

A PET OWNER'S GUIDE

TO HIRING A PROFESSIONAL
PET SITTING AND DOG
WALKING COMPANY



HOW TO FIND A SITTER YOU CAN TRUST.

BY LIANA SANDERS

I am Liana, the owner of Wet Noses Pet Sitting. This is my guide to hiring a professional pet sitting and dog walking company. This guide does tell you a lot about us, but it also provides valuable information for hiring ANY pet sitting company, no matter where you live.

Use this guide to:

- Learn more about how a professional pet sitting company works.
- What to look for in a professional pet sitting and dog walking company.
- Find out what questions to ask when you are hiring.
- Learn about our expectations for professional pet care, which should also be your expectations.
- Get checklists and other resources for the hiring process.
- Always feel free to reach out to us with any questions you may have.
- Hiring a professional pet sitting company can be a task, but ideally it is one you only have to do once!

Liana Sanders

Owner of Wet Noses Pet Sitting



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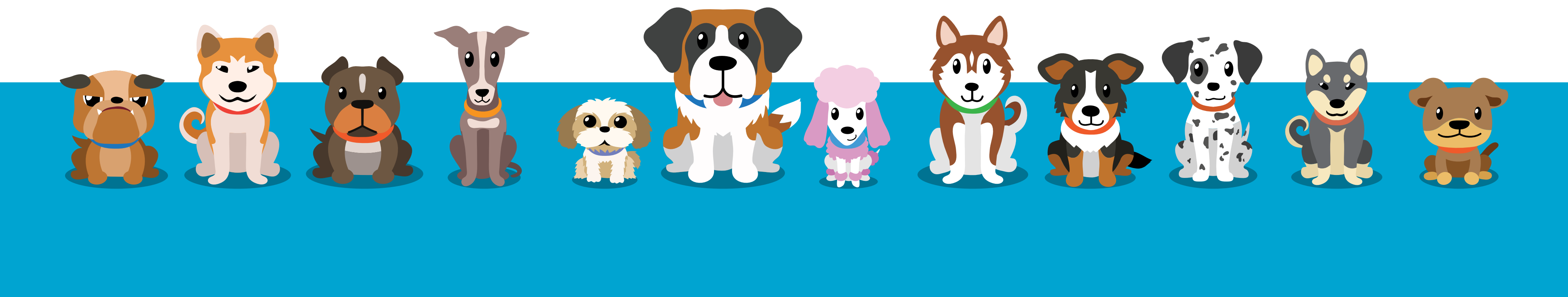
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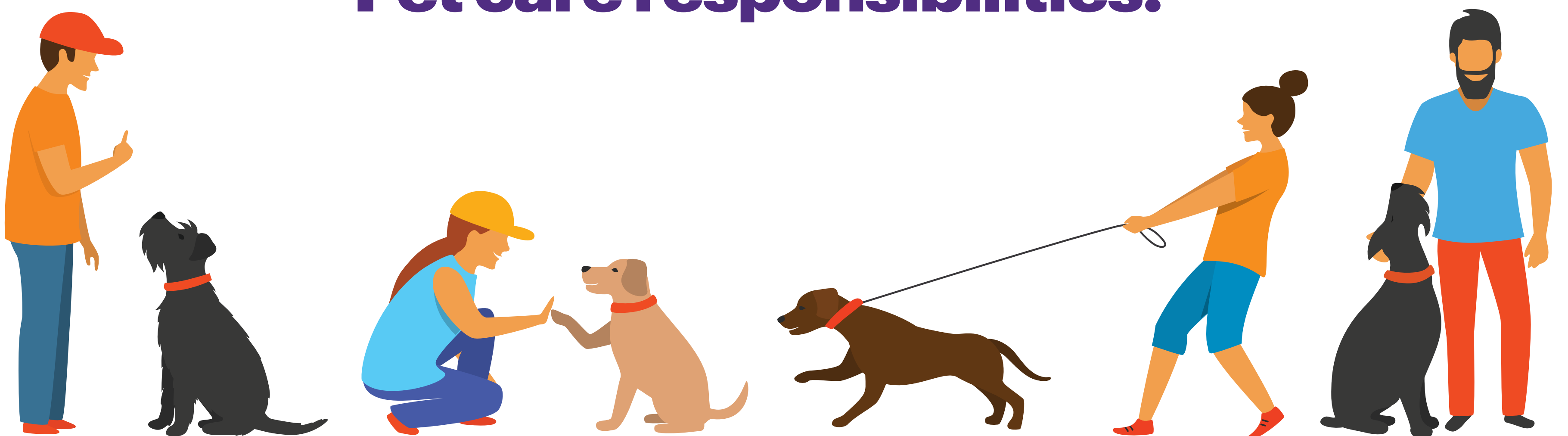


What Does a Pet Sitter Do?



A pet sitter does way more than just feed your dog. A sitter is in charge of making sure your pets are safe, secure and happy while you are gone. A sitter will also be in charge of the security of your home.

Pet care responsibilities:



Feed all pets



Change water



Clean food and water bowls



Walk dogs



Play with dogs and cats



Clean cages, bedding and litter boxes



Provide lots of pets and cuddles!



