

November 2007

Dogs in the Workplace



THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES



Why Dogs in the Workplace?

- Mission consistency
- Higher standard of care for dogs
- Improved employee morale
- Additional employee benefit (higher recruitment/retention rates)
- Reduced employee absenteeism
- Higher employee productivity
- Reduced home-work tension for employees
- Higher degree of employee life balance
- Lower stress level in the workplace



Timeline

- Proposal pitched to CEO (Jun 2006)
- Initial staff announcement (Jul 2006)
- Staff survey (Jul 2006)
- Dogs in the Office (“DIO”) committee meetings (Aug-Oct 2006)
- Admin/Finance/OGC review (Nov-Dec 2006)
- Policy/Procedures finalized (Dec 2006)
- Report to CEO (Dec 2006)
- Staff announcement (Dec 2006)
- Proposed implementation (Jan 2007)



Staff Survey Highlights

- More than half of the HSUS staff completed the online survey (219).
 - More than two-thirds (68%) supported allowing dogs in the workplace and another 18% were “not sure.”
 - 47% have canine family members
 - Of those, 59% have one dog, 26% have 2 dogs, and 17% have 3 or more dogs
 - Of those employees who have worked in dog-friendly workplaces before (a third of all employees), 78% support a policy allowing dogs
 - A total of 54 employees want to bring a dog to the workplace.
 - Another 51 employees report an inclination toward adopting a dog if they could bring them to work.
- Primary concerns: enforcement, distractions, dog fights, allergies, and sanitary issues.
- Primary benefits: stronger mission consistency, ability to work longer hours, improved morale, and improved work-life balance.
- Suggestions: carefully screen dogs for appropriateness, fair and strict enforcement, and no free-roaming.



Non-negotiable Principles

- Appropriate dogs only
- No other animals considered at this time
- One owned dog per employee
- Initial limit of 30 in Gaithersburg
- Controlled (not free-roaming) situation
- Professional environment preserved
- Workplace distractions minimized
- Even-handed enforcement
- Allergy sufferers accommodated
- Zero tolerance policy for human aggression
- Organization-wide policy
- Adherence to local animal control ordinances
- Consistency with stated HSUS policies



Dog Criteria

- Requirements for bringing a dog to the workplace
 - No history of demonstrated aggression toward humans
 - House-trained
 - Does not disturb others
 - Spayed or neutered
 - Current license tag, worn on a collar with current identification
 - Up to date on vaccinations
 - Free of fleas and does not have an offensive odor

- Other rules
 - Dog and all bedding are kept clean
 - Kept under control at all times
 - One dog per employee
 - Minimum of 3 days per week
 - Owned dogs only (no foster dogs)



Application/Approval Process

- Two-part “Request for Dog in the Workplace” form
 - Part I
 - Requests basic information and proof of s/n, vaccination and license
 - Requires supervisor approval
 - Approval initiates 20-day (4-week) probationary period
 - Part II
 - Completed with supervisor at end of probation
 - Requires evaluation of adherence to policy/supervisor approval
 - Approval grants permission for dog to come to work regularly



Dogs in the Workplace

Application/Approval Process (continued)

Employee Request for Dog in the Workplace: Part 1

Employee Name: _____ Office: _____ Position: _____
 Department: _____
 Email: _____
 Dog Name: _____ Microchip _____
 Color(s): _____
 Approx Weight: _____
 Emergency Contact: _____
 Veterinarian: _____
 Distinguishing Marks: _____
 Designated "Sitter": _____

Spayed/Neutered* (circle one): Y N (Attach proof)
 Current Vaccinations? (check all that apply & attach proof)
 Rabies* Distemper**
 Heartworm
 Current License** (circle one): Y N (Attach proof)
 License Number: _____
 ** = Required ** = Required for dogs

Is your dog completely house-trained? (circle one): Y
 Has your dog ever shown aggression toward humans (circle one): Y
 If yes, please describe: _____
 Please state your reasons for wanting to bring your dog to work: _____
 Schedule for bringing dog to the workplace is (circle one): _____

I confirm that I have read and that I understand each and every provision of HSUS' Dogs in the Workplace Policy, as set forth in The HSUS Employee Handbook. If this "Employee Request for Dog in the Workplace" is approved, I agree to be bound by all terms and conditions of the "Employee Request for Dog in the Workplace", and I expressly authorize the HSUS to withhold from my net biweekly wages any costs that may be incurred by the HSUS as a result of my violation of the Dogs in the Workplace Policy.

Employee Signature _____ Date _____
 Preliminary Approval (check one): Granted* Denied
 Supervisor Signature _____ Date _____
 Probationary Period: _____ to _____ Date _____

**Note that approval does not guarantee continued participation in the program. Privileges may be revoked at any time for reasons identified in the Dogs in the Workplace Policy.*

Employee Request for Dog in the Workplace: Part 2

Employee Name: _____ Office: _____ Position: _____ Tel: _____
 Department: _____
 Email: _____ Supervisor: _____
 Dog Name: _____
 Probationary Period: _____ to _____ Date _____

Probationary Period Checklist

	Yes	No	Corrective Action Needed?
Dog accompanied employee to work as scheduled?			
Dog wearing collar, license tag and identification at all times?			
Dog under employee's control at all times?			
Dog not taken to common areas or meetings?			
Dog not disruptive to employee or others?			
Employee responsive to any colleague requests/concerns?			
Dog's bedding, bowls, etc. kept clean?			
Dog taken out regularly?			
Dog not causing any unworkable allergy issues for colleagues?			

