

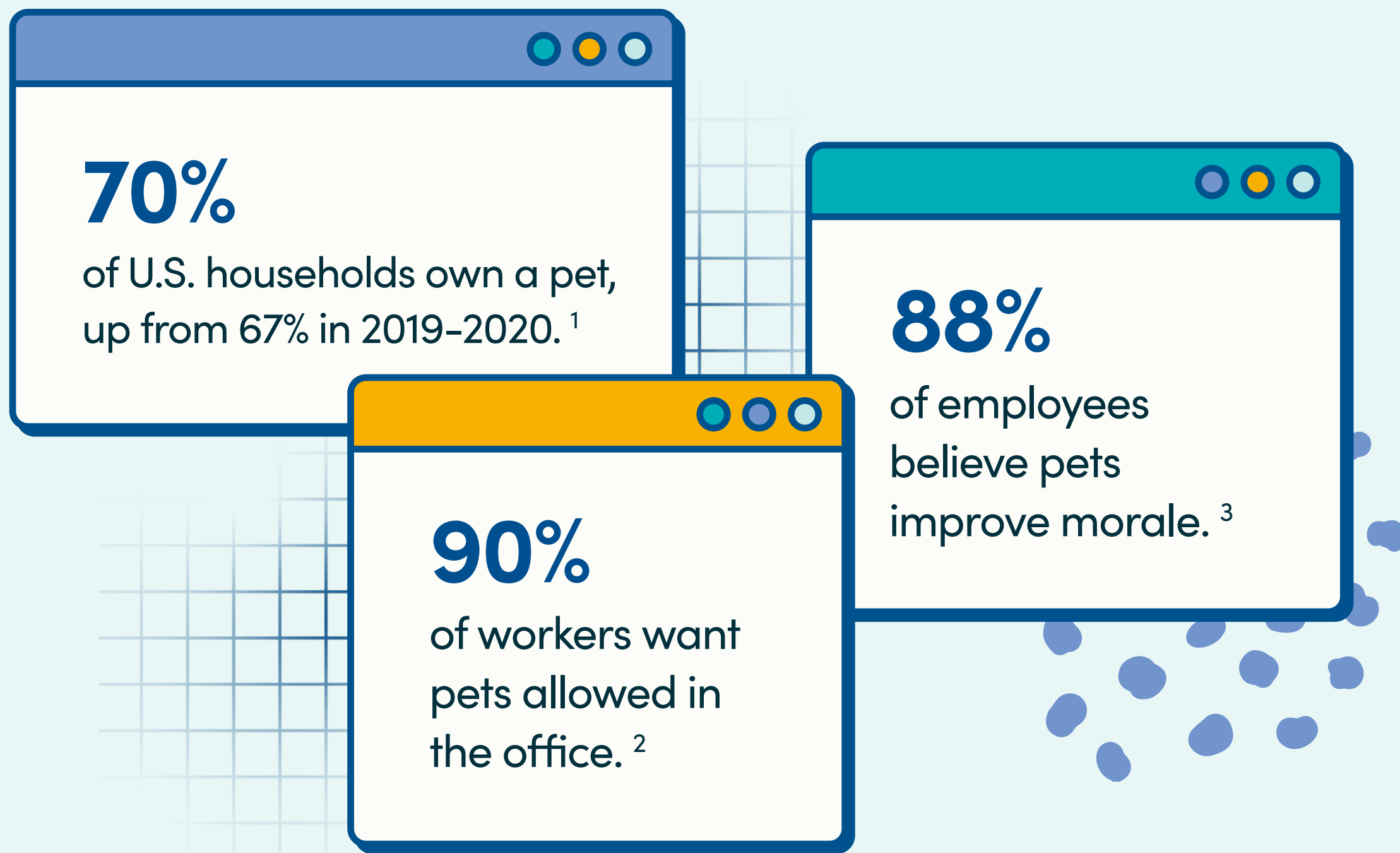
# Dogs At Work

A Guide to Creating a  
Pet-Friendly Workplace





From office policies to benefits packages, more companies than ever **are becoming pet-friendly** to improve employee morale, recruit and retain talent, and bring wagging tails to the workplace.



We've been pet-friendly for over a decade. **Here's how it's made an impact:**

- Improvements in physical and mental health
- Positive shift in company culture
- Higher employee retention rate
- Increase in number of applicants
- Less stress in and outside of the office
- More fun and laughter

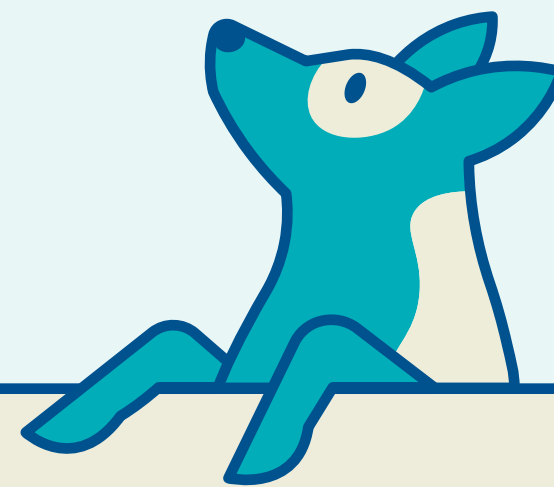
**89%** of pet owners globally say they've experienced the mental health and/or physical **health benefits of the human-animal bond.** <sup>4</sup>

We want to share this success with other companies. That's why we created *Dogs at Work*, a step-by-step guide to help employers make their workplace dog friendly.

