

What are the benefits of a Pet-friendly office?

(see the presentation)

Work is a leading source of stress worldwide. A generation ago, it was largely restricted to CEOs and high powered business people, but now most Australian workplaces are hugely demanding, with notifications and culture preventing us from leaving work at work.

With one in five Aussies taking time off the job because of work-related stress and anxiety, it's clear the Australian workforce could benefit from some creature comforts.

If the COVID crisis wasn't enough, we're dealing with a new beast: logging off Zoom, dusting off the non-elastic section of the wardrobe and returning to the workplace. For those of us who've shared a co-working space with our pets over the last 18 months, waving goodbye at the door feels like canine and feline sacrilege.

Making your office pet friendly has been proven to:

- Reduce stress levels, enhance coping skills and lower blood pressure.
- Squash pet-owner guilt about leaving them on their lonesome for the day.
- Wipe-out brain fog with lunchtime walks, toilet breaks and forced time in the sun.
- Boost office morale and communication... "Have you seen Story's bandana today?"
- Spread the benefits of chilling with a pet to the less fortunate (i.e. non-pet owners).
- Build an environment of camaraderie between the manager and their employees. Most workers are massively appreciative of small yet powerful actions like allowing dogs.

How to make your office pet friendly

Education, clear guidelines and fair ground rules will be your best friend here.

Making pets a valued and beneficial part of your workplace centres around 3 key themes:

1. Everyone feeling safe (pets included)
2. Avoiding chaos (smart rules are a must)
3. A little supervision

To make pets in the office work for you, you first need to understand that they are brilliantly, magically, fantastically unique. They vary in breed, personality, preferences, moods and more. Some love pats, others are wary of strangers.

CANA Pets in Business

Preparing your office for furry colleagues

It's important to consider your infrastructure.
The more people or the smaller the space, the more to consider.

Try to:

- Provide some gated or inaccessible areas to control movement and give dogs a safe and secure place to roam.
- Focus your dog-friendly zones on places with easy to clean floors, or nearby cleaning products. Hopefully it's only fur that you have to worry about, but accidents do happen.
- Provide a grassy patch outside for toilet breaks. Providing eco-friendly poop bags here would be a big bonus, for your employees and the environment. In the early days, employees could consider buddying up: watching each other's dog when somebody needs to use the bathroom, attend a meeting, and so on.