Please describe any corrective actions that need to be taken to ensure compliance: _____

Final Approval (check one): Granted* Denied Date _____
 Supervisor Signature _____
**Note that approval does not guarantee continued participation in the program. Privileges may be revoked at any time for reasons identified in the Dogs in the Workplace Policy.*



Employee Responsibilities

- Dog must always be under the employee's control (confined to cube or on leash in hallways/outdoor areas).
- No dog may be tethered or tied up.
- Indoors and out, employees are responsible for immediately cleaning up after his or her dog.
- Any dog bite incident – involving humans or other animals, no matter how trivial – that takes place on HSUS property must be reported immediately to the Human Resources Section.
- Dogs may not be left alone for more than ten minutes. Whenever the employee leaves the building, he or she must take the dog along.



Policy

- “As an animal protection organization that promotes and celebrates the human-animal bond, The HSUS recognizes there are some employees who would benefit from being able to bring their dog to the workplace. As such, The HSUS permits each employee the privilege of bringing one dog to work with them on a regular basis (for a minimum of three days per week) subject to specific requirements and only after receiving their supervisor’s permission.”
- Includes: requirements, employee responsibilities, enforcement management, complaint process, discipline process, employee discipline, infractions



Allergies

- Employees with dogs shall take all possible steps to keep their dogs and their areas clean (thus reducing potential for allergies significantly).
- The health and welfare of any employee shall take precedence over the privilege of another employee to bring his/her dog to the workplace.
- At any time, employees experiencing allergic reactions to specific dogs may ask the owner to refrain from bringing the dog to the workplace if the presence of the dog makes it difficult for the allergic employee to work.
- If the affected employee feels uncomfortable dealing directly with the employee whose dog is causing their allergic reaction, they can report concerns either to that employee's supervisor or to the Human Resources Section.



Enforcement

- Primary enforcer is supervisor, with notification to the Human Resources Section
- Complaints directed to supervisor, or to the Human Resources Section
- Discipline process modeled on existing progressive discipline system
- If a dog is prohibited from the workplace, the employee may reapply after a period of six months. Proof of training or corrective efforts will be required upon re-application.
- Employee responsible for paying any costs associated with cleaning, repair and/or replacement of HSUS property or property belonging to any employee or visitor caused by dog.




Dogs in the Workplace

Signage

Notice to Employees: Dog in the Workplace

My name is: _____




My traffic light color is:

For me, a red light means:

*Please don't approach me.
I'm just here to be with my person and
am sometimes scared of people.*

(space where people can hand-write notes
specific to their dog)

Please respect my temperament and instructions for your interaction with me.

Thank you! 



Handouts

Additional "Building Codes"

In addition to the policy and other provisions for dogs in the workplace, here are some guidelines for managing your dog effectively in your building. Since most of the regional offices have been permitting dogs in the workplace for some time and this is the first time dogs will be allowed in the DC-area offices, we've identified specific "building codes" for the Gaithersburg, L Street and C Street offices.



All

- 🐾 Your dog should be on leash whenever he/she is with you beyond your office/cubicle – whether indoors or outside.
- 🐾 Lobbies, mailrooms, bathrooms, kitchens and conference rooms are considered "dog-free zones."
- 🐾 Employees with dogs shall enter/exit through the door nearest their cubicle/office, always avoiding (where possible) the main front entrance/exit.
- 🐾 Please do not let your dog eliminate on the grassy areas directly abutting your building. Be sure to bring along bags to pick up after your dog; dispose of waste in appropriate receptacles.
- 🐾 Please avoid walking your dog or loitering with him or her near the main entrance.

Gaithersburg

- 🐾 The elevator and shipping dock are additional "dog-free zones."



Handouts (continued)



Working with Canine Colleagues

Not everyone is a "dog person." Some people are comfortable around dogs while others are not. Since you're working in an office with canine colleagues, here are some basic tips on canine behavior that will promote successful interactions in the workplace and help keep the peace.

❖ **Ask first.** All employees with dogs in their cubicles/offices will post signs indicating the dog's presence along with an introduction to their dog. Colleagues should ask for permission before interacting with the dog.

❖ **"No thanks."** It is okay to decline to be petted and to set boundaries of your dog. It is also okay to ask for an alternative to go about your work.

Being a Considerate Canine Colleague

Ok, so you're a "dog person." And you're excited to be bringing your canine companion to the office. While by and large your colleagues support you having a furry cubicle mate, it is important to continue to show courtesy and consideration to everyone you work with. Here are some simple ideas to help keep the peace and ensure the "dogs in the office" privilege becomes a solid HSUS tradition.

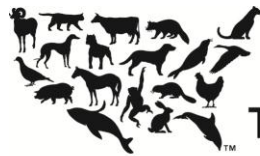
❖ **Dress for success.** Now that your dog has a full-time job, he or she must consider hygiene a top priority. Bathing your dog often, keeping nails trimmed and ears clean, and brushing the dog's coat several times per week are all good habits anyway, but such efforts will ensure your pup will get positive attention from your co-workers. Also remember to use a good flea/tick preventative, especially during the summer months (before the first freeze). And be sure to bring bedding, towels, soft toys or other textile dog accoutrements home weekly to be laundered.



Please be responsible so we can keep coming to work!



Yoda Fearing



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