Workplace Safety Part 1

Welcome to Workplace Safety Certification Program. My name is Mary Oquendo. And I've been teaching safety since 2006. I am a Certified Master Pet Tech Instructor, one of 13 worldwide. I'm going to be your ray of sunshine inform you of all the ways your business trying to cause you harm.

Employee and personal safety should hold tremendous importance for every company. First and foremost, everyone has the right to work in safe and healthy environment. No employees or their families should have to suffer because of avoidable dangers in the workplace. By creating a safe and healthy workplace companies also protect themselves.

If you have questions after this program is over, these are all the ways to get a hold of me. The two three best to best is either to text me on my cell phone, (203-994-5308) or tag me in the mastermind group.

 I also encourage you to fill out the workbook for this program. The workbook is designed to take notes you will need in order to get a certificate from Pawsitive Educational Training. One of the requirements will be to create a safety guide for your business and to pass the test.

I'm going to start off first with what the goal of this workshop is, there's a reason that pet grooming gets the high-risk insurance rating. Not only is it a physically demanding job, let's add in working with live animals.

We will define what constitutes a workplace injury, and learn how to prevent and mitigate those injuries that have the potential to not only end a career, but drive up your workman's compensation insurance premium.

As I was finishing up this workshop, someone had put up a poll in a Facebook group and group the poll originally had about five options. It was closer to 30 by the time I took a couple of screenshots. The question was What Things Do You Suffer From While Grrooming? It included: back injury, arm pain, injury, anxiety, carpal tunnel syndrome, shoulder injury, bites, feet issues, hearing loss, wrist issues, neck and leg disease. Someone wrote all of the above and it got nine votes when I screenshot it the following were added: bipolar disorder, nerve damage, hernias, zoonotic illnesses, pituitary tumors. One person, I'm in great shape, nothing is wrong with me, PTSD wrist issues, arthritis, hair, splinters, carpal tunnel, again, trigger finger/ thumb, bursitis tendinitis, Raynaud's disease, and I'm sure there are more since I actually screenshot that.

I’ve broken up this workshop into basically four categories. The first is facility and what I mean by facility is that it encompasses shops, house call, mobile, and home based injuries. The second is animals and how they cause injury to us. Three, specifically, any repetitive injuries, and then I’ll finish up with any preventive and mitigation I haven't already covered.

According to OSHA Standard 190 4.5. an injury is defined as work related if an event or exposure and the work environment either caused or contributed to the injury, or significantly aggravated any pre-existing injury or illness. The general rule of thumb is an injury or illness is presumed to be work related when they occur because of events in the workplace. And I want to emphasize this can be a pre-existing condition that was made worse for the workplace.

OSHA stands for Occupational Safety and Health Administration. I will be referencing OSHA throughout the workshop as they have set the bar. Even if you are a business of one, these standards will serve you well.

Let's define work environment. Whether or not injuries and illnesses are caused by something in the work environment is key to determining if an injury if an injury is work related. It's critical that you know what OSHA considers the work environment to avoid record keeping mistakes. OSHA defines the work environment as the establishment and other locations where one or more employees are working or are present as a condition of their employment. The work environment includes not only physical locations, but also the equipment and materials used by the employee during the course of his or her work.

This is really important for household and mobile employees. Their work environment includes driving and time spent outside of the vehicle and in the homes of clients. All incidences must be documented for your own records, even if you don't think it's work related. OSHA has other requirements. There is a difference between recordable and reportable you record major incidents for your personal records, which during an audit, they will want to see. Any event is reportable to OSHA if it consists of work related fatalities, inpatient hospitalizations, amputations, or loss of an eye. Fatalities must be reported within eight hours and the others within 24. For example, if your employee has a heart attack and is taken to the hospital and dies, you must report that within eight hours. If they survive and are hospitalized, you have 24 hours to report if you have more than 10 employees, record keeping is required and must be kept on the premise for five years.

Before you even enter the facility, trips and falls can occur right outside the door. Icy walkways and broken sidewalks are probably the two biggest culprits. Trips and falls account for about a third of all workplace injuries. So what happens when someone trips and falls.

The most common injuries from these type of accidents are fractures and dislocated joints. They are most common to the ankle or the wrist. But fractures to fingers can also happen. Shoulder dislocations and knee injuries are also fairly common. And then after fractures are sprains and superficial cuts and bruises, followed by lacerations and open wounds, and then followed by either burns or scalds

 Falls at work will account for 2% of fatal injuries in the workplace. Slips and falls also, in rare cases, can lead to traumatic brain injuries or spinal cord damage. And addition to workmen comp claims this employee can also sue in civil court as well.

