



## REAL ESTATE LAW

# Be aware of pet restrictions



Jacques Robert  
**REAL ESTATE  
LAW**

Pets can offer an incomparable source of companionship for many of us. However, in order to ensure sanitary living conditions for your pets, your neighbours, your family and yourself, it is important to comply with the laws and statutes that regulate pet ownership. There are numerous restrictions put into place in order to control the number and the types of pets that one can own in their home. If these restrictions are ignored, pet owners could face penalties ranging from small fines to imprisonment for more serious offences.

The number of pets permitted per household is regulated by the City of Ottawa. The by-laws clearly state that no homeowner or tenant shall keep more than three dogs in their dwelling. Likewise, no homeowner or tenant is permitted to keep more than five cats. Both cats and dogs need to be tagged and registered with the City of Ottawa. To register a dog

or cat, there is a registration charge of \$23 if the pet is sterilized, or \$40 if the pet has not been sterilized.

All pet owners must ensure that the pet is given a clean and sanitary living environment free of accumulated fecal matter or insect infestations. The pet should also have access to adequate food, water and shelter, as well as the opportunity for physical activity. Keep in mind that each pet-owner should prevent their pet from making constant disturbing noises such as barking or whining. Furthermore, a kennel licence is required for any homeowner or tenant who keeps more than three dogs, five cats, or a total of five cats or dogs on the premise. This can be obtained by contacting the Business Licensing Centre.

The City of Ottawa also regulates the type of animals that can be domesticated. For example, wild mammals (such as wolves, lions or squirrels), wild sea

mammals (such as dolphins, whales or seals), primates (such as chimpanzees or gorillas), large rodents (such as beavers, porcupines or gophers), wild birds (such as hawks, ducks, pheasants or owls), wild or venomous reptiles (such as vipers, snapping turtles, iguanas or alligators), and venomous arachnids (such as tarantulas or black widows) are all forbidden from being kept in your home. Additionally, it is forbidden to own any animal listed as an endangered species. However, zoos, research facilities, animal care and control centres, veterinary facilities and animal shelters are exempt from these prohibitions. Likewise, animals considered to be livestock can only be kept in parts of the City that are zoned accordingly. Furthermore, the owner of any livestock that causes damage to another's property shall be held accountable for the animal's actions.

It is also important to note that as of 2005, it is

now prohibited to own pit bulls in Ontario. However, the exception to the rule indicates that existing pit bulls may remain in Ontario if the pet owner can prove that he or she owned the pit bull prior to 2005. Nonetheless, the pit bull must remain leashed and muzzled in public

and must also be spayed or neutered.

For some people, pets can become more than just a friend and companion. Service animals are an essential part of day-to-day life for many. A service animal is a domestic animal that has been trained by a professional to assist a disabled person. This includes assistance dogs, therapy dogs and emo-

tional support dogs. These animals must be registered with a recognized organisation. Unlike a typical cat or dog, there is no fee associated with registering a service animal.

If you suspect that one of your neighbours is violating any of the above-mentioned regulations or if a neighbouring pet is causing a nuisance, you can always issue a report with Service Ottawa or the Ottawa Humane Society. And please always remember that it is against the law to leave your pets unattended in a parked vehicle on hot days where their health or safety may be endangered.

co-authored with Robin Goski, associate lawyer

Jacques Robert is an Ottawa real estate lawyer. For more

information visit [www.jacquesrobert.com](http://www.jacquesrobert.com)



METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

## Tips for moving to a new home with pets

Making the transition to a new home can be stressful for everyone, including your pets. "We often are anxious about our pets' adjustment to a new home," says Lincoln Thompson, a broker-owner with Royal LePage Gardiner Realty in Fredericton, New Brunswick. "To ensure a safe and successful transition, homeowners can plan ahead and take initiatives to make the process as smooth as possible."

### Before the move

Pull out moving boxes in advance of packing to allow your pet an opportunity to

become accustomed to them. Orient your pet to its carrier or crate so that you have a safe-place for her before and after the move. Try to keep routines as stable as possible during the flurry of packing and preparation for the big move.

### Research by-laws and pet licensing in your new area

Contact the local municipality for requirements concerning domestic animals in your new area. Ask about licensing and by-laws concerning the responsibilities of pet owners. Also check into the availability of off-leash areas for dogs in your new

community.

### Special considerations for rural areas

If your new home is in a rural area, be sure to learn the rights of farmers when neighbouring pets venture onto their property. Often, farmers have special privileges when it comes to protecting their livestock.

### Transitioning your pet to your new home

Be prepared for some trepidation, particularly with cats that tend not to take as well to a change in environment. Cats should remain inside for sev-

eral weeks until they become comfortable with their surroundings. Then, allow them only short accompanied ventures outdoors. Take your dog for several walks each day to help him become familiar with the new area. Avoid walking a dog immediately before leaving for errands or work. Plan to be home for a period of time after those initial walks. That way, the dog will associate his new home with positive outcomes.

Additional moving tips are available at [www.royallepage.ca](http://www.royallepage.ca).



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