

# **TERMS OF SERVICE**

**Revised March 2025**

**Policies & Fees:** By using our services client agrees to the policies, rates, and fees posted on our website at [www.aunthope.com](http://www.aunthope.com). Aunt Hope's Pet Care, LLC & DBA Hope Polenica prices and policies are subject to change without direct written notice. Please always refer to our website for the most current information.

**Initial Consultations:** A meet and greet consultation is required for all new clients before any service can be provided or confirmed. Any requests from a new client made through the booking system prior to scheduling the consultation will be deleted from our calendar. This helps keep our calendar open to vetted and established customers. All parties forfeit claims to a schedule of service when the consult has not been agreed to within a timely manner. We recommend scheduling your meet and greet in advance to secure reservations. There is a fee for short notice consultations.

**Access to the Home:** Please verify that your key will open your door, that locks are functioning well, that we have the correct keypad code, and that batteries are fresh in the keypad entries. Select a unique door code to be used only by the pet sitter. A garage door opener or garage code will not be accepted as the only means of entry into the home as a power outage will prevent your sitter from gaining access. We require independent and reliable access to the home in the form of a key or keypad code. We are unable to wait for clients or others to allow us into the home, or coordinate our schedule to arrive at an exact time for entry. If the client is unable to keep their key on file with us: a.) Client agrees to deliver a temporary key to our business address and then pick it up, b.) Client shall purchase a lockbox for safe keeping of the key on their premises, c.) Client may pay a fee for us to pick-up and drop-off the key. We will not leave keys hidden anywhere due to safety and security reasons for your home and for the pet sitter. We are not comfortable leaving doors unlocked for the same reason. We will not lock keys inside of the house after the last visit as if the client's return is delayed, we will need to access the home to provide additional visits for your pets.

**Request for Service-** Client agrees to be responsible for scheduling and maintaining the accuracy and integrity of their own schedule through the booking portal. A reservation is not added to our calendar unless the client receives an email confirmation for each visit. Please contact us immediately if you have not received the email confirmation regarding your requested appointment(s).

Short notice and special requests may be submitted via text at 574-855-6026 and must include: calendar dates, preferred arrival times, and the desired length of time for EACH visit. To avoid confusion all requests must be clearly stated in writing. Verbal requests will not be honored and recurring visits are never assumed.

**Tentative Appointments-** While we strive to be flexible, we cannot hold the schedule for tentative/unconfirmed requests nor can we guarantee availability at a future date or on short notice. Availability is on a first-come-first-serve basis. All appointments on our calendar (tentative or otherwise) are subject to the same policies and will be billed as such. We recommend firming up your plans before scheduling with us.

**Minimum Visits for Vacation Pet sitting:** Your pet's safety and well-being are the number one priority. In order to ensure your pets are thriving, we require a minimum number of visits while you are away:

One visit per 24 hours for healthy adult cats and small animal species.

Two visits per 24 hours for kittens, and for elderly or ailing cats and small animal species.

Three visits per 24 hours for most healthy adult dogs (able to go 6-8 hours between potty breaks).

Four visits per 24 hours for elderly dogs, for puppies, and for certain special needs pets.

**Limitations of Pet Sitting:** We do not provide care to puppies less than 16 weeks old. We will not agree to every-other-day cat visits or twice per day dog visits. Client agrees to the scheduling discretion of Aunt Hope's Pet Care LLC to appropriate visits for their pets. Furthermore client agrees that Aunt Hope's Pet Care LLC cannot be held liable for any pet left unattended beyond our recommended guidelines.

**Arrival Times:** Aunt Hope's Pet Care, LLC does not guarantee an exact arrival time for visits. However, we generally arrive within 30-60 minutes of the scheduled time. Our calendar is arranged into two-hour time blocks and we use this window to prioritize special needs pets, to accommodate for travel delays, or any last minute events. Priority is given to pets requiring medication, to special needs pets, and to vacation dogs. Healthy cats are usually attended to after 9am in the morning. Clients requesting only one visit per day are given a four hour arrival window (morning, afternoon, or evening).