Check on the health of pets








Provide medications

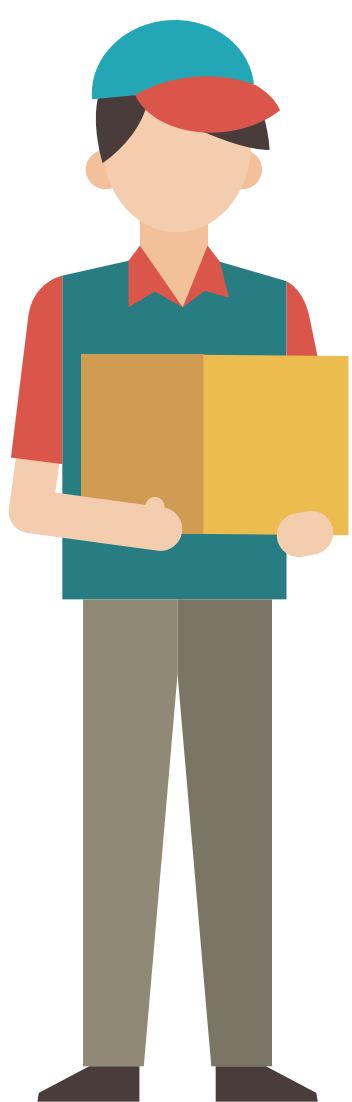


Ensure a safe environment

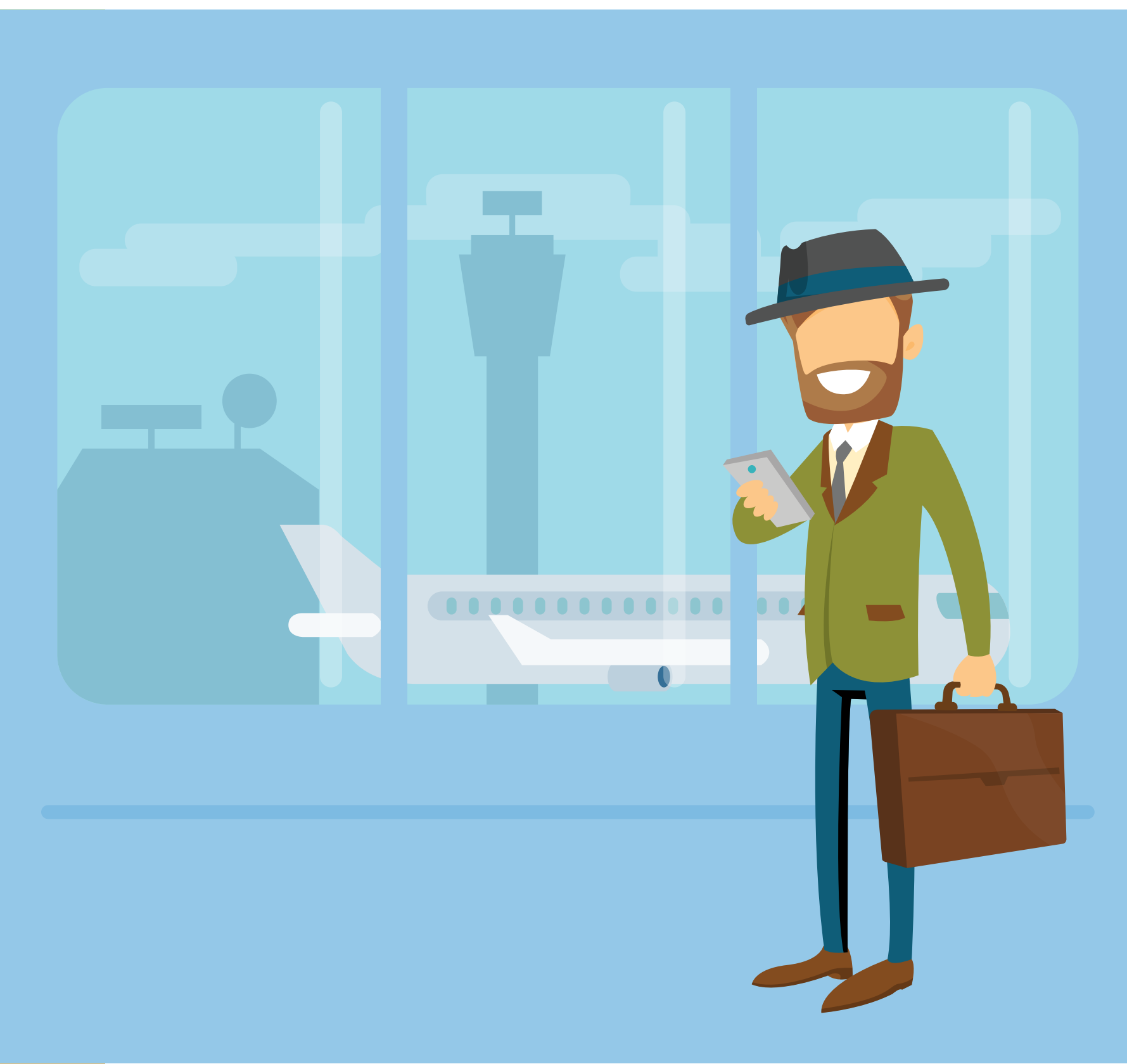
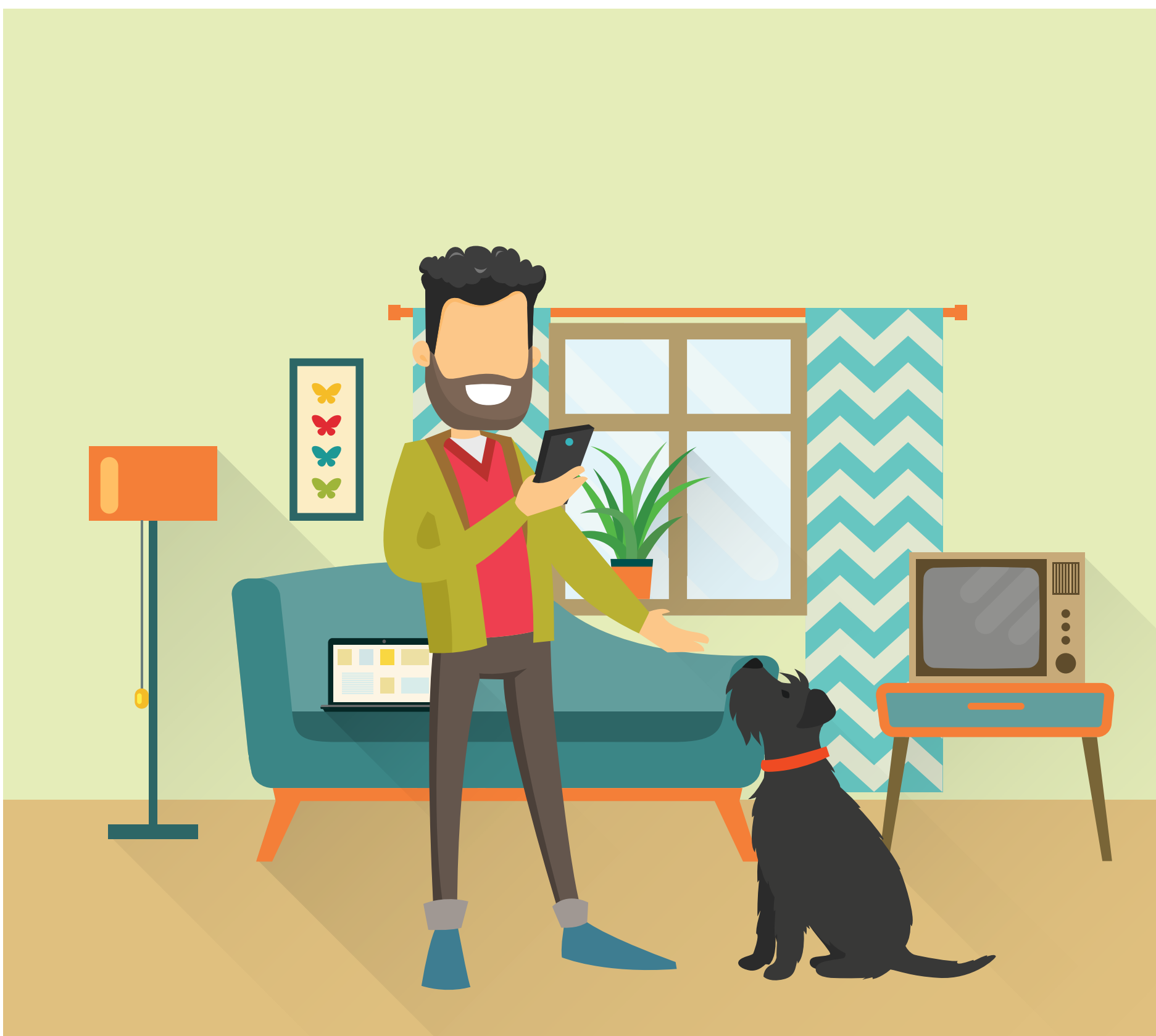
Home care responsibilities:



-  Bring in mail, newspaper and packages
-  Alternate lights
-  Make home appear lived in
-  Water houseplants
-  Monitor for any problems



In addition, a Professional Pet Sitter gives you peace of mind with updates as often as you like!



Why Hire a Dog Walker?



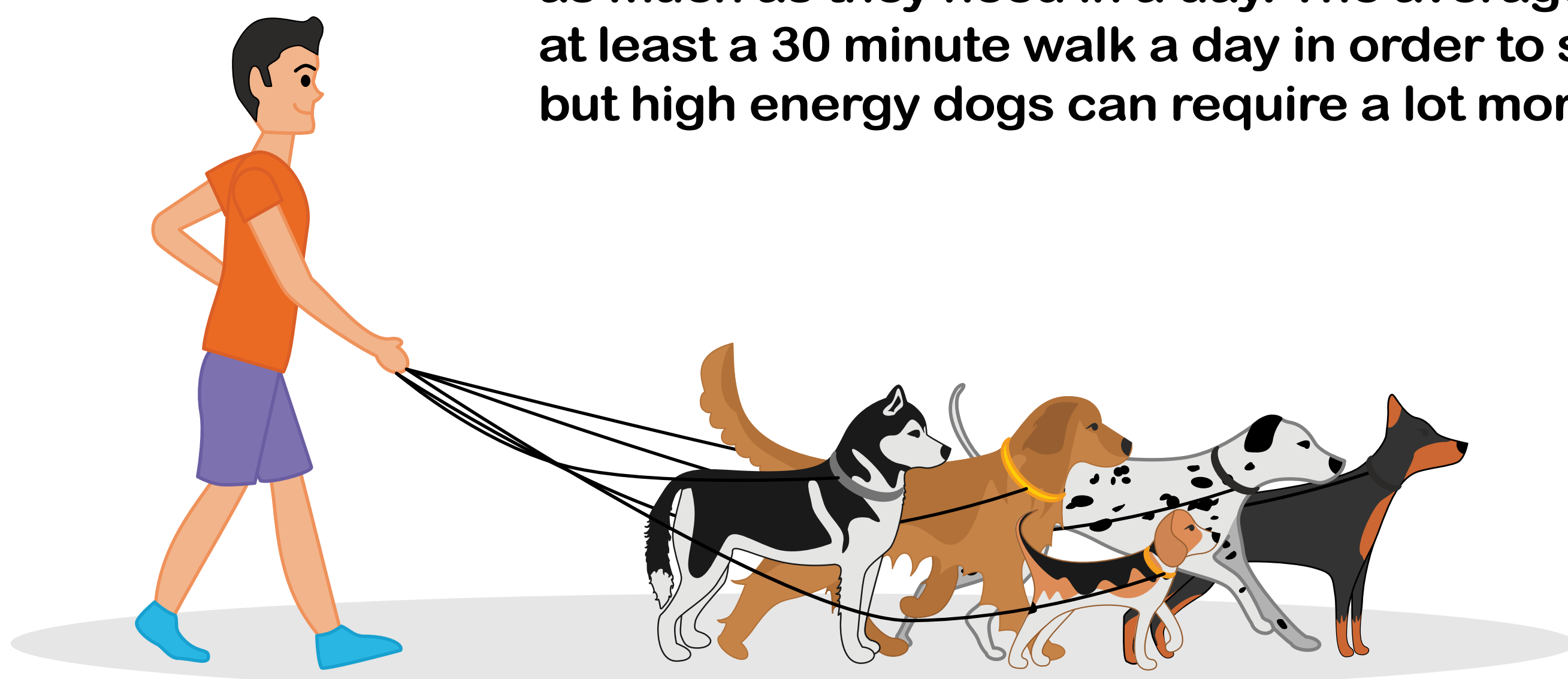
Most people believe that dog walkers are only needed by people who work 12 hours a day, and while it is necessary in that case, there are a bunch of reasons when a dog walker can be helpful. We are going to look at when you may need a dog walker and how professional dog walks work.

