

PETS WELCOME:

A PET-FRIENDLY BUSINESS PROGRAM

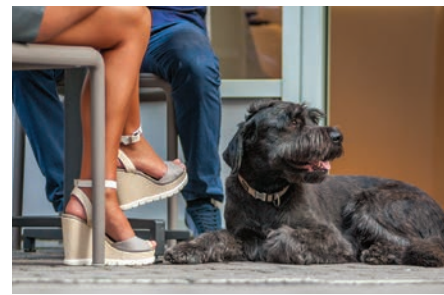
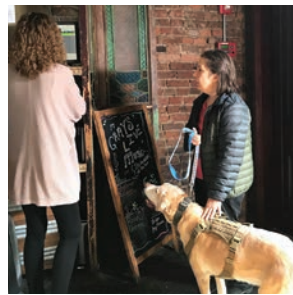
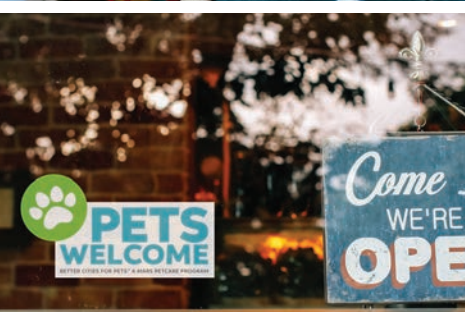


Table of Contents

2	Welcome
4	The Power of Pets
8	A Code of Conduct is Key to Success
10	Promoting Your Business as Pet-friendly
12	Ways to Make Your Business Pet-friendly
14	Ways to Participate When You Can't Welcome Pets
16	Handling Customer Concerns
20	What about Service Dogs?
28	Pet Behavior 101 for Pet-Friendly Businesses
32	Spreading the Word on Social Media
36	Resources



Making Pets Welcome

Pets are now part of over 84 million U.S. households, and more people than ever before see pets as family. As they try to juggle work, family, school and social activities, people don't want to miss out on the benefits of pets' companionship. They want to bring their pets with them!

Pets are good for business, too. People with pets are more likely to visit pet-friendly businesses, and to stay longer during their visit. Plus, having pets around often drives social media buzz, providing both tangible and intangible PR benefits for the business.

The Pets Welcome program shows communities how to launch a coordinated, community-wide pet-friendly business initiative that can benefit businesses, pet owners and pets. This includes having clear signage, rules and guidelines for participants, education for businesses, and pet-friendly amenities.

The program was initially developed and piloted in Franklin, Tennessee, through a partnership with the City of Franklin, the Downtown Franklin Association, Williamson County Animal Center and the Williamson County Convention & Visitors Bureau. It was led by Mars Petcare and supported by Nashville Civic Design Center.

You can read more about it and other pet-friendly programs in the Playbook for Pet-Friendly Cities at BetterCitiesForPets.com. Please visit the site and click “Join the Movement” to stay in touch.

We hope the enclosed tools will be helpful as you explore your own Pets Welcome program. Pets truly do make every day better! Enjoy the many benefits that being pet-friendly brings for your customers and your business. Together, we can make life better for pets, so everybody benefits.

—Your Friends at Mars Petcare

The Power of Pets

As a business, you might wonder about the benefits of making pets welcome and allowing customers to bring pets in businesses. Here are some statistics showing the power of pets and their impact on those around them.

ACCORDING TO THE 2017-18 AMERICAN PET PRODUCTS ASSOCIATION (APPA) SURVEY:

- More than 84 million U.S. families now have a pet.
- 81% of dog-owners say having a dog gives them companionship or love.
- 53% say having a dog is good for their health or their family's health.
- 59% think of their dog as being like a child or family member.
- 67% say having a dog relaxes them or relieves stress.
- Millennials are now the largest pet-owning demographic.
- Reports suggest some millennials are delaying parenthood and choosing to be pet owners instead.

PETS ARE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR BUSINESSES:

- In 2017, U.S. pet owners spent an estimated \$69 billion on pets.
- 76% of millennials said they're more likely to splurge on their pet than themselves.
- Three-quarters of pet owners say issues with the economy have had no influence on their pet ownership.
- In a 2017 survey by the U.S. Conference of Mayors and Mars Petcare, more than 60% of U.S. mayors surveyed believe pet-friendly policies and amenities can attract additional traffic to retail establishments.
- In a 2017 study by the National Association of Realtors® Research Department, 81% of respondents said pet-related considerations will play a role when choosing their next living situation.



**IN OUR PETS WELCOME PILOT,
OUR SURVEY OF THE PILOT
COMMUNITY (FRANKLIN, TN)
FOUND THAT:**

- 79% of residents surveyed said they value pets being welcome in businesses.
- 56% of business owners strongly agreed that pet-friendly businesses are good for the community.
- 65% of residents said having pets around helps build social connections.
- 49% of residents said they are more likely to visit a business that's pet-friendly.
- 48% of business owners said more pet-friendly policies would increase pedestrian traffic to the downtown area.