**Length of Visits:** Aunt Hope's Pet Care, LLC may shorten or lengthen visits at our discretion for any reason. Such reasons may include inclement weather, aggressive pet behavior, awkward or unsafe conditions, when the client has not requested an adequate amount of time to perform all duties, time consuming cleanup of pet related accidents, pet care emergencies, emergencies of any kind, lockouts, and/or maintenance issues of the client's property. Visit time begins when your sitter arrives at the location. Any delays such as lengthy conversations with the client will affect the time spent with your pet(s).

**20 Minute Visits:** are exclusively available to neighbors within 2 miles of travel. All other appointments are scheduled at a 30 minute minimum.

**Overnight Pet Sitting:** Is a 9 hour service (10pm-7am). It includes your pets' bedtime routine with potty break, plus their morning routine with breakfast and potty break the following day. Any care desired outside the hours of 10pm-7am will need to be scheduled separately with additional visits.

**Return Home Policy:** We ask all clients to send us an 'I'm home' text upon returning from their trip. Travel delays occur regularly and this policy assures that your pet will be cared for in the event of your delay. Without notification we can only assume that you have not arrived home yet, and that your pet(s) will require continued care. In such case Aunt Hope's Pet Care LLC will use their discretion to provide additional visits. The client will be billed for any such visits even if the petsitter arrives on location and service is not needed because the client failed to send the 'I'm home' text.

**Required Vaccinations:** Client attests that all pets are current on licenses and vaccinations required by the state, city, and county in which they reside. Pets are required to wear their current rabies medallion during all pet sitting visits.

**Dog Walking Equipment:** Aunt Hope's Pet Care, LLC does not rely on the safety of collars and retractable leashes. All pets are required to wear a no-slip harness during walks and outside activities while being secured to a standard six foot leash. If you do not have the proper equipment, we will be happy to use our own until you can obtain them for your pet(s).

**Loss of Animal:** Client is responsible for ensuring that all pets are wearing their rabies tag and an identification tag with the pet's name and phone number. Aunt Hope's Pet Care, LLC cannot be held liable for the loss of pets with a propensity for aggression, bolting or escaping, leash reactivity and during the malfunction of the owner's dog walking equipment. Aunt Hope's Pet Care, LLC will not be held responsible for the loss, injury, death, or legal consequences of any pet that is granted unsupervised access to outdoors per the client's instructions.

**Third Parties-** The client is responsible for informing Aunt Hope's Pet Care, LLC of any third parties having access to their home during our scheduled service periods. Please inform others (ie. repairman, cleaners, family, friends etc) that we are scheduled to arrive. We reserve the right to immediately terminate any scheduled pet care in the event that third parties have shared access to the client's property when those arrangements were not previously discussed at the time of booking. Client agrees that sharing access to their property with anyone not directly employed by Aunt Hope's Pet Care, LLC will waive our liability and bonding insurance for the entire period in which our services are scheduled. Therefore Aunt Hope's Pet Care LLC cannot be held liable for the injury, death, loss of pet(s) and/or damage to the client's property when third parties are granted access to the client's property.

**Shared Pet Sitting:** Aunt Hope's Pet Care, LLC does not support shared pet sitting arrangements due to safety and liability concerns. If you believe your circumstances are unique, a written agreement may be drawn between the client and Aunt Hope's Pet Care, LLC. The client understands that in entering such an agreement Aunt Hope's Pet Care LLC will waive our liability and bonding insurance and cannot be held responsible or liable for the injury, death, loss of pet(s) and/or damage to the client's property when a shared pet sitting arrangement has been agreed to.

**Communicable disease:** If your pet is a carrier of any Communicable disease, you must disclose this information prior to care. Some diseases are highly contagious and can be transferred easily to the next pet client. Aunt Hope's Pet Care, LLC exercises the right to deny service at any time, for any reason, at our discretion.

**Medical Emergencies:** Aunt Hope's Pet Care, LLC's protocol is to contact the client if an issue arises. If the client cannot be reached, we will reach out to the emergency contacts listed in your file. If neither parties can be reached in a timely manner Aunt Hope's Pet Care, LLC will use their discretion to transport and/or seek medical care for the client's pet(s). For routine medical care Aunt Hope's Pet Care, LLC will attempt to arrange a visit with the veterinarian of your choice as long as the clinic is within reasonable travel distance

and scheduling is favorable. For medical emergencies Aunt Hope's Pet Care, LLC will seek care from the nearest available veterinarian. The cost of any medical treatment is the financial responsibility of the pet owner except in the event of gross negligence on our part.

