

DOH WSBOH

From: Greg Goldberg <greg.goldberg.1984@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 21, 2020 5:15 AM
To: DOH WSBOH
Subject: Fwd: Amazon's response regarding possible workplace hazards
Attachments: petition.pdf

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Dear Washington State Board of Health,

Please consider the following email chain for of emails and facts for legislation to protect Washington Employees from zoonotic diseases such as bring your dog into work:

- There was no policies against bringing the sick dogs into work (so my teammates would), this has been amended in 2017 as it must have happened to someone other than me, however it should most likely be added to legislation to prevent this from happening at other companies.
- They never clean our workspaces and lock us with dogs in those workspaces
- They provide us with food and encourage us to eat in those workspaces
- Do not provide employees with the risks of working in environments with animals (Or that they may still be asymptomatic when unwell, such as Strep Zoo/Kennel Cough, like what happened to me)
- Don't put signage up to remind people to wash their hands after handling animals
- Have communal areas with dogs coming and going
- Individuals also owning farms with farm animals where they bring these dogs (I believe this is all increases the risks and makes something unlikely inevitable. Healthy 30 year old males shouldn't get sick with this pathogen and the dogs are the most likely source if not the only source of my infection)

I have gotten extremely sick from a Group C Strep infection which is suspected to be Streptococcus Zoo due to clinical manifestation such as reticulonodular opacities and the microbiological characteristics.

Amazon's dog policy when I was working in Seattle for them:

<https://www.seattledogspot.com/amazon-dog-friendly-seattles-dog-friendliest-company/>

Evidence that they have enormous amounts of dogs walking through their offices:

<https://fortune.com/2019/06/21/amazon-dogs-at-work-perks/>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/16/technology/inside-amazon-wrestling-big-ideas-in-a-bruising-workplace.html>

There are a significant amount of documents which describe this and even formal peer reviewed articles discussing the risks and benefits of bringing your pet to work which can be found with a simple search.

Most of this legislation could be applied to mainly:

- Provide Washington Employees with a pathogen free environment by maintaining cleaning standards for these shared environments (Perhaps only if a specific number of dogs are within the premises etc? I am not an expert in zoonotic disease transfer from animal to human)
- Develop a standard baseline to prevent outbreaks of zoonotic diseases.
- Help identify these occupational diseases and treat them before they become a significant issue
- Enable Medical Providers to understand that the employees are at higher risk for these diseases and to screen for them more thoroughly when exposed to these communal environments to prevent them from becoming permanent, debilitating or even evending fatally.

Please let me know if this is not suitable for your agenda.
Kind regards
Gregory Goldberg

+61 490 467 769 (When dialling from a cell phone)
(011)-(61)-0490 467 769 (When dialling from a landline)

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Levy, Susan (Susie)** <slevy@kingcounty.gov>
Date: Sat, Nov 21, 2020 at 2:47 PM
Subject: RE: Amazon's response regarding possible workplace hazards
To: Greg Goldberg <greg.goldberg.1984@gmail.com>

It is worth reaching out to the State Board of Health here: <https://sboh.wa.gov/>

They may have more authority on this than the local health boards.

Best of luck!

Susie

From: Greg Goldberg <greg.goldberg.1984@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, November 20, 2020 7:45 PM
To: Levy, Susan (Susie) <slevy@kingcounty.gov>
Subject: Re: Amazon's response regarding possible workplace hazards

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That's okay, I just figured that microsoft, Amazon, Facebook and all these big IT companies are setting up in Washington state, they all have bring your dog into work policies, so there is tens of thousands of dogs walking through communal areas and there is no legislation specifically aimed at this scenario like there is for kennels, petting zoos or other similar settings providing a specifically unhealthy environment for employees.

As the state board of health is responsible for enacting legislation to protect their employees, I assumed you would want to prevent this from occurring to any future employees.

On Sat, Nov 21, 2020, 2:29 PM Levy, Susan (Susie) <slevy@kingcounty.gov> wrote:

Dear Greg,

Thank you for the follow up information. This is really outside of the scope of the Board of Health's jurisdiction, but I appreciate you sharing the information and your story. Sorry there is not more of a role for the Board to play.

