



# Client care in the veterinary setting

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# Client care in the veterinary setting

## Trainer's overview

To help your employees get the most out of their training sessions, it is suggested that:

- The training sessions should be conducted in a relatively quiet and uninterrupted environment.
- The sessions should be held the same time and day of the month (e.g., first Tuesday at 12:30 p.m.).
- Employee handouts should be given out along with writing utensils.
- The trainer's guide, employee handout, and references are reviewed.
- The sessions are kept to a maximum of 20 minutes.
- Personal examples of incidents or prevention techniques that worked for you should be included.
- Ensure all employees who are present sign the safety training sign-in sheet for documentation purposes.
- If some employees were not present, a second training session should be given.



The Employee Health & Safety exposures and loss prevention efforts are the responsibility of your company. Safehold's Risk Control services are intended to assist you and your management with evaluating potential exposures to loss and methods to minimize exposure. services do not necessarily include every possible loss potential, code violation, or exception to good management practices.

## Trainer's guide

### What you need to know about client care issues in the veterinary setting

Client care is admittedly a very broad term, but it essentially means making sure your clients experience a safe and positive visit to your clinic or hospital.

Client care should be in everyone's interest and responsibility within your organization. Most of the time, greeting and treating clients in a friendly, positive manner comes second nature to you and your staff. However, you should remind all employees that there is an elevated standard of care or duty owed to clients to provide them a hazard-free environment as they move about the premises.

Providing a hazard-free environment means considering all areas clients may encounter such as: waiting room, restrooms, examination rooms, lobby, and parking areas. These areas should be examined daily basis for a trip and fall hazards, housekeeping issues, and adequate lighting.

As employees and clients use the same areas, you should keep a handle on housekeeping by following the controls outlined here. It will prove useful in also maintaining employee safety.

### Resources

One terrific source of assistance in this area is your workers' compensation insurance carrier's safety consultant and/or Safehold representative.

These representatives are available to visit your facility to consult with you and your employees. They will provide feedback in the form of specific recommendations designed to eliminate or mitigate identified client care issues.

Contact us today to learn more. [safehold.com](https://www.safehold.com)

# Client care in the veterinary setting

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## Trainer's guide (continued)

### Work Practice Controls

Work practice controls are meant to reduce the likelihood of exposure through regular refresher training, reminding and/or reinforcing of policies and procedures. Controls include, but are not limited to:

- Restrooms should be checked on a regular basis, the frequency will depend on your level of activity and staffing. A "sweep sheet" on a clipboard can be used to mark the date and time of each check.
- Lobby areas get a lot of use and should be policed frequently to maintain a clean setting free of debris.
- Product displays should be stable and limited to six feet high and should not be overloaded with goods.
- Keep scale platforms away from primary walking paths and main exits so they do not create a trip and fall hazard or impede egress from the building in an emergency.
- Lighting indoors should be bright. Front entry and parking lot lighting should give clients a clear vision of walking surfaces and not be obstructed by landscaping or overhangs.
- Emergency exit signs and emergency lighting fixtures need to be conspicuous and in good working order. Emergency lighting should be checked monthly.
- Walking surfaces should be in good condition; floor mats get a lot of wear and are a leading of trips and falls. Mats need to lay completely flat and not be frayed or torn.
- Parking lots need to be in good condition and examined for loose fasteners and/or potential repairs.
- Hand sanitizer should be made available.
- First aid kits should be readily at hand and employees should know its location. It should include an inventory of items available and information for restocking.

- Employees should be familiar with your emergency evacuation, egress routes, and outside assembly point.
- Employees should be familiar with post-accident procedures and reporting requirements.

### Questions for discussion

**Question:** Does the concept of standard of care increase or decrease the importance of maintaining a safe client experience?

**Answer:** Increase

**Question:** How often should emergency lighting be checked?

**Answer:** Monthly

**Question:** What is a common problem with floor mats?

**Answer:** They get a lot of wear and can fray, becoming a trip hazard.

**Question:** What two ways can you get immediate loss control help?

**Answer:** Contacting your workers' compensation insurance carrier's safety representative and/or Safehold representative.

### Employee Questions?

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**Please complete the sign-in sheet (next page).**

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# Client care in the veterinary setting

## Employee handout

### Overview

Client care does not begin following an incident or accident that takes place in the office. Rather, exceptional client care begins the moment a customer, sales representative, delivery person, contractor, or anyone else walks in the door your building, From the doctors to the reception desk, along with everyone else working in the Office, there is an inherent responsibility to care for and provide a safe environment for anyone that comes in. By inviting the general public onto your premises, there is an elevated standard of care or duty, owed to clients to provide them a hazard free environment.

Providing for a hazard free environment means considering all areas clients may encounter such as waiting rooms, restrooms, examination rooms, lobby, and parking areas. These areas should be examined on a daily basis for trip and fall hazards, housekeeping issues, and adequate lighting.

Our focus in this handout will be a discussion of what reasonable expectations all parties that enter your buildings should have, and what tips and techniques can be employed before an incident or accident occurs to increase safety levels.

### Key Safety Points:

- Safety concerns begin even before our visitors come inside the building. Is our parking lot in good condition with clear traffic indicators and signage, free of potholes and cracked or up-heaved concrete?
- How about our lighting? While we are familiar with our own walkways and facility layout, visitors may not be. Outdoor and indoor lighting should be bright, while front entry and parking lot lighting should give clients a clear vision of walking surfaces and not be obstructed by landscaping.
- Lobby areas get a lot of use and should be sanitized and policed frequently to maintain a clean setting free of debris.
- Interior walking surfaces should be in good condition.

- Floor mats get a lot of wear and are a leading cause of trips and falls, so they need to lay completely flat and not be frayed or torn. Also, walking path obstructions should be moved to their last conspicuous positions. Things like scale platforms, and product displays should be kept out of emergency evacuation pathways as well as other common walkways.
- Restrooms should be checked on a regular basis, sanitized, and kept clear, clean, and dry. The frequency at which these checks are done will depend on your level of activity and staffing. A "sweep sheet" on a clipboard can be used to mark the date and time of each check.
- Emergency exit signs and emergency lighting fixtures need to be conspicuous and in good working order. Emergency lighting should be checked monthly.
- A first aid kit and hand sanitizer should be always readily available. All employees should know where to access these items. And finally,
- Familiarize yourself with your facility's emergency evacuation and egress routes and post-accident procedures and reporting criteria for both employees and visitors.

### Conclusion

Client safety is the responsibility of all employees, not just management and ownership. The most important factor in minimizing the exposures faced by clients that come to our building is perspective. Putting oneself in the position of a client coming to our facility can be valuable; is the parking lot smooth? Is it well lit? How clean is the lobby and reception area? Are the restrooms clean and clear? If these questions are not answered in a positive manner, actions should be taken along with management and ownership to correct them.

While the above listed safety points are a start to create a safe workplace for clients and employees, attention to details and an increased awareness will help maintain a safe environment for clients and all other parties that visit the premises.

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