

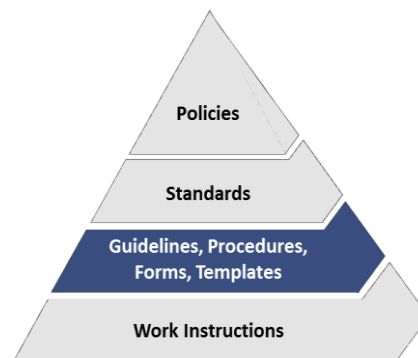


Retirement Living Assistance and Companion Animal Care Guideline

A GUIDELINE supports a related Principle/Standard and contains a specified series of actions or operations to be completed in a particular manner.

A GUIDELINE may be further expanded upon in a related Instruction.

A GUIDELINE is approved by the ELT Functional Owner or their nominated delegate.





1. What this guideline is about

The RSL Care Chief Operating Officer will provide leadership, support and resources to implement this guideline across the organisation.

RSL Care supports assistance and companion animals in retirement living as providing therapeutic and lifestyle goals between a person and a pet or animal. Assistance and companion animal ownership improves the physical, social, emotional, motivational and cognitive functioning of elders.

Common therapeutic goals for assistance and companion animals are to provide security, relaxation and pleasure but can also reduce mood disorders such as anxiety, and/or depression increase appetites of Alzheimer's patients, lower blood pressure and improve the health and longevity of people who've suffered a heart attack.

Assistance and companion animal ownership also stimulates residents to:

- express their emotions;
- create communication opportunities and sense of validation;
- reminisce about past companion animals, stimulating long and short term memory;
- provide tactile/sensory experiences that elicit a sense of comfort and security;
- promote expression of positive social behaviours including smiling, laughing and eye contact;
- create conversation, social interaction and connectedness among fellow residents;
- have an increased sense of purpose and responsibility; and
- increase mobility.



2. Importance of this Guideline

RSL Care's Retirement Living Assistance and Companion Animal Care Guideline has been developed to:

- allow residents to move to an RSL Care retirement village with their assistance or companion animal;
- enhance residents quality of life (socially, psychologically, physically and emotionally);
- allow RSL Care to remain competitive in the retirement living market;
- improve opportunity for residents to live with assistance animals deemed so by the state;
- provide assurance and protection to all residents that the peace and enjoyment of their residence and the public and communal areas will not be disrupted by companion animals;
- provide information relating to the welfare of the animals, site management responsibilities and risk associated with the animals and pets; and
- provide guidelines and guideline for RSL Care staff and residents to adhere to and understand compliances and regulations.

RSL Care reserves the right to change this guideline if required and it may be subject to change without notice. However, every effort will be made to communicate any guideline changes with residents. Residents can discuss this guideline and obtain further information from their Retirement Living Coordinator.

3. Who this Guideline applies to

This guideline applies to all RSL Care visitors, residents, staff and customers.

4. What the Guideline requires

4.1. Approval from RSL Care

Approval is required from the Retirement Living -Coordinator and the Manager, Retirement Living to keep a companion animal in an RSL Care Retirement Community. Veterinarian documentation of vaccinations and breed must be provided at the time of the interview.



4.2. Units Available for Companion Animals

Companion animals will only be permitted in the following units:

1. cats will be permitted in the interior of all units. Cats may only be permitted outside if:
 - a. on a harness or leash; or
 - b. within the confines of a cat run. For example, a resident may install a cat run under the roofline of the patio to their unit that is attached to a cat flap.
2. dogs will only be permitted in units that have a fenced courtyard or backyard which is licensed to the resident as part of their residence contract;
3. birds are permitted in all units but must be kept inside during the hours of 6pm and 8am. For example, a resident may place a cage in their courtyard during the day but it must be brought inside at night-time.
4. All other animals will be assessed for suitability on a case by case basis.
5. RSL Care reserves the right to decline or approve an application to keep a companion animal on conditions of RSL Care's discretion.

4.3. Acceptable Animals

The following types and number of assistance and/or companion animals will be allowed:

1. Dogs
 - a. Maximum number of one per unit.
 - b. Maximum size: 13 kg's maximum (small and medium sized).
 - c. Must be de-sexed (neutered or spayed) and have current vaccinations.
 - d. Must be registered and micro chipped.
 - e. Breeds whose origin shows development for purpose of "attack, guardian, or fighting," are not appropriate for RSL Care.
 - f. Dogs must be house-trained and well-behaved.
 - g. Dogs must be trained not to bark unnecessarily.
 - h. Age more than 12 months
 - i. Must wear a collar that clearly notes the owner's name and phone number.
2. Cats



- a. Maximum number of one per unit.
 - b. Must be de-sexed (neutered or spayed) and have current vaccinations.
 - c. Must be registered and micro chipped.
 - d. Must wear a collar that clearly notes the owner's name and phone number.
3. Birds
- a. Maximum number of two per unit.
 - b. Wings must be clipped.
 - c. Must be caged when outside the resident's dwelling.
 - d. Must have appropriate vaccinations.
 - e. Only breeds that do not squawk or screech will be allowed. For example, love birds, budgies, canaries and cockatiels will be acceptable. Parrots and cockatoos are not acceptable.
4. Fish.
- a. Maximum aquarium size: 190 litres (50 gallons).
 - b. Tank must be safely located within the residence.
5. All other animals will be considered on a case by case basis on application; however undomesticated animals of any type will not be permitted.

4.4. Assistance and Companion Animal Damage

RSL Care reserves the right to offset any costs associated with any damage caused by a resident's companion animal by:

1. offsetting it against the Companion Animal Bond (if any);
2. billing the resident directly; or
3. applying the damage costs against the refund of the resident's exit entitlement.