When Can I Use a Dog Walker?

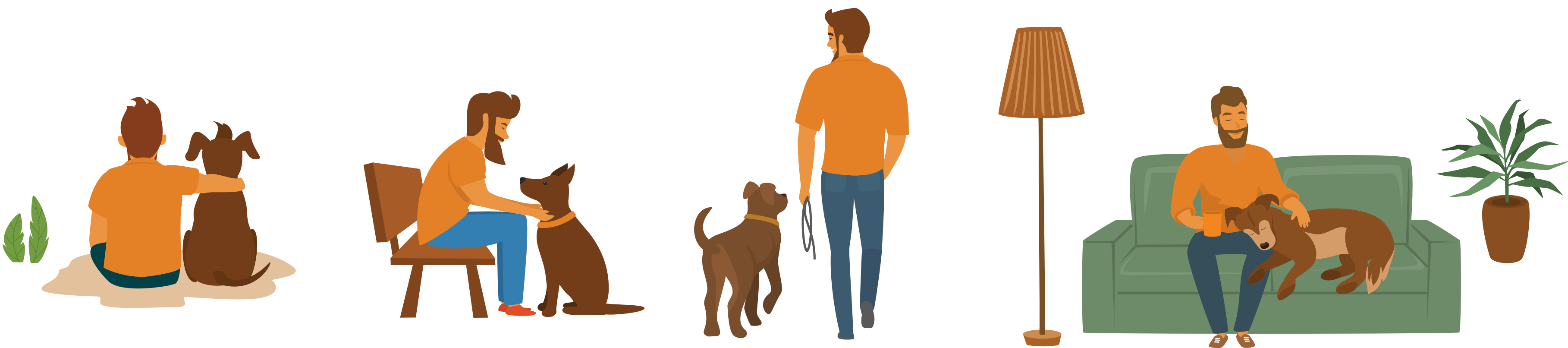


When you are working long days. This is the most common reason for people to hire a dog walker. They are working for longer than their pup can last and they want to make sure she gets out for some exercise and a potty break during the day. Usually these visits are scheduled during the middle of the day, but can also be arranged based on your work schedule.

When your dog needs some extra exercise. Some of us do not have the time, or energy, to exercise our dogs as much as they need in a day. The average dog needs at least a 30 minute walk a day in order to stay happy, but high energy dogs can require a lot more than that.



When your life gets crazy! We all have those times when everything piles on and we just cannot get to it all. Having a dog walker come in and make sure that your pup is happy can take a load off your mind and free you up to work on tasks that only you can do. Dog walkers can also help out by feeding your pup and taking care of other small tasks when needed.



When you have a puppy. Puppies need to go out often and be supervised constantly.

A standard rule of thumb is puppies can only hold it for one hour per month of age. This will vary based on the breed of puppy, their schedule and the puppy herself. It is hard to get anything done when you have a puppy needing so much time and attention. Even if you are home all day, it can be nice to have someone help out for awhile so you can take a break.

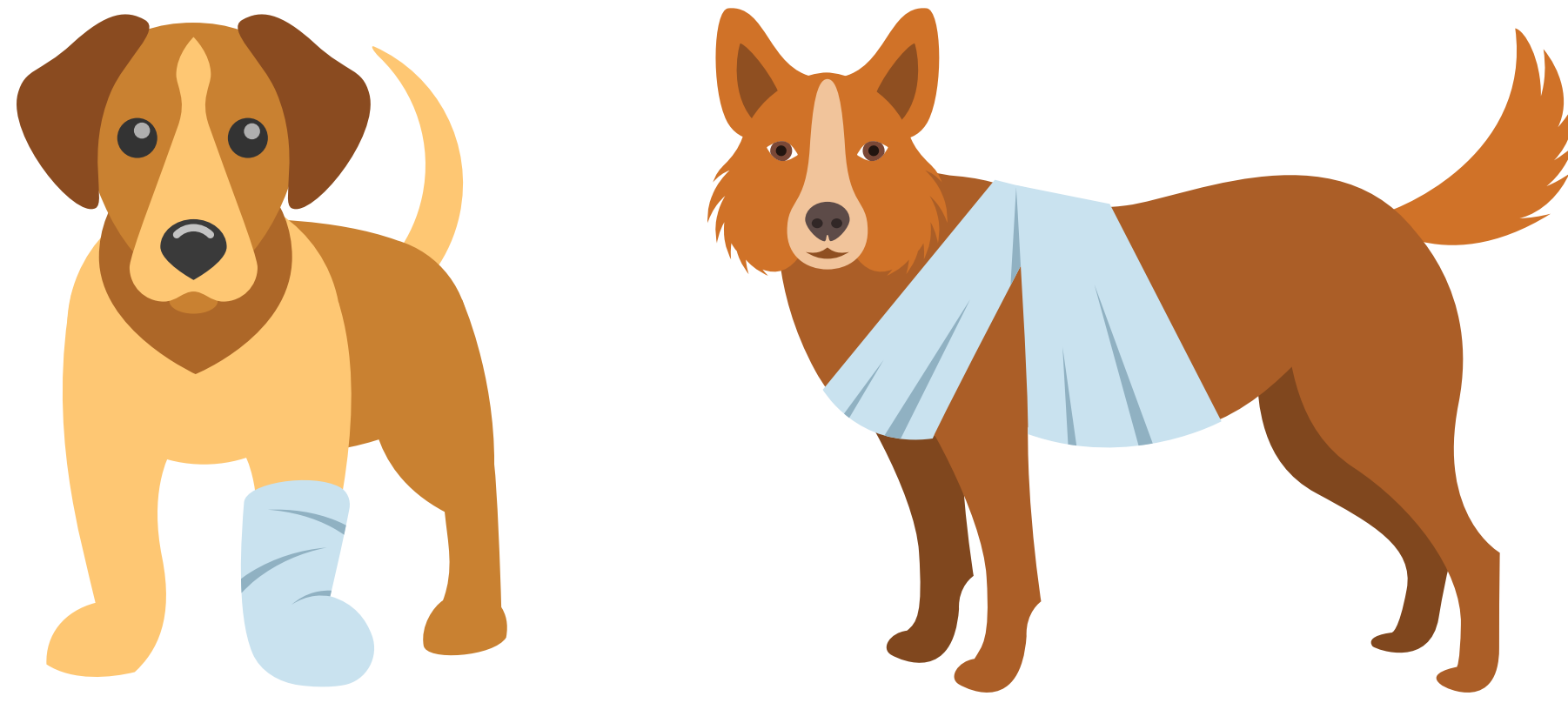


When you have problems with mobility. We have had quite a few clients that are injured or elderly and need some extra help. This includes folks in assisted living facilities who are able to keep their dogs but cannot get them out for walks.



When your dog is bored. Maybe you are able to get your dog out but he is still bored during the day. A new friend coming in and changing up the routine will excite any dog and relieve the boredom.

