

Pets As Family - Policies

Reservations: A minimum of three (3) days advance notice is recommended and appreciated. New clients may want to consider more than three (3) days to allow time to schedule the free initial consultation. Returning clients are welcome to make reservations by telephone, e-mail, or by texting me. Please confirm your reservation before your departure to confirm your request has been received.

Consultation: I allow 30 to 60 minutes for the free initial consultation. During this time I will obtain all necessary information for the care of your pet(s). If you feel that an additional visit is needed, it can be arranged. This extra visit will be billed at the current 30-minute visit rate.

Visiting Hours: Normal visiting hours are between 6:00 am and 8:00 pm. I do my best to accommodate special time requests, but cannot always guarantee specific time slots. Once-a-day visits cannot be scheduled at a specific time. An exception to this is when a pet requires medication or has a medical condition. I will always attempt to arrive within a two-hour window of your pet's normal feeding time.

Visit Frequency: All pets in my care will receive daily care and socialization. To ensure their safety and well-being I do not offer every other day visits for cats or dogs. Because dogs require frequent outdoor breaks, special arrangements must be made in advance if indoor-outdoor access is unavailable.

Pet Access: I do not generally accept pet care assignments for pets allowed outdoors. An exception may be made for dogs with indoor-outdoor access in a secured yard. However, I cannot be held responsible for the well being or actions of any dog with unsupervised access to the outdoors. To ensure the well-being of your pet(s), I do not accept pet care assignments for pets who require confinement in a kennel or other small area.

Visit Length: All regular visits last at least 30 minutes. On some occasions it may exceed this time frame (at no extra charge to you). The only exception to this is for those pets who do not enjoy playing or do not want extra attention during my visit. If I find for example that my checklist has been accomplished in the first twenty minutes, and there is no interest in playing or receiving attention, I may leave.

Cancellations: There is no charge for cancellations, change of dates, plans, or early returns. An exception to this is if you return from your trip early and do not call to cancel the next scheduled visit, and I arrive for that visit. In this instance you will be charged the current 30-minute visit rate. A cancellation on the day of a visit requires as much notice as possible. Any notification at least eight (8) hours prior to a scheduled visit will be credited to your account. My voicemail, e-mail, and texting services are available twenty-four hours a day for this purpose.

Returning Home: To ensure the safety and well-being of your pet(s), please call, e-mail or text me to confirm you have arrived home. While a call indicating you are close to home, or when your airplane lands is nice, I prefer that I hear from you after you have arrived home. This way I can be certain you made it home safely, and that no further visits will be needed.

Visiting Pets: In the event there are additional pets needing care during your service period (i.e. visiting guests), an extra charge will apply. This charge will vary by individual pet care needs. Please inquire about this charge, and the forms to be completed by your guest when making your reservation.

House Keys: As a general rule I will keep your house key(s) until you return home. This will assure the continued care of your pet(s) should your return be delayed. If you prefer to leave your key(s) outdoors, in an unsecured location (for home access), I cannot be held responsible for theft, damage, or home invasion. Please ask about my Ready-Key Program.

Walking Pets: Each visit includes a walk unless I am instructed that it is not needed, or my visit is scheduled after dark (for safety reasons). I walk all pets that enjoy walking. If a pet fights the leash, chokes him|herself, or is unruly, I will discontinue the walk.

Grooming: Although my service can include brushing your pet(s), I do not include bathing or nail clipping. If your trip is lengthy and your pet needs a groomer, I may be able to take him|her to your previously arranged appointment. An additional charge for this service will apply. Please discuss this service with me prior to your departure.

Food Supply: Please be certain that an adequate supply of food is on hand for your pet(s). If you miscalculate and it becomes necessary for me to purchase additional food, a shopping charge equivalent to the current 30-minute visit rate will apply. This will be in addition to the actual cost of the food.

Wet Food: For health reasons I recommend that canned (wet) food not be left out. To ensure cleanliness I will wash pet dishes at every visit.

Drinking Water: I change drinking water at every visit. In some instances the water container may not be of adequate size to enable the pet(s) to have a continuous supply. In this case I may use additional containers to assure that your pet(s) are adequately hydrated between visits.

Litter Boxes: Changing a cat's litter box is a matter of personal preference. I will scoop litter boxes a minimum of once per day. As a courtesy, please ensure that all waste is removed prior to my first visit. I will also be happy to change the litter in the litter box as often as instructed.

Yard Waste: I will clean-up outdoor pet waste once per day. As a courtesy, please ensure that all waste is removed prior to my first visit, and that the area is one in which I can easily see where your pet has eliminated. If excessive waste is present, or I am unable to easily perform this task due to high grass, the area is not easily accessed, or visits are scheduled after dark, I may decline to perform this service.

Shared Responsibility: Occasionally clients like to include neighbors, family, or friends in the care of their pet(s). This well intended action can cause confusion. The most common situations that may occur are overfeeding, missed meals or, unlocked doors. If it is absolutely necessary that there be shared responsibility, special arrangements must be made in advance. I cannot be responsible for a pet sitting assignment where others are sharing the same responsibilities.

Outdoor Plant & Yard Care: I do not generally include yard care as part of my service. This is not to say that there are no exceptions. For example, I will be happy to water those plants hanging or sitting on a porch or patio, if they are easily accessed. I will also turn on a sprinkler if it is pre-placed and set up to water a specific area of grass or those plants in need. Keeping ground plants and grass alive is not my expertise - I prefer to tend to your pet care needs.

Other Tasks: If the pet(s) in my care cannot be with me when I am performing a majority of other tasks, I believe they may be tasks I should not be performing. I am there for your pet(s).

Destruction by Pets: Occasionally when pets get lonely or bored they may do damage to property. Pet owners may not know in advance that their pet(s) will react this way. I will make every effort to limit any destruction by your pet(s). If, for example, your pet(s) begin to chew on throw carpets, I will remove the attraction. If the problem continues I cannot be held responsible for damage done by your pet(s).

Catastrophic Events: In the event that a catastrophic event should occur during your absence, I will, if humanly possible, do the following:

- Check your home (making note of any damage) while ensuring the safety of your pet(s). If your home appears unsafe, I will take your pet(s) somewhere that is safe. This may be the home of another client, a friend, or my own home.
- After my initial check I will call you at your location. I will advise you about your pet(s) and your property, and let you know where your pet(s) will be located.
- Your pet(s) cannot be transported long distances to family or friends. I will make every effort to keep your pet(s) as close to home as possible.
- Please be prepared as soon as you hear from me, to let me know what date you will return, and when you will retrieve your pet(s).
- If you arrive home before I can contact you, please attempt to contact me to let me know that you and your pet(s) are safe.

Sick Pets: I will not knowingly accept pet sitting assignments for sick pets. I firmly believe that sick pets belong under the care of a veterinarian. However, it is not a problem if a pet is aged, infirm, or on medications. Please discuss this with me prior to your departure. Any pet showing signs of illness will be taken to a veterinarian.

Payment: Payment of the expected charges is appreciated on or before the first service period visit. If a check is returned due to insufficient funds a \$25.00 service fee will be billed to the account, and future services will require that payment be made by cash or money order.

Note: If you have any questions about any of my policies, or would like to make special arrangements in advance, please feel free to discuss them with me prior to your departure.