

# **Lou's Sitting and Service Manual**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Thank you for choosing Lou's Pet Sitting Service for your in-home cat care needs. I am dedicated to providing the most professional service available. In order to accomplish this, I need your input and cooperation as well as your understanding of my procedures. Lou's Pet Sitting assumes great responsibility when caring for your cats and your home. In order for me to live up to the high expectations you have, I hope you will familiarize yourself with this service manual and keep it in a safe place so you can use it as a reference should any questions arise.

The care and happiness of your cats is my top priority. Each section in this manual provides thorough details about my procedures and requirements. In the interest of the cats that I care for, Lou's Pet Sitting reserves the right to refuse service to any customer. Should you ever feel the service you have been provided is less than excellent, please call me immediately so I can rectify the situation. The only problems I can't solve are the ones I never hear about.

Lou's Pet Sitting prides itself on being the leader in the in-home pet care industry, and I look forward to working with you in helping to provide the top quality care that your cats deserve. If you ever need me for any reason, please don't hesitate to call. I thank you for the opportunity to help make the life of your cats a little more enjoyable and I look forward to years of continued service.

## **STANDARD SITTING SERVICE**

My objective during any sitting assignment is to provide the best quality care for your cats and provide added security for your home. In addition to the love and care I give to your cats, I also rotate your lights, retrieve your mail and newspapers and water your plants at your request. There is no additional charge for these services. I schedule my sits into 3 daily time blocks. Morning sits are from 6:00am to 10:00am, midday sits run between 10:00am to 2:00pm and evening sits are from 6:00pm to 9:00pm. The particular time I am at your home is at my discretion.

## **A LOU’S PET SITTING STANDARD SIT INCLUDES:**

- A 20-30\* minute visit with your cats and your home.
- Feeding per your instructions and freshening of water.
- Scooping of litter boxes and minor cleanup. Full changing of litter boxes on request.\*
- Administering of medicine and monitoring of general health.
- Playing and exercising\*
- “Spoiling with treats”—with your permission.

## **RULES AND REQUIREMENTS FOR QUALIFIED SITS:**

- I regret I cannot sit for cats that show signs of biting and aggressive behavior. My safety is of the utmost importance.
- I prefer not to share cat care with your family and neighbors. I reserve the right to refuse service in such cases.
- Please supply food and medicine as well as adequate litter and cleaning supplies for each sitting assignment.

## **HOW TO REQUEST A RESERVATION**

- You may make your request via my website:  
<http://louspetsittingservice.com/>
- You may leave a message on my office phone:  
919-380-0004

When booking a reservation by phone, please be specific and detailed. I take pride in my organized, professional system. I need certain information to properly schedule your sitting assignment. Please have the following ready prior to calling for a reservation.

- The day, date and time that you are leaving.
- When you would like the 1<sup>st</sup> sit to be scheduled.
- The day, date and time that you are planning to be back.
- When you would like the last sit to be scheduled.
- Special instructions regarding medications for your cat.
- Any new additions to your family of pets and their care.
- Any changes in alarm codes or key status.
- Phone numbers where you can be reached in an emergency.

Kindly note that all reservation requests—*regardless of how they are made*—will be confirmed via a return phone call to you. Technology can and does fail. If you do not

receive a phone call, your sit HAS NOT been reserved. Ordinarily, if you are a regular client, I simply book the dates you have asked for and call you to confirm the reservation. If there is a conflict, I will call you back as soon as possible.

Communication is extremely important in my business. Lou's Pet Sitting needs information to properly care for your cats and your home. I maintain many customer files with specific information on many cats. To offer quality, personalized service to each and every client, I need your help in keeping my files current. You may call my office anytime day or night. If I am unable to take your call, please leave a message and I will return the call ASAP.

## **BEFORE YOU LEAVE**

Usually, if you call me to take care of your cats, you're going out of town and have dozens of other things that have to be done. Now that your cats have a new "friend", you'll never have to worry about their care or well-being while you are away.

Once your account has been set up with me, the following checklist will cover everything necessary to ensure I can provide the quality and attention your cats deserve.

- Call the office for reservations at least 1 week prior to the first sit\*.
- Notify me of any important changes or new medications.
- Properly stock your home with food, litter, paper towels, etc.
- Leave me detailed notes on the kitchen counter.
- **WRITE DOWN PHONE #(S) WHERE I CAN REACH YOU IF NEEDED**
- If you are not on my "Keyed-Client" program, I must have your key.
- Be sure to have an additional emergency key holder—a friend, neighbor or relative—and notify me of that person.
- **DO NOT LEAVE WITHOUT A CONFIRMATION CALL!**
- Give your cats a hug and a kiss good-bye and **REMEMBER**, you can be **WORRY FREE** and enjoy your trip away when your cats are with me!

Sometimes plans get changed at the last minute. If your trip is postponed or canceled, **PLEASE NOTIFY ME IMMEDIATELY.** If I arrive at your home for a scheduled sit and you have not left yet or return home early without notifying me, there will be a standard sitting charge.

## **EMERGENCIES**

Although not common, as well as we all know, emergencies do come up. If I think there is an emergency, I will proceed with the proper course of action for the situation, as I deem necessary.

**Sick or injured animals:**

I first consider the health and safety of your cat. I am familiar with animal first aid but cannot be expected to diagnose the severity of an injury or illness. I will contact your veterinarian or if unavailable I will refer your cat to the nearest emergency animal clinic.