## Company Benefits

Employees expect company benefits that go above and beyond medical coverage and retirement funds. A recent study showed that pet insurance is the third fastest growing employee benefit.<sup>5</sup>

Another showed that **71%** of Gen Z and **48%** of Millennial pet owners want to bring their pets back to work. Being a pet-friendly workplace is a cost-effective and great way to **invest in employee wellbeing**, not to mention attracting and retaining top talent.<sup>6</sup>

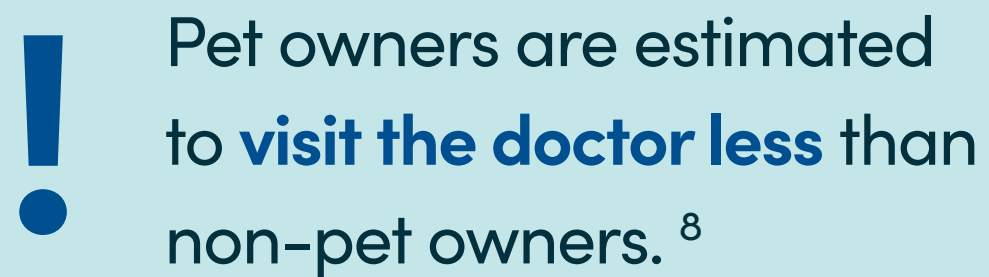


**“Pet-friendly policies reflect a commitment to innovation and flexibility in the workplace. It’s about recognizing that a pet’s companionship can bring joy, reduce stress, and ultimately enhance productivity and creativity of teams at all types of organizations.”**

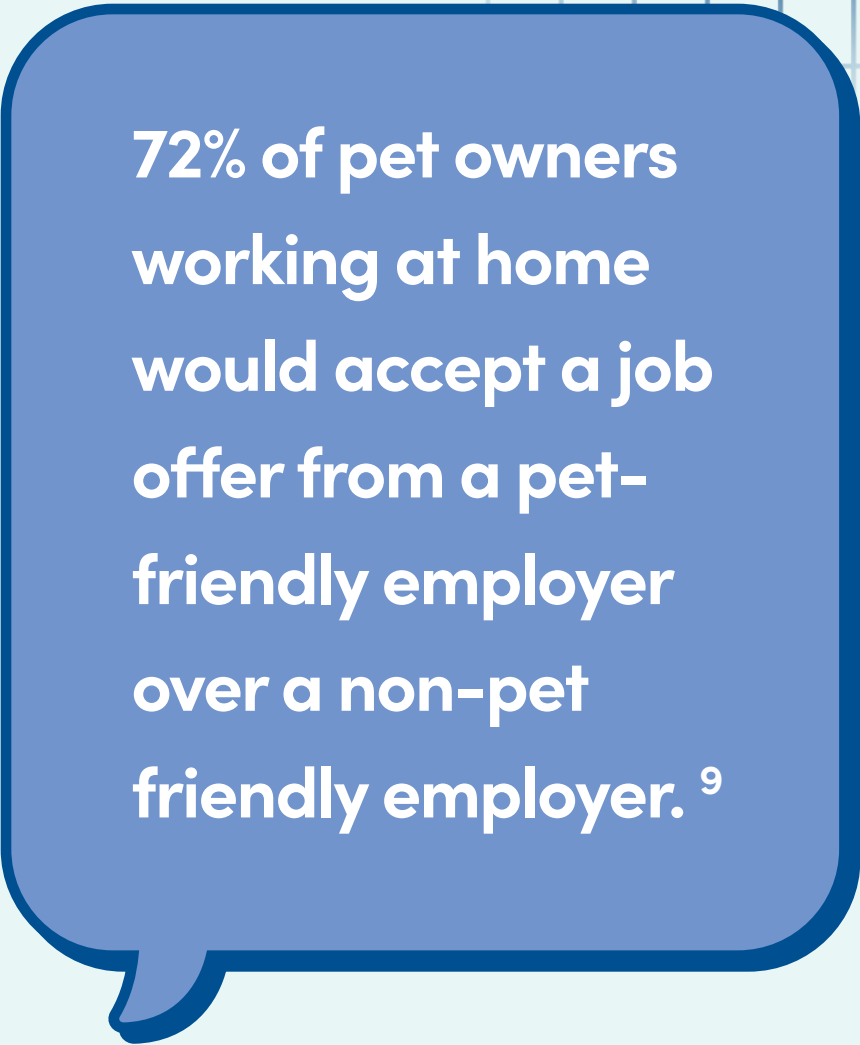
**Michelle Yates**  
EVP Business Development, PetPartners




