

The Pet Promise: Finding an Assisted Living Facility That Welcomes You and Your Pet

The “live-for-today” attitude of pets like dogs and cats gives their owners a gentle reminder to live in the present and enjoy each day to the fullest. That’s likely one of the reasons why they provide such a positive [contribution](#) to the overall physical and mental health of people of all ages, especially seniors. Fortunately, more and more living assisted facilities recognize the important influence pets have on seniors and are making accommodations to provide a welcoming environment for animals — from visiting therapy animals to resident pets.

Remember: Just as residents rely on highly trained and professional facility staff and other health professionals for ongoing care, so does your pet. If you are looking for a facility that allows you to bring your loving pet, look to this guide for tips and information.

You can also find information about assisted living and other senior-related services and products at [Arkansas Senior Resource Directory](#).

Understanding accommodations and limitations

Once you find an assisted living facility that’s pet-friendly, you will likely be excited! What better way to have a positive transition from your home to a new facility than experiencing it with your best animal friend? It is important that you also temper that excitement with the realities of continuing your pet’s care in this new environment and that you understand and accept any restrictions that the facility has in place so that you and your pet can fully enjoy this new chapter in your lives together. Such [restrictions](#) may include:

- Animal breed
- Size
- Age — young kittens, for example, can be highly energetic!
- Training level
- Temperament — will your cat be inclined to scratch other residents?
- Health record

Don’t just consider the facility rules — you owe it to your pet to consider their routine, as well. If your dog is used to twice-daily walks, can that be accommodated in this new environment, even if you have a bad day or if your health [declines](#)? Are you able to keep up with their dietary needs (e.g., a high-fiber diet for [health issues](#) like indigestion or weight gain)? How socialized is your pet with other humans and animals? Does your dog or cat get nervous around other pets and strange people? If so, this could cause behavioral issues that quickly zap the joy of living with your companion and will need to be assessed to see if these issues can be adequately addressed to begin or continue the arrangement.

You should also be prepared to pay a one-time deposit or an ongoing monthly fee for each pet, and you need to take this extra cost into consideration. Assisted living costs can easily be a burden for many individuals and families, so discuss these added costs with any involved family members. Many families opt to sell a home to [pay](#) for assisted living care. If this is an option,

you will benefit from some upfront preparedness to make your home as appealing as possible to potential buyers. A broken window or [leaky pipe](#), for example, screams disrepair that can be disheartening to a buyer and not be a true representation of your home's valuable attributes. If you or a family member can't make repairs, you'll need to factor the cost of hiring someone to do them in the final sale price.

The dream and promise of continuity

Pets provide their owners and caregivers with consistency in their unwavering love and loyalty and provide [continuity](#), no matter where we are, what changes take place, or who else might leave us. These factors are important physical and emotional health considerations and are reason enough to be persistent in your search for a long-term care option that works for both of you so that you can continue to benefit from each other's companionship.

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