

# HR SURVIVAL GUIDE TO Pet-Related Benefits

Boost Employee Wellness and Retention  
with 5 Perks They're Looking For

## INSIDE:

Transform your workplace from  
“whatever” to waggy by ...

- 🐾 Reducing workplace stress
- 🐾 Retaining great employees
- 🐾 Attracting top talent



**PetFriendly**  
OFFICE.COM



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# Welcome, employee happiness manager!

I'm Pam Foster, your Chief Pet-Friendly Officer at PetFriendlyOffice.com. And this is my little drawing of Louie my beloved officemate and doggy soulmate.



If you want to be your company's HR champion ...

**It's time to go bold with pet-related perks that transform your workplace from “meh” to magnetic.**

From “just a regular office” to a bodacious place your employees will enjoy and appreciate.

From “whatever” to waggy.

The future of employee wellness is furry, four-legged, and fiercely effective ... and you're about to lead the way as a superhero making a real impact.

**First, what exactly do pet fans want at work?**

If you've been following the latest employee benefits trends, you know that pet-related perks can be extremely attractive to employees. Much appreciated, in fact.

For instance, a [Nationwide Insurance survey article](#) noted these findings:

*“Nearly one-third of pet owners surveyed said they would be more likely to stay at an employer that offered pet benefits.*

“What kinds of benefits?” you may ask.

The Nationwide article listed the following top benefits that employees with pets are seeking (among others):



**Aha. And how do these findings affect your organization’s goals?**

It's very likely that your human-resource goals include:

## 1. Enhancing employee wellbeing and mental health in a supportive and inclusive culture

I assume you're looking for ways to foster a workplace that supports the mental and physical well-being of employees, so they'll be more productive, happier, and likely to stick around.

You're bound to win when you create a workplace culture where your staff feels valued and supported in all aspects of their lives, including their roles as pet parents.

But let's back this up with facts.

[A HABRI \(human animal bond research institute\) article](#) reports from an HR survey,

*“Nearly 87% of HR professionals believe that offering pet insurance demonstrates the company’s care for employees and their families.”*

[A SoaringGroup.com article](#) noted,

*“Pet-friendly benefits-such as pet insurance, veterinary telehealth, and pet bereavement leave are recognized as effective ways to reduce stress, boost morale, and foster a positive work environment.”*

According to [the SHRM \(Society for Human Resources Management\)](#),

*“Pet-friendly policies, such as flexible schedules for pet care, “pawternity” leave, and even bring-your-pet-to-work days, help employees feel included and understood, strengthening their connection to the organization,”*

I'll add that pets in the office have similar effects. If that's something you can offer — you'll be a superstar. I cover specifics in this playbook. (Read on even if you can't allow pets in the office.)

## 2. Retaining employees and reducing turnover

Pet-related benefits can go a long way in retaining great employees.

Here's a showstopping finding from [a different SHRM article](#):

*"[In] a recent Vetster survey of 1,800 employed pet owners ... 60% would consider leaving their job if it conflicted with their ability to care for their pet."*

But in the same article,

*"Nearly one-third of pet owners say they'd stick around longer for a company that rolls out pet benefits."*

## 3. Attracting top talent, candidates excited to join your company

There's really no doubt that pet-related benefits are a huge PLUS for standing out in a competitive job market, making employees respected.

In that same HABRI article I mentioned above, I found this astounding survey finding:

*"82% of HR professionals believe being/becoming pet friendly will help to recruit and retain the best talent – this rises to 85% for Millennial HR professionals."*

WOW, right?

When you're designing the best pet-related benefits for your company, you're not just ticking boxes.

You're building a culture that says, "We see you; we value you, and yes, your pets are part of the family." That's how you win hearts, minds, and the competitive market for top talent.

## Now let's talk about you.

### How will pet-related perks impact you and your career?

Let's consider your personal satisfaction for a moment.

If you successfully achieve your top three goals: enhancing employee well-being, retaining great employees, and attracting top talent — you're bound to personally benefit in several meaningful ways.

You'll foster tangible transformations among your officemates and the culture.