**PETS IN WORKPLACES
ARE VALUED, TOO. THE 2017
BANFIELD™ PET HOSPITAL
PET-FRIENDLY WORKPLACE
PAWROMETER™ SURVEY*
FOUND THAT:**

- 88% of employees at pet-friendly workplaces said having pets at work improves sense of well-being.
- 83% said it reduces stress.
- 83% said it gives them greater company loyalty.
- 81% said it improves work-life balance.
- 80% said it improves morale.
- 79% said it improves work relationships.
- 66% said it increases productivity.

* If you choose to use the PAWrometer™ survey results, please identify them as originating from The BANFIELD™ Pet Hospital PAWrometer™ survey.



THE HEALTH AND COMPANIONSHIP BENEFITS OF SPENDING TIME WITH PETS ARE WIDELY DOCUMENTED:

- Having a pet reduces blood pressure and lowers the risk of heart disease and high cholesterol. (Friedman et al 2010)
- Numerous studies have suggested dog walking is a great way to increase physical activity and may help reduce rates of obesity. (Timperio et al 2008)
- 94% of heart patients with pets survive serious heart attacks, compared to only 72% without pets. (Friedman et al 2010)
- Pet owners tend to visit doctors less often and spend less money on medication. (Heady et al 2007)
- Kids who grow up with pets tend to have greater self-esteem, less loneliness and enhanced social skills. (Purewal et al 2017)
- Pet owners feel less afraid of being a victim of crime when walking with a dog or sharing a residence with a dog. (Serpell et al 1991)
- The presence of dogs increases the number and length of peoples' conversations with others in the community. (Jenkinson et al 2010)
- Pet owners are significantly more likely to form friendships in their neighborhood than non-pet owners. (Wood et al 2015)
- Almost 60% of dog walkers report feeling safer when walking their dog. (Christian et al 2016)



- For those who have lost a spouse, pet ownership and a strong attachment to a pet is associated with significantly less depression. (Garrity et al 1989)
- Pets in nursing homes increase social and verbal interactions among the elderly. (Fick et al 1993)
- Growing up with a dog during infancy can help to strengthen the immune system and reduce the risk of allergies linked to asthma. (Hesselmar et al 1999)
- Self-esteem is higher in children and adolescents who own pets. (Redefer et al 1996)
- Kids who grow up with pets demonstrate more empathy, are usually more popular with classmates and are more involved in activities such as sports, hobbies, clubs or chores. (Melson et al 1990)

References:

<http://www.americanpetproducts.org/>
<http://bit.ly/USCMMarsPetcareSurveyFindings>
<http://www.nar.realtor>
<https://www.banfield.com/about-us/community/wellness-our-people/pet-workplace>
<https://www.waltham.com/waltham-research/hai-research/hai-overview/>
<https://www.waltham.com/news/companion-animals-and-child-development.shtml>
<https://www.waltham.com/news/mans-best-friend-helps-owners-build-new-friendships.shtml>
<https://www.waltham.com/news/walking-the-dog-helps-keep-owners-healthy-and-neighbourhoods-feeling-safe.shtml>

A Code of Conduct is Key to Success

A successful pet-friendly business program depends on pets behaving well while visiting, and pet owners taking responsibility for their pets. A pet code of conduct helps make this possible, by providing clear guidelines about behaviors and accountability.

Here's a sample pet code of conduct with suggested guidelines for participation in a pet-friendly business. Communities, business organizations or individual businesses would want to create a version of this document that meets their specific needs.

We suggest you post your code of conduct on your website and/or post it at your business, to make your requirements clear to your customers.





SAMPLE CODE OF CONDUCT

- Pets must be leashed and under control of their owner at all times.
- Pets must be licensed, immunized and comply with all state and local regulations.
- Pet owners may not leave pets unattended at any time.
- Pet owners are responsible for making sure their pets remain safely out of the way and do not present a hazard to employees, other customers or their pets.
- Pet owners are responsible for monitoring their pet's behavior and mood, and removing any dog that might be over-excited, aggressive or anxious.
- Pet owners are responsible for monitoring their pet's needs and ensuring accidents do not happen. Any accidents that do occur must be reported and cleaned up immediately.
- As needed, individual businesses may establish limits for the number of pets allowed on the premises at a time.
- Businesses have the right to ask a pet owner to remove their pet from the premises at any time.
- Pet owners are legally responsible for the behavior of their pet.
- Damaged or broken merchandise that is caused by a pet must be paid for by the pet owner.
- By bringing a pet onto the premises, pet owners agree to indemnify and hold harmless the business and its owners, against any and all liabilities that may arise from the pet being on the premises.

Promoting Your Business as Pet-friendly

A key part of launching a successful pet-friendly business program is ensuring customers know where pets are welcome.