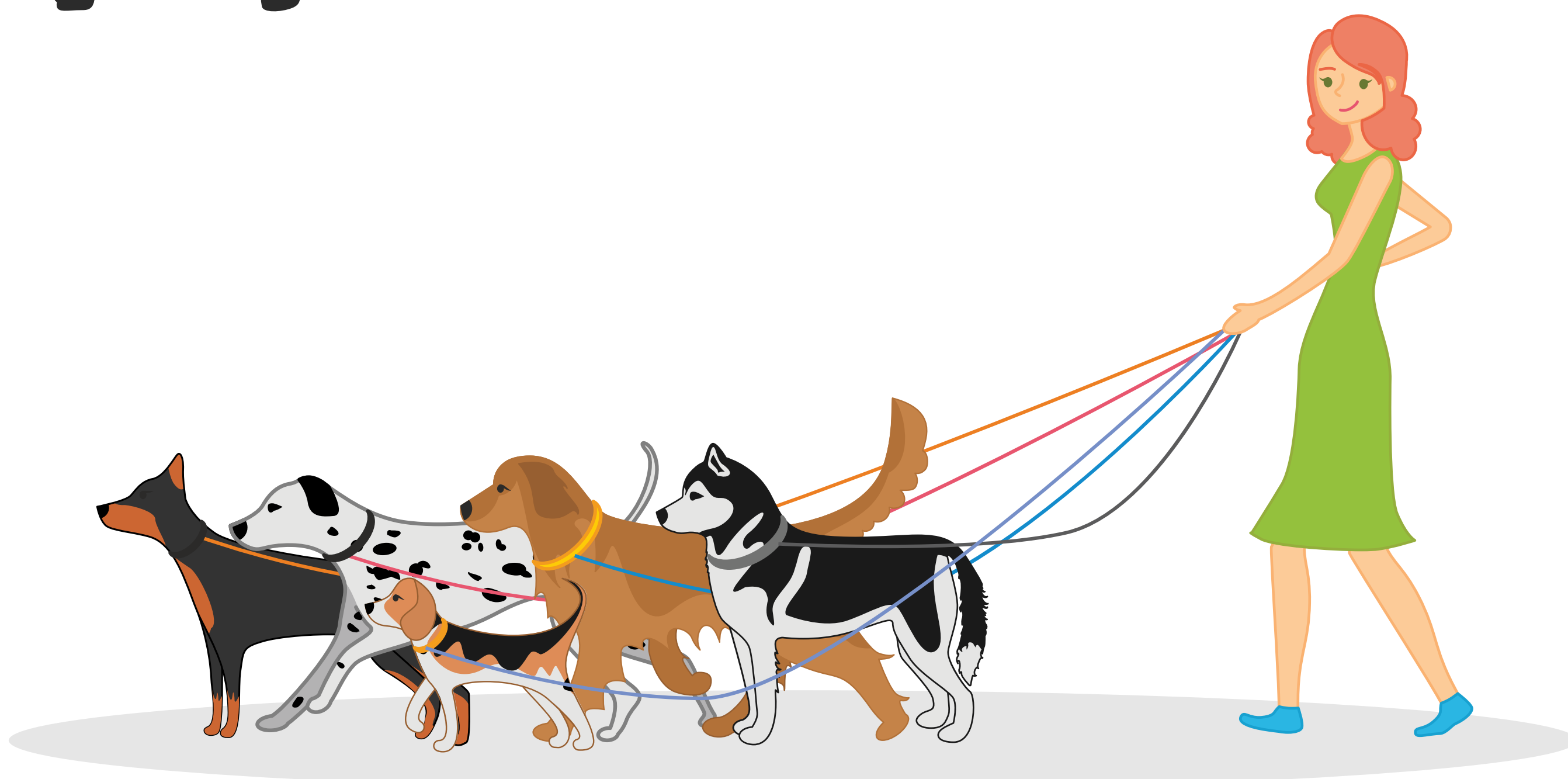




When your dog is elderly or ill. Older dogs often need to get out more, especially if they develop health problems. Dogs with injuries or illnesses may need medication during the day or supervision while you are gone. We have spent time with more than one dog in a cone!



When your life is unpredictable! You have a job and kids and never know when the schedule is going to change. Dogs, as flexible as they are, thrive on routine. Knowing your pup is cared for, no matter what life throws at you, is a huge weight off your shoulders, and great for your dog!



These are just a handful of reasons you may need a dog walker. Really there is no end to the reasons you may need a dog walker in your life, nor should there be! A dog walker is there to provide your dog with consistency and you with peace of mind.



How Can a Pet Sitter Make Your Home More Secure?



Having a pet sitter provides a variety of benefits for you and your pets. One of these benefits is making your house more secure while you are gone.

**When you are gone,
sitters can make your house
more secure by:**



Having a person in the house makes it appear as if you are not gone



Checking on your home during every visit



Alternating your lights and blinds



Turning on the radio and/or tv



Bringing in your mail, newspaper, packages and any other deliveries



Securing the doors and windows every visit



Checking for any household problems



Questions to Ask Your Pet Sitter or Dog Walker Before You Hire Them

We get a lot of calls from people that have never used a pet sitter or dog walker before. They are understandably confused and curious about the process. Of course they want to know how it works, how much it costs and how to pick the best sitter for their pets. You love your pets and you want the best care. So how do you weed through the options and find the best choice? Here are the questions we would ask if hiring a pet sitter, and you should too!



Is the Company A Professional Pet Sitting Company?

There are a lot of people who pet sit, but professional companies do this full time. If a person is a hobby sitter, then you are one of many things going on in their lives. They may not always be available, or other things may take higher priority.

Professional pet sitting companies will put you first, no matter what.

Is the Pet Sitting / Dog Walking Company Insured?

Professional companies should always have insurance and bonding to cover their company, sitters, and you! Every company, whether they work with animals or not, should have insurance. That is what makes a company professional.

Bonding Policy: This policy is basically for theft. If your pet sitter is convicted of theft in your home, you will be covered.

Custom Pet Sitter Policy: This is the most important insurance policy for pet sitting clients. It covers your home and/or pets in cases of damage or injury. That means it can cover health care costs for injuries caused by your dog or that your dog incurs during a visit. This policy will also cover any damages in your home due to something the pet sitter does. For example, we once had a sitter use the wrong type of cleaner on a very expensive rug. Unfortunately, the rug was stained and ruined. However, we were able to use this insurance to pay for a replacement rug.

Worker's Compensation Policy: This is also an extremely important policy to have for everyone. The company, sitters and walkers, plus clients, all benefit from this policy. Basically, if the pet sitter happens to get injured while at your house, this insurance will cover their medical costs. And it does happen. We had a sitter once trip and fall during a visit and broke her wrist. Thankfully, all her medical costs were covered by Worker's Compensation insurance.

Unowned Auto Policy: This is an insurance policy that is rarely considered, but very important. It covers sitters while they driving in between homes.

Does The Pet Sitter Have an Online Presence?

These days we live in a world of technology and you should use that to your advantage to learn more about the company. Most companies have a website, but how often is it updated? Do they have information about their staff?

What about social media? There are few ways to learn about a company that to see what they are putting out into the online world. Check out Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and YouTube. Are they helpful and interested in animals? What are other people saying about them? Can you get ahold of them on social media quickly if needed?



Policies

Check out the company's policies and make sure they seem reasonable to you. If they do not have their policies posted and available, then how do you know what you are getting into? You should know how the company operates and what they guarantee in order to make sure it works for you.

Who Works for the Company?

You should be able to learn quite a bit about the pet sitters before you decide to sign on with them. A Meet and Greet is especially important to get to know your sitter, see how they interact with your pets and convey all of the information they need to know about your fur kids. This meeting should put your mind at ease while you are gone.

But what about the rest of the company? What happens if your sitter is sick or has an emergency? Who will take care of your pets? Every company should have a solid backup plan in the case of an emergency, and it should not just be a friend of the sitter. You may not meet the backup, but knowing who it is and how the plan works can help.

How Long are the Visits and What Do They Include?



Every pet sitting company works differently, so make sure you understand exactly how long your sitter will be with your pets and what the visits entail. Are the visits for a specific length of time or just however long it takes to get the job done? Is this tracked with GPS or just on the word of the sitter?

At the visits, will the sitter clean the litter box and clean up the yard? Will she clean food and water dishes? Will she bring in mail and water plants? Make sure you know exactly what to expect from your sitter so you are not caught by surprise.

Where is Your Information Stored?

Pet sitting companies store a vast amount of information about your home, including dates you are going to be gone, alarm codes, emergency contacts, etc. It is extremely important that your information be stored in a safe, secure manner. Does the sitter carry around your information? Is it all in a computer? Is there a backup if the computer is lost or stolen?

How are Your Keys Secured?



All pet sitting companies end up with a large amount of keys. Keys should be labeled in a way that makes them impossible to identify should they be lost. Most companies will also require multiple copies of a key in case of an emergency. When keys are not actively being used they should be stored in a safe, secure location that cannot be easily accessed.



Will Your Sitter Send You Updates?

Peace of mind can be the greatest gift when you are away from your pets. You want to know they are well cared for so you can continue your trip or your work day without concern. Some sitters have journals they update online while others send texts or emails.

About



My name is Liana Sanders and I am the owner of Wet Noses Pet Sitting. I live in Fort Collins with my husband, daughter, dog, fish and other friends.

I am thrilled to have spent most of my life providing professional pet care for our furry friends. I have spent years working in various animal professions and continue to increase my animal knowledge so that Wet Noses Pet Sitting can provide the best possible care for your pets.

We provide care to our animal friends, but also spend hours educating animal caretakers about pet care, nutrition, and other tips and tricks.

Why We Started Wet Noses Pet Sitting



Like many young animal lovers, I began pet sitting when I was a teenager. This only increased as I went to college and had various jobs working with animals. As my knowledge increased, so did the number of pets I cared for. In 2010, I reached a point where I had too many clients for me to care for by myself. I was faced with the choice of having to turn people away, people whose pets were like my own family! I wanted to ensure they were well cared for, even if I could not be there myself. So Wet Noses Pet Sitting was born! We have grown from one sitter to a group of sitters and a full time manager, but at the core we are still the same. We are still all here to make sure the pets we love receive the best care while you are gone.

What Do We Offer Our Customers?

When I started Wet Noses Pet Sitting I wanted to be sure that my sitters were all going to provide the same excellent care that I would want for my own pets. That means we need to understand the routine of your household, your pet's behaviors and what your animals are accustomed to.