I hope you have a safe holiday.

Thanks so much,

Susie

Susie Levy, MPH (*she/her*)

Government Affairs Analyst

Public Health – Seattle & King County

Phone: 206-263-8328

slevy@kingcounty.gov

From: Greg Goldberg <greg.goldberg.1984@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, November 20, 2020 4:58 PM

To: Levy, Susan (Susie) <slevy@kingcounty.gov>

Subject: Re: Amazon's response regarding possible workplace hazards

[EXTERNAL Email Notice!] External communication is important to us. Be cautious of phishing attempts. Do not click or open suspicious links or attachments.

Dear Susie Levy,

I just wanted to provide you with Amazon's dog policy when I was working there:

<https://www.seattledogspot.com/amazon-dog-friendly-seattles-dog-friendliest-company/>

And evidence that they have enormous amounts of dogs walking through their offices:

<https://fortune.com/2019/06/21/amazon-dogs-at-work-perks/>

There was no policies against bringing the sick dogs into work (so team mates would), they never clean our workspaces, lock us with dogs in the workspace, provide us with food and encourage us to eat in those workspaces and still do not provide employees with the risks of working in this environment, don't put signage up to even tell people to wash their hands after handling animals.

This is a communal area with dogs coming and going and individuals also owning farms with farm animals where they bring these dogs (I believe this is all increases the risks and makes something unlikely inevitable. Healthy 30 year old males shouldn't get sick with this pathogen and the dogs are the most likely source if not the only source.)

Kind regards

Greg

On Fri, Nov 20, 2020, 4:25 PM Greg Goldberg <greg.goldberg.1984@gmail.com> wrote:

Thank you so much for responding as well,
I really appreciate that you are considering this issue for me.
I hope you have a great evening
Greg

On Fri, Nov 20, 2020 at 4:22 PM Levy, Susan (Susie) <slevy@kingcounty.gov> wrote:

Dear Greg Goldberg,

Thank you for reaching out. I will share the information with the Board of Health Chair.

Thanks so much,

Susie

Susie Levy, MPH (*she/her*)

Government Affairs Analyst

Public Health – Seattle & King County

Phone: 206-263-8328

slevy@kingcounty.gov

From: Greg Goldberg <greg.goldberg.1984@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2020 9:32 AM

To: Levy, Susan (Susie) <slevy@kingcounty.gov>

Subject: Fwd: Amazon's response regarding possible workplace hazards

[EXTERNAL Email Notice!] External communication is important to us. Be cautious of phishing attempts. Do not click or open suspicious links or attachments.

Dear Susie Levy,

Please review the communication below from OSHA at Labor and Industries and consider it for your agenda. They did not start investigating my Occupational Disease claim until several months after I reported it and I had appealed their decision to the BIIA and retained an attorney. I believe they have no intentions of paying as they refused to accept the claim during mediation without any reason after investigating the issue for months and their OSHA investigator has not investigated this health issue and is not responding to my communications (even though I have tried via SMS, phone call and email).

Kind regards

Greg Goldberg

RCW [16.36.070](#) - Danger of infection—Emergencies.

RCW [16.36.082](#) Infected or exposed animals—Unlawful to transfer or expose other animals.

WAC 246-100-191 [Section 246-100-191](#) Animals—**General measures to prevent human disease.**

RCW [51.28.010](#) Notice of accident—Notification of worker's rights—Claim suppression.

RCW [51.48.010](#) Employer's liability for penalties, injury or disease occurring before payment of compensation secured.

RCW [51.48.025](#) Retaliation by employer prohibited—Investigation—Remedies. (Complained about a hazardous workplace and that it is a risk to my open wound while getting sick, they began complaining I was getting sick)

[51.48.030](#) Failure to keep records and make reports.

[51.48.060](#) Physician or licensed advanced registered nurse practitioner—Failure to report or comply.