- ☐ Make it visual! Use signage to make it easy for customers to see where pets can and cannot go.
- ☐ If your community is going pet-friendly, have all participating businesses use the same signs so they provide an easy, recognizable cue for visitors.
- ☐ Offer an option for businesses that can't have pets inside but that plan to support the community program in other ways (such as water bowls outside for pets).
- ☐ Window clings on the front entrances to businesses are a great first step. These were designed based on learnings from the Pets Welcome program pilot:



- ☐ Be sure to list on business and community websites that local businesses are pet-friendly. Explain what that means for customers.
- ☐ Mention your pet-friendly status in “about us” descriptions on social media.
- ☐ Mention your pet-friendly status on sites like Yelp.com.
- ☐ List businesses and your community on BringFido.com, GoPetFriendly.com and other pet-friendly business directories.
- ☐ Consider a social media campaign! Try featuring pets who visit your business and community. It’s a great way to draw attention and show how you welcome pets.



Ways to Make Your Business Pet-friendly

Here are ideas to help show that your pet-friendly business is a great place for pets and pet owners:

- ☐ Train staff on pet behavior and pet safety, to offer pets the same hospitality you give to all your other visitors.
- ☐ Offer your pet guests fresh water. Hydration is very important for pets, especially on hot days.
- ☐ Have pet treats or small toys on hand for visiting pets.



- ☐ Clearly mark any areas where pets are allowed or not allowed within your business.
- ☐ Know where the nearest pet relief station is, so you can direct customers there as needed. Have spare pet waste bags available.
- ☐ Be prepared with paper towels and cleaning supplies just in case accidents happen.
- ☐ Have an amenities basket on hand for pet owners, with items they might need such as hand sanitizer, paper towels, lint roller, etc.
- ☐ Be ready to recommend other businesses that welcome pets. Suggest pet-friendly local areas for walking and other pet-friendly amenities.
- ☐ Stock some pet-friendly products that fit with the theme of your business.
- ☐ Have a special event for pet owners, such as a class or special showing that's pet-focused, or a promotion where those who bring pets get something extra special.
- ☐ Host a special promotion where a portion of sales goes to support a local pet shelter or rescue.
- ☐ Feature a "Pet of the Week" on your social media.
- ☐ Encourage visitors to post about their pet-friendly experience on social media.
- ☐ Create a "selfie space" in or near your business where people can take pictures with their pets.
- ☐ Honor your pet owner-customers with a picture wall or other display of customers and/or their pets.

Ways to Participate When You Can't Welcome Pets

While some businesses can welcome pets with no restrictions, due to health codes or safety concerns, others might not be able to have pets inside. In these cases, there are other ways to be pet-friendly and help showcase your community as a pet-friendly destination.

- ☐ Welcome pets outside your business — add a water bowl and/or treats near your front door, for pets who are in the neighborhood.
- ☐ Know where the nearest pet relief station is, so you can direct customers there as needed. Have spare pet waste bags available.
- ☐ Be ready to recommend other businesses to visit that welcome pets. Suggest local walking areas and other pet-friendly amenities.
- ☐ If you own your building or are allowed to add outdoor decoration, add a pet-friendly “selfie space” where visitors can take pictures with their pets.
- ☐ Train staff to explain the reasons why pets aren't allowed. Be clear that you love pets, but it's safer for them (or required by health codes) that they not be in your particular type of business.
- ☐ Take part in social media promotion — celebrate your neighbors who are able to have pets inside and share your support of your pet-friendly community. Use the opportunity to explain why your business can't participate.
- ☐ Step outside periodically to engage with pets in the neighborhood, and post about these encounters on social media. Here again, you can mention that while you can't have pets inside, you support your pet-friendly community.
- ☐ Offer pet-friendly takeaways — even if you can't welcome pets, you might offer something pet owners can take home to their furry family members, such as a pet treat.
- ☐ If you are a food business, have a “doggie bag” option that is literally for pets, with pet-friendly treats customers can take home.

- ☐ Consider a pet-friendly program outside your business — set up a booth at a local event where you can offer pet-friendly treats, or hire an artist to sit outside your building and do portraits for pet owners.
- ☐ Look for other opportunities that are outside your official space, but where you can show your customers you appreciate them and their pets. For example, host a dog wash in your parking lot on a hot day.
- ☐ If you have green space outside your building, consider offering it as a pet rest area. With just a few amenities (waste bag dispenser, garbage bin) and cute signage, you could make your extra lawn space into a pet attraction!



Handling Customer Concerns

Just like any concern you might get from a customer, with pet concerns, the most important thing you can do is listen carefully and try to respond fairly.

Where you can address a situation to allay pet concerns, do that. Where you can't change the situation, or don't want to, be honest and explain why.

And, keep in mind that sometimes when faced with a new situation like pets in businesses, customers just want to know that their perspective has been heard.

Here are tips to help you handle questions you might get from customers who aren't used to pets in businesses.

HOW DO I RESPOND TO A CUSTOMER WHO HAS ALLERGIES AND IS CONCERNED ABOUT COMING INTO MY PET-FRIENDLY BUSINESS?

What to do:

- Minimize allergens by cleaning often, particularly soft surfaces like carpets and upholstery, to which allergens are most likely to cling.
- If your business has the space, set aside a "pet-free" zone for those who prefer to remain away from visiting pets.
- Consider having an amenities basket on hand with hand sanitizer, tissues and a lint roller, for customers who want to try to minimize allergens sticking with them.
- Encourage customers to self-report, for example with a notation in your signage that says, "If you have allergies, please let a staff member know."

