

PET SITTING TRAINING VIDEO

INTRODUCTION / WELCOME:

Pet sitting is an extremely rewarding vocation that affords you flexibility, benefits and the satisfaction knowing that you are providing a valuable service to not just the immediate families but the community at large.

Many families consider their pets to be an integral and irreplaceable part of their immediate family.

Some even consider and treat their pets as surrogate children.

As a pet sitter you must consider and always be aware of the tremendous responsibility that has been entrusted to you.

Hi I am Victor Pelaez and Julie Brooks. We are going to walk you thru the do's, don'ts and in's and out's of pet sitting.

Whether you work as a sole proprietor or for an established service, the basics are pretty much the same.

We are going to cover little details you may not think of, the tools of the trade, advantages and benefits, and even though no one wants to think or talk about it, we will cover the worst case scenarios.

Much of this is good common sense but it is important to remember your reputation and professionalism is key to a successful and long-term career.

So lets get started.

Remember: you are point of contact for the client.

You must conduct yourself at all times in the most professional manner possible.

This is not to say you can't relax, laugh, enjoy yourself and have a good time. Just a few key things to keep in mind: wear comfortable, sensible, appropriate clothing and shoes, treat your client with respect, and maintain a good solid decorum at all times.

In other words, don't chew gum, don't use slang, don't accept alcohol beverages and remember you are not there to socialize. Nor should you promote any other side ventures or business you may be involved with.

Respect your clients time and let the golden rule be your guide.

Why a pet sitter?

Leaving for the day? Family vacation? Business trip or an unforeseen emergency? Or just going to work?

Take your pet with you. Simple as that. You don't need a petsitter.

Unfortunately, most workplaces don't allow you to bring your pets to work with you. They can't help with your workload because they don't have thumbs and they say hello by sniffing your butt.

You've got a couple of options:

The Kennel, the vet or the neighbors:

Downside to Kennels:

- Subject to stress associated with confined quarters

- Possibility of contracting illness from other tenants

- Little one on one human interaction

- Can be overstocked and fill up quickly

- It's like being stuck in a hotel bathroom for the duration or a closet at your mother-in-laws

Vets:

- Same as kennels, plus you don't know what additional visual trauma your pet maybe subjected to, and the possibility of catching something is a little greater.

Neighbors:

- It's one thing to borrow tools and forget to return them, it's another ball game entirely.

Most people don't know their neighbors well enough to ask such a monumental favor and few neighbors want the responsibility in case something goes wrong. And who wants to ruin a relationship with the people you live next door to.

This is where you, as the petsitter comes in.

One of the singular best advantages to having a pet sitter come to your house is the pet remains in a familiar environment.

It is their house, their toys, their rules, their yard, their happy place.

- Regular feeding time

- Exercise and play time with a real qualified human.

- Proper administration of medications

- Immediate transportation to the vet in event of an emergency

Also form an individual one on one relationship with the pet

Why would you want to take them anywhere else. In addition, pet sitters also provide other invaluable services such as:

- Picking up the mail, packages and newspapers

- Home security checks

- Watering plants

- Alternating lights

- Opening and closing of blinds

- Trash removal and bringing in empty receptacles

If you have a key service, your pet sitter can also provide a look out service for you.

Often time's even clients without pets may request just home care services. One added benefit to hiring a pet sitter is the increase safety of the neighborhood overall through these crime deterrent measures.

QUALITIES OF PETSITTER:

- Love of pets (animal experience a plus)

- People person: Need good communication skills, pleasant personality

- Highly organized

- Dependable, Trustworthy, Reliable

- Self Motivated

- Problem solver, must be able to think on your feet

- Non aversion to biological discharges (we're talking poop, vomit and drool here)

- Okay with working Holidays.

 - You will be ON CALL to your clients needs

YOU WILL NEED:

- A cell phone and your own reliable transportation

ADVANTAGES OF BEING A PETSITTER:

- Demanding, but flexible hours

 - Rounds will usually be morning, midday and evening

- No uniforms

- Not time clock to punch and no one looking over your shoulder

- Fun with a lot of variety, that doesn't really feel like work

- Generous tips and gifts clients give as additional tokens of appreciation

You provided a service for which most people are extremely grateful.

