

A HAPPY HOUND AT WORK



The Blue Cross hopes that Take Your Dog to Work Day will encourage people not to leave their dogs alone at home for prolonged periods. Dogs are social animals and isolation is an unnatural state for them.

Sadly, The Blue Cross often deals with cases of dogs that display some form of coping behaviour. This causes problems when they are left alone at home when their owners are at work, i.e. barking, destructive behaviour (chewing furniture) and anxiety.

There are a few things to remember if you are taking your dog to work with you for the first time:

- Remember to ask permission from your boss
- Check work place insurance and health and safety implications and ensure that any requirements are followed
- Carry out a simple risk assessment. A risk assessment is simply deciding what could go wrong and ensuring you have taken sufficient precautions to prevent or minimise any risks. If your workplace employs five or more people, the risk assessment must be in writing.
- Check your own insurance and/or pet insurance policies and ensure that it provides adequate cover for damage to third party property or injury to third parties (including fellow employees)
- Keep your dog under proper control at all times
- Make sure everyone in your office knows your plans
- Be realistic. Is your working environment suitable for your dog? If not, maybe Take Your Dog to Work Day is not for you. There are some workplaces where it is illegal to have dogs.
- Make sure your dog is housetrained, but be prepared for little accidents
- Is your dog in good health? Make sure your dog is not suffering from any sickness or diarrhoea.
- Watch out for signs of stress – is your dog panting a lot or licking his lips?
- Make sure there is a quiet place for your dog to relax
- Get together with any other participants and consider how your dogs might get along
- To comfort your dog, bring along something that smells like home, such as his favourite toy or bed
- Make sure your dog has access to fresh water
- Remember walkies!
- If you need to leave your dog temporarily, make arrangements with colleagues so that they can check your dog is OK. You should consider your dog in any emergency procedures such as fire drills and other building evacuations.
- If you are transporting your dog, ensure he is secure and not loose in the vehicle where he could distract you. If you are using company vehicles, check what company policies are in place for carrying animals.