95% of pet parents rely on their pet for **stress relief**.<sup>7</sup>



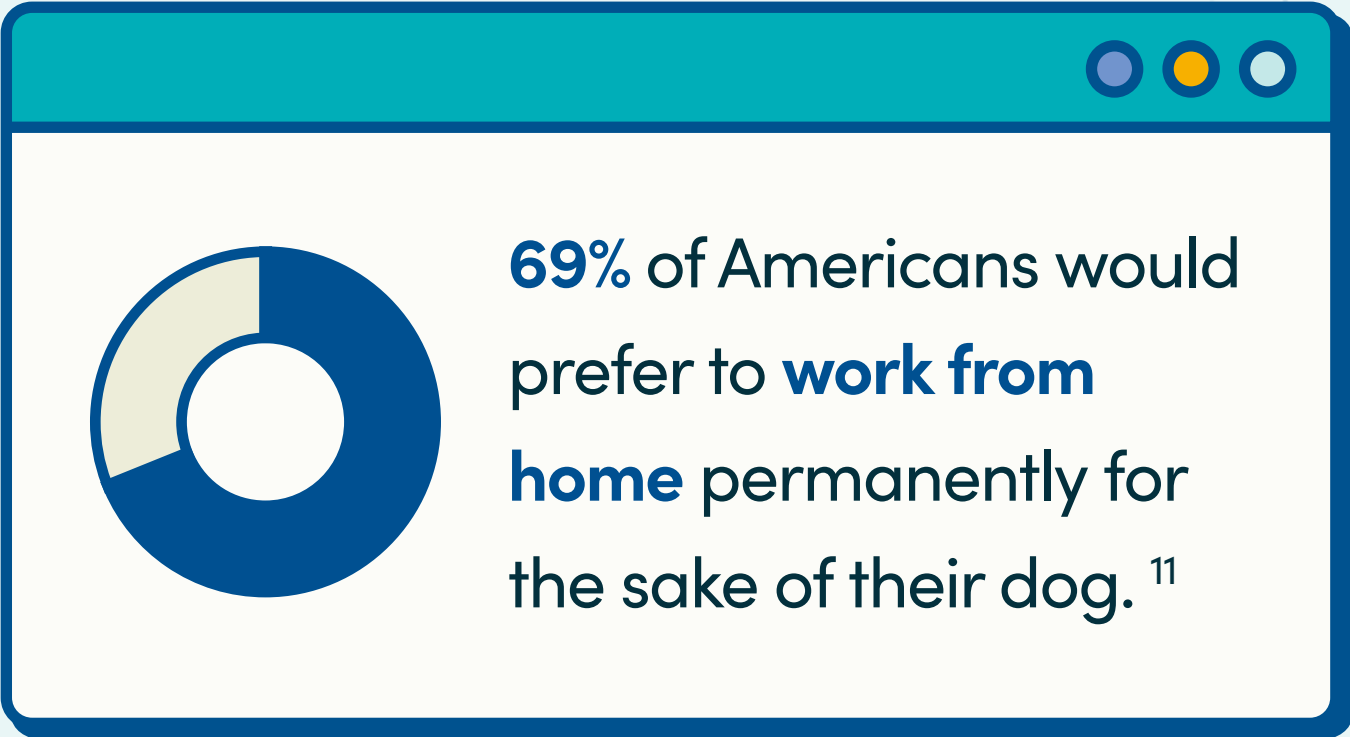
! Pet owners are estimated to **visit the doctor less** than non-pet owners.<sup>8</sup>




72% of pet owners working at home would accept a job offer from a pet-friendly employer over a non-pet friendly employer.<sup>9</sup>



90% of those aged 18 to 26 say they **consider their dog** when making decisions about their careers.<sup>10</sup>



69% of Americans would prefer to **work from home** permanently for the sake of their dog.<sup>11</sup>



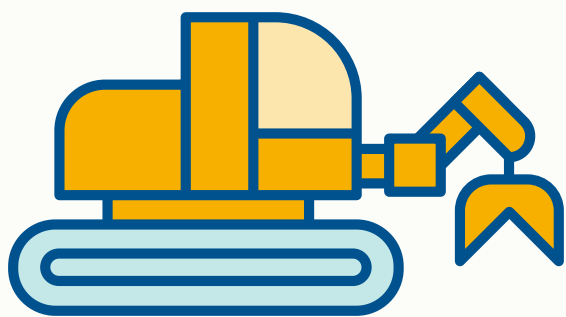
Interacting with dogs **enhances people's executive function**— their ability to think, plan, memorize and concentrate.<sup>12</sup>

## Step 1: Get the Ball Rolling

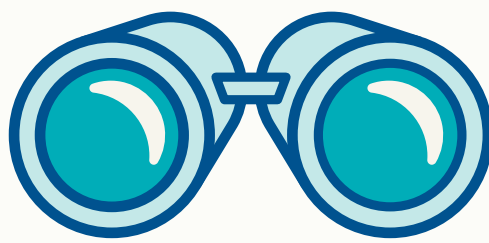
### A Good Fit for The Office?

While it would be wonderful if every office could be dog-friendly, in some cases it isn't feasible. The checklist below will help determine **if becoming pet-friendly is right for your office.**

### Areas to Check



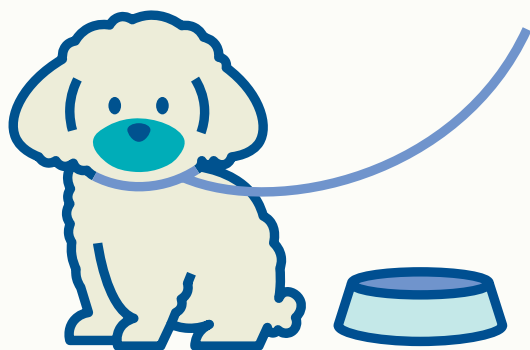
Is your workplace free of heavy equipment and machinery?