**Errands, Pet Supplies and Medical Care:** Client is responsible for the cost of pet food, medications, medical care, and other pet care essentials. A trip charge will be added for any errands required to accommodate your pet while under our care.

**Harsh Weather:** We walk dogs rain or shine! We will arrive at your scheduled appointment regardless of the weather as long as we are physically able to do so. During harsh weather we may shorten the amount of time spent outdoors and supplement any remaining time with indoor enrichment activities. Short notice cancellation made by the client will be billed according the cancellation policy.

**Inclement Weather:** In the event that we are unable to reach your pet(s), we will ask the client's emergency contacts for help with pet care until we can safely resume visits. There is of course no fee for cancellation on our part due to inclement weather.

**Natural Disasters:** Client authorizes the relocation of their pet(s) to a safe location in the event of a pending or eminent natural disaster or emergency.

**Security Systems:** Please verify that the alarm codes provide to us are valid. Client shall provide a working passcode, password, alarm company phone number and instructions to set and disarm the security system. It is recommended that you arrange a separate code solely for pet sitter use, and that you notify your alarm company that this code will be used for pet sitting services.

**Lockouts:** In the event that a locksmith is needed to gain entry to the client's property, the client grants permission to the locksmith and to Aunt Hope's Pet Care, LLC to access their property and agrees to reimburse Aunt Hope's Pet Care, LLC for all costs incurred.

**Insurance & Bonding-** We are fully insured and bonded through Pet Care Insurance, Certain Underwriters at Lloyd's, London. Our policy also includes broadened property damage in addition to the general liability coverage. Proof of insurance will be presented during the initial consultation and the client may request a copy at any time.

**Limitation of Liability-** Aunt Hope's Pet Care, LLC will endeavor to offer only safe and responsible care for your pet(s). Client understands the inherent risks of owning a pet, including but not limited to the risk of bites to themselves and others, interactions with other pets within their home and/or interactions with other animals during walks and playtime. Furthermore, client will remain responsible for the actions of their pet(s) at all times and will hereby agree to indemnify and hold harmless Aunt Hope's Pet Care, LLC of any and all claims of injury, loss, damages or expenses caused by the actions of their pet(s) or others. Aunt Hope's Pet Care, LLC will act with all due respect and caution in the client's home. Client understands that acts of nature, faulty equipment and improperly maintained items within or around the home and/or third parties could potentially cause damage to their property. Client agrees to indemnify and hold harmless Aunt Hope's Pet Care, LLC of any and all claims of injury, loss, damages and expenses to the client's home or property while under our care, custody and control UNLESS such damages are caused as a direct result of willful misconduct and/or gross negligence on the part of Aunt Hope's Pet Care, LLC. Client understands that the recommendation of any product or service is not a guarantee of their satisfaction with that product or service.

**Pet Abandonment:** Grounds to assume pet abandonment will be considered during the following circumstances: Pet is not collected within three days of the scheduled pick-up date or client return date and the client is non-responsive over the course of that three day period whereas the client has not expressed their inability to communicate prior to the start of service. Aunt Hope's Pet Care, LLC reserves the right to make alternate arrangements for the care of the client's pet(s). Arrangements include but are not limited to directing care of client's pet(s) to the emergency contact persons, boarding pet(s) at an alternate location or facility, or relinquishing pet(s) to a local shelter or other caregiver. Client agrees to cover the costs of alternate care and agrees to be responsible for any outcome of alternate care and shall indemnify and hold harmless Aunt Hope's Pet Care, LLC of any damages or expenses as a result thereof.

**Payments:** We accept Cash, Check, Zelle, ApplePay and Venmo (@aunthope).

**Payment Disputes:** There is a \$35 fee for returned checks and payment disputes.

**Late payments :** A fee of \$1 per day is applied to any delinquent payment. An outstanding balance of 90 days will be turned over to a collection agency or a suit filed in small claims court. In addition, the client

agrees to cover any legal expenses, filing fees, court costs, and any additional expenses accrued in an attempt to collect such debt.

**Social Media-** Client gives Aunt Hope's Pet Care, LLC permission to use photos of their pet(s) on social media, for promotional and/or advertising purposes. Your personal information will never be shared.