



Healing COMPANIONS

DOGS IN THE WORKPLACE

OVERVIEW

The pandemic is placing unusual stress on everyone, including those in the workplace. Employees are experiencing unprecedented changes in their personal lives, as well as their work lives. Employers may be struggling to find ways to support their employees. As workplace wellness takes on a new dimension, therapy dogs may be the answer. Their presence in the workplace can help reduce employee stress, increase work satisfaction, and lead to greater staff retention.

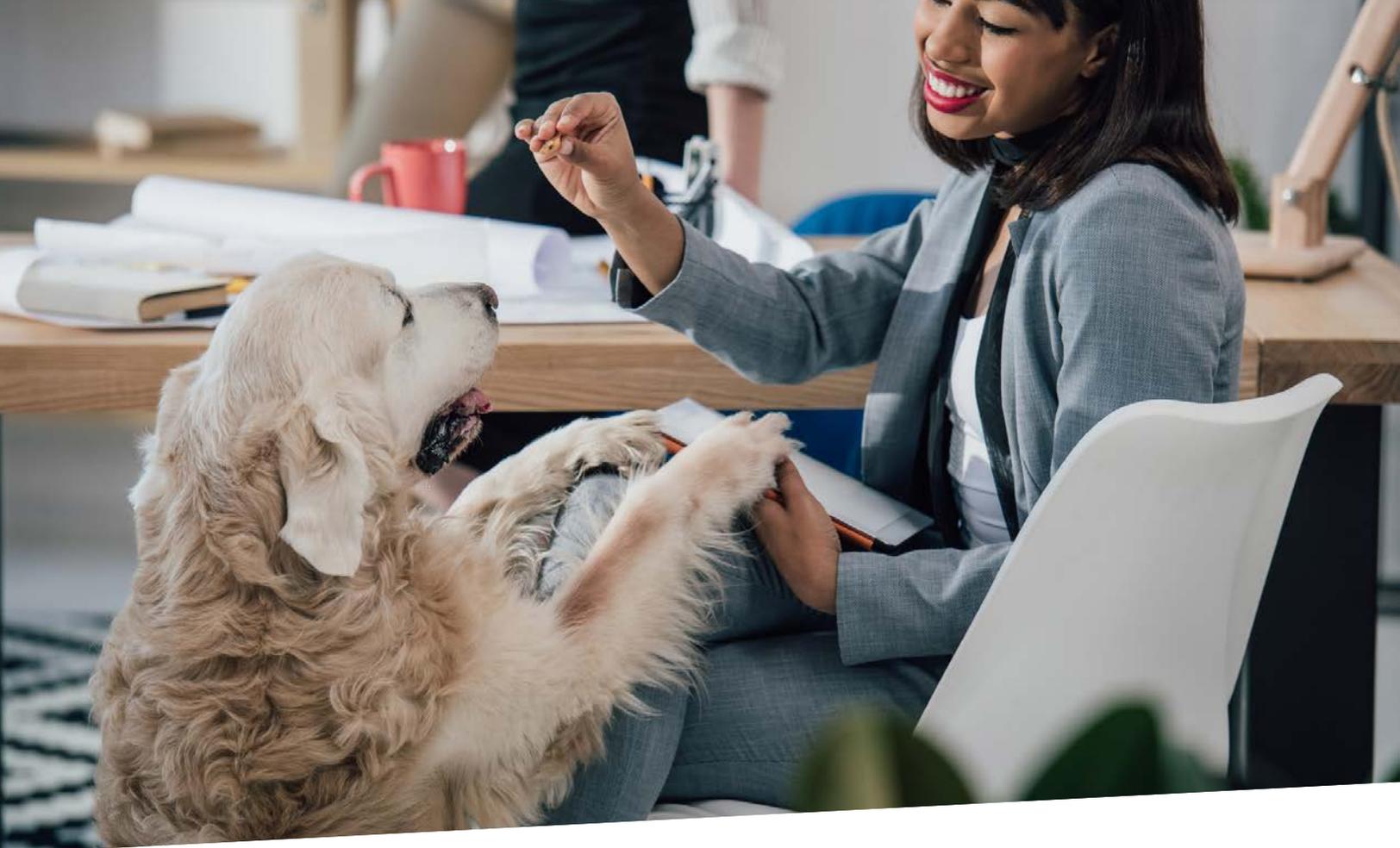


WORKPLACE BENEFITS

“In consideration of the discernable cost of employee turnover,” says Scott Liles, president and chief pet insurance officer for Nationwide, “adding pet-friendly benefits, such as allowing pets in the workplace or offering pet health insurance as a voluntary benefit, can provide significant savings to a company’s bottom line.”

