

LV = Reveals Pet Sick Leave Costs UK Businesses £18 Million A Year



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A new LV= commissioned report into the impact of pet illness and death on their owners' work attendance has revealed that British businesses are losing £18 million* a year in lost workforce hours, as thousands of staff take 'pet sick leave' either to look after their sick animal or to grieve because their pet has died.

The UK is well known as a nation of animal lovers with nearly half of all adults in the UK owning a cat or dog. The new LV= [pet insurance](#) report found that one in ten dog or cat owners interviewed (11%) said they had stayed at home to nurse a sick pet, while 11% had stayed off work because they were so upset after their pet had died.



The 1.1 million pet owners who called in sick last year because their dog or cat was ill or had died, each took an average of 2.4 days off.

Rather than admit the truth to their employer, nearly a quarter of those who took time off for their pet (24%), told their boss they were staying off work due to their own ill health.

The LV= [pet insurance policy](#), which covers cats and dogs, includes free bereavement counselling for the pet owner as standard. LV= is also one of the few insurers that will insure older cats and dogs, with no maximum age limit.

Emma Holyer, [LV=](#) pet insurance spokesperson, said: "It's clearly an upsetting time when a beloved pet is sick or dying, and this report shows that many people suffer as much they would for a friend or relative. This has a significant impact on employers across the UK, as staff take time off because of their pets. To help owners through this difficult period, LV='s [pet health insurance](#) policy now includes access to a free, confidential helpline on pet bereavement and illness. The helpline is manned

by experienced therapists and counsellors to help pet owners get through troubled times."

Belinda Hall, counselling services manager at Medicals Direct Group, which runs the helpline on behalf of LV=, said: "The pet bereavement counselling service is designed to assist pet owners come to terms with the loss of their animal. Callers can access the service at any time of the day or night and their call is completely confidential."

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Notes to Editors:
Opinium Research carried out an online poll of 2036 dog and cat owners aged 18 and over from 11th - 14th December 2010. Results have been weighted to nationally representative criteria.

*Of the 49,121,000 adults in the UK 47% own a dog or cat (23,086,000). 38% have had a dog or cat which has been sick or died in the last five years (8,773,000). 18% with sick or dying pets have taken time off work (1,579,000). 24% of these dog and cat owners have been given paid leave by default after calling in sick (379,000). The amount of time off taken off by pet owners to look after sick pets or grieve is, on average, 2.4 days, equivalent to £234.72 (ONS) at the median weekly wage rate. Therefore 379,000 x 234.72 = £88,958,880 divided by 5 = £17,791,776.

About

LV=

LV= is a registered trade mark of Liverpool Victoria Friendly Society Limited (LVFS) and a trading style of the Liverpool Victoria group of companies.

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