We strive to replicate the daily care and routine your pets are used to so they can be 100% comfortable in your absence. This routine ensures you and your pets are at ease in the care of our sitters.

What Makes Wet Noses Pet Sitting Different From Other Pet Care Companies?

All of the decisions we make at Wet Noses Pet Sitting are made for the benefit of your pets. We have created a standard for care that we believe all pet professionals should adhere to when caring for your pets.

Steps Wet Noses Pet Sitting takes to ensure the best professional pet care:



- 🐾 Educated pet sitters and dog walkers
- 🐾 Expert management team
- 🐾 Online scheduling software
- 🐾 Online payment system
- 🐾 GPS tracking of visits
- 🐾 Pet care notes and regular check ins
- 🐾 24/7 backup and sitter support

Who Makes Up the Team of Wet Noses Pet Sitting?



We have an amazing team of pet sitters and dog walkers at Wet Noses Pet Sitting, as well as expert managers and support staff.

You can learn all about our team, including watching videos, on our About Us page of our website.

Why Choose Wet Noses Pet Sitting



We are a locally owned family business that started in Fort Collins. We still have clients that were with us before we even became a company. All of our clients are like family to us. When I leave town, a Wet Noses pet sitter watches my own pets.

When a sitter is busy or out of town, another Wet Noses pet sitter is there.

Animal Lovers and Experts



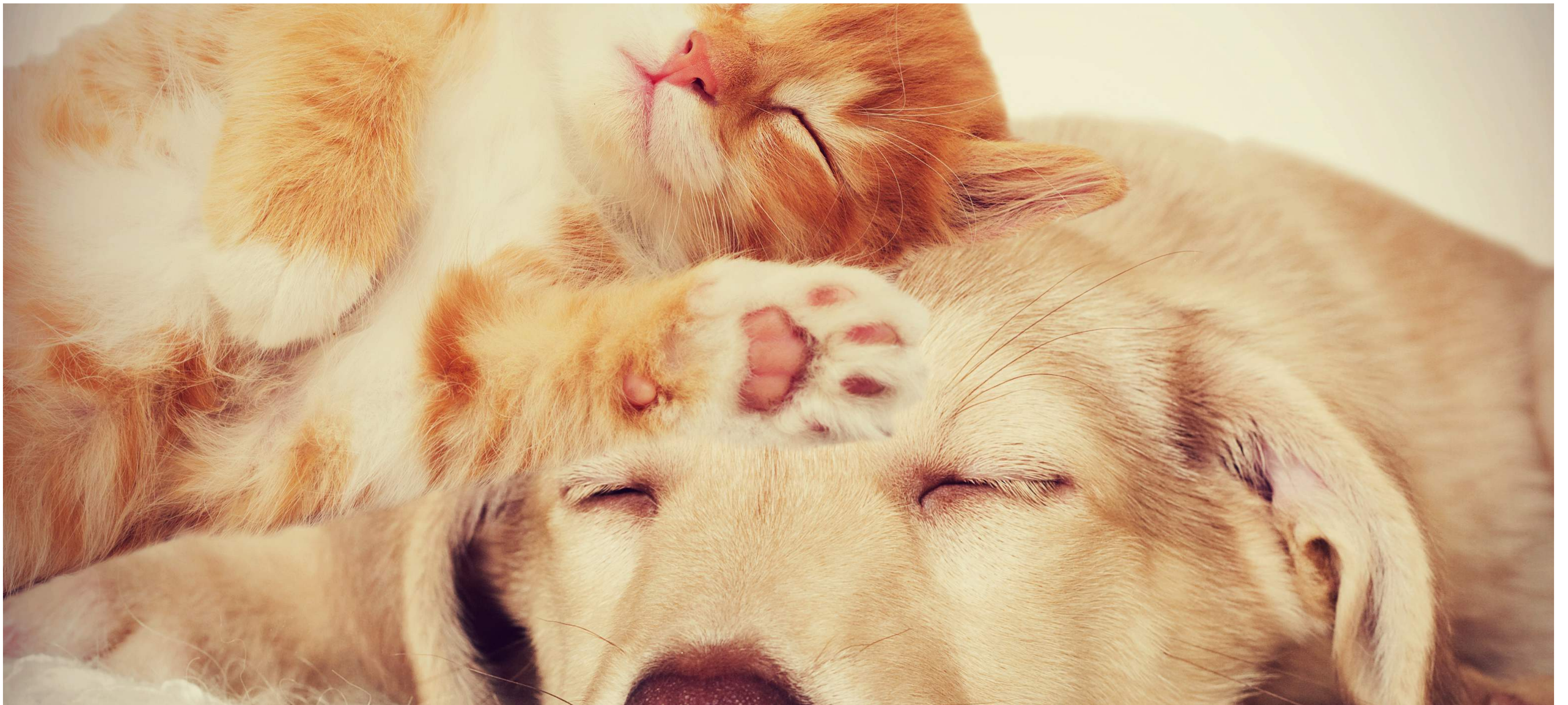
It should go without saying, but we all love animals. I have worked with animals my entire life, from the humane society and a dog daycare, to rescue and volunteer work at sanctuaries. My own dog, Podrick, has his own routine and loves the comfort of his own space. All of my pets over the years have been most comfortable in their own home, on their own beds (or ours), playing with their own toys. This is the comfort we want for your pets as well.

Our sitters have a wide variety of animal experience, from veterinary technicians, professional dog training, feed supply stores, rescues and more. They each bring their own bit of expertise to their work, as well as their own love for animals and dedication to their comfort.

When we watch your pets, we know how much you care about them because we love our own pets just as much! We know how important it is that they receive amazing care and that you worry, because those issues are the same ones we have when we leave our pets.

We Offer Services That We Want Ourselves

When we design our visits, we make sure they match what we want for our own pets when we leave. I know how precise I am with the care of my pets and I want a sitter to do the same. In case you are wondering, my dog Podrick is very active and loves attention. In the past, I have had other dogs, cats, reptiles and other critters that have specific steps for their care. Does this sound like your household?



When we suggest visits, we plan a schedule that we know we would want for our pets. This means visits that are similar to what we would provide if we were home, so our pets will be comfortable. Whether your dog needs a quick potty break or overnight stays with a cat that sleeps on the pillows, we have you covered. When we talk to you the first time we learn all about your household including:

- How many pets you have
- Breeds and ages of your pets
- The normal routine your pets are used to
- Medical problems and mediations
- Any behavioral concerns
- Preference for male or female sitter
- Anything else we need to know



All of this information allows us to plan a schedule that will work well for your pets based on our experience providing pet sitting visits since 2010.

We have seen what works and what doesn't!



Pet Education

Our goal is not only to provide excellent pet care when we are in your home, but also all year round. That means we are constantly learning new tips and tricks that we can pass on to you. Whether it be questions about our services, a referral for a groomer, or holiday safety tips, we are there. We put in hours every week making infographics, blog posts, ebooks, videos and more, all to make sure we can be as helpful as possible and try to improve the lives of your pets all year round.

Customer Service



We are here for you, because of you. We are always happy to hear feedback and areas for improvement. We survey our clients regularly to see if there are ways we can do better. We also sit down with our sitters often to see what steps can be taken to make our services and their lives easier.

We are all one big family and our goal is to improve every day! We are available via phone, email and social media every day and are happy to discuss any issues, good or bad. We are also happy to answer general animal questions and provide referrals to other pet businesses that we love.

Convenience

Finding a new pet sitter and setting up services can be a task at first. You want to make sure you found the right people! Then after you are sure, it is terrible if it is a hassle to sign up! We try to make it as quick and easy as possible, while still maintaining our high quality of service.

Our scheduling and payment system is completely online and available 24/7. We are available for questions and help and always get back to you ASAP if we were with another client. We are available Monday-Friday 9am-5pm, but once you start to set up we can contact you after hours if needed.






We want to make this process simple for you so you can get away knowing your pets are well cared for.

Our Pledge to You



When we care for your pets:

-  We will love them and care for them like we would our own pets.
-  We will follow your instructions and maintain a schedule similar to yours.
-  We will update you regularly with pictures and video so you can have peace of mind while you are gone.

How Many Pet Sitting Visits Do I Need Per Day?

At Wet Noses Pet Sitting we tailor your appointment to the needs of your household. This is great for your pets but can sometimes be confusing when trying to decide what type of appointment to schedule.

Here are some tips we use to match you with the best schedule for your needs and make sure you have the right pet sitting service:



What is your regular schedule with your pets?

When you are gone we prefer to keep your pet's schedule as similar to your regular schedule as possible. Some of the aspects you should consider are: how many times your dogs go outside during the day and what times, how often your pets are fed, when medications are given and how much attention and exercise your pets require.