What to say:

Thanks for bringing this up. We value your patronage and want you to be comfortable. Since we've become pet-friendly, we've increased our regular cleaning to be sure we're minimizing pet allergens and keeping the space comfortable for everyone.

- *If your business has seating:* Offer to seat the customer away from any currently visiting animals.

- *If the customer appears to already be having allergy symptoms:* Offer amenities to help, such as tissues.
- *If a significantly-allergic customer is already there when a pet enters the business:* See if the pet owner would be willing to stop back in a few minutes when the allergic shopper has departed.

What to know:

Even without pets in businesses, pet allergens spread throughout public places because they are very lightweight and easily stick to things like clothing and shoes. WebMD estimates that 100% of homes have pet dander; the same is likely true of most public spaces.

HOW DO I RESPOND TO PET CONCERNS RELATED TO DIRT FROM PETS?**What to do:**

- Minimize dirt by cleaning often, particularly in entrance areas where pets might track in dirt.
- Add a welcome mat to catch dirt on pets' (and people's!) paws.
- Consider having a "Clean Your Paws" amenities basket near the door with paper towel, pet-friendly wipes, hand sanitizer, etc.

What to say:

Thanks for bringing this up. We value your patronage and want you to be comfortable. Since we've become pet-friendly, we've increased our regular cleaning to be sure our business stays clean for everyone who visits.

-OR-

You know, we were a little worried about that at first too. But as it turns out, pet owners are so glad to be able to bring their pets inside, they are very responsible. We really aren't having any issues. People want to be respectful when they bring their pets with them.

Handling Concerned Customers (continued)

HOW DO I RESPOND TO A CUSTOMER WHO IS AFRAID OF PETS?

What to say:

I'm glad you told me. We value your patronage and want you to be comfortable. Would you like me to assist you while you shop, and I can help make sure the pets here keep their distance?

-OR-

I'm sorry you're uncomfortable. We want you to have a great experience here. What can I do to help make you feel safe?

What not to do:

Don't try to change someone's mind. There's a time for that — we all want to help more people love pets! — but a moment of fear while a customer is visiting your business is not the time to do that. Even if you happen to know that a particular pet is friendly and easy-going, don't force an introduction. Focus on helping the customer get what they need and depart feeling safe.

HOW DO I ASK SOMEONE NICELY TO REMOVE THEIR PET FROM MY BUSINESS?

What to say:

It seems like your dog isn't super comfortable right now. We want you to have the best experience possible while you're here. Do you want to take him outside and see if a break makes him more comfortable?

-OR-

It seems like this isn't a great environment for your pet right now. Why don't you come back another day and hopefully she'll be more comfortable.

-OR-

Your pet seems like he might be uncomfortable. Is it possible he needs a bathroom break?

-OR-

Your pet seems a little anxious. I wonder if you could take her outside for a break, to see if that helps her settle down a bit?

-OR-

Your pet seems uncomfortable. Could you please take him outside for a bit, to see if that helps? I'm afraid other customers are a bit nervous.

What not to do:

Don't offer to take the pet out yourself and be sure staff members know not to do so. Pet owners must remain responsible for their pets.

HOW DO I DEAL WITH PET ACCIDENTS?

What to do:

- Have cleaning products and paper towel on hand, to clean up.
- Don't ask the customer to clean up. You will want to ensure the cleaning job meets your standards.
- Do ask the customer to take the pet outside in case he or she needs another break.

What to say:

It's ok! Accidents happen and we love pets. Next time, please just be sure to take your pet to visit a local waste station for a break before coming inside.

HOW DO I RESPOND TO CUSTOMERS WHO ASK WHY MY BUSINESS CAN'T HAVE PETS INSIDE?

What to say if your business is not a safe place for pets:

We love pets! Above all, we want them to be safe, and our products/equipment/environment is not the best place for furry friends. We're really excited about the Pets Welcome program, though. We're supporting it in other ways, like [list ways].

What to say if regulations/ordinances forbid pets in your type of business:

We love pets! And we wish we could have them here too. But the current local ordinances don't allow it and we need to comply with the law. We're really excited about the Pets Welcome program, though. We're supporting it in other ways, like [list ways].

What about Service Dogs?

For veterans and others with symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS) or Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), the stress and anxiety can be nearly overwhelming. Yet there's a resource that can make an amazing impact: service dogs.

Unfortunately, there's a lot of confusion about service dogs that can lead to discrimination against veterans. In fact, a survey by American Humane found that nearly 7 in 10 retail employees said they never received training from their employer on the questions they are legally allowed to ask customers to verify an animal is a service dog.

We are thrilled to partner with American Humane to provide free service dog training videos for businesses. They're designed to help business owners and employees understand how to better accommodate veterans and others with service dogs. You can find them at **[BetterCitiesForPets.com/servicedogs](https://www.bettercitiesforpets.com/servicedogs)**, and we hope you'll take the time to review them and share them with your teams.