### Yes, that's a direct result of YOUR EFFORTS!

Who knows where your career will go as the architect of these positive changes?

And BONUS: If you're a pet parent, you can also enjoy the perks you've created for your company. Win-win!

### Next Up:

This playbook explores the five pet-related benefits employees want most, giving you helpful facts and actionable steps to consider for implementation. Start with pets in the workplace and then discover other powerful pet perks your staff will appreciate.

Let's make it happen!

Pam Foster  
Your Chief Pet-Friendly Officer  
[PetFriendlyOffice.com](http://PetFriendlyOffice.com)

# #1

# Pet-Friendly Offices



## Where “bring your whole self” means Buddy, too

### Why Offer Pet-Friendly Offices?

*“Pets make us better people. You smile and laugh EVERY day when there’s an animal in your space. That’s such a huge benefit.”*

— Heather E. Lewis, AIA, NCARB, is the principal at Animal Arts Design Studios (pictured here with her pet chicken May)

Looking for ways to lower employee stress? Consider allowing pets in the office. It’s proven that pets improve workplace relationships and satisfaction!

In the HABRI guide, “[Pets in the Workplace](#),” it’s reported that,



Imagine a brainstorm session with a sweet golden retriever at your feet, unleashing creativity.

# Let's Make it Happen

Here's a primary checklist to get you started:

## ✓ Develop clear policies:

- Specify which pets are allowed (e.g., dogs, cats) and set clear behavioral expectations. Plan to have a screening process with employees agreeing to follow the ground rules. Also make sure you're aligned with ADA service pet guidelines.
- Require up-to-date vaccinations and proof of good health.
- Designate areas for employees with allergies or phobias.
- Address insurance, liability waivers, and emergency protocols.

## ✓ Prepare your office space(s):

- Provide water stations, relief areas, waste disposal bags, pet beds, quiet toys, crates, leash hooks, and other essentials.
- Make sure pet-specific cleaning products are readily available for accidents, and consider hiring a cleaning company for a weekly thorough vacuuming, etc.
- Use a scheduling system to limit the number of pets in the office at one time as needed.

## ✓ Plan for communication and culture support

- Educate employees on the ground rules, office pet & disability service animal etiquette, and responsibilities.
- Regularly solicit feedback to address concerns and improve the program.
- Perhaps even form a pet-friendly office committee to share the monitoring and maintenance

## Is Your Office Ready for Pets?

Take this quick quiz to see if you're ready to allow pets in the office.  
Choose YES or NO to each of the following questions.

	YES	NO
<b>When it comes to space for pets...</b>	Are there areas for pets to roam, rest, and relieve themselves?	
	Is your office safe (no exposed wires, toxic plants, or dangerous items)?	
	Does your lease or building management allow pets?	
	Are you prepared to designate areas where pets are and aren't allowed?	
<b>When it comes to employee interest and commitment...</b>	Do you know if enough staff will want pets in the office?	
	Do you have a plan for employees with allergies or other concerns?	
	Are pet parents willing to sign waivers and provide proof of insurance?	
	Are they willing to supervise pets at all times and clean up after them?	
<b>When it comes to policies and standards...</b>	Have you determined which pets are allowed (dogs, cats, others)?	
	Have you outlined any health and vaccination requirements?	
	Have you outlined rules regarding social behavior, house-trained, non-aggressive, barking or disruptive?	
	Do you have a plan to use air purifiers, noise reduction material, designated pet-free zones, and other pet-free accommodations?	
<b>When it comes to preparing the office...</b>	Do you plan to supply water bowls, crates, leash hooks, and other essentials?	
	Do you have a "cleanliness plan" with waste bags and cleaning supplies?	
<b>When it comes to employee communications...</b>	Do you have a regular communication plan (internal communications) that includes feedback?	
	Do you plan to host a meeting or workshop on pet policies and etiquette?	
	Do you have a protocol for handling pet-related issues with employees?	