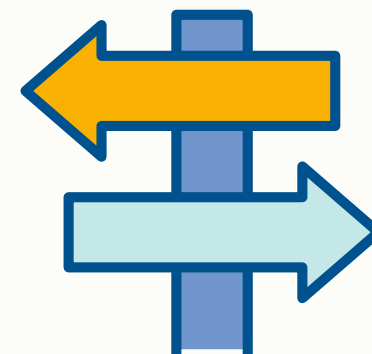
Are there employees that could and would help implement and oversee this program?



Are there spaces you can easily designate as a "No Dogs Zone?"



Does each employee have a personal workspace, where they can confine their dogs?



If visitors come into the office, can you easily separate them from the dogs, if needed?

If you answered "**No**" to one or more of these questions, becoming a dog-friendly workspace **may not be right for you.**

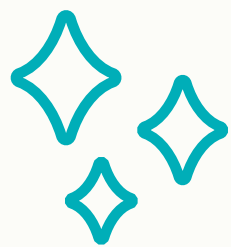
## Conduct an Employee Survey

Once you've decided your workplace is a good fit for four-legged friends, send out an anonymous survey to **determine employee interest** in the program. The survey is an opportunity for in-office employees to express interest and voice their concerns.

Include a draft of office rules, the dog-approval process, and alternative options your office is considering.

1 New Email

1. Would you bring your dog into the office if the option was given?
2. Do you have any concerns about the office becoming dog-friendly?
3. Would you be interested in any of the alternative options being offered?



### Cleaning

Increased cleaning to reduce dirt and dander



### Dog-Free Zones

Workspaces, conference rooms, and entrances/exits where dogs are not allowed



### Air Purification Systems

Placed throughout the office to help with allergies



### Work from Home days

Scheduled days when dogs are allowed in the office and others can work from home if they prefer

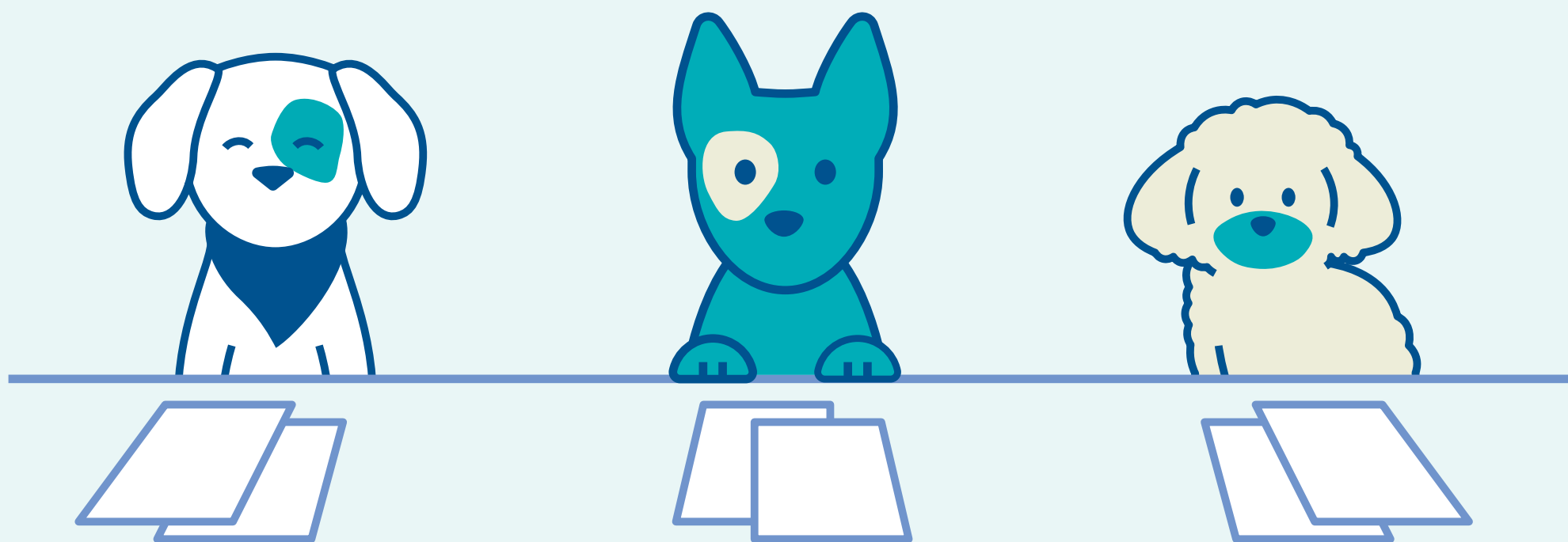
4. Do you have any additional suggestions or thoughts you would like to share?



## Step 2: Form a *Dogs at Work* Committee

Your employees have voiced their approval—**dogs in the workplace are a winning idea!**

Now, create a committee that will be responsible for establishing rules, handling approval paperwork, and keeping the office running smoothly.



