

Policies & Procedures for AKPS Updated 11/27/23

**** Please be advised of the following****

Upon reserving services with AKPS, you confirm and accept that you have carefully reviewed and will strictly comply with the terms and practices set forth in this document, establishing a binding understanding between the parties involved.

General

- 1) **Payments. Booking is not confirmed until full payment is received.** Please be advised that an inquiry as to my availability does not confirm a pet sit. I receive multiple inquiries in any given day, and where I may have been available when asked several days ago, that can and does change rapidly. Zelle, Venmo, Check.
- 2) **Cancellations.** For boarding, 10 days minimum. Pet visits in your home, 5 days minimum. When I reserve your spot I am potentially turning away other clients. If you cancel last minute, this has financial implications. Full refund if the above mentioned cancellation time frames are complied with. Fees are as follows. If you cancel or modify within the 10/5 day period, **forfeit 1st days rate within 7-9 days of reservation for boarding/3-4 days out for drop ins. 5-6 days out boarding/2 days out for drop ins** results in a **25% forfeiture of the total booking fee** and lastly **50% of the total rate if you cancel within 4 days boarding/within 24 hours of start day for drop ins.**
- 3) **Emergency contact.** This is essential information for so many reasons. An issue with your dog, personal emergency, something awry at your residence. This person should be someone that can not only tend to your pet in an emergency but should also know who to call if there is an incident in your home, mechanical or otherwise.
- 4) **Office Hours.** Other than for emergencies, phone calls, texts & emails are handled between the hours of 8am & 8pm, 7 days per week. Messages & requests received outside of these hours will be viewed and responded to during "office hours".
- 5) **Current vet info.** If deemed necessary I will retain emergency veterinary care in your absence, at your expense. **It is now customary for vets to require prior authorization that allows somebody other than yourself to obtain services for your pet(s).** It is your express responsibility to submit myself (alternately any representative of AKPS) as an authorized person to secure veterinary services. If we have not yet done a medical form on your pet(s) please be advised that I will need this form to be filled out before service begins. I will keep this form on file and it is your responsibility to keep the information current and notify me of any updates. In the event that your preferred vet is not available in an emergency, I will seek service with an alternative veterinarian.
- 6) **Medications.** I will administer medications per your instruction as routine and will not be held liable for complications or adverse reaction.
- 7) **Illness.** I do not provide service to any animal that has an active, contagious illness. Current vaccines (or titers as an alternative) are required for all pets in my care.

- 8) **Aggression or reactivity.** As a general rule, I do not accept dogs with a history of aggression. Reactivity, depending on the severity, is often something that I can work with and must be made aware of the history so that I can make informed decisions with regard to providing the optimal environment for your dog. *This does not apply to cats as I fully understand that some of them aren't social and I can work within those parameters when providing cat care.
- 9) **Food shortage.** Please be sure that you have enough food on hand. If your trip is extended or food supply is exhausted due to low supply, I will purchase the food that your pet is accustomed to and it will be your responsibility to reimburse me. Additionally unforeseen trips of this sort will be billed at the pet taxi rate of \$30. This also applies to cat litter, prescriptions or miscellaneous necessities.
- 10) **Pet Photos.** I love sharing cute photos of pets in my care on social media and the AKPS website. If this is objectionable to you please notify me that you do not wish to have photos shared.
- 11) **Pet Sitter time off/vacations.** At times my vacation plans will coincide with yours. I realize that this imposes an inconvenience for you. I very much want to be your primary pet sitter. I would highly recommend that you have a back up pet sitter. I can make a few recommendations but please be advised that every pet sitter has their own policies, prices and business practices. I will only refer to, and will not be involved in the relations other than to ask you how your experience was so that I can make an informed decision as to whether or not to continue referring to the sitters that I have networked with. As a side note, if you are looking for a house sitter I can gladly refer you to my own, of course he will not be available when I am traveling as I will have already booked him.
- 12) **Periodic Rate Increases.** Please be advised that in order to keep up with inflation and my costs of operating, I do sometimes find it necessary to increase my service rates. I am aware that this is not always going to be well received, but again, it is strictly done out of necessity. I understand that some clients may seek service elsewhere as a result of such increases and while I am sympathetic to financial limitations, those who see the value in my experience, expertise and servitude will sigh and comply... just as I do with the ever increasing cost of living. sigh.

Boarding

- 1) **Drop off & pick up is done curbside.** There are several reasons for this.

-It keeps things relatively calm for the other inhabitants of the property and the incoming dog(s) as well. When a dog comes to the door a number of things happen. The dog or dogs inside get excited and barking ensues, this energy transfers to the incoming dog and results in over excitement and unnecessary anxiety. It is a much smoother process when I am able to calmly enter the home and make introductions or re-introductions methodically.

-Reduces wait time at the door thereby reducing the chance of your dog marking right outside our front door (which influences other dogs to mark there). We all appreciated sanitary conditions and a good smelling entryway.

-I'm a "good neighbor". Often there are dogs in my yard and they will come to the gate to see who's at the door. Incessant barking is not a disturbance I want to impose on my neighbors.

-A swift exchange of the leash from your hands to mine at your vehicle allows your dog to take the lead and head to the door. This builds confidence and diminishes separation anxiety. Long goodbyes actually make the transition harder on your dog. Especially if they have a tendency for anxious behavior. If it is up to me, your pup will NEVER have to watch you leave.

-On the flip side, curbside pick up allows me to see your dog build excitement when they realize mom or dad is here! Witnessing this reunion brings me so much joy and chills every time! Mainly however, it again keeps the energy inside for the remaining critters steady.

I ask that you please respect the fact that this is after all our family home and I want it to be a pleasant place for us to co-exist. I take professional measures and use proven practices to ensure that your pet's arrival at their second home is a smooth & pleasant transition.