If you have more NO than YES responses ... and you still want to establish a pet-friendly office ... now you have a checklist to accomplish it. You'll find guidance and tools for each of these items at [PetFriendlyOffice.com](http://PetFriendlyOffice.com)

# #2 Pet Insurance

## Financial peace of mind with a side of meow-wonderful

### Why Offer Pet Insurance?

By offering group pet insurance plans, sometimes with discounts, you'll be the unicorn in a field of horses. Mr. Jubilee the cat (shown here) agrees.

An article [by Spot Pet Insurance](#) noted,

*“Rising veterinary costs make pet insurance a valuable support, reducing financial stress for pet owners.”*

And in an article [by AllWork](#):

*“78% of HR professionals believe pet insurance is an important benefit, and it helps differentiate your company in a competitive market.”*

Alrighty then! It's obvious that pet insurance plans help employees manage unexpected veterinary costs ... which means employees are less anxious about pet emergencies, reducing absenteeism. Everyone wins, essentially.



## Let's Make it Happen

### ✓ Offer plans that make sense for your group

- Explore and partner with top pet insurance providers that offer group rates, make enrollment seamless, and provide excellent communications and service.
- Try to offer plan options to cover different pet types and needs.
- See which insurance companies are accepted by the most veterinary practices your employees are likely to use based on location, etc.
- Consider subsidizing premiums for greater impact.

### ✓ Make enrollment easy with clear, helpful communication

- When introducing the different options, throw in info sessions with real-life stories. Nothing makes coverage clear like a “saved by pet insurance” tale.
- Integrate a simple pet insurance enrollment process into your benefits portal online.
- Host information sessions and provide clear plan comparisons.

### ✓ Provide ongoing support

- Reassess provider offerings and employee satisfaction.
- Offer support for navigating claims and understanding coverage.

