

## Dog and Cat “Cafés”

Indoor establishments that provide space for people and pets to interact — commonly called dog or cat “cafés” — have opened in New York City (NYC), but the name “café” is confusing! Dog or cat “cafés” do not prepare or serve food or drink for consumption by humans. Here is how these businesses work:

### Physical space and setup

If a business that allows pets is right next to a restaurant or other food service establishment:

- The two locations must be completely separated by a floor-to-ceiling wall or walls.
- Each location must have its own street entrance and separate address.
- There must be no doorway or other way to move directly from the business that allows pets to the restaurant or other food service establishment without first exiting outside.

### Staff

Staff of the business that allows pets must not have any work responsibilities that require them to enter any food service establishment.

### Food or drink

Any food or drink consumed by humans at the business that allows pets can only be brought there by the customer. Food or drink for human consumption cannot be directly offered, sold or served at a business that allows pets.

### Animals and indoor or outdoor dining

Live animals, except for service animals, are prohibited in all indoor and most outdoor areas of restaurants and other food service establishments. Restaurant and other food service establishment operators *may* allow dogs that are not service animals in *outdoor* dining areas as long as the operators comply with the “Outdoor Dining With Dogs” rule and post the required sign. To find the required sign needed for restaurants and other food service establishments, visit [nyc.gov/health](https://nyc.gov/health) and search for **Rules for Outdoor Dining With Dogs**.

For more information about dining with dogs, visit [nyc.gov/health](https://nyc.gov/health) and search for **Dining With Dogs in Restaurants**.

### Questions?

Before opening a business where you allow pets and expect customers to eat or drink, call the Office of Food Safety at the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (Health Department) at 212-676-1600 to be sure your setup does not actually meet the definition of a restaurant or other food service establishment, where animals are prohibited.

Depending on your business, you may also need to check the **requirements for pet shops or other animal-related businesses**. For more information, call the Health Department’s Office of Veterinary Public Health Services at 646-364-1765, call **311** or visit [nyc.gov/nycbusiness](https://nyc.gov/nycbusiness).