2) I do not walk with retractable leashes.

-These types of leashes do not give me the control that I need. Please keep in mind that there are lots of smells, unfamiliar dogs/cats/birds that we encounter on our walks. More times than I can count, has a dog on a flexi leash lunged, chased or approached something resulting in dropped leash or agonizing friction burns for your pet sitter. When we walk I keep your dog close for pet's safety and my own.

-If you provide a retractable leash please be advised that I will use one of my own for our walks.

3) Dog beds, bowls, toys, bones & treats.

-You may bring your dog's creature comforts. Most dogs for whatever reason choose not to use their own beds, however, they love my dog's bed and she is gracious enough to share. I would recommend leaving the dog bed at home.

-I have sanitized food/water bowls and kennels (only used if this is customary for your dog) so you will not need to provide these items.

-Toys are welcome as long as there won't be protective behavior with regard to the toys. This is very much a community environment and everyone is expected to be a good citizen.

-Bones can sometimes cause an uproar. Every dog will want to check out any bones that enter the house. If your dog is kenneled then I will only offer a bone (if provided) when

they are securely inside the kennel, otherwise I will withhold the bone to prevent any potential issues with regard to possession.

4) Do book early.

-There are times when I am at maximum capacity and I have to turn away additional boarders. Please be advised that for the safety and well being of your dog, I need to have a manageable “workload” so that each dog gets the individual attention, love, play, snuggles & supervision that they deserve.

-You won't hurt my feelings if you secure a back up pet sitter, in fact, I am officially making that recommendation. It's a good idea as I do frequently find myself over booked. Summer and holidays are particularly high demand.

5) Scheduling is everything.

I provide care to pets in my home, and also in yours. I do not have the option of being casual about the schedule. In the event that I am stuck at home waiting for a pet parent to pick up or drop off, this could put me off schedule for the entire day. Would you want your baby waiting on me with a full bladder or an empty belly? Or even worse, a skipped dose of life preserving medication? I schedule very carefully with your pets as priority, accepting clients only if I can accommodate with no schedule conflicts. I look at the forecasted itinerary before I even accept your pet sit/boarding request. Please keep this in mind when we agree to specific pick up/drop off arrangements. In the event that you are running ahead or behind schedule, do check with me so I can potentially make modifications, and that all the pets in my guardianship get the time and care that they deserve.

6) Same day changes do not generate a refund or credit.

Please note that requests for changes made on the same day of a reservation do not qualify for a refund or credit. For instance, if you have initially booked a specific drop-off time and subsequently decide to change it to the following day, you will still be held responsible for the original scheduled itinerary charges. In the event that you intend to extend your pet's stay beyond the predetermined itinerary, I kindly request that you consult with me beforehand to verify whether accommodating your pet beyond the designated time frame is doable. While such arrangements may often be possible, they cannot be guaranteed in all cases.

7) Boarding rate is for a 24 hour stay.

In the event that the duration of your dogs' stay surpasses 24 hours by a margin of 4 hours or more, an extended care rate equivalent to half of the daycare rate will be applied.

- 8) **Dogs over 1 year of age must be spayed or neutered to board with me**
- 9) **Dogs with destructive tendencies, extreme anxiety, indoor marking habits, intolerance to other dogs or those that are cat aggressive are not a good fit for our boarding model**

Drop in visits at your home

1) I cannot guarantee an exact & precise arrival time.

-I will get as close as I can to your requested visit time but be advised that it could be up to 60 minutes on either side of your time preference. There is traffic, travel distance from one client to another, unforeseen driving conditions, scheduling overlaps, and rarely, emergencies within the pet sitting family that can all potentially affect my commute.

2) I do not walk with retractable leashes

-These type of leashes do not give me the control I need. Please keep in mind that there are lots of smells, unfamiliar dogs/cats/birds that we encounter on our walks. More times than I can count, has a dog on a flexi leash lunged, chased or approached something resulting in dropped leash or agonizing friction burns for your pet sitter. When we walk I keep your dog close for pets safety and my own.

-If you provide a retractable leash please be advised that I will use one of my own for our walks.

3) Key exchange if keyless entry is not available

-You may, if you wish, provide me with a key to keep securely on hand for the duration of our professional relationship.

-If a key exchange is necessary, there are 2 options. You may deliver the key to my residence at your convenience or I can pick up/drop off key for a \$10 fee.

4) Minimum number of visits for dogs (vacation care)

-If you do not have a doggy door, a minimum of 3 visits per day must be reserved. This is simply in the interest of being humane to your best friend.

-If you have a doggy door, the number of visits is at your discretion, my recommendation is 2 at minimum..

5) Length of visit may vary (gated communities)

Depending on how time consuming the entry process is for your subdivision, the 30 minute visit may be shortened by a few minutes. This is particularly so for guard gated communities. The process and long lines for non residents is quite time consuming, and staying on schedule is important for the welfare of all of our furry friends. Keypad gated communities do not generally cause delays. Gates where I have to call you for access do also tend to result in a lengthier entry process. Please provide a gate code and/or put me on the safe entry list with the gate attendant for expedited entry.

6) Job sharing and/or other persons in your home

In the event that I am sharing the caregiving responsibilities with another individual, such as a family member, neighbor, or other if professionals such as housekeepers or handymen have access to your home while our pet sitting services are being provided, AKPS shall be exempt from any liability concerning damages, losses, or other potential liabilities. Please note that this time frame commences when you depart from your residence as per your travel itinerary and concludes upon your return to your home at the completion of your travels. This policy encompasses all individuals present during the duration of our service, including but not limited to family members, friends, and neighbors. It is a comprehensive policy that applies to all individuals not directly represented by AKPS.