And while physical locations may only have to concern themselves with one or maybe two locations, mobile and housecall groomers have to contend with multiple occasions on a daily basis, and any injury must be documented. But depending on your state, your insurance company may be able to go after the homeowners insurance policy as well. An example would be that a mobile employee who has slipped on an icy walkway would be a workman's comp case. But this employee can also sue the homeowner and more than likely that your workman's comp insurance would also go after the homeowners policy.

Take a look at the outside of the facility and repair the sidewalks. If you're leasing it may be considered the landlord's responsibility. However, it is ultimately your workman's comp that may be affected. In winter, you want to make sure that your walkways and the parking lots are liberally salted and cleared.

As I was mobile, I would text the clients before their appointments to remind them that I needed clear walkways and driveways and many times I would have them text me pictures so I could judge for myself. I did not hesitate to inform them that in Connecticut it would be their homeowner's policy that would be tapped if I injured myself on their property.

It’s not just ice, wet leaves in the fall are as dangerous as any ice covered driveway.

Next is the reception area. For housecall groomers and mobiles, this may be the interior of a client's home. So let's start off with the clients and the dangers that they present to us. For one, there is the threat of assault or verbal abuse, including threats from unhappy clients, or their friends or family. Don't be afraid to call the police tell them you have a disorderly person and you're afraid they are becoming violent. Let me repeat that. Tell them that you have a disorderly person and you're afraid they are becoming violent. You will get the police's attention with the words disorderly and violent.

For mobile groomers, it means locking your doors. For vans that need to idle have a second key. I kept mine in my pocket, so that you can lock and unlock the door and trust your gut. If you get a bad feeling leave. My go to excuse was that the water pump went and I needed to get it fixed. But as I was in the neighborhood, I stopped by to tell them I'll call and reschedule. I be like, Yeah, I don't think so.

If your house call, make sure that an exit is not blocked. That there's no one standing between you and the way out of their house. Before carrying any type of weapon. Make sure it is legal in your state and you are equipped to use them. I have always had a crappy pair of scissors in my smock pocket. No sense ruining my $300 ones.

Go with your gut feeling if you feel weird leave. If they answer the door in your underwear leave. Tell them that since they are not ready for their appointment, you will have to reschedule. Don't schedule registered sex offenders if you are mobile or housecall.

 Now, Mary, how do we know someone is a registered sex offender? I'm so glad you asked that. Google register sex offender list slash your state. Make sure you choose from an official government site. There are sites that will look up the information if you pay them. This is free information that is part of the public record. I'm going to choose Washington association of sheriffs and police and search for sex offenders, Washington sex offender public registry, I'm going to choose that. It's gonna take me to another page, and I must agree to the Terms of Service. Hit Continue. You’re going to have to type in an address it. So pick an address that smack in the middle of your service area. Hit search. I chose a five mile radius. So within this radius, there are 12 registered sex offenders. I'm going to just note their address and their name, if they call to schedule an appointment, I'm not going to book them. As simple as that. If your areas outside was more than five miles, you got to have to do this step multiple times.

A physical shop can have a panic button with almost any security system. After you press the button, the police are summoned to your facility. Your tech person who sets that up for you can set up a panic button for you.

There is something called a red panic button app. And another one called silent beacon. It is an app for both Android and Apple phones. You could add personal contacts to it and they do have free versions of them.

If you have a newer iPhone, you just press and hold the side button and one of the volume buttons until the emergency SOS slider appears pretty quickly. You can drag the slider over to call emergency services. However, if you can't do that, by simply holding the two buttons on the side of the phone it starts a countdown and then an alert will sound You hold it until the countdown ends your iPhone will automatically call emergency services.

 If you have older iPhones, iPhone seven or earlier, you can press the side button five times, then the emergency slider appears. You can drag the slider over to call emergency services. After the call ends your iPhone will also send your emergency contact a text message with your current location unless you choose to cancel that. If location services are off, it will turn on to do that. If your location changes, your contacts will get an update, and you'll get a notification about 10 minutes later, you have to stop the updates. If you keep doing it'll start after like a couple hours, it'll give you a reminder every four hours for 24 hours, right? If you use the SOS shortcut, you will need to re-enter your password your passcode because the Touch ID will be disabled, right.

Now if you have an android, open up your phone settings, go to personal, select privacy and emergency and click Send SOS messages. You enable the feature by clicking the toggle at the top right, it will prompt you to agree to a disclaimer. And once you accept the terms you will be able to set up SOS messages. click send messages to choose up to four emergency contacts to receive your emergency alerts. You can add a new contact, you can select from contacts already on your phone, but you cannot add 911 as an emergency contact.

