

How I Became a Pet Sitter

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I have always loved animals and enjoyed meeting lots of different pets and their owners. About 15 years ago, I thought I could make a little extra money and meet people and pets by offering to pet sit for them.

I started out by taking care of my friends' pets when they went out of town. I then expanded to other households in my apartment complex. I created a couple of fliers and put them up by the mailbox and common areas. Soon, I had a small roster of clients that used my services mostly around the holidays. Co-workers then found out about my services, and asked me to pet sit for them when they went on business trips.

When I moved back to California a little over three years ago, I needed a way to earn some money while I looked for a permanent job. I was searching for jobs on the Internet and located a pet-sitting company that was looking for sitters. Since I already had experience, I was hired right away.

I work as an independent contractor for a large pet-sitting company. Working as an independent contractor definitely has its advantages for me. My boss does all the advertising, booking, and collections. She made the investment in a software program that clients and staff use to book services and keep track of what has been done. The company pays for insurance and bonding and has invested in training for the staff. All I have to do is keep track of my assignments and take care of the pets.

There are more than 20 staff members working for my company, so if I become sick or have car trouble, there is always someone to back me up so we make sure the pets are always cared for. I also can deduct expenses associated with the business off my income taxes.

Flax, a 16-year-old pit bull Pet sitting is very rewarding for me. I have many very special clients who really appreciate the service I provide. And it gives me the opportunity to get exercise walking the dogs. The pets are wonderful, even though some do present challenges. I have training on administering subcutaneous fluids and injections, so I often work with elderly dogs and cats.

The pets also appreciate the care I provide. Flax, a 16-year-old pit bull, will come and put his head in my hand. Cats that hide from other people will come out when I come over. And the licks I get from the doggies are very special.

If this sounds like something you'd like to try, I recommend checking out Pet Sitters International or the National Association of Pet Sitters. They can provide more information to you about starting in this rewarding job.

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