Also, American Humane shared the additional tools on the following pages to help businesses understand service dogs and the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the difference between service dogs, emotional support animals and therapy dogs.

For the 184 veterans diagnosed with PTS every day, a trained service dog can make a world of difference. Let's make sure service dogs are always welcome.

VIDEOS

What You Need to Know about Service Dogs



The Importance of Service Dogs – A Veteran's Experience



See the videos at: [BetterCitiesForPets.com/servicedogs](https://www.bettercitiesforpets.com/servicedogs)

AMERICAN★HUMANE *FIRST TO SERVE™*

SERVICE DOGS AND THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) – AN OVERVIEW FOR RETAIL BUSINESSES

If you are a retail business owner or employee, you have likely encountered customers accompanied by dogs in your place of business. Many of these dogs perform specific disability-related functions, but in other situations, people may bring their personal pet into shops and other public spaces.

As a business employee, it is often challenging to identify a legitimate service dog since people may falsely claim that their dog is a “certified service dog” in order to gain access



with their animal to your restaurant, hotel, or store. This not only poses public health risks (to both humans and animals), but also does a disservice to individuals who are actually in need of their dog's assistance to function and engage with the greater community.

This quick resource guide is offered to help retail business employees navigate these potentially tricky situations, and to understand what is required of them under the federal ADA in regard to service animals in public. There may be additional state and local laws that are pertinent for businesses.

Service dogs

Service dogs are trained to perform quantifiable tasks (such as alerting a person with epilepsy of an impending seizure) to ease the challenges associated with their owner's physical, psychiatric, intellectual, sensory, and/or developmental disability; *they are not pets*. Currently, there are no nationally or legally recognized service dog training, certification or identification standards, although service dogs should be individually trained to assist their owner with tasks that they could not otherwise do. Note: Emotional support dogs are NOT defined as service animals under the ADA.

What is required of me according to the ADA?

The ADA protects the rights of people with disabilities, including ensuring equal access with service dogs to most public places, such as restaurants, theaters, shops, hotels, dormitories, government agencies, and non-profit organizations (note: religious organizations are exempt from ADA requirements). The Air Carrier Access Act (ACAA) and the Fair Housing Act define "service animal" differently and allow for different questions and documentation requirements.

How can I tell if the dog is a "real" service dog?

The ADA does *not* require that specific equipment be used to handle service dogs (such as a harness), or that service dogs wear vests, bandanas, or ID cards/badges. However, trained service dogs should be calm, under control at all times, and attentive solely to their owner and his/her directives in public. You should never see an unruly service dog.

What about Service Dogs? (continued)

What can I ask?

According to the ADA, business employees are only allowed to ask the following two questions of a person with a dog:

- Is the dog a service animal required because of a disability?
- What work or tasks has the dog been trained to perform or provide?

Solely providing comfort or emotional support is not recognized as a task under the ADA. However, people with disabilities may have difficulties in succinctly articulating what physical tasks that dog is trained to perform, so staff should be trained to handle difficult situations with tact and compassion.

What can I NOT ask?

If a person with a dog enters your place of business, you are **not** legally allowed to:

- Inquire about the nature of the person's disability or condition
- Ask for service dog certification or other documentation
- Request that the dog perform any tasks (for example, as "proof" of service dog status)

What if a (service) dog becomes disruptive or unsafe in my place of business?

The ADA specifies that, if the dog is out of control and the handler does not attempt to rectify the situation, the staff may request that the dog leave the premises. If the handler wants to re-enter your business without his/her dog, you are required to serve them. In addition, if the dog "fundamentally alters" the nature of services (such as a sterile operating room), its presence in the setting may be prohibited as well.

For more information, please visit: www.ada.gov.

DEFINITION OF A SERVICE DOG VS. EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMAL VS. THERAPY DOG

While the terms “service dog,” “therapy dog,” and “emotional support animal” are often used interchangeably, these three types of animals have very distinct roles and qualifications. This resource is designed to clarify the roles among dogs that are geared to improve human health.

Service Dogs

Service dogs (also known as “assistance dogs”) are trained to perform quantifiable tasks that directly ease the challenges associated with their owner’s physical, psychiatric, sensory, and/or developmental disability. The most common types of service dogs include guide, hearing, medical alert, mobility, autism service, and psychiatric service dogs (such as those who assist veterans with post-traumatic stress). Having a service dog provides handlers with greater independence, as well as enriched confidence to leave their home, foster social relationships, and enter or re-enter the workforce.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) protects the rights of people with disabilities to bring their service dogs with them to most public places, including restaurants, theaters, shops, hotels, government agencies, and non-profit organizations. Likewise, the Air Carrier Access Act (ACAA) of 1986 ensures that service dogs may travel with their owners on airplanes (note: the ACAA has a separate definition of “psychiatric service animal”), and the Fair Housing Act of 1968 stipulates that housing with a “no pets policy” must make an exception or reasonable accommodations for people with service dogs.