Another factor we ask you to think about is when during the day do you interact with your pets and what does this interaction look like? If your dogs love to go for a long walk in the afternoon then maybe a longer mid-day visit would be a good idea. If your cat loves her cuddle time in the evening then a dinner visit with extra time will be in order.

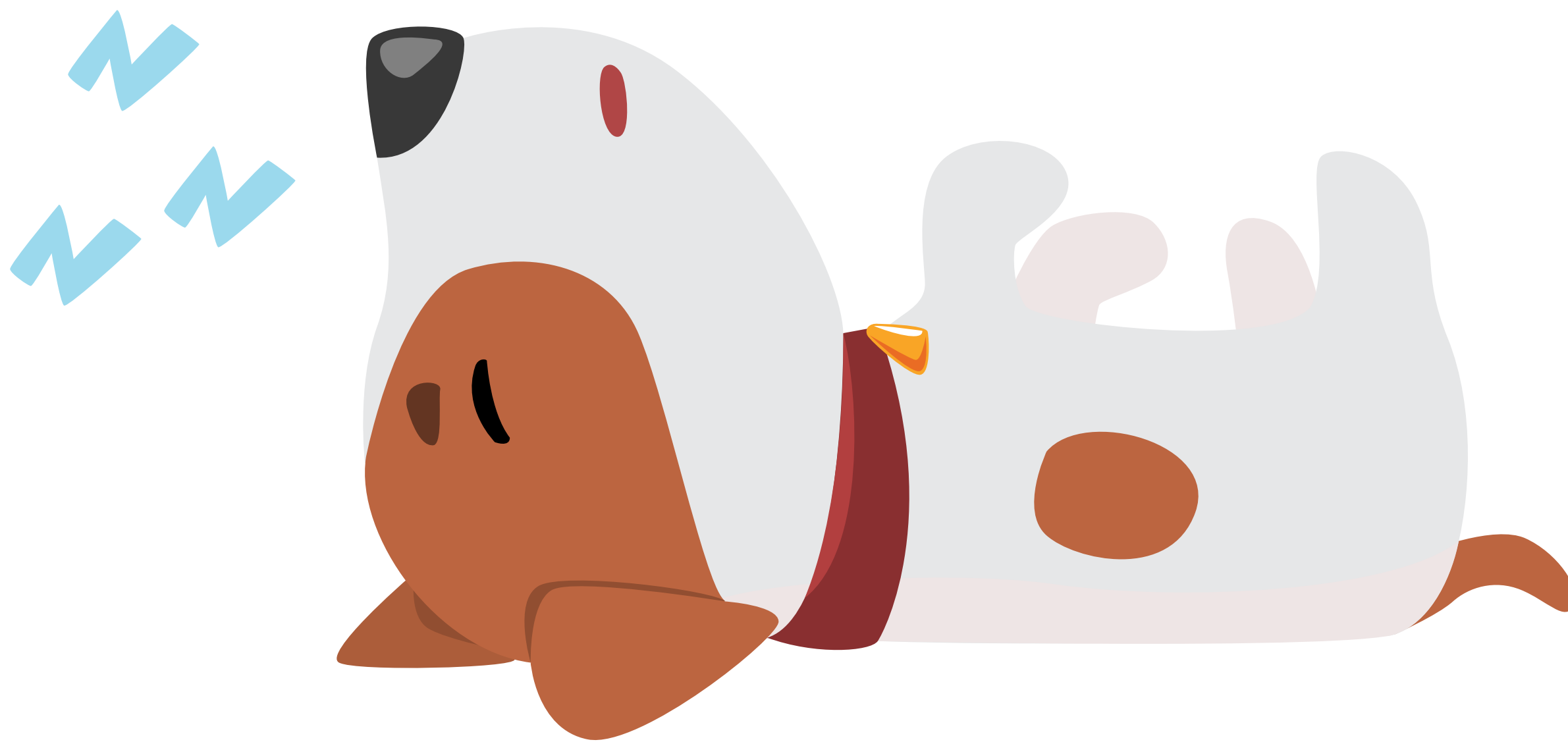


Do I need an overnight stay?

Some clients prefer an overnight stay for the security it provides your home, but there are two factors we use to determine whether an overnight stay is necessary for your pets:

Does your pet need attention (potty break, medication, etc) really late at night or early in the morning? Our normal visits are 7:30am-9:30pm, so anytime care is required outside of these hours, an overnight stay is recommended.

Do your pets sleep with you on the bed? Not having a person there overnight can be a very upsetting change for some pets.



How many visit per day do I need?

After taking a look at your normal routine, we like to set you up with as many visits as you need in order to keep your pet happy and healthy. We recommend:

Dogs: 3-4 visits a day or 1-2 visits and an overnight stay

Cats: 1-2 visits per day or an overnight

We require at least two 30 minute visits per day for dogs and one visit per day for cats, but we find they are much happier with more frequent visits.



How long should my visits be?

Along with how many visits the next step is to decide how long your visits should be. Our most common visits are 30 minutes long, but many people utilize our other visits as well.

15 minute visits

Good for shy cats that do not need any attention or a quick potty break for dogs. We often recommend these for late night dog visits.

30 minute visits

A normal length visit. This is enough time for feeding, a dog walk and some good attention.

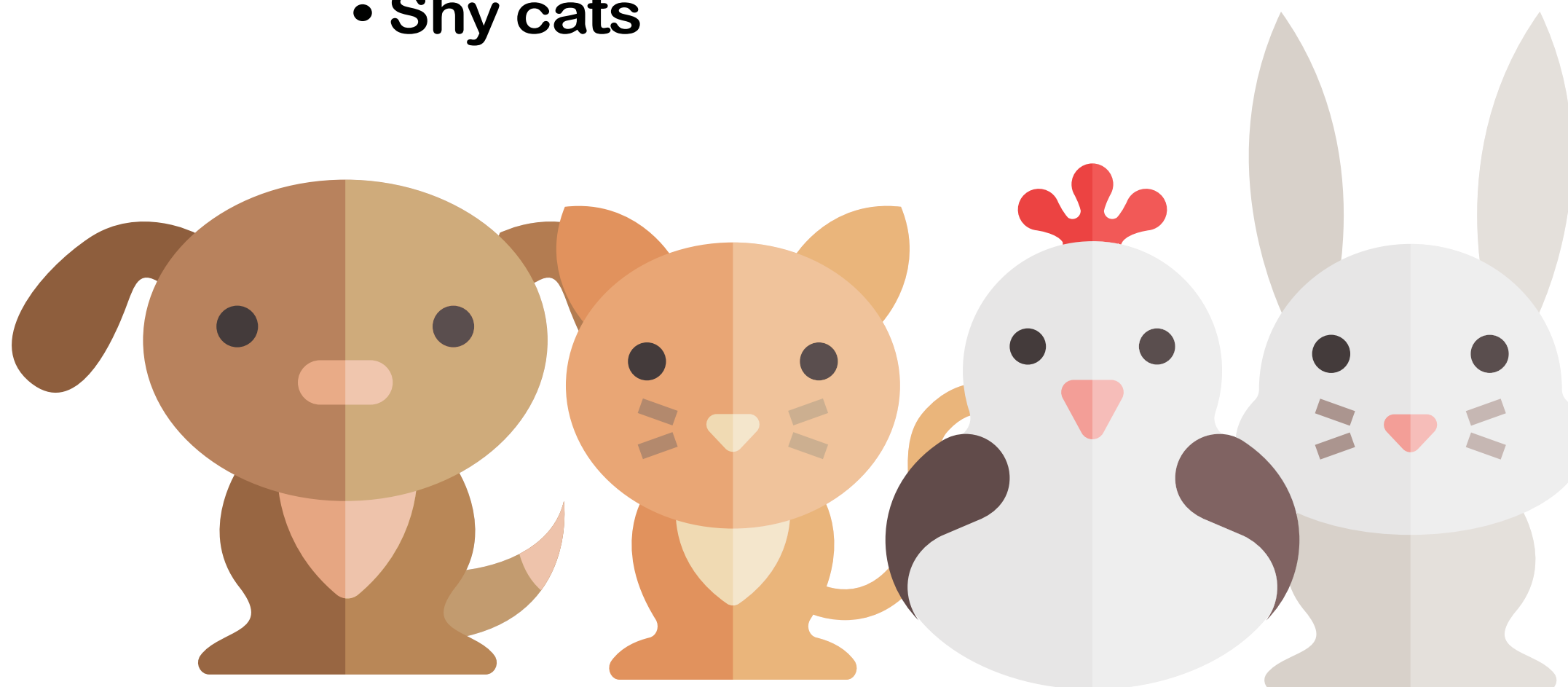
45 minute and 1 hour visits

Longer visits are great for pets that need extra attention or dogs that need longer walks. It often helps to mix and match visits, such as a 30 minute breakfast and dinner visit with a 15 minute late night visit.

We have sample schedules based on your fur kids!