There is more legislation I have seen but need to document, and others I probably need to discover. For example:

- **Train employees of the hazards of the workplace (Such as working alongside animals)**
- **Keep workspace clear of pathogens**
- **Maintain Signage as there is over 7000 dogs walking through their offices when it is Business As Usual.**

On Tue, Oct 13, 2020 at 12:00 PM Greg Goldberg <greg.goldberg.1984@gmail.com> wrote:

Amazon policy does permit employees to bring dogs to work, but only once they have been registered in the Amazon Dogs at Work program (details below). The registration process includes a discussion with an employee's manager and teammates in their immediate work area to ensure everyone supports having a dog present first. **This issue occurred in 2014-2016, they should be noticing their policies at that time** As an ongoing requirement of bringing your dog to work, you must keep your dog's vaccinations up to date, maintain adequate vaccination records, and monitor your dog at all times **You cannot get a vaccination for Dog Streptococcus.** In addition, all dogs must have updated licensing as required by applicable law. Of course, we also provide dog-free spaces for those employees who may prefer not to work around dogs **I specifically requested to work from an office without dogs WITH my team, I was then penalized for working away from my team.** We note that our corporate offices, including this Facility, are currently seeing low employee volumes as our employees are welcome to work from home until January 8 **We are talking about a historical issue, according to Legislation (I will quote them at the bottom of the email) there should be action taken after this.** This Facility in particular is averaging around 2%

occupancy **This is because of COVID, when things return to Business As Usual it will not be that way**, so few dogs are present currently. Regardless, employees are required to adhere to a very strict and detailed policy that governs the Dogs at Work program and requires:

Documentation validating the dog has up-to-date vaccinations.

Affirmation that the dog:

- Is housebroken
- Will not be disruptive (**Jumping on my lap while I am trying to work is not disruptive?**)
- Will be well-behaved (**A dog was sitting at my desk whenever I was not, how is this well behaved? It also jumped on my lap/leaned all over my body whilst trying to work as it was quiet large**)
- Is socialized
- Is clean, healthy, and both flea and infection free. (**Chris Powers would take his dog to the family farm and then into work. Regardless of if it was clean it increases the risk of infection. He was explicitly late to meetings as he was taking his dog to the vet prior to the morning meetings. Amazon only implemented their "Take a sick day if your dog is sick" policy after I was terminated from contracting this zoonotic pathogen.**)
- Does not pose a threat to health, safety, or company property. **Without regular cleaning of the office spaces which are shared with dogs POST COVID-19, it is inevitable it will happen again with over 7000 dogs walking through their offices (Even if it is a low risk thing, 7000 dogs and 80000 employees statistically guarantees that it will occur again and has most likely occurred in the past as it took a long time to source, diagnose and treat this issue. I believe in general most people may never even know they got sick from animals at the office if they do not tell the doctors that it is basically a kennel.**
- Requirement that the dog will be contained within the working area and attended to at all times. (**Chris Powers directly bought in a sick dog from the vet and locked it in my work area, the dog was locked in the confined cubical based workspace without the owner on several occasions. Specifically when meetings were attended or when he left his desk to have lunch in the cafeteria downstairs for example. This is common practice that I had observed during my tenure**)

Further, dogs are not allowed in the following areas:

- Café areas **I only attended the Cafe once so cannot confirm or deny this**
- Conference rooms or meeting centers **Chris Powers would leave his dog in my teams work area during meetings so I can personally testify that this occurred.**
- Decks
- Escalators

- IT Support
- Kitchenettes **Possible their dog dishes are cleaned and water is added in this space, GCBHS is a Droplet based Airborne pathogen**
- Locker rooms
- Mother's rooms
- Quiet rooms
- Restrooms **Possible their dog dishes are cleaned and water is added in this space, GCBHS is a Droplet based Airborne pathogen**

Our facilities operations team have cleaning protocols in place to ensure workspaces and common areas are disinfected and cleaned regularly (see below) **Why would my team leader keep a vacuum in his workspace and complain about ants being there in the morning if that was true, please note they have started to comment on POST COVID procedures instead of acknowledging the issues that were present during my tenure.** In addition, we utilize MERV13 filters in our buildings, which reduce airborne allergens such as bacteria, particles that carry viruses, pollen, mold spores, fine dust, and pet dander. Our Dogs at Work Policy provides a mechanism for employees to request additional workspace cleaning as needed **I requested a clean workspace as I had an open wound which could be reinfected by dogs specifically from HR, which I now know was caused by a dog pathogen.** We have a dedicated team responsible for administering the program, defined processes and procedures in place to manage it **When was this team implemented?.** In addition, we regularly audit program compliance and manage violations