Currently, there are no nationally or legally recognized service dog training, certification, or identification standards, and both professional trainers/organizations and laypersons may train and provide service dogs. At a minimum, service dogs should be individually trained in essential tasks that a person could not otherwise perform due to his/her disability (such as alerting a person with epilepsy when s/he shows signs of an impending seizure). Additionally, service dogs should be well behaved and under control in the community.

What about Service Dogs? (continued)

Emotional Support Animals

Emotional support animals are companion animals who help their owners cope with the challenges associated with emotional and mental health conditions (such as depression and anxiety) by providing comfort with their presence. Unlike service and therapy dogs, emotional support animals are not expected to perform specific tasks related to their owner's condition, nor must they adhere to any behavior standards or training. Their presence alone is what is thought to provide their owner with solace and therapeutic benefit.

Emotional support animals are not allowed in public places, with the exception of air travel, which requires special documentation. The Fair Housing Act requires that most housing units accommodate emotional support animals with appropriate documentation.



Therapy Dogs

Together with their owners, therapy dogs are certified or registered to visit hospitals, long-term care facilities, treatment centers, schools, and other settings to benefit people in need. While typically trained in basic obedience skills, therapy dogs (or “comfort dogs”) are not required to perform essential tasks for those they serve or specialize in any particular area of service. Therapy dogs do not have public access rights under the ADA and are only allowed in facilities by invitation/agreement.

Additionally, they serve people other than their owners (also known as handlers), and their role is often to complement more traditional modes of treatment or therapy through comforting, supportive, calming, and engaging interactions. This is frequently done through the work of volunteer therapy dog- handler teams, but professionals (such as psychotherapists and social workers) may also incorporate a therapy dog into their practice with clients.

While many types of animals can be therapy animals (such as horses and cats), dogs are by far the most common species and any canine breed is eligible.

Pet Behavior 101 for Pet-Friendly Businesses

Here are tips to help you understand and anticipate pet behavior when pets visit your business.

These tips focus on dogs, since they're the most common pet visitors at pet-friendly businesses. But some of these insights apply to cats, too. The key with any pet is to be calm, respectful and aware of how the pet is reacting to you and to his or her situation.

Also, keep in mind that all pets are individuals. They have quirks, moods and idiosyncrasies just like we do. Just as a smiling person may not actually be happy, a dog wagging its tail may not necessarily be comfortable.

Look for cues from the whole pet for a sense of how they're feeling. Download our pet body language brochure at **BetterCitiesForPets.com** for additional insights about interpreting pet behavior.





HOW TO GREET A DOG

- Always, always, always ask the dog's owner first.
- Stand or kneel down a safe distance away; don't invade a dog's personal space.
- Avoid leaning over or looming above the dog; stay to the side.
- Don't make direct eye contact; look slightly to the side.
- Avoid sudden movements.
- Let the dog approach you; don't reach toward him or her.
- Once the dog has sniffed you, if he or she opts to stay nearby, then pet gently on the neck — petting an unfamiliar dog on the head can make it uncomfortable.
- If the dog is comfortable, his or her owner can tell you if there's a special way their dog likes to be touched, for example scratching behind his or her ears.
- When finished, move slowly away, again avoiding sudden movements.

SIGNS A DOG IS CONFIDENT AND HAPPY

- Soft, loose body.
- Soft, almond-shaped eyes.
- Wagging or neutral tail.
- "Smiling" face.
- Ears up or natural.
- Weight evenly distributed when standing.
- Offering a "play bow" — this looks like the downward dog yoga position, with front legs stretched out, and signals the dog wants to play with you or another dog.

SIGNS A DOG NEEDS TO GO OUT FOR A BATHROOM BREAK

- Sniffing around as if looking for something.
- Circling or otherwise being restless.
- Leaning or pulling toward the door.
- Pacing from their owner to the door and back.
- Standing in front of the door.
- Moving suddenly to a corner of the room.
- Moving suddenly to the door.
- Pawing at the door.
- Whining or whimpering.

SIGNS A DOG MAY BE GETTING ANXIOUS OR UNCOMFORTABLE

- Licking lips when not drinking or thirsty.
- Yawning when not tired.
- Blinking rapidly.
- Stiff and/or tense body.
- Shaking or shivering when not cold.
- Skin rippling when touched.
- Increased and/or heavy breathing.
- Ears back or flat on head.
- Tail low or between legs.
- Fidgeting or shifting weight back and forth.
- Barking and/or growling.
- Whimpering.
- Eyes wide showing the whites of the eye; looking at you from the side.

SIGNS A DOG MAY BE GETTING OVER-EXCITED

- Pulling strongly on their leash.
- Spinning around in circles.
- Standing still with muscles twitching.
- Nipping at fingers, clothing or other items.
- Staring intently around at the room and avoiding eye contact.
- Barking rapidly or excessively.
- Holding their tail high and erect.
- Stiff and/or tense body.
- Holding their mouth tightly closed or with lips drawn back.
- Ears standing up in an alert position.
- Turning their body away from someone/something.
- Growling, barking, whimpering or whining.



ALWAYS

Ask a pet owner for permission before approaching or touching their pet.



AVOID

Cornering a pet or standing over him or her.



