



MARIPOSA COUNTY

Human Resources • (209) 742-1379



RESOLUTION - ACTION REQUESTED 2019-247

MEETING: May 7, 2019
TO: The Board of Supervisors
FROM: Kimberly Williams, Human Resources Director
RE: Approve the County of Mariposa Pet Policy

RECOMMENDATION AND JUSTIFICATION:

Approve the County of Mariposa Pet Policy.

The Board of Supervisors has previously designated June 21, 2019 as the first official "Bring Your Dog to Work Day" in an effort to boost employee morale and to support the local pet community. With prior approval from their department heads, employees will be allowed to bring their well-behaved dogs to work with them and participate in dog-friendly activities that are being planned.

The Board has expressed a strong interest in establishing a Pet Policy to ensure public safety, employee responsibility, and a safe and pleasant work environment for everyone while dogs are in the workplace. Human Resources has developed a policy that provides guidelines for employees to follow, which includes a sensitivity to coworkers and visitors who may have allergies or an aversion to dogs. The policy further contains an Authorization and Waiver form to indemnify the County from any liabilities, claims, or lawsuits relating to the behavior of a pet on County property.

Prior to bringing a dog to work, each employee must complete and sign the Pet Policy Authorization and Waiver form and also obtain written approval of his/her Department Head in the Department Approval section of the form. Department heads shall have full discretion to allow or not allow dogs into their departments. The County Administrative Officer shall have the final decision of any action taken relating to violations of the policy.

The Pet Policy has been reviewed by County Counsel and the Director of Public Works and Transportation. This policy is intended to encourage responsible pet-ownership in the workplace and does not apply to emotional support animals, service dogs, or police dogs.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF BOARD ACTIONS:

On January 22, 2019 the Board designated June 21, 2019 as the first official "Bring Your Dog to Work Day," and requested that Human Resources develop a pet policy to address concerns of having dogs in the workplace.

Resolution - Action Requested 2019-247

ALTERNATIVES AND CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION:

Do not approve the policy, which would leave the County open to potential liabilities, claims and lawsuits.

ATTACHMENTS:

Pet Policy Draft (PDF)

RESULT: ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Merlin Jones, District II Supervisor

SECONDER: Kevin Cann, District IV Supervisor

AYES: Smallcombe, Jones, Long, Cann, Menetrey



COUNTY OF MARIPOSA PET POLICY

Currently dogs are the only authorized pet category for employees to bring into any County worksite. The overall objective of this policy is to ensure responsible dog guardianship and promote an environment where dogs and people can peacefully and safely co-exist while on County work premises. An employee may only bring one (1) dog to work on Bring Your Dog to Work Day. Employees with approved dogs at work are expected to be sensitive to employees and/or visitors, especially those who may not be dog-oriented and who may have allergies or other health conditions that preclude them from being in close proximity to a dog. All dogs must be treated humanely, and a high standard of animal compassion is expected of all dog owner employees. It is considered a privilege to have a dog at work and as such, requires the complete cooperation and responsible action(s) of all dog owners at all times.

An employee must have approval of his/her Department Head prior to bringing a dog to work. Dog owners are responsible for ensuring that their dogs are fully trained on all aspects of hygiene and elimination, personal habits in homes or offices, and non-disruptive behavior in a professional public facility. Dogs must be properly licensed and vaccinated. Dogs should be in generally good health, free of any parasites, and have adequate food, clean water, and veterinary care. Dogs must be free from offensive odors and display habits appropriate to the work environment, must not engage in behavior that endangers the health or safety of the individual or others in the workplace. All dogs greater than six (6) months of age must not be in a heat cycle or have any recent history (6 months) of infection or ringworm.

Dogs must be kept on a leash at all times while on County property. Reasonable periods of exercise, at least once every four (4) hours, are to be provided during the day (i.e. dog elimination breaks, a walk at lunchtime and/or socialization). When moving about outside the offices, the leash should never be extended more than six (6) feet from the owner. If dogs are left alone in employee work areas, they must be restrained by a crate. Dogs may only attend short business meetings if they are quiet and do not distract participants.

Dog owners are personally responsible at all times for controlling the behavior of their dogs regarding, but not limited to, disruptive, aggressive, protective and/or unfriendly behavior; biting, excessive barking; destructiveness; fighting with other animals; proper clean up and waste disposal. Dog owners must also keep a supply of plastic bags with ties at all times and appropriately dispose of dog waste in a manner that does not cause disruption in the workplace, including without limitation offensive odor or unsightly material. Any dog behavior interfering with the County's and/or another employee's ability to work, will be cause for the dog to be banned from County premises and the dog owner will be banned from bringing any other dog to work in the future. Dog owners are cautioned to be especially alert at all times when any member of the public is present on the property. Employees are responsible for advising anyone visiting them with a dog of the County's leash requirements. No pet dogs may be transported in a County vehicle at any time. If an employee needs to travel on County business and wishes to also transport his/her dog, he/she may use a personal vehicle to do so.

Dog owners are completely liable for the actions of their dogs at all times and are financially responsible for any damage, liability, injury or special cleaning required as a result of accidents and excessive pet hair and odor removal. The County assumes no responsibility for the health and wellbeing of any pet. The County also assumes no responsibility for any personal injury or property

damage to any person caused or contributed to by the conduct of an employee's dog or the employee's failure to supervise or care for the dog.

Any concerns regarding the observance/administration of this policy are to be expressed in writing to the County Administrative Officer (CAO) or the Assistant County Administrative Officer in his/her absence. Any employee who fails to act responsibly, as defined herein and as determined by the CAO, shall be subject to losing their dog privileges, will be required to remove their dog from County property immediately, and will be responsible for making up any resulting lost productivity. The CAO's decision shall be final regarding any action taken under this policy.

Created: 05/2019 (B/S Res. No. 19-247)

**PET POLICY
AUTHORIZATION AND WAIVER**

GENERAL INFORMATION

Employee Name:

Date:

Department:

Phone:

Department Head:

DOG DESCRIPTION

Breed:

Weight:

Age:

WAIVER OF LIABILITY:

For valuable consideration, including without limitation authorization to participate in this policy authorizing pet dogs to be present at work, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, [EE name] hereby agrees to indemnify the County from any liabilities, claims, or lawsuits arising from or related to the conduct or behavior of a pet on any County premises. The employee shall indemnify and hold harmless the County, its officials, administrators, employees and agents from any and all claims, injuries, damages, liabilities, losses, or lawsuits, including attorneys' fees and court costs defending against such actions, resulting from any claim asserted, or legal action filed by or on behalf of any individual who is an employee or member of the public for personal injury, property damage, wrongful death, medical expenses, medical liens or fees, arising out of the conduct or presence of the employee's dog on any County facility.

BY SIGNING THIS AUTHORIZATION AND RELEASE, THE DOG OWNER EXPRESSLY ACKNOWLEDGES AND REPRESENTS that he/she has carefully read the foregoing terms and conditions, understands the contents thereof and signs voluntarily; he/she is at least eighteen (18) years of age and fully competent; and executes this Authorization and Release intending that he/she, his/her spouse and family members, and his/her heirs, assigns and personal representatives if deceased, be legally bound by same.

Employee Signature

Date

DEPARTMENT APPROVAL:

I have discussed the foregoing Authorization and Release with the dog owner and am agreeable to the employee bringing his or her dog to the workplace and into my department. I approve this request, subject to employee following these and other departmental guidelines and demonstrating responsible dog ownership.

Department Head Signature

Date