You are appreciated.

1. THE REQUEST FOR SERVICES / THE FIRST CONTACT CALL

Return calls immediately

This is where you will determine if you can handle your clients request

You may not wish to handle large dogs, aggressive dogs or those that bite

You may have a breed that you are adverse to handling

Cats or bunnies if you are allergic

Or any exotics you may have phobias about: snakes, spiders, lizards

The distance to their house maybe too great.

It's okay to say "no"

The payment schedule should be discussed.

You do not have to be licensed, bonded or insured but it is highly recommended and will go a long way toward easing your clients mind.

Insurance also protects you from any unforeseen accidents that may occur in the home or with the pet while in your care.

Have and fill out the FIRST CONTACT FORM.

2. THE MEET AND GREET / SERVICE CONTRACT

This meeting should occur in timely fashion usually within 3-5 days of the clients departure to remember the pet and specifics

One place you can shine is by learning as much as possible about the breeds and exotics your client may have.

This simple effort on your part will go a long way to increase your clients comfort level.

This also lets them know that you have the pets best interest at heart.

Be there five to ten minutes early

Look presentable, wear business casual attire

Remember you are representing yourself, attitude and presentation is everything

This is the opportunity for mutual evaluation, not just of the humans but the pets as well.

Don't be offended if pet doesn't warm to you immediately-we can't all have beagles-

Let the pet come to you.

Get down to the pet's level, remember the pet has a say in this too.

THE SERVICE CONTRACT

The most important aspect of in home pet care is getting all the pertinent information you will need.

This is where you will learn all you need to know to properly care for the pet and home.

Do not be afraid to ask questions even simple and obvious ones.

Name, proper spelling

Address

All contact numbers including emergency numbers including where client will be

An emergency contact person who should have a key to the house

(anyone else who has a key to the house)

Vets number and address

Back up vet

Nearest 24 hour vet care service

vet records- call vet to let them know you will be caring for the pet

Can you get vacc records?
Inform client you will be contacting the vet
All medications for pet(s)
How, when and what dosage they should be administered
What to do if you run out
All pet information
Feeding schedule for pet and location of food and dishes
Special dietary requirements
Treat allowance and what kind
Exercise/play requirements and where
Special commands for pets, treats, needs
Any pets fears/ phobias/ likes/ dislikes/ unusual behavior or biological symptoms
Leash and tag locations
Limits and off limits of house for the pet(s) and yourself
Circuit breaker box location, water main and flashlights
Cleaning supplies for any pet clean-ups
Be clear about areas of the house that maybe off limits
Clarify dates and times and return. Follow up is crucial
Name and info of people that have access to your home
in case some one may be there on your visit

How to handle the kitty litter box

Get your own password for alarms if possible
What to do if the phone rings (don't say you are the pet sitter, say you are a friend of the family)
And leave a note for the homeowner

What to do in the unlikely event that the pet should expire

Take detailed notes

Complete walk through of the house

Be succinct, courteous, thorough and professional. You are not there to socialize, although you should be sociable. They also do not want to be regaled by other pet stories and long winded anecdotes.

If you have a key service, code the key. If you do not have a key service, make arrangements for the return of their key within 24 hours of their return

3. THE FIRST VISIT

Make sure you have your service contract and keys. A simple common sense thing, but very important.

Have contract and license with you in case you set off the alarm

Be on time, if not a little early

Wear comfortable, sensible clothing and shoes

Always assume you are being watched: Neighbors, security cameras.

What you do in public is your personality, what you do in private is your character. Be of strong character.

Make a thorough walk trough of the house to make sure no appliances were left on, or doors or windows unlocked.

Stay the full time you are scheduled for. It is not uncommon for clients to call just to check on their pets while you are there or leave last minute instructions.

Maintain cleanliness, always go the extra mile. Rinse out garbage cans.