**Damage to your property:**

If I notice anything in or around your home such as damage due to storms, plumbing leaks, power outages or any other potentially serious situation, I will do everything in my power to notify you and your emergency contact person of the problem. This is an added benefit that I naturally provide due to the fact that I am at your residence while you are away. By no means will I be held liable for any decisions I make during these emergency situations if I am not able to contact you.

**Pet Behavior:**

Although your pets may never display destructive behavior when you're home, the stress of your departure can abruptly affect his/her behavior. Lou's Pet Sitting cannot assume responsibility for unpredictable events such as destructive scratching of furniture or carpet, chewing, house soiling, or the eating of items that are normally ignored.

**Suspicion of criminal activity:**

If I suspect danger or criminal activity of any sort, I will leave the premises immediately and contact the police.

## KEYS AND ALARMS

As a matter of convenience, most of my customers take advantage of my "Keyed-Client" program. I retain your house key at my office. For security reasons, your key remains coded by a numbered tag. It will always remain locked in my office unless I am performing a scheduled sitting assignment. An added benefit is that I have an "emergency backup key" should you ever misplace your own key. This system is convenient for you as well as Lou's Pet Sitting Service.

Should you decide not to use this program, I must acquire a key before your departure. It is the client's responsibility to provide a key for my use. A \$10.00 key pick-up charge applies when I must make an extra visit to get or return the key. I discourage the "hide the key under the mat" routine to start a sitting assignment. This system provides poor security and too many problems when a key cannot be found and an animal remains locked inside. Should I have to hire a locksmith to take care of a pet, the customer is responsible for the bill.

It is equally important that I have the code to any alarm systems you may have. It is your responsibility to provide me with the necessary codes and instructions for use before you leave. Should your alarm sound, I cannot be responsible for ensuing fines or charges by local authorities such as the police department. Again, my top priority is the safety and health of your cats.

Lou's Pet Sitting Service is fully insured. I am devoted to maintaining high ethical standards. The mutual trust that is established between Lou's Pet Sitting Service and all of its customers comes from a joint commitment to make certain that your cats are receiving the best possible care available today.

## **WHEN YOU RETURN HOME**

I hope you had a great trip. Please review the following checklist and complete the necessary items. These items are important in helping me continually improve and remain a reputable cat sitting service.

- Give your cats a big hug and kiss.
- **CALL MY OFFICE** and confirm that you have arrived home.
- Take the time to read the entire note that I left you.
- Listen to all those phone messages. YES, you were missed!
- Check your mail that is piled high on the kitchen counter.
- Promise your cats that the next time you have to leave them, you'll send that nice lady (that spoils them rotten) from Lou's Pet Sitting Service to take care of them.
- If you like the service I provide, please tell your friends (with cats). If you didn't like something, please tell me.
- Recommend me to your friends and neighbors that have cats.

## **PAYMENT POLICIES**

**ALL PAYMENTS ARE DUE AND PAYABLE AT THE TIME THE SITS ARE PERFORMED. Most clients leave a check on the kitchen counter with their feeding instructions.** I will leave an invoice for the scheduled sitting assignment on the counter on the last day of the sit.

I accept cash and checks. In the event of a veterinary emergency, the veterinarian will demand immediate payment for services rendered. For this reason, I require all of my customers to keep an active, major credit card account on file with Lou's Pet Sitting (listed on the Service Contract) along with a standing order I can leave with the veterinarian stating that you will be responsible for all charges. I will, of course, attempt to contact you, and doubtless the vet will do likewise. But hurricanes, delayed planes,

and all manner of situations can and do arise which can preclude my ability to reach you immediately.

**PAYMENT TERMS** (also listed on the Service Contract)

- Customer agrees to pay for the scheduled visits in full at the time of each sitting assignment. Invoices are due upon receipt.
- Any additional reimbursements that are due Lou's Pet Sitting, caused by expenses incurred in the handling of emergency situations or purchase of pet food or supplies, shall be invoiced and due immediately.
- There will be a \$25.00 + bank fees service charge for checks returned for any reason.
- If there remains any unpaid balance after (30) days, Lou's Pet Sitting reserves the right to refuse any additional services. If the balance remains unpaid, Customer understands that the account may be turned over to a collection agency. The Customer agrees to pay any attorney fees and court costs involved as well as a processing fee equal to 50% of the original invoice amount.

**RATE SCHEDULE**

STANDARD CAT SIT RATE	\$18.00 per sit.
FUELAGES CHARGE (+10 MILES/VISIT)	\$5.00
7+DAYS SPECIAL RATE	\$17.00 per sit.
KEY PICK-UP & RETURN	\$10.00 if extra trip needed
HOLIDAY* CHARGES	\$10.00 extra per day

**EMERGENCY SERVICES**

PET SUPPLY SHOPPING	\$18.00 + Costs
VET EMERGENCIES	\$25.00/HR. + Costs
SUB-Q FLUIDS OR MEDS ADMINISTERED ONLY	\$10.00 per visit
PET TAXI TO VET (DROP-OFFS FOR APPOINTMENTS)	\$18.00
EMERGENCY HOUSE VISIT (GAS LEAK, WATER BREAK, SERVICE APPT., ETC. INCURRED)	\$25.00/HR.

Many thanks in advance for trusting me with your pets and home. I look forward to serving you in the future.

Sincerely,

**LOU ANN WADDELL**

Owner of Lou's Pet Sitting

**\* Clients are encouraged to book holiday sits 30 days in advance, particularly near Thanksgiving and Christmas. Often I have to refuse clients who make late requests for holidays, which is something I hate to do. Holidays are New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Easter, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day. Due to tight bookings, a holiday sit may be shorter than an ordinary sit, though in no case will your pet's care be compromised.**