



Spring News, 2017

Dear Customers,

We've come a long way since I began managing Acton Critter Sitters. Thanks to your input, trust, and loyalty, we've received top honors in Wicked Local's pet services category two years in a row, added new services, and tripled the number of families we serve.

To handle this growth while still providing the best service possible, we've introduced online scheduling and billpay, opened up new ways you can connect with us, and expanded our staff. Please keep reading to learn about these changes and more that are coming in 2017.

New rates effective April 1, 2017



In order to attract and retain quality staff, and to reward them for their dedication, we are raising our rates effective April 1, 2017. These new rates are comparable -- and in some cases still lower than -- our competitors. These updated rates also help fund the online services, background checks, and insurance costs that provide you with convenience and peace of mind. Please also note that the names of some services have been changed to better describe the service provided.

Email billing coming this spring



To lower billing inaccuracies, keep our costs down, and reduce our environmental impact, we will be moving to all-email billing this spring. Monthly customers will continue to be billed early in the month for the previous month. Periodic customers will be billed on the weekend following the last day of service. Please watch your email for your invoices or check the INVOICES tab in your portal. Note that invoices marked as DRAFT have not been reviewed by our office and should not be considered final.

Making the most of your portal account

CONVERSATION PETS SCHEDULE MY INFO INVOICES HELP  LOGOUT

Using the portal helps us most efficiently meet your needs, as it can be monitored by multiple staff.

- Requests and changes made through the portal SCHEDULE link receive first priority.
- Comments made in the portal can be seen by your sitters and management staff alike, enabling us to work as a team to meet your pets' needs.
- The INVOICES tab allows you to view your invoices at any time and to check the status of your payments.
- You can confirm services simply by looking at the SCHEDULE; no need to request a confirmation from us.
- Please keep your portal information up to date! This will help us take the best care of your pets. You can edit your contact information, home access, pet's diet, vet, etc. at any time.

If you have not yet activated your portal account, please send us an email to request an invitation.

Weekend, holiday, and same-day scheduling guidelines



While we are committed to caring for your pets 365 days a year, we ask that you plan ahead as much as possible. We all need a little down time, and our staff need a chance to plan their schedules.

- Our business office is closed from 2 PM on Fridays through 2 PM on Sundays. We will continue to check the portal, emails, phone messages, and texts, but we may not be able to respond immediately.
- Weekend requests should be made by 12 PM (noon) on Fridays. We cannot guarantee weekend service for requests made after that time.
- Holiday requests should be made a week ahead of time, especially for major holidays: Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Years Day, and July 4th, as well as school vacations.
- We make every effort to honor same-day requests and changes, including on weekends, but because of staffing restrictions, it may not always be possible.
- As we are often out with animals and are not always able to check email during the day, please text 978-674-9604 or call our office at 978-263-6578 with same-day requests, changes, or concerns. We will get back to you as soon as possible.

Staffing updates and opportunities



Some of our best sitters have come to us through our clients, and we are once again looking for quality staff. Sitters must be at least 21 years old, have experience with animals, hold a valid driver's license, and be looking to make a long-term commitment. For more information, please see the flyer enclosed, or visit <http://www.actoncritisitters.com/meet-the-critter-sitters/>

In addition to our outstanding Critter Sitters, we've been joined this past year by Stephanie Cavagnuolo, our Office Administrator. Stephanie provides all-around assistance with scheduling and troubleshooting, handles all of our financials, manages our website and social media, and more! Please feel free to talk with Stephanie about any issues you encounter.

Getting social



This year we plan to be more active on social media, sharing glimpses into your pets' time with us and also news of interest to pet owners.

- Please LIKE and FOLLOW us on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/actoncritisitters/>) and while you are there, please write us a review.
- We also appreciate your reviews on Yelp and Google. Thank you!
- Should we use Twitter for time-sensitive announcements? Post resources on Pinterest? Would this interest you? Let us know what you think.

Off-leash guidelines



For the safety and protection of your animals, all off-leash dogs must have proven, reliable recall abilities AND wear identification tags with your contact information.

Acton establishes a dog park committee



On the community side of things, Acton's Board of Selectmen recently established a committee to look into the need for and design/location of a dog park in Acton. Substantial funding is available through the Stanton Foundation (<http://thestantonfoundation.org/canine/dog-parks>). Volunteers are needed to serve on the committee. If interested, please email Acton's Board of Selectmen at bos@acton-ma.gov.

How are we doing?



Was this newsletter helpful? Should we do more? Do you have any other suggestions for how we can better serve you? Please contact our office: pets@actoncritisitters.com.

Thank you!



Clare, Stephanie, and all the Critter Sitters