



With return-to-office mandates, are more workplaces embracing pet-friendly policies?

CANA Launches National Survey to Find Out on Take Your Dog to Work Day

Stress levels in Australian workplaces are among the highest, with employee burnout doubling and return-to-office mandates emerging as a key contributing factor, according to studies*.

Pet-inclusive policies can help reduce stress, boost wellbeing and strengthen workplace connection*. Yet many employers are still unsure how to implement them successfully, says national animal welfare charity [Companion Animal Network Australia](#) (CANA or Australia CAN).

On **Take Your Dog to Work Day (June 20)**, CANA is launching a [nationwide survey](#) to explore the current status of pets in the workplace, inviting employees and employers alike to share their experiences, opinions and challenges around welcoming pets at work.

“With so many people now balancing hybrid work or returning to offices full-time, we want to understand how attitudes toward pets in the workplace have shifted,” says Trish Ennis, CEO of CANA. “For many people, pets became essential companions during remote work, and they’re not so easy to leave behind. Our survey aims to explore whether workplaces are adapting to that reality.”

Benefits of pets in the workplace

Evidence continues to show that pets in the workplace can lead to reduced stress, stronger workplace morale and improved work-life balance*. However, many businesses are not prepared to have animals on site, with 64% lacking formal policies in place to support pets in the workplace, according to a global published study*.

Some businesses have challenges to navigate, such as allergies, building regulations or employee comfort.

“Creating a pet-friendly workplace involves carefully balancing the interests and rights of all employees, ensuring the welfare of the animals and managing the associated liability risks,” says Ms Ennis.

Plus, not every workplace is suitable for pets. For instance, a warehouse or other area that operates high-risk machinery. Some animals are also prohibited, such as snakes, spiders and uncaged bunnies who can chew up cords!

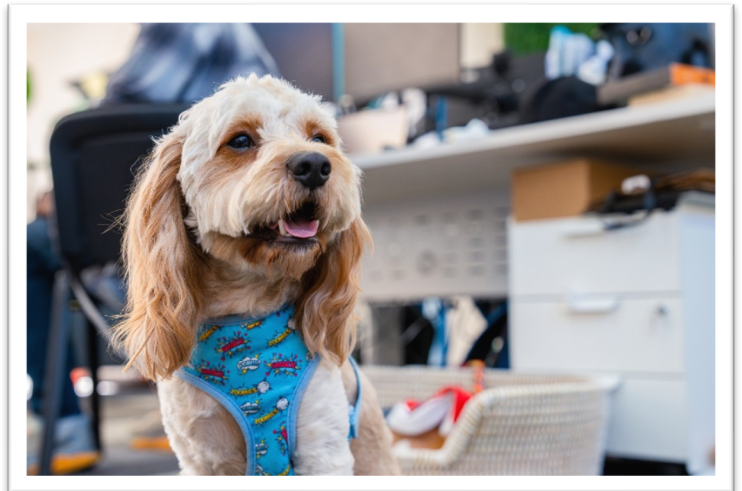


Photo credit: Eastern Innovation, CANA Pets in Business Partner

“All pets need to be trained and not cause disruptions, such as reactive dogs that tend to bark at other people or animals,” says Ms Ennis. “CANAs Pets in Business survey will help gauge how common pet-friendly workplaces in Australia really are in 2025, what concerns employers and staff have and what support is needed to make pet inclusion work for everyone.”

Get the Pets in Business Toolkit and support CANA

As part of its [Pets in Business initiative](#), CANA offers a comprehensive toolkit available for purchase by businesses interested in exploring or formalising pet-friendly policies. The toolkit can also be custom branded to reflect the company’s identity and workplace needs.

It includes:

- Policy templates
- Rules for pets and people
- Pet-friendly and pet-free zone signage
- Office pet rosters

Purchasing a Pets in Business toolkit supports CANA’s ongoing work with animal welfare member agencies across the country. For more information or pricing, please contact info@australiacan.org.au

“As some companies struggle to persuade employees to spend more time working onsite, implementing a pet-friendly policy might be the perfect solution for creating happier and more productive workplaces!” says Ms Ennis.

“Even a small change, like one pet day a week, can have a big impact. We’re inviting businesses to start the conversation and we’re here to help guide them.”

For tips to make your office pet friendly, please visit <https://australiacan.org.au/can-your-office-be-pet-friendly>

Pets in Business Survey: Have your say

The survey is open to all Australian employees, employers and business owners, whether you already welcome pets at work or are just curious about the idea.

Take the survey <https://australiacan.org.au/pets-in-business-survey/>

Real stories from the workplace to the home office

Pets are making a difference in diverse work settings, from physiotherapy clinics and creative agencies to co-working spaces.

- At Sydney’s Inspired Physiotherapy clinic, a [German Shorthaired Pointer named Benji](#) helps clients feel at ease during treatment.
- At Pepperit in Newcastle, NSW, [Chalky the Cattle Dog cross](#) is a regular team member who boosts morale in the office and sneaks into meetings for snacks.
- Pets are also welcome at [Eastern Innovation](#) in Melbourne, a CANA Pets in Business partner. The pets love the attention and pats, and the owners love the attention their pets get.

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