We know it can be hard to figure out a schedule the first time and to envision how your trip will go. We set up a list of sample schedules, so find your most high need pet and look at our suggestions:

- Dogs
- Active dogs
- Puppies
- Cats
- Shy cats
- Kittens
- Diabetic pets
- Rabbits
- Chickens



On our website we have a list of possible schedules that would be perfect for your pet! Look at our FAQ page for a list.

So what now?

If you still have questions or want to talk through the possible schedule with us, give us a call! We are happy to discuss our services with you and make sure we match you with the best option for you and your fur kids. If you know what you want to schedule then hop on our online system and set up your appointment today!

How Do You Know You Can Trust Your Pet Sitter?



One of the most important questions our clients ask us is, “how do you screen your pet sitters?” After all, these are the individuals that are put in charge of your precious pets. We put our trust in our sitters to respect your home and give your pet nothing but care, love and affection while you are away.

That’s why the screening process is so important to Wet Nose Pet Sitting. Here’s a glimpse inside how we choose the best sitters for you.

Step 1: Online Application



When a sitter is interested in working for Wet Noses Pet Sitting they first complete an online application. This is where we ask the initial important questions. How much experience do they have? What is their availability for weekends, emergencies and holidays? And do they have physical health problems and/or limitations? All of these help us pick out the right candidates for to start the hiring process.

Step 2: Phone Interview

Next, we will schedule an interview with Gabby, our manager. During this interview we also conduct a personality test. This test is used to weed out anyone with a possible history or predisposition to theft, substance abuse, or anything else that doesn’t represent Wet Noses Pet Sitters.



Step 3: Interview



After a successful first interview, our candidate will meet for an interview with Liana, our owner. She will get more in depth and gauge experience levels, both with animals and professionalism in general. She will also assess their level of dedication and availability. We don't like high turnover and want pet sitters with longevity. Our pet clients can get attached to their sitters; they become friends and we want employees that convey that level of commitment.

Step 4: Background & Reference Checks

Once we've determined a prospective pet sitter would be a good fit for our team we then complete a full background check and call their references. We call references of both with animals, professional, and personal interactions.

After all of this, we have a pretty good feel for our sitters. Once hired, a sitter will undergo ongoing training.



New sitters



Go through a training on our processes, procedures and systems

Learn about animal behavior and health

Work one-on-one with a manager during training and for ongoing training

Learn CPR and first aid training

Have continuing education and training

No sitters are brought onto our team without our 100% confidence in their abilities. After they join the team, they are constantly in touch with managers, accompanied on visits and checked up on. Wet Noses also has managers on call 24/7 so in the case of any emergency, or even just a small question, we are there to help!

Who Will Be My Pet Sitter / Dog Walker?







When you join the Wet Noses family, we learn all about you. How many pets you have, any medical concerns, where you live, and all the little details. Once we have that information we are able to best match you to a sitter on our team. This professional pet sitter will be able to match all of your household's needs!

On our About Us page of our website, you can see all of our current sitters and learn more about them. In the next section we talk about meeting your sitter.

Our sitters are highly screened professionals.

They all are:

-  Experienced working with animals
-  Reliable and responsible
-  Trained in pet CPR and first aid
-  Trained in animal behavior and care

Can I Meet My Pet Sitter Before the Pet Sitting Visit?



When you are getting started with a new professional pet sitting company, you want to be sure you are comfortable with the person who will be working in your home. We want you to be comfortable as well! When first getting started with Wet Noses Pet Sitting, we will answer all of your questions via phone and email. We work our hardest to make sure you understand the process of working with us, that we have an understanding of the care needed for your pets and that we have scheduled visits that are going to make your pets happy while you are gone.