through a reporting process I am reporting it now and they are denying that this has occurred. I am telling you that Chris Powers confirmed that his dog was sick and that he was late to the office as he had to take it to the vet, are these policies only implemented since I reported this issue directly to Amazon earlier this year? Our Dogs at Work Policy further provides multiple avenues for anonymous complaints. We have not received any recent complaints about dogs and/or the cleanliness at this Facility. **They are being particularly obstinate, they have been implementing a work from home policy and taking COVID precautions since early this year.** As part of our response to COVID-19 **This issue dates from 2014-2016 and compliane after this COVID nonsense may be nonexistant. They cannot take temporary measures and use them as evidence that they are compliant when these policies need to be in place to prevent this occurring to employees in the future.,** we have provided additional guidance to employees regarding bringing dogs to work that explicitly states: "Out of an abundance of caution, please be sure to practice physical distancing with your pooch to maintain everyone's safety and, as with humans, please ensure your dog stays home if not feeling well." In response to this specific complaint, we dispatched our facilities team to do a thorough review of the facility and they found no issues (i.e. pests, etc.). **That is not how bacteria works or viruses, it would be impossible to determine if a compound had no pathogens as they are stating until the deep clean has been done, even then there could still be a possibility of the pathogen being there.** Further, we completed an additional deep cleaning of the building, which was completed on August 18, 2020. We have reviewed complaints for this Facility and do not have any current complaints regarding pests/ants. **They should be looking at my former team leaders history (Greg Eldridge) as he DOES HAVE A VACUUM IN HIS OFFICE FOR ANTS** If we did receive a complaint, the facilities team is immediately dispatched to address the concern and track the complaint to closure.

Lastly, and of course, employees(and their dogs) are allowed to consume food/drink at their workspaces. Employees have an obligation to keep their workspaces clean and we will address any concerns or complaints regarding cleanliness if raised. **A droplet based pathogen from a dog made me sick, this is a possible cause of infection. This is a confined cubical based workspace which dogs and humans share and is not cleaned regularly, they quoted an August 2020 cleaning for COVID not policies on regularly maintaining that the workspace is clear of pathogens or even educating employees of the hazard they have created by letting animals share their workspace in the first place. It is basically a kennel.**

In regards to their cleaning notes, you can see that they are talking COVID precautions and not corporate policies and I believe they are providing an inadequate response to this issue.

Please see the medical PROA attached to this email, my doctors are as follows:

<https://www.holdsworthhouse.com.au/doctors-practitioners/dr-mark-bloch/> University of NSW - Clinical Researcher and internationally recognized for his work in antibiotics and STDs

<https://www.holdsworthhouse.com.au/doctors-practitioners/aprof-deborah-yates/> University of NSW - Professor of Thoracic Medicine

<https://www.holdsworthhouse.com.au/doctors-practitioners/dr-jessie-lee/> Holdsworth House - Immunologist
Doctor Jeffrey Tsai - Rheumatologist Griffith University

I have a huge list of other doctors I had to see to figure this all out and I can guarantee that it was the dog at Amazon at this point. (Further sourcing of the infection has taken place since we filled out the PROA)

On Tue, Oct 13, 2020 at 11:38 AM Greg Goldberg <greg.goldberg.1984@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Karen Michael,

I do have a detailed response I need to provide in regards to their letter. I am going to put it together today hopefully for you and send it through ASAP.

Kind regards

Greg

On Tue, Oct 13, 2020 at 7:51 AM Michael, Karen (LNI) <MICV235@lni.wa.gov> wrote:

>

> Mr. Goldberg,

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>

> Amazon responded to your complaint concerning possible workplace hazards at Amazon. I have attached a copy of the employer's response.

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> Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions you may have,

>

> Karen Michael

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> Karen Michael, MPH, PhD

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> Industrial Hygiene Compliance Officer

>

> Region 2 – Seattle

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> Department of Labor and Industries (L&I)

>

> Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH)

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> Cell: (206)-465-3385 (preferred)

>

> Desk: (206)-515-2845

>

> she/her

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