### **Committee Members**

The committee should consist of team members who are interested in bringing their dog to work and at least one person from Human Resources or the senior management team.

### **Establishing Rules**

*Dogs at Work* provides a general list of rules as a guideline, and they are meant to be tailored to fit your office's needs. Make sure that you're aware of each state and local government's different codes and regulations regarding animals in places of business.

### **Fetching Feedback**

Consider implementing a regular feedback cycle, including surveys or feedback boxes, to gauge ongoing employee satisfaction with the dog-friendly policy. This step can help identify areas for improvement and adjust your policies as needed.



## Dog Do's and Don'ts



### Getting the Landlord's Agreement

To show your landlord that you have anticipated their concerns and will ensure the program runs smoothly, provide them with the following items that demonstrate how your company will take responsibility for dogs in the workplace:

- A copy of the *Dogs at Work* application process and rules, established procedures for emergencies, and cleaning plan.
- A copy of the pest control plan, which should include what company and method you will use to remove pests.



### Reviewing Applications and Issuing Approvals

Ensure employees have a copy of the company's rules to review. Hand out applications and handle approval paperwork for new applications and renewals, while maintaining a list of approved dogs. Upon a dog's approval, the committee will place the Dog ID outside the employee's workspace.



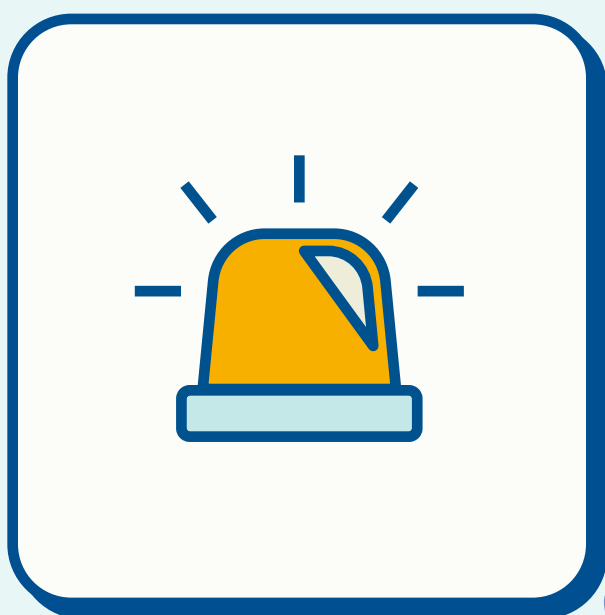
### Maintaining a Dog-Friendly Office

Oversee both the dog-friendly and dog-free spaces by posting the appropriate signage, ensuring no damage has occurred to the office, and keeping an eye on the outdoor dog walking area.



### **Determining the Dogs Per Day Limit**

Consider the size of the office space, layout, and landlord agreement to best determine the number of dogs allowed per day. If there are more approved dogs than the office limit, set up a schedule or a sign-up system to help determine when each eligible dog has access to the office.



### **Establish Emergency Protocols**

Create an emergency and evacuation plan inclusive of office dogs to keep every person and pet safe. Consider your plan for multiple emergency scenarios, including a fire or natural disaster, and coordinate with the on-site fire marshal as needed. Review the plan with approved dog owners and post the plan in the office. Practicing fire drills with dogs in the office can help to ensure safety in the event of a real emergency.

Additionally, keep a pet first-aid kit in the office and explore having someone certified in pet first aid onsite in case of an accident.

## Step 3: Two Paws Up Approval Process

Creating an Approval Process will **ensure employees and dogs are safe** in the office and tails stay wagging. The guide below should be adjusted based on your office's needs and may need to be revisited over time.

It is also important to consider that the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires businesses to make reasonable accommodations for employees with disabilities, which can include service animals. Understanding this distinction between service animals, which are protected under the ADA, and pets.

### Employee Application

Have employees fill out an application providing their dog's details, affirming their understanding of office rules, and accepting responsibility for their dog's behavior. The form will also nominate a 'buddy' to supervise the dog in dog-free zones.

Additionally, ask for proof of the dog's health records, current vaccinations, and obedience and socialization training.

### Health Requirements

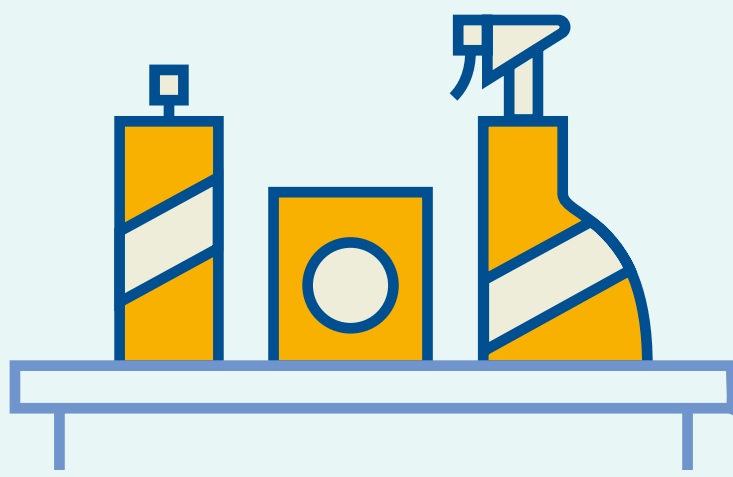
Employees should ensure their dog is healthy before coming into work. Dogs exhibiting any sign of illness, including fever, lethargy, vomiting, or diarrhea, should be sent home.

