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**Office Dogs: Six top tips to prepare for a dog-friendly workplace**

**– how to enjoy increased productivity, profitability and happiness on International Dog Day**

Dog-friendly workplaces are becoming increasingly common, as employers welcome back workers who’ve become ‘pawrents’ since the start of the pandemic.

And the reasons to be pet-friendly are compelling. [Research](https://www.helpguide.org/articles/mental-health/mood-boosting-power-of-dogs.htm) shows that dogs don’t just make work more fun, they also improve productivity and profitability by reducing employee anxiety, depression and stress – illnesses associated to which accounted for over [13.7 million](https://nras.org.uk/resource/promoting-mental-wellbeing-at-work/) lost workdays last year alone. And dogs are also perfect for promoting trust, relaxation and friendliness amongst colleagues.

But it would appear that not enough workplaces are as welcoming as we’d like – and are missing out on the many benefits of co-working with canine companions.

Despite dog-friendly workplaces being on the rise, a recent survey by global pet brand [PetSafe®](http://www.petsafe.com/UK) for International Dog Day, on **Friday 26th August**, found that employers of just 9% of respondents offered a ‘bring your pet to work’ policy.

Here Jenny Swanson, HR & Chief People Officer at [PetSafe® Brand](http://www.petsafe.com/UK), reveals how more workplaces can easily become pet-friendly – creating safe and comfortable environments for dogs and colleagues – by following these six simple steps.

**Establish rules and make sure everyone sticks to them**

If a company is going to allow dogs, it's really important that they have an office dog policy which allows all current and new staff to be aware of the rules and regulations when it comes to bringing their own dogs into the office.

At PetSafe® Brand, our pet policy includes that dogs must: Not show no signs of aggression towards other pets or people; wear a collar at all times; be toilet trained; not be allowed in the kitchen; must be able to follow basic commands; be clean; not bark and be disruptive and must be up to date with immunisations, which means that puppies must be at least 14 weeks of age before being brought to work as that’s when they’ll be fully immunised.

**Think about space**

When establishing a pet-friendly policy at work, consider how many dogs can be comfortably accommodated each day. A limitless free-for-all can quickly end up being chaotic and stressful - for both humans and our furry friends.

And, as well as considering how much physical space is available for dogs, also think about easy ways to separate them - either by child gates or doors – should the need arise.

**Learn about dog body language**

Encourage those colleagues who aren’t so familiar with being around dogs to learn about canine body language and behaviour. There are lots of online resources that can be shared and uploaded to the intranet or other internal communication networks, or host trainings sessions.

This will help them to understand how dogs are feeling and how to respond, when it’s ok to approach the dogs and when they need space.

**Take a break**

It's important to create some calm spaces where dogs can comfortably sleep. Or maybe only allow dogs in for a maximum of four hours at a time, so that they go home for a well-deserved rest in between.

**Recognise that not all dogs are office dogs**

As with humans, some dogs just aren't suited to office life. They may find it too exciting, or it could be a really stressful experience for them.

It’s important to assess each dog on its suitability and talk to employers, employees and colleagues on an ongoing basis to ensure the dog is adjusting to the nine ‘til five.

**Create spaces to overcome boredom**

Just like many workplaces have office break out rooms with fun activities and decoration for humans, consider creating calm enrichment zones for dogs too.

Simple spaces with different textures, toys, and fillable food toys – such as our [range of enrichment toys](https://uk.petsafe.net/collections/enrichment-dog-toys) – will keep pets busy, and are a great way for dogs to spend a few minutes of positive, boredom-busting time to break up the day.

Jenny continues: “As you’d expect, at [PetSafe® Brand](http://www.petsafe.com/UK) we’ve long been advocates of dogs in the office and have been reaping the benefits for nearly 25 years.

“Research shows that playing with a dog reduces stress by up to a third and, let’s face it, no matter how hard your workday can sometimes be, all of the stress melts away when that little furry face comes over for a snuggle.

“When we stroke a dog, our bodies produce oxytocin – sometimes called the love hormone - which makes us feel more relaxed and happier. This means that dogs are great stress relievers and motivators to increase productivity, as well as being an excellent way to bring teammates closer together.

“We know that pet owners are very passionate about being able to take dogs to work. One recent study showed that more than two-thirds of them have looked for a more flexible job to be able care for their furry friends.

“We’d like to use International Dog Day as a platform to celebrate our most fabulous canine companions and hopefully encourage more workplaces to enjoy the many benefits they bring.”

For further information visit [www.petsafe.com/UK](http://www.petsafe.com/UK)

**ENDS**

**NOTES TO EDITORS**

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**About PetSafe® Brand**

PetSafe® Brand is a global pet product expert renowned for developing high quality, reliable product solutions that strengthen the bond between pets and pet parents.

Following its launch in 1998, the PetSafe® brand was quickly and solidly built around the provision of trusted training solutions, with innovative ideas in Containment, Training and Bark Control. Whilst these popular categories remain today, other product solutions include Pet Doors, Harnesses and Walking Solutions, Pet Fountains & Feeders, Cat & Dog Toys, Waste Management and a Travel, Access & Mobility range.

Its in-house teams of engineers and innovative design specialists are constantly researching, testing and developing new products, working closely with pet behaviourists, veterinary professionals and every day pet parents to ensure products are effective at keeping pets healthy, safe and happy.

Visit [www.petsafe.com/UK](http://www.petsafe.com/UK) for further details or connect on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/petsafeuk/), [Twitter](https://twitter.com/PetSafeUK) or [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/petsafe_uk/).