# #3

# Pet Wellness and Preventive Care Plans

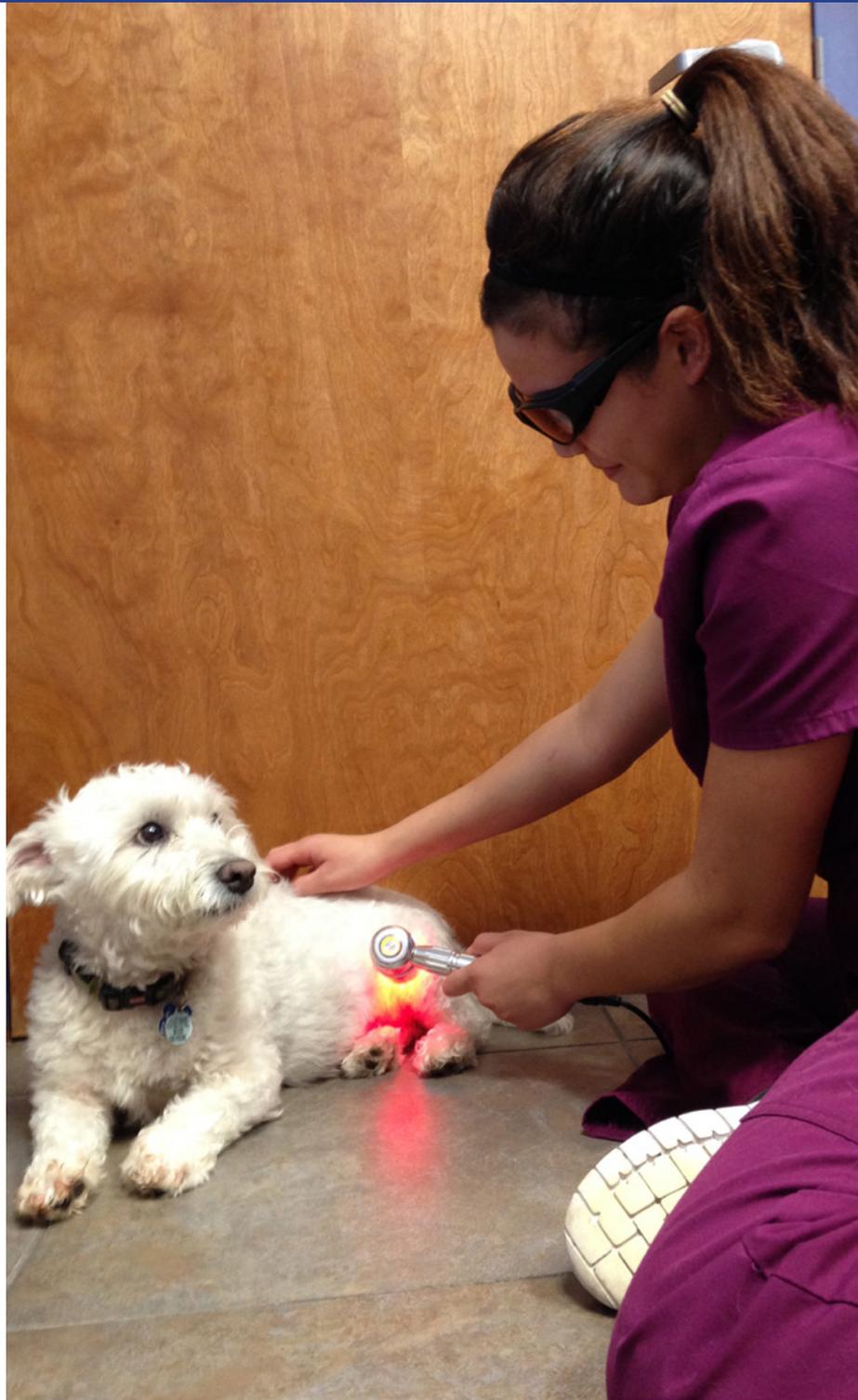
**Because healthy pets are everything**

**Why Offer Pet Wellness and Preventive Care Plans?**

Picture your team spending less time worrying about their pets and more time winning at the office. This is possible when you offer pet wellness and preventive plans that cover routine care, vaccinations, grooming, and other services like laser treatments on Louie here. >>

And it reduces emergencies and the need for time off.

More and more companies are offering wellness stipends, partnering with local veterinary practices, and making plan reimbursements a breeze.



## Let's Make it Happen

### ✓ Design a smart program...

- Offer a fixed annual or monthly reimbursement for preventive care.
- Collaborate with local vets or pet care providers for discounted services.
- Allow employees to use stipends for services not covered by insurance.

### ✓ Go for easy administration

- Streamline the process for submitting receipts and claims.
- Outline eligible expenses and documentation requirements.

### ✓ Spread the word

- Promote with a “Pet Wellness Month” and share success stories.
- Highlight the wellness plan during open enrollment and new-employee onboarding.
- Provide Resource Guides with lists of local providers and tips on preventive pet care.

# #4 Pet-Related Leave

## Show empathy with “pawternity” and bereavement time off

### Why Offer Pet-Related Leave?

Time off for major pet-life events allows employees to adjust. They’ll truly feel seen and value by your company when their life events, including new pets or pet loss, are recognized by their employer, as noted in [this article by Pet Benefit Solutions](#).

When it comes to introducing a new pet into the household like my newest grand-puppy Riggs here >>

... employees will be delighted, grateful, and loyal when they’re given time to help their new furry friend acclimate.

On the other end of the spectrum, the loss of a pet can be as devastating as losing a human family member. I know, because I was distraught when I had to say goodbye to my doggy soulmate Louie at 14-1/2 years old. He’d been with me since he was 9 weeks old. This little heart rock is my homage to Louie. >>

Kudos to you for having emotional intelligence — driving initiatives that acknowledge pets as family members.



## Let's Make it Happen

### ✓ Develop feel-good policies

- Offer paid/unpaid pawternity leave for adopting or caring for a new pet.
- Provide pet bereavement leave for the loss of a pet.
- Define clear guidelines: which pets and circumstances qualify for eligibility.

### ✓ Make administration an easy no-brainer

- Integrate into existing leave request systems.
- Educate managers on responding empathetically and confidentially.

### ✓ Communicate to all employees, everywhere (plus job candidates)

- Clearly outline leave options in the employee handbook.
- Encourage employees to use this benefit without stigma.
- Reinforce these benefits in employees newsletters and other materials.