Additionally, employees should also provide proof of dog vaccinations, including: DDHP, Rabies, and Bordetella. All dogs must also be current in a parasite maintenance program, including flea and tick prevention. We recommend that dogs are at least 6 months old to allow for adequate training.

It's also important to communicate clear health and safety protocols, including specific hygiene practices and allergy accommodations.

## Step 4: Creating a Dog-Friendly Building

Great! The dogs have been approved and their tails are wagging with excitement. Now, let's make sure the **building is dog-friendly** before welcoming in our new co-workers.



**Cleaning Supplies:** Place paper towels, trash bags, and pet-safe cleaning products around the office to help assist in clean up in case of an accident.

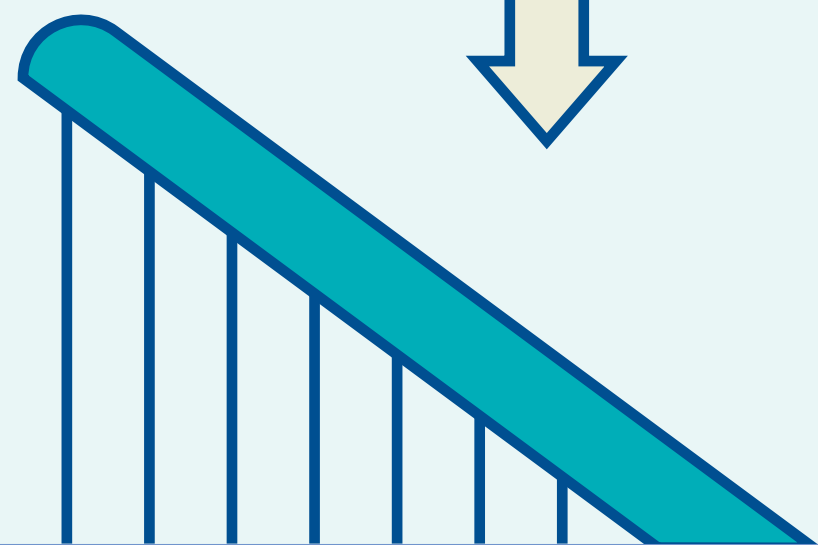
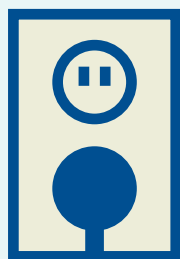
**Dog Free Zones:** Hang up signage that establishes dog-free zones. This may be an entire floor in a larger workspace. In smaller offices, this may include conference rooms or specific sections.



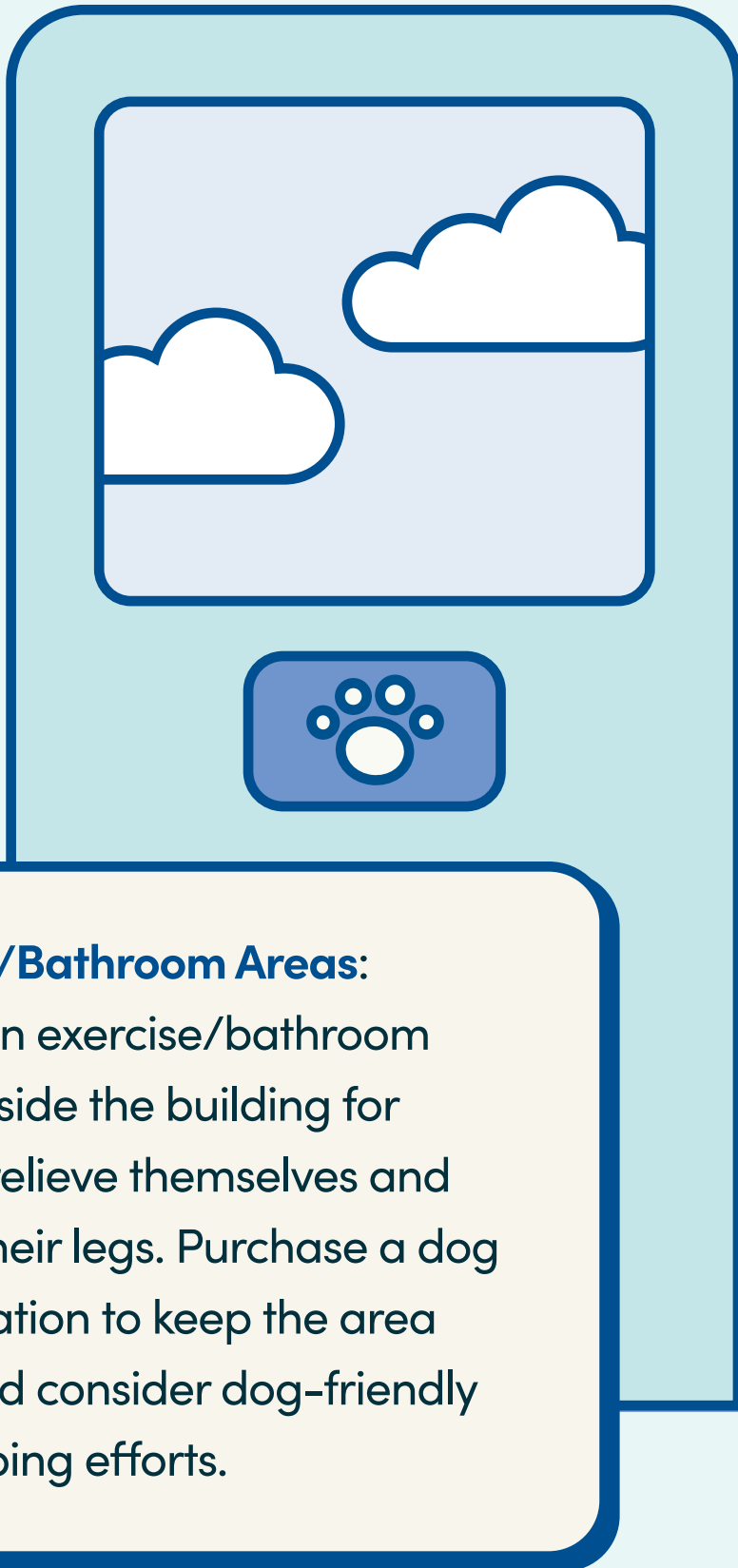
**Stairs/Elevators:** If possible, designate elevators or stairs for dogs and keep at least one dog-free.