Perform each pet sit as if it were you last, don't leave anything for next time.

Leave detailed notes, indications about the weather, things that are different or out of place, anything unusual or of note. What the pet did and how they acted. ALWAYS LEAVE POSITIVE

Beware of surroundings

Call client if police are called

What to do if: (flow chart love)

The pet is ill. Defined as

Excessive bleeding

Prolonged vomiting

Obvious injury

Unusual respiratory activity

Recent or new ailments not discussed on the service contract.

Contact client and follow instructions

Can't reach client. Make sure this is an emergency. And take pet to the vet, back up vet or 24 hour emergency care. It is always better to err on the side of caution.

This is where thinking on your feet comes in handy. They hired you because you are trustworthy.

If you take the pet to the vet, get in touch with the client ASAP

Leave messages with all of their emergency contacts and where they are staying. They need to know you did everything you could to reach them.

The pet is missing:

Thorough check of the house

Check again

Check the yard and the perimeter.

Did they get out through an open or unlocked door or window, or hole in the fence?

Call the agency if you work for one or call friends and family to help.

Call the client immediately when you are sure the pet is missing.

Canvass the surrounding neighborhood

Ask neighbors if they have seen the missing pet

Contact animal control and the humane society.

Leave your cell number with anyone you speak to.

Post missing pet signs around the immediate neighborhood and intersections.

If the house has been broken into or there is obvious damage

LEAVE THE HOUSE IMMEDIATELY and call the police.

Stay nearby and return to the house with the police.

Have your service contract with you.

You can then care for the pets once the police have determined the house is secure.

Inform the client immediately.

You are often the voice of reason in an unplanned emergency

TOOLS OF THE TRADE:

Things every well equipped pet sitter should always have in their car:

- Flashlight with spare batteries
- Spare leash
- Treats for bribing pets
- Cleaning supplies and towels
- Waste bags
- Rain gear
- Extra pens and paper supplies
- Flea repellent
- Extra food and water dishes
- Maps
- Emergency change of clothes and shoes
- Latex or rubber gloves
- Small pet carrier
- Can of WD-40

4. FOLLOW UP

After last visit return key personally or leave in pre designated area outside in case you must regain access to home in emergency. NEVER leave a key locked in a house.

Confirm the clients have returned before what would be the time for the next scheduled visit. If you have not heard from the client, take care of the pets just as if you were scheduled to. They can't get dinner for themselves. Better safe than sorry.

If you'd like to leave an evaluation form for the client to fill out, make it short and sweet and leave a SASE for them.

Your final note should thank them for their business, remind them to call again when they require your services and if they enjoyed your service to please refer you to friends, neighbors, co-workers and relatives.

THE DISASTER PLAN (hard hat, flashlight, gearing up)

What to do if you are out of the loop

Back up person, Original Service Contracts in a file at your home. The back up person should have a key to your home and should understand the seriousness of what you are asking of them.

What occurs to pets if disaster strikes the home

TIPS TIPS TIPS TIPS TIPS

Make a copy of the service contract and keep the original on file at home

Keep your car clean, the client may walk you to your car at the end of the meet and greet. As your car is a reflection of you and the job you do, you want to present the best possible image. You want to trash something, trash your garage at home

Keep your license, registration and car insurance up to date. Also join an auto club and keep an emergency road kit in your car and jumper cables. Your car is your life line. Also have car charger for your cell phone

Let someone know where you are going on your meet and greets

Use a code to label your keys, for example the pet's name and the owner's initials or house number

Never keep your keys and contracts in the same place. If they are lost or stolen you don't want people having all the pieces to the puzzle.

When at the clients home, keep the house key on a some type of key retrieval system to avoid locking yourself out of the house.

Carry a card with you that says you are a pet sitter with pets in your care in the event of an unforeseen emergency.

Do not put adverts on car during visits only on initial meeting

ID outside while in your care (micro chip)

Avoid turning on lamps that are plugged into a wall outlet in event pet may chew through the cord

Confidential business relationship should not to be discussed in personal context.