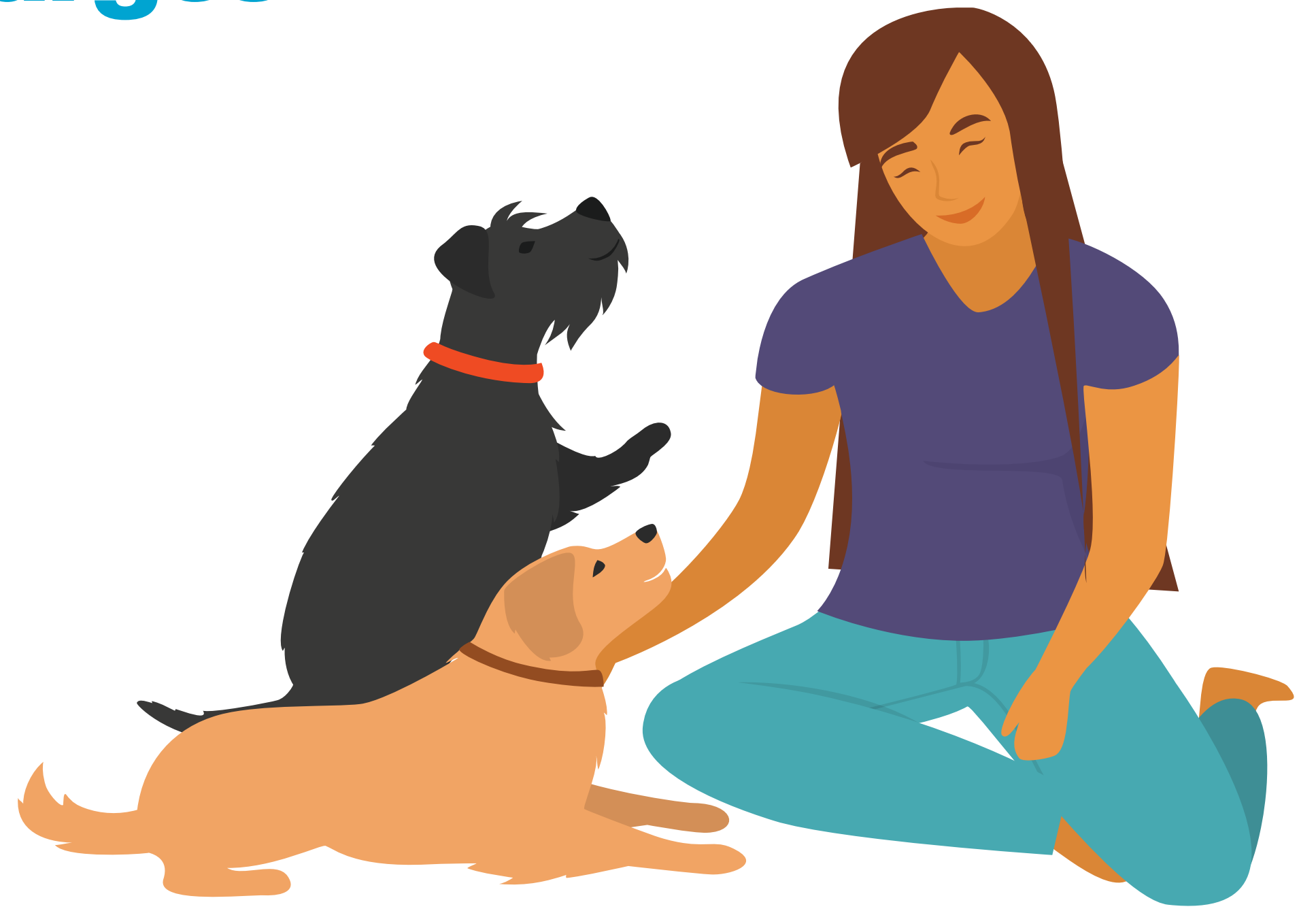
Setting up your meeting



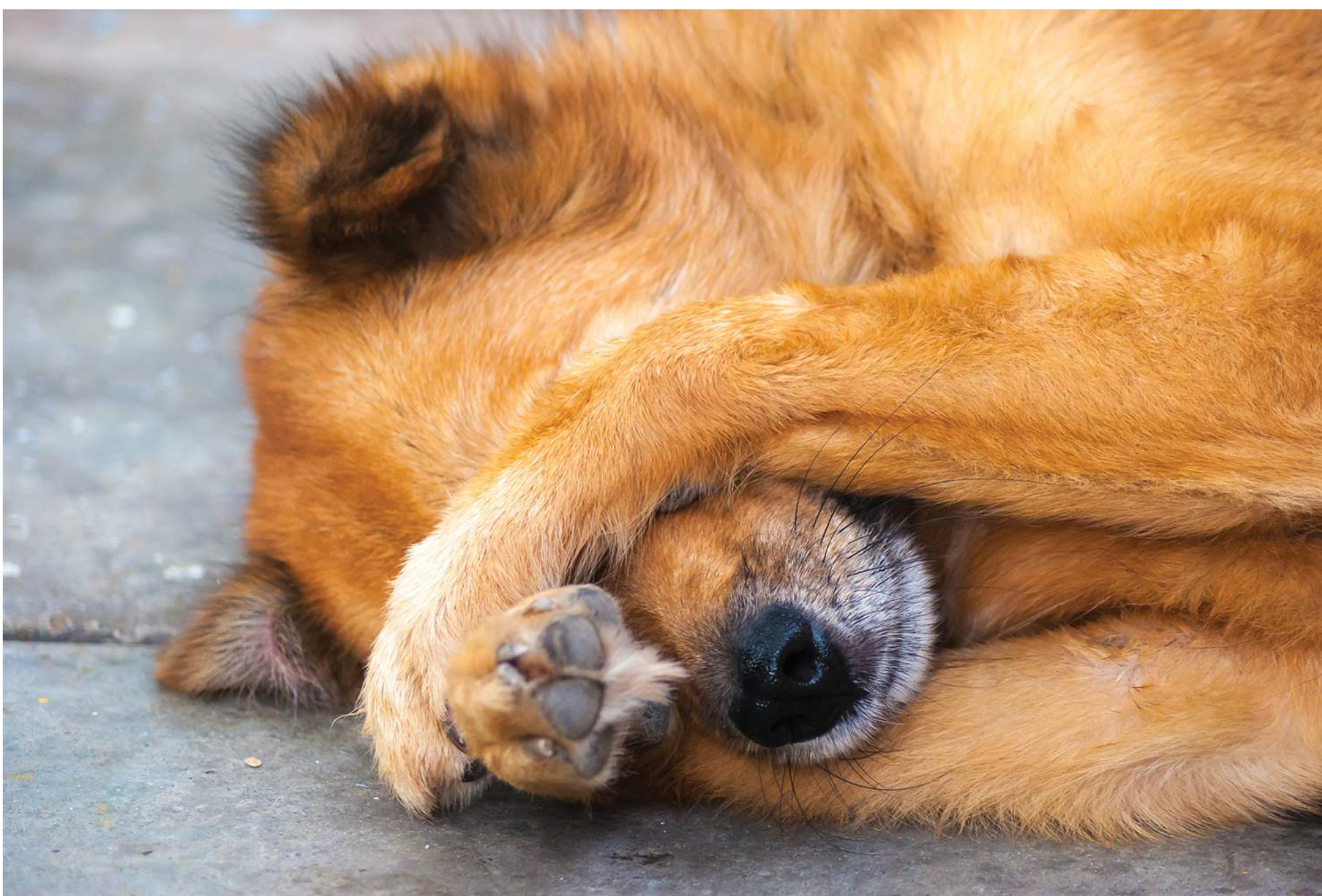
After we have set up your first appointment, we will pair you with a sitter whose schedule and experience matches your household. About a week before your first visit, your sitter will contact you to set up a meeting time. We intentionally have sitters meet with you just before you leave so that all of the details are fresh in their minds. In addition, there is a higher likelihood that your pets will remember your sitter if they have met recently. This helps to make your pets more comfortable with a new person coming into their home for the first time.

Charges

We believe this introductory meeting is necessary so there is no charge for the meeting! In the event that you need more than one meeting, we will charge for any additional meetings. This can happen if you have a dog that is particularly shy or uncomfortable with strangers.



Shy dogs



Unlike some professional pet sitting companies, we do accept dogs that sometimes need a little more care, and thus a few more meetings. How many meetings will depend upon you and your dog and we can discuss this before setting up your first meeting with your sitter.

Future sitters

We attempt to keep you with your same sitter whenever possible, but if you are with us long enough then you will eventually have a new sitter. Anytime we change sitters we will offer up a new meeting at no charge. On some occasions clients chose to forego these meetings, but that is up to you.



We feel it is of vital importance for you to feel comfortable with your sitter and do not believe that you should pay for this meeting.



How Do I Know My Pet Sitter / Dog Walker Has Visited My Pet?

Peace of mind is extremely important when you are away from home. That is why you hire a professional in the first place, instead of the kid down the street.

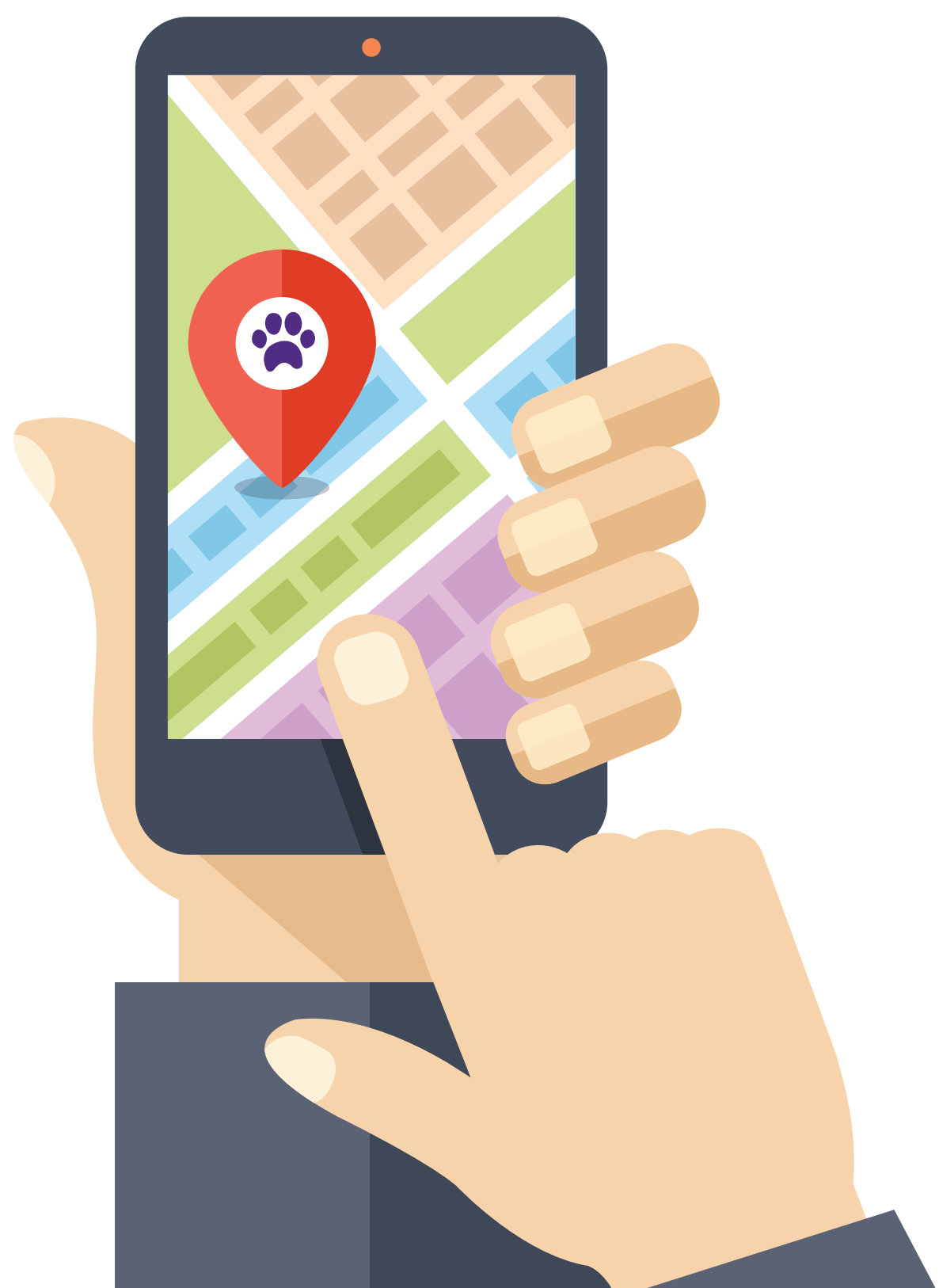
There are a few ways to know your sitter has visited:

Your sitter can send you an email or text as often as you like.

Maybe you want a text at each visit or maybe just once a day, we can provide it.

Wet Noses sitters are known for sending some pretty amazing photos and videos so you can see exactly how your pets are doing!

At the completion of each visit, we leave a note on site. This is done regardless of whether we send an update or not so there is a record on site of the care we provided. This is necessary so any family or friends coming in know what is going on, and in case there is an emergency. It is always good to have a record on paper.



Our sitters also always check in via our online software. The software tracks how long they are at your visit as well as GPS tags them so we can keep track of the sitters during their day.

If a sitter does not check into a visit on time the system sends managers a notification so that we can check in make sure your pets are being cared for.

If for whatever reason you are unable to contact your sitter, you can always reach out to a manager. We are available 24/7 for emergencies.

How Can I Contact Wet Noses Pet Sitting?



We are easy to reach!



You can contact us directly:

Phone (970) 980-1325

Email info@wetnosespetsitting.com



If you want to set up an appointment,
you can schedule that on our website as well!

You can also find us on social media!
Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest



Or take a look at our website for more information!
We post regular blogs, podcasts and infographics.

Hop onto the website and check out all of our resources.

Get In Touch Today!