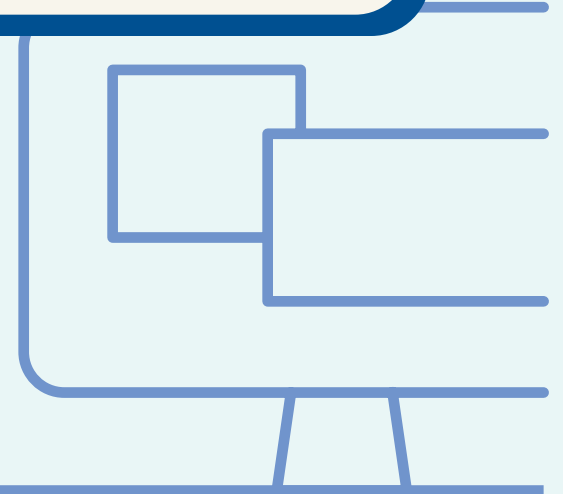
**Pet Proofing:** Tuck wires out of reach or tape them to the floor where they can't be chewed.



**Entrances/Exits:** Designate entrances and exits for dogs to ensure they are in the approved areas of the building.



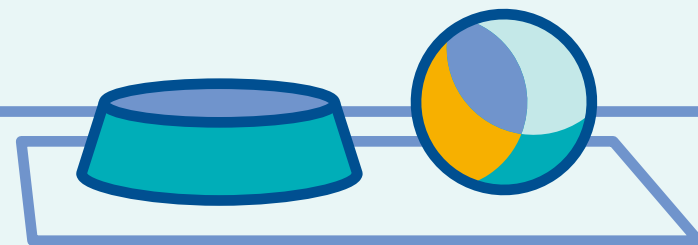
**Put Up Dog IDs:** Place the approved Dog IDs outside of employees' desks to notify co-workers of the dog's presence and any specific needs.



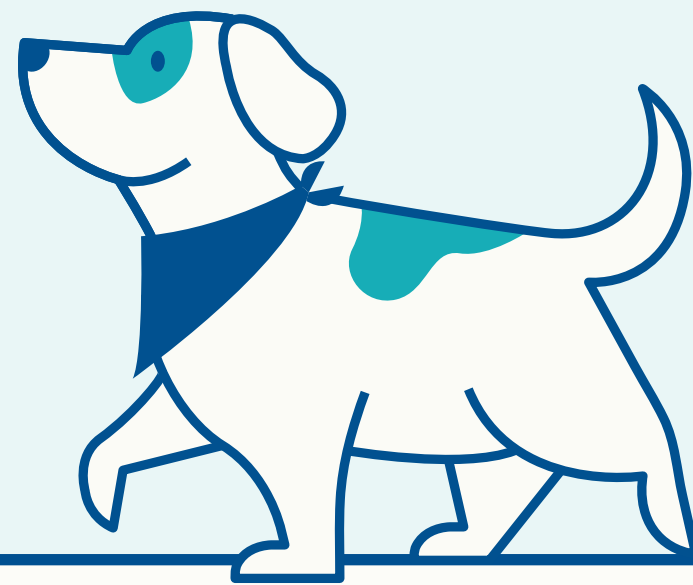
**Exercise/Bathroom Areas:**

Create an exercise/bathroom area outside the building for dogs to relieve themselves and stretch their legs. Purchase a dog waste station to keep the area clean and consider dog-friendly landscaping efforts.

**Water Bowls and Toys:** Provide water bowls and toys throughout the office and encourage employees to bring in specific items for their dogs as needed.



Finally, consider providing **training and informational sessions** for employees who are not dog owners themselves to ensure they feel **comfortable and safe with dogs in the workplace**. This could include lessons on understanding dog behavior, safety practices, and how to interact with dogs.