# #5

# Veterinary Care & Grooming Services

## Bring services to the office (so convenient!)

### Why Offer On-Site Veterinary Care and Grooming, and Perhaps Even Training?

If you're allowing pets in the office, why not add on-site pet-care services?

You'll help employees in a big way because they won't need to take time off for appointments (or travel back and forth to them). Mobile vets and grooming services come to your office and voila! Taken care of.

This photo is from [Doorstep Veterinary Care](#), an awesome mobile practice serving Northern VA and MD (Photo used with Dr. Nickens' permission.)

When you host mobile vet days, partner with local mobile groomers, and make booking appointments a cinch... you can turn pet care into a community event.



## Let's Make it Happen

### ✓ Establish service partnerships

- Partner with nearby vets and groomers for on-site visits if possible, maybe discounts, too!
- Host regular mobile vet/grooming days at the office.
- Offer reimbursements for out-of-office services.

### ✓ Offer easy scheduling and logistics

- Use digital tools/online booking to help employees schedule and access services.
- Ensure safe, hygienic spaces for on-site services. (Mobile services are ideal for this benefit!)

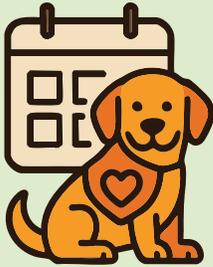
### ✓ Communicate clearly and often to boost employee use of these benefits

- Use internal communication channels to announce service days and discounts.
- Survey participants to improve future offerings.
- Gather employee feedback to monitor happiness and make continuous improvements.

# BONUS:

## Additional Ideas

I've heard of other wonderful pet-related benefits, including:



**Therapy pet office visits**, a monthly event for locations that can't allow pets in the workplace. Set up a separate space outside if possible.



Employee pet training: enlist a **local trainer** to come and offer office-friendly sessions.



**Doggy yoga days**, a big hit!

**Invite your team to get creative!  
It can make a huge difference.**

# 7 Best Practices for Launching Pet-Related Benefits

- 1 Send out a survey to find out which pet perks would actually make your team's tails wag. Let their voices drive your next big move.
- 2 Roll out a pilot program that gets people talking, gather honest feedback, and then scale up the perks that spark real excitement.
- 3 Build inviting spaces for pets to chill along with dedicated pet-free zones so everyone can work and breathe easy.
- 4 Set the gold standard for a safe workplace. Every pet perk should be safe and 100% above-board with local laws.
- 5 Use a simple sign-up system to keep the number of pets in the office just right.
- 6 Encourage honest conversations between pet owners and non-owners so everyone feels heard, respected, and part of the team.
- 7 Host lively pet days, creative contests, or and/or adoption drives that bring everyone together and turn your workplace into a place people can't stop talking about.

# Conclusion

**With your compassion and guidance, your office pet perks will be a big hit!**

Pet-related benefits are powerful tools for engagement, retention, and wellbeing. Oscar and Stella here couldn't agree more.



And YOU'LL make a major, meaningful difference to employee happiness.

By choosing one or more of the five most-desired benefits, you'll help foster a culture that values employees as whole people, pets included. This not only attracts top talent but also creates a more compassionate, productive, and loyal workforce.

# About PetFriendlyOffice.com

If you're an HR Manager or business owner, you'll appreciate having "All the Things to Make Pet-Related Benefits Easy" in one place. With my **Pet-Friendly Office DIY SYSTEM** (checklists, templates, policy guidance, and more), you can set up everything yourself. Or you can have me handle most of it for you through my **Pet-Friendly Office CONCIERGE SYSTEM**. Can't allow pets in the office? I can help you choose other popular benefits for your company. Ultimately, you'll be the hero who leads a pet-friendly culture, increasing employee retention and attracting top talent.

Let's make quick work of your mission. Visit [PetFriendlyOffice.com](https://www.petfriendlyoffice.com) to see how I can help.

— Pam Foster, your Chief Pet-Friendly Officer

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