Transparency Act)

This bill requires that a landlord of any residential rental property provide a link to the property’s pet policy on the property’s website, in digital advertisements, and in any information provided for a residential rental search engine. A written copy or summary of the pet policy must also be included in any rental application form. The pet policy must state any (1) breed and weight restrictions; (2) required fees (including up-front, nonrefundable pet fees, refundable pet deposits, and monthly pet fees); (3) limit on the number of pets allowed in a unit; (4) vaccination requirements; (5) liability insurance requirements; and (6) additional requirements for pet owners imposed by the landlord.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill does not materially affect State finances or operations.

Local Effect: The bill does not materially affect local government finances or operations.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Current Law: Statute does not expressly govern pet policies for residential rental properties or a landlord’s obligation to disclose any such policies. However, current law does include limited protections for certain tenants in Montgomery County related to pet ownership. Specifically, in Montgomery County, a landlord may not prohibit an elderly person (an individual who is age 60 or older) from keeping a household pet, unless specifically prohibited in writing at the time occupancy took place. Under the applicable

provisions, a tenant is liable for any damage done to the premises by the tenant's pet, and a landlord may establish reasonable rules governing the type, size, and number of pets allowed, disposal of pet waste, and aspects of pet conduct and pet control related to the protection of the health and safety of other tenants and the property of the landlord.

State statute also outlines certain procedures and requirements for landlords to protect certain pets (domesticated cats and dogs) when property is repossessed in failure to pay rent, breach of lease, tenant holding over, and wrongful detainer actions.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: HB 1152 (Delegate Stein) - Environment and Transportation.

Information Source(s): Office of the Attorney General (Consumer Protection Division); Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 21, 2025
js/jkb

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