Any residence that was occupied by an assistance and companion animal (including birds) will require a flea treatment upon vacating the residence and prior to a new resident moving in. Where there are companions animals, the companion animals will be replaced at the resident's cost before a new resident moves in. The resident may be held financially responsible for any flea or other insect infestation that affects adjacent residences as a result of his/her assistance and companion animal.



Companion Animal Bond

RSL Care may decide in its absolute discretion that a condition precedent to approving a companion animal will be payment by the resident of an Assistance and Companion Animal Bond. The amount of the bond will be set by RSL Care in its absolute discretion following an application for a companion animal. The Assistance and Companion Animal Bond must be paid to RSL Care before the companion animal can be brought into the village. It will be refunded within 14 days from the date RSL Care receives notice from the resident that the companion animal has left the village.

4.5. Assistance Dogs

Assistance dogs are not required to receive administrative approval, are allowed to accompany their owners in any area of the facility, and do not require a Companion Animal Bond.

4.6. Assistance and Companion Animal Owner Responsibilities

The following rules apply for all companion and assistance animals.

1. The assistance and companion animal must be kept under the resident's control at all times when outside their individual accommodation or unit. Under no circumstances is the companion animal allowed to roam free in communal or public places.
2. Assistance and companion animals must be registered with the local Government Authority, where necessary and it is the responsibility of the resident/owner to maintain registration on an ongoing basis.
3. Assistance and companion animals must be treated for fleas and worms on a regular basis, where appropriate (e.g. cats and dogs).
4. All animal waste (from litter boxes, cages, etc.) is to be picked up and disposed of in sealed plastic bags and placed in the rubbish bin. Litter from litter boxes is not to be disposed of in the toilet. Charges for unclogging the toilet or cleaning up any common area will be billed to the resident.
5. The resident agrees to clean up behind his/her companion animal while walking the companion animal on the common grounds (exceptions will be made in the case of assistance dogs for the sight impaired). For this purpose, RSL Care suggests that residents carry a plastic bag or a pooper scooper when accompanying their animals throughout the village.
6. The resident agrees to keep his/her companion animal under control at all times so that the companion animal does not jump up on other residents and guests on the property.



7. When transporting animals in a vehicle within the village, residents are required to house the animal in a cage within their vehicle at all times.
8. The following animal behaviours constitute a public nuisance:
 - companion animals left unrestrained in a public or communal area,
 - companion animals soiling private property,
 - companion animals causing unsanitary conditions,
 - companion animals making or causing noise of sufficient volume to interfere with other resident's rest or peaceful enjoyment of the property,
 - companion animals showing aggressive behaviour, biting, attacking or otherwise interfering with the freedom of movement of any person, chasing vehicles, aggressive behaviour, biting or attacking other companion animals, or to create a disturbance in any other way.
 - owners failing to promptly clean up companion animal droppings and dispose of them in a sanitary manner.
9. If the Resident is to be away from his/her residence/unit for longer than 12 hours, arrangements must be made for the care of the companion animal. Under no circumstances are companion animals to be left unattended in the Resident's home for more than 12 hours. Companion animals left unattended for a longer period will be considered an emergency and reported to the appropriate emergency contact or authority. If the companion animal needs to be removed from the accommodation by an authority this cost will be charged to the resident. If the resident leaves the companion animal unattended because of emergency illness, their emergency contact will be notified.
10. If it is intended that a companion animal stay at the premises for a period of more than one week, prior permission must be sought from the site manager.
11. The Resident agrees to provide adequate care, nutrition, exercise and medical care for his/her companion animal including all current shots as required or necessary.

4.7. Breaches to Owner Responsibilities

The owners of animals that disturb the peace and quiet of others through noise nuisance will be cautioned. If there are three incidents the animal will be required to leave the accommodation.

If the animal attacks another resident, RSL Care will require permanent removal of the companion animal.

Companion animals that appear to be poorly cared for will be reported to the appropriate authority.



5. Appendices

5.1. Roles and Responsibilities

The following table defines the roles and responsibilities associated with this Guideline.

Who?	What
Board	Responsible for the Endorsement of Guideline in accordance with legal and regulatory obligations, and to enable RSL's pursuit of opportunities aligned with this vision and values in an ethical and responsible manner.
Chief Executive officer	Leads RSL's implementation of and compliance with the related Guideline, by communicating RSL's vision, and the importance of the related Guideline, to all RSL personnel.
Executive Leadership Team	Must assist the CEO with the implementation of this Guideline and by extension the related Guideline, by leading the implementation of this Guideline in their respective functions, everywhere, every day.
<Insert Role>	
Leaders of functions, areas and teams	Must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support and communicate the Guideline to their employees, contractors and consultants to ensure they understand the Guideline • demonstrate compliance with the Guideline.
All employees, contractors and consultants	All Employees, contractors and consultants are responsible for understanding and complying with this Guideline.

5.2. Terms and definitions

Term	Definition	Source ¹
Consultant	A person who provides professional or expert advice under a professional services agreement with.	
Contractor	A person who contracts to furnish supplies or perform work at a certain price or rate	



Employee	A person appointed by to a position on a permanent, fixed term or casual basis, or an apprentice or trainee.	
[insert terms alphabetically in table]	[insert definition]	[insert source]

¹ Where left blank, source is not applicable

5.3. Related documents

Key relevant legislation and regulation, as amended from time to time, includes but is not limited to:

What	Why
Federal Acts	<Insert Text>
State Acts	<Insert Text>
Other	Various Australian Standards, Codes of Practice, Memoranda of Understanding / Agreement and Government Policies are also applicable.

The following documents relate to this Guideline:

Document Name	Document Type	Location