SIGNS TWO DOGS MAY NOT BE INTERACTING POSITIVELY TOGETHER

- They stand still and/or become rigid.
- Their barking becomes guttural.
- Either of the dogs shows the anxiety signs listed on the previous page.
- Either dog lunges at the other, or they lunge at each other.
- They show their teeth, snarl or lick their lips.
- They stand up on their hind legs, face-to-face.
- One or both dogs try to hide behind their owners or get away.
- One dog pins the other on its back and won't let it get up.
- (Dogs play-bowing to each other with their front legs generally is a sign of play, not fighting.)

THINGS TO AVOID THAT COULD MAKE A DOG FEEL THREATENED

- Taking food away while they're eating.
- Taking a toy away while they're playing.
- Disturbing a dog while they're asleep.
- Lifting or trying to pick up the dog.
- Touching the dog's ears, feet or belly.
- Scolding the dog.
- Putting your face in the dog's face.
- Staring at the dog.
- Leaning or looming over a dog.
- Petting on the head — always pet an unfamiliar dog on the neck or chest so they can see you coming.



ALWAYS

Look at the whole pet to get a sense of how they're feeling.



AVOID

Making sudden movements or approaching a pet too quickly.

Spreading the Word on Social Media

Pets rule social media. A survey by Mars Petcare found that one in six people create a social media profile for their pet, and a third of people post about their pet as much as they do about their human family.

Based on all this pet love, talking about the pets who visit your business could help draw attention to your social media channels and get your customers even more excited to visit.

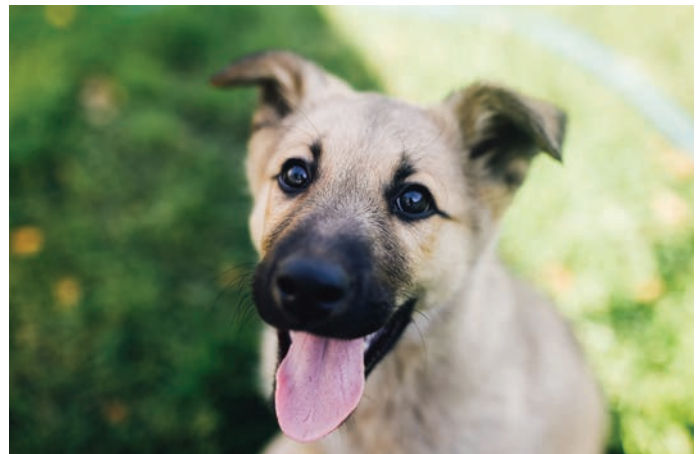
Here are some ideas to get you started.

PET-RELATED POST IDEAS

- **Pet of the Week** — start capturing photos of furry visitors and post your favorite or a collage once a week.
- **Caption This** — post funny photos of pets at your business and invite followers to write a caption for what's happening in the shot.
- **Voice of the Pet** — post funny photos of pets at your business, with a funny quip about what they're thinking.
- **Fill in the Blanks** — same as above, but provide a thought starter, e.g. "Fido, when he saw _____ at our store today!"
- **Pet Tales** — ask willing customers to participate in short videos, Facebook Live broadcasts or Instagram Stories answering one or two questions like, "How do you feel about being able to bring your pet to pet-friendly businesses like ours?"

Here's Moe when he learned we're not only pet-friendly, WE HAVE TREATS. Hope you'll stop by with your pup soon!

[#PetsWelcome](#)



- **Quotes** — post humorous or inspiring quotations about pets, accompanied by photos from pets who visit your business.
- **Pet-mentities** — highlight the amenities you have onsite to help make pets comfortable.
- **Product or service features** — highlight something your business offers that is pet-focused.
- **Action shots** — sometimes it's fun to see pets in action, even if the photo doesn't turn out perfectly. If a joyful pet comes to visit, capture that joy!
- **Videos or gifs** — thanks to smart- phones, we can all capture cute short videos of pets. A great one is a pet walking toward you, shot at eye level. Use a gif-making tool to turn it into never-ending adorableness.
- **User-generated content** — watch for mentions of your business and retweet, share or repost mentions that include pets.
- Remember, you aren't limited to pets inside your business — you can get great content by stepping out to the sidewalk too!

Best moment of the week so far was definitely when Frankie stopped in with her mom, Sue. [#PetsWelcome](#)



PET PHOTOGRAPHY TIPS

- Shoot pictures near windows or outside where you'll have the most natural light.
- Don't use a flash, which can scare the pet and create red eyes.
- Get down on their level for a "pet's eye" view.
- Be patient. Sometimes you have to wait to get the best expression.

Spreading the Word on Social Media (continued)

- Take lots of photos in a short time. Thanks to digital photography, you have the ability to shoot many, so do that to give you plenty of options.
- Let pets be who they are — don't try to pose a pet or force them into a particular position. You'll get the best pictures if the pet is relaxed.
- Think about what's in the background. The less going on behind them, the more the focus of the photo will be the pet.
- That said, if you're looking to promote your business with the post, think about how to get a subtle hint of it into the frame — a part of your sign in the background, a logo'd item in a corner, etc.
- Holding a treat or toy by the camera is a great way to keep the pet focused on you for the photo. Just be sure to follow through by handing it over when done — teasing a pet can upset him or her.
- Sounds can be helpful too. Whistle, use a squeaky toy or shake a treat jar to get them focused on you and the camera. But save the sound for the moment you really need it, as it will distract the pet, too.