## Step 5: **Wagging Tails All Around**

**Congratulations on implementing the *Dogs at Work Program!*** Welcome in your new co-workers with lots of pets and treats. Looking for additional ideas to become an even more pet-friendly employer? Read on to learn more about how offering pet insurance to employees helps **retain your current staff and attract new talent.**



## Step 6: Go the Extra Mile with Pet Insurance

Great! The dogs have been approved and their tails are wagging with excitement. Now, let's make sure the **building is dog-friendly** before welcoming in our new co-workers.

Pets are a part of the family and protecting your employees' health means taking their furry family members into consideration.

Employers are increasingly turning to pet insurance as a key component of employee benefits packages, reflecting a deeper commitment to the health and wellness of employees' families, including their cats and dogs. Pet insurance helps alleviate the stress and financial burden of unexpected veterinary expenses, enhancing overall job satisfaction and well-being.

Our 2024 study in partnership with **Human Animal Bond Research Institute (HABRI)** underscores the value of such benefits: at companies offering pet insurance, **84%** of

employees report higher job satisfaction, and **82%** are more satisfied with their benefits. Additionally, **78%** of employees indicated they would consider major life changes, such as switching jobs, to better accommodate their pets.

HR professionals echo this sentiment, where **80%** believe that pet-friendly policies are crucial in attracting and retaining top talent. Furthermore, **87%** of HR professionals view offering pet insurance as an effective way to express care for employees and their families, a figure that increases to **91%** among senior leaders.

**By integrating pet benefits like insurance, companies not only support the financial and emotional well-being of their workforce but also reinforce a culture of empathy and inclusivity.**

To learn more about the **OnePack Plan** and group pet insurance at your company, reach out:

**[Sales@PetPartners.com](mailto:Sales@PetPartners.com) • [OnePackPlan.PetPartners.com](https://OnePackPlan.PetPartners.com)**

***OnePack Plan***<sup>TM</sup>  
by petpartners 



## Research Notes

1. American Pet Products Association. (n.d.). 21-22 Business and Finance. Retrieved from <https://www.americanpetproducts.org/docs/default-source/uploadedfiles/npos/21-22-businessandfinance>
2. Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. (n.d.). Poll: More than 90% of workers want pets allowed in the office. Retrieved from <https://www.mspca.org/news/poll-more-than-90-of-workers-want-pets-allowed-in-the-office/>
3. Rover. (n.d.). The Future of Work: Dog-Friendly Companies. Retrieved from <https://www.rover.com/blog/future-of-work/#:~:text=Dogs%20Are%20a%20Company's%20Best,company%20that%20is%20dog%20friendly>
4. Human Animal Bond Research Institute. (n.d.). International HAB Survey. Retrieved from <https://habri.org/international-hab-survey/>
5. Willis Towers Watson. (2021, May). Pandemic accelerates employer voluntary benefit offerings: WTW survey finds. Retrieved from <https://www.wtwco.com/en-us/news/2021/05/pandemic-accelerates-employer-voluntary-benefit-offerings-wtw-survey-finds>
6. PR Newswire. (2021, March 4). Survey reveals pandemic pet owners worried about returning to the workplace while employers plan to offer new pet-friendly policies. Retrieved from <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/survey-reveals-pandemic-pet-owners-worried-about-returning-to-the-workplace-while-employers-plan-to-offer-new-pet-friendly-policies-301240679.html>
7. American Heart Association Newsroom. (n.d.). New survey: 95% of pet parents rely on their pet for stress relief. Retrieved from <https://newsroom.heart.org/news/new-survey-95-of-pet-parents-rely-on-their-pet-for-stress-relief>
8. Human Animal Bond Research Institute. (n.d.). Health Care Cost Savings. Retrieved from <https://habri.org/health-care-cost-savings/>
9. Purina News Center. (2021, July 20). U.S. Employees Eager To Help Pets Win A Permanent Spot In The Workplace. Retrieved from <https://newscenter.purina.com/2021-07-20-U-S-Employees-Eager-To-Help-Pets-Win-A-Permanent-Spot-In-The-Workplace>
10. USA Today. (n.d.). Pets over parenthood. Retrieved from <https://www.usatoday.com/money/blueprint/pet-insurance/pets-over-parenthood/>
11. CertaPet. (n.d.). Separation Anxiety in Dogs Survey. Retrieved from <https://www.certapet.com/separation-anxiety-in-dogs-survey/>
12. Gee, N.R., Rodriguez, K.E., Fine, A.H., & Trammell, J.P. (2021). A systematic review of human-animal interaction research: 2015–2018. SAGE Open. <https://doi.org/10.1177/23328584211011612>

Policies are administered by PetPartners, Inc. and underwritten by Independence American Insurance Company (rated A- "Excellent" by A.M. Best), with offices at 11333 N. Scottsdale Rd, Suite 160, Scottsdale, AZ 85254. PetPartners, Inc. (CA agency #OF27261) is a licensed insurance agency located at 8051 Arco Corporate Drive, Suite 350, Raleigh, NC 27617. Eligibility restrictions apply. Terms and conditions may apply. See policy/certificate for details on coverage, terms, limitations and conditions. Pre-Existing condition coverage may require a 365-day waiting period. Waiting period may be waived for groups over 200 employees or with prior coverage for Accident & Illness plans. Participation in this plan is voluntary and not subject to ERISA.