In addition to sending your location you can choose to enable two other additional SOS messaging features. The one is attached pictures that allows you to attach photos taken from both the front and rear cameras before the emergency alert is sent. Attach audio recordings allow you to attach a five second audio recording to the message.

Video and audio recordings. All states have different regulations regarding audio and video recordings. But the general rule of thumb is that they can't be placed where someone has a reasonable expectation of privacy. And that there is notification such as a prominent sign in the lobby, as well as new sign Terms of Service.

As a mobile, I verbally informed clients at all first appointments were recorded start to finish. And then they did not want me recording in their home they can then they can finish filling out any paperwork in my van while going over instruction puts a stop to those he said she said scenarios.

 Camera options can vary. I have personally utilized four different options. And there could be more than what I'm outlining here. First is the system set up by a security professional? I know I have four months of recordings always stored, it is the most expensive option. And I do need Wi Fi and but there are other setups where you don't need Wi Fi. And if I need anything in particular is saved. I can also save it from an app on my phone and simply send it to myself.

Second one is a dash cam setup. And what I like about this option is that it uses an SD card and all the video is stored on it. If you do that route, make sure you label those SD cards. They're small, make sure they're in a secure location.

Three- Blink Ring, and Arlo types. The setup is very easy to install. You could also set up a subscription service where they keep recordings for a specified amount of time. They do need Wi Fi. Also, they have phone apps where you can set alerts. I use I have ring in my office, I have blink set up for my mother in law. And I have set it up for alerts.

Fourth- You can use your smartphone and a flexible tripod. They're like 25 bucks on Amazon. So now while talking to clients, you could simply have it in a pocket while recording. Or while working on it a pet.. The flexible tripod can be placed almost anywhere to record the grooming. And as phone video files can be quite large, right? I have a Google Drive account and I have the Google Drive app on my phone. Dropbox is another option. I will pre set up folders in Google and Google Drive and simply move the files from my phone to the Google Drive. You will need a Gmail account to set them up the free account has a great deal of memory. And the $20 a year has a phenomenal amount of memory of memory.

 If you are recording in most states, you must adhere to the two party agreement law or you can be sued. They can state you violated their civil rights. Know your state and local laws.

 So now I want to reference the workbook. In the workbook, there's going to be forms in there. They are my forms. You can use them, you can tweak them. If you are concerned about the legality of the forms, you can always have a business attorney take a look at them and make sure they are compliant with your state.

A thorough pet assessment and paperwork is going to save you so much grief and tell you everything you need to know about this pet. The first form I have there is from Pet Tech, you can make copies as long as you keep their logo on it.

There are other options including Barkleigh that has a very nice form as well.

This is what I'm looking for. I watch them walk. I am looking for any possible neurological disorders or arthritis. Many tick borne diseases will show up as painful front legs. Does this pet look like it's in pain. A pet in pain is a bite risk. Is there any discharge from the eyes of the nose? Could this pet be contagious? Many communicable feline diseases are respiratory in nature. And ill pet may have a zoonosis such as rabies or lepto. Do the ears feel warm. This pet may have an infection. Are they protecting their face, bad teeth is painful. This pet is it bite risk.

I want to run my hands over their body I want to see if they're anticipating a touch that might be painful. And I always check gum color. Anything other than normal gums indicates a serious medical condition. For a new client, this will take a couple of minutes. They also need to see how their pet handles being handled. But established clients it should take less than a minute and that time you will know if this pet is healthy enough to groom, if there are any problem areas and the overall behavior of this pet? Just a note, if I find something that I'm going to refuse service, and I will offer a descriptive reason.

For example, if the gums are pale, I need vet clearance before grooming as I do not know if it's something that can be aggravated by grooming or if the ears feel warm to the touch, I need to vet clearance to make sure I won't aggravate a pre-existing condition. Be aware that any pet is a bite risk if you cause some pain or that they anticipate pain, muzzle if necessary or this is an unknown pet.

What paperwork and waivers do is to set boundaries with your clients, prevent miscommunications and alert you to the well being of the pet. We're trying to avoid client confrontations. Let’s lookat some of the other forms.

Your Terms of Service details under what circumstances you offer your services. Like I said, you can use any of my documents I provide to tweak for yourself. Note that the very first term states and only healthy pets are accepted. And I am not responsible for aggravating pre-existing conditions.

Client information and this is where I put my video and audio recording at any other my general waivers. My other waivers will come out as necessary. They include senior pets, cats, matting, and aggressive pets. There's also a health form in there too. And the reason I asked when was the last vet visit and list of medications this because I want to know if there's a medical concern that the owner doesn't think is a problem. A list of meds tells me precisely if I need to be concerned over seizures, diabetes or heart concerns.

This concludes the part one.