KEEP RESPONSIBLE PET OWNERSHIP IN MIND

Pets should always be safe and secure. To avoid encouraging unsafe behaviors, don't post pictures of:

- Pets that aren't leashed.
- Pets wearing choke chains, pronged collars, head harnesses, shock collars or muzzles.
- Pets whose leash is tangled in a potentially dangerous way.
- Pets wearing clothing, hats or other items that are tight, dangling or otherwise potentially unsafe.

Here's Jack when he found out the patio at our business is now pet-friendly. Come on down for a pint! [#PetsWelcome](#)



- Pets in precarious positions.
- Pets eating people food (since some people foods are unhealthy for pets).
- Pets playing with inappropriate toys such as sticks or raw bones.
- Pets riding unsecured in cars.
- Pets fighting.
- Pets playing with kids without adult supervision.
- Pets with dyed hair, which can be unsafe.

Woofs and wags to our [#PetOfTheWeek](#), Molly. Thanks for stopping by! Hope to see you again soon. [#PetsWelcome](#)



JOIN THE MOVEMENT AND FOLLOW ALONG!

Be sure to follow us on social media at [@MarsPetcareUS](#), to keep up with the latest pet-friendly initiatives. And, visit [BetterCitiesForPets.com](#) and click “Join the Movement” to stay in touch.



Resources

Join the movement and stay in touch:

[BetterCitiesForPets.com](https://www.bettercitiesforpets.com)

For research on the power of pets and how they make life better:

[Waltham.com](https://www.waltham.com)

For information about service dogs in businesses:

[BetterCitiesForPets.com/servicedogs](https://www.bettercitiesforpets.com/servicedogs)

[AmericanHumane.org/marspetcare](https://www.americanhumane.org/marspetcare)

For pet health information and tips:

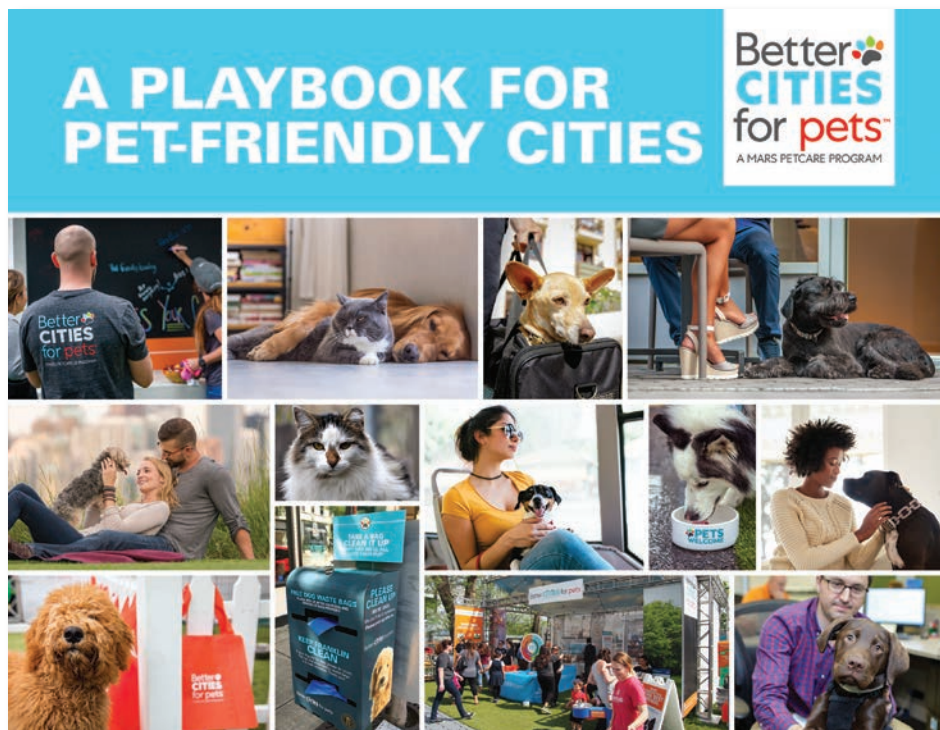
[Banfield.com](https://www.banfield.com)

[VCAhospitals.com](https://www.vcahospitals.com)

[BluePearlVet.com](https://www.bluepearlvet.com)

For pet health awareness event dates:

[Avma.org/Events/pethealth/](https://www.avma.org/Events/pethealth/)






Download the playbook at [BetterCitiesForPets.com](https://www.bettercitiesforpets.com) to get more ideas for pet-friendly shelters, homes, parks and businesses.

Better **CITIES** for pets™

A MARS PETCARE PROGRAM

BetterCitiesForPets.com

   MarsPetcareUS

MARS Petcare

