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## On the Job! Is Your Dog Office-Ready?

BY ARDEN MOORE

Some days, you may feel that you work like a dog at your job. But imagine getting to work with your dog in your cubicle, your office or business. In 1999, Patti Moran, founder of Pet Sitters International created the annual event Take Your Dog to Work Day. This year, it is being celebrated on June 23, and it has now expanded to Take Your Pet to Work Week and, yes, even Take Your Cat to Work Day.

"I wanted to find a way for PSI to give back to the pet community from which our members earn their living and find a unique way to celebrate dogs and promote their adoptions," Patti says. "Since that time, the event has grown by leaps and bounds."

### Tail-wagging offices

Tito's Handmade Vodka, headquartered in Texas, embraces Take Your Dog to Work Day every day. "Since the found-

ing of Tito's Handmade Vodka in 1995, stray dogs have always found their way to the distillery in rural Austin, where the Tito's team would feed them, take care of them and sometimes adopt them," says Beth Bellanti, manager of Tito's Vodka for Dog People program. "By allowing humans to bring their furry companions to work, we have seen reduced stress and anxiety levels, and improved work-life balance throughout our workforce."

Well-mannered pups are also welcomed at dog product supplier Chewy locations. And that makes Gabrielle Miller, senior pet team operations member, break out into a smile. "I love being able to bring my dogs, Tuffy and Maddie, to work with me," Gabrielle says. "When I take breaks, I take them for walks, and I like to see them modeling and working on the set with other pet wranglers."

One enforced rule: Dogs cannot be tethered and left unsupervised, even for a few minutes while their pet parents grab coffee or use the bathroom. Another co-worker must stay with the dog until the pet parent returns.

### Prep and practice

"Having a well-behaved dog will make it easier to take him to work," says Teoti Anderson, co-owner of Pawsitive Results in South Carolina, and past president of the Association of Professional Dog Trainers. "Brush up on his training, and he could be employee of the month!"

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Do a trial run. "See if you can bring him on a day off or on a quiet workday so that you can pay attention to your dog's behavior at the office," says Cara Armour, a professional dog trainer and agility instructor. Cara is also president of Cara Armour Consulting. "Pet proof the area where your dog will be each time he comes to work with you. Pay attention to anything on the floor. What if a coworker dropped an Advil and your dog found it? Make sure your dog is not allowed to roam freely and rummage in trash cans."

Teach your dog to self-soothe. "Have a ready-made supply of frozen, food-stuffed, rubber toys available that you can pull out to serve as doggie pacifiers during your meetings," Teoti says. "Take him out to eliminate in the designated potty area before you participate in office meetings."

### Review your pup's profile

How do you know if your pup is ready for an office job? Teoti, who is author of *Ultimate Guide to Dog Training*, encourages a candid assessment of your canine. **Ask yourself:**

- ❖ Does my dog have good manners?
- ❖ Will he jump on people?
- ❖ Does he drag me down the hallway?
- ❖ Does he like other dogs?
- ❖ Is he house-trained?
- ❖ Is he up-to-date on his vaccinations and flea and tick preventives?



- ❖ Will he enjoy coming to work with me or become stressed?

### Follow office rules

Setting boundaries and rules makes having your dog at work a good experience rather than a stressful one.

1. Keep your pet's needs in mind. Bring treats, chew toys, a water bowl and a comfy bed where your pet can relax while you are focused on work.
2. "Set 'ex-pet-tations' beforehand," Beth from Titos says. "Make sure there are office-wide guidelines and policies in place regarding pets that address roaming, leash restrictions, the number of pets allowed per person and anything else to ensure a peaceful environment for pets and humans alike."
3. Take quick breaks throughout the

day to step outside to give your pet some air and a chance to play and get out some energy.

For tips on starting a TYDTW program at your office, visit [dogster.com](http://dogster.com). 🐾

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## TAKE YOUR DOG TO WORK DAY

**1999:** The First TYDTWD event sponsored by Pet Sitters International is held on the Friday following Father's Day — a tradition still maintained today.

### Spinoff pet celebrations:

Take Your Pet to Work Week is June 19-23 and Take Your Cat to Work Day is set for June 19.

**About 300 businesses** participated in the first TYDTWD. Now, the number of companies steadily grows each year.

### PSI's Take Your Dog to Work

**Week's** website is [petsit.com/take-your-pet-to-work-week](http://petsit.com/take-your-pet-to-work-week). Visit it for more FAQs, history and tips on the holiday.

**Follow the TYDTWD** events and post your company's participation by using the hashtag: #takeyourdogtoworkday.

## A+ EMPLOYEES



Vallie, Louie and Roy are regulars at the Tito's Handmade Vodka offices in Texas.



Above: Twig from Ray's Automotive Center in Columbus, Indiana. His job duties include greeting guests and telling the humans when it's time to eat!