Allowing employees to bring pets to work is incredibly beneficial, but it’s not feasible for many employers.

Therapy dogs provide the same benefits within a more structured framework. “Therapy dogs are often a better fit for companies,” says Jane Miller, Executive Director of Healing Companions. They are trained for their work and are always under the care of their handler. They also visit sites on a set schedule, and employees don’t have to attend to their needs throughout the day, which can be a distraction.



How exactly do therapy dogs benefit employees?

Therapy dogs can help employees feel more resilient in dealing with stress and lessen their reactions to stressful situations. Employees who are healthier take fewer sick days, need lower health insurance premiums, and contribute better at the workplace than those who fall sick often or suffer chronic health issues. Overall, the introduction of a therapy dog in the workplace allows for productivity, an improvement in happiness, encourages teamwork and promotes a healthier environment.

In a matter of minutes, petting a dog decreases cortisol levels and increases oxytocin. That translates to less stress and anxiety and improved mood. Stress level scores dropped 11 percent among workers who brought their dogs to work, according to a study by Virginia Commonwealth University. In contrast, stress levels increased 70 percent for those who did not have their pets at work.

Having a furry companion not only lowers stress in the employee but overall increases their productivity in their work, research from University of Lincoln says “..it was found that those who bring their dogs to work report increased absorption in their work (33.4%) and more dedication towards their work (16.5%). They also report an overall increase in work engagement by 14.4%.” Dedication and Absorption of work material was scored at a higher rate having a dog in the workplace than not according to a survey done by Sophie Hall an animal behaviorist.

In addition, co-workers find their workday to be more satisfying once they interact with therapy dogs. These interactions have meaningful physiological and emotional effects on employees — both of which influence attitudes toward the workplace. A study by Nationwide/HABRI shows that 9 out of 10 employees are highly bonded to their employers when pet-friendly benefits are offered.



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Ordinary Dogs Transforming Lives

HOW CAN WE HELP?

“Decreasing employee stress and increasing employer loyalty should be extremely important to companies across the country, regardless of the type of business they manage,” Jane says. Keeping this in mind, Healing Companions is currently offering educational resources to corporations about the benefits of therapy dogs. Healing Companions is excited to educate employers as to how therapy dogs can provide present and ongoing support to employees. Also, post-COVID, Healing Companions can act as a headhunter and consultant for employers who would like to incorporate therapy dogs into their wellness programs.

Jane teaches humans and their dogs specific techniques through acupressure points, energy work, Reiki TT touch, meditation etc. to be more relaxed during stressful situations/environments. Healing Companions shows how beneficial holistic strategies are in lowering stress and increasing moods. When you book with Jane she will show you how these techniques can be calming to an employee and build an overall more peaceful balanced work environment. Big corporations such as Google, Amazon, Atena and Intel have all incorporated therapy dogs into the workplace in consideration of how beneficial dogs are for humans.

Workplaces are more and more focusing on wellness for their employees and one very important aspect of that focus is mental health. According to Margaret Glenn, professor in the Mental Health Counseling Department of Counseling at West Virginia University “Petting animals can release oxytocin, a hormone that reduces stress levels and decreases the production of stress-reducing hormone cortisol.”

Healing Companions will be happy to discuss any questions you have about incorporating a therapy dog into your business.



WANT TO LEARN MORE...

Jane Miller, the Executive Director of Healing Companions, is a nationally and internationally recognized expert in this area of training. She welcomes discussions with employers about the ways in which PSDs (psychiatric service dogs), ESAs (emotional support animals), and Therapy Dogs can have a positive effect on employees. She can provide comprehensive education to corporate leaders, managers and other employees about these dogs, their role in the workplace, and their benefit to staff.

Jane is available to provide consults devoted to providing educational material and information about the differences between PSDs, ESAs, and Therapy Dogs. Also, if you have an employee who may be struggling you may considering speaking with Jane regarding introducing them to a psychiatric service dog or an emotional support animal.



CONTACT

Contact Jane Miller at jmiller@oberlin.net to learn more about service dogs in the workplace. She is available for consultations and can customize the experience to best help each employer.

RESOURCES

[The New Normal- Dogs in the workplace](#)

[Dogs Promoting Work Engagement](#)

[Employees Who Often Take Their Dog to Work](#)

[What are the Benefits of Therapy Dogs in the Workplace?](#)

[8 Advantages of a Dog-friendly Workplace](#)

[Animal-Assisted Workplace Well-Being](#)

[Preliminary Investigation of Dog Presence](#)

[Study Indicators for Pet Friendly Companies](#)

[Studies Show that Pets in the Workplace are Good Business](#)

THANK YOU for taking the time to explore adding therapy dogs to your workplace. I look forward to speaking with you.

Jane Miller