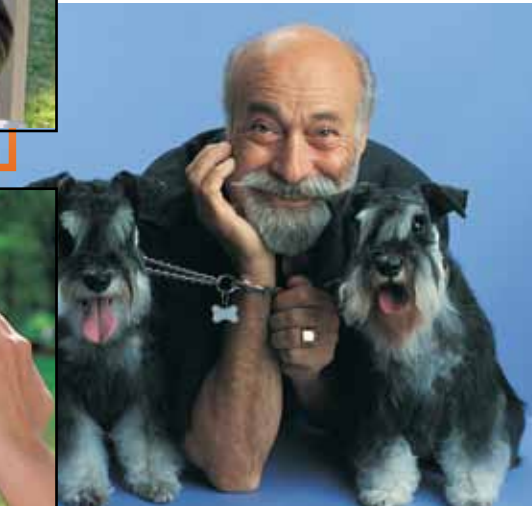


Member Guide



www.petsit.com

Pet Sitting Excellence Through Education

Welcome to Pet Sitters international

Your decision to be a part of the world's largest and most progressive organization for professional pet sitters shows you're a dedicated individual who recognizes continuing education as a valuable business investment.

Your PSI membership tells the world, your clients and prospective clients, as well as your staff sitters, how serious you are about your career in professional pet sitting.

Every facet of this association is dedicated to serving professional pet sitters. This document includes important details regarding your PSI membership and benefits.

ACCESSING YOUR BENEFITS

By [logging in](#) to the Members Area of Petsit.com, you can always access the most recent version of this document. You can also access a complete description of each member benefit in the **"Services and Benefits"** area of the site. Please note that some Canadian and International services/benefits are described separately and may have restricted access. You can review a complete list of member benefits/services and geographic availability [here](#).

Please note: To access many of the links in this document, you will need to be logged-in to the Members area of petsit.com.

Contents

Insurance and Bonding	2
PSIStoreOnline and Member Exclusive Products	3
Educational Resources for PSI Members	3
Promoting Your Business	5
Web Site and E-mail Marketing	7
Health Care Resources for PSI Members	7
Business Services to Build and Grow Your Business	8
Strength in Numbers: Networking Opportunities	9
Get Plugged in to Your PSI Membership	10
Quality Standards	11
Member Code of Conduct and Ethics	12
PSI Contact Info	14

Insurance and Bonding

The number one qualification pet owners often look for when choosing professional pet care givers is whether they are insured and bonded. U.S. members receive a group rate on Pet Sitters Liability Insurance through [Business Insurers of the Carolinas](#) and Canadian members have access to insurance through [Binks](#). PSI has partnered with these companies because our research shows that these providers offer the most economical and comprehensive coverage you need as a professional pet sitter.



Business Insurers of the Carolinas
Customer Service: 1-(800) 962-4611, Ext. 224

[Apply now](#) for insurance through
Business Insurers of the Carolinas



BINKS

Binks (877) 302-4657

[Click here](#) to apply for
insurance through Binks (Canada)

PSIStoreOnline and Member Exclusive Products



The PSIStoreOnline is the largest specialty retailer of products for pet sitters and pet-sitter business owners. As a member you receive 10 percent off all purchases as long as you are logged into your store account. The PSIStoreOnline provides a broad range of custom and creative products specifically designed to start and grow a successful pet sitting business. In fact, the store has the most comprehensive online product selection available for pet sitters and their clients. Starter kits, daily planners, DVDs, promotional materials, T-shirts and fun holiday cards are part of the store's growing inventory.



PSI Member Exclusive Products

As a PSI Member you have access to a variety of exclusive products that are available to members only. Choose from items including popular PSI T-shirts, magnets, bookmarks, and the very popular "Looking for a Pet Sitter" brochure that helps you educate pet owners about professional pet sitting.



[Visit the PSIStoreOnline.](http://www.petsit.com)

Educational Resources for PSI Members

We take the PSI motto "Pet-sitting Excellence Through Education" very serious. From the most rigorous, respected pet-sitter certification program in the industry to free monthly teleconferences, PSI members have access to the most up-to-date pet-sitter training and resources:

Certification Program

Far from being a basic course for new sitters, the PSI Certification Program offers a wealth of information that even seasoned pet sitters will find beneficial. PSI went straight to the experts and designed an extensive program that includes topics on **Pet Care** for everything from dogs and cats to reptiles, ferrets and horses, **Health & Nutrition**, including parasite control, animal diseases and first aid and even training principles. The program includes a section on **Additional Services** such as midday dog walking and grooming, and **Business & Office Procedures**, covering everything from how to set up an office to marketing and legal issues.



If you're looking to gain knowledge, confidence and respect from your clients, [find out more](#) about this comprehensive program. Members who earn this prestigious three-year certification may then also participate in the [Recertification Program](#). Boost your knowledge and your career by engaging in a variety of activities to earn credits toward recertifying your credentials for an additional three years.

Educational Resources for PSI Members (continued)

Educational Webinars

Each month, members can take advantage of a *Pet Sitting for Smarties*® Webinar. These webinars are offered free-of-charge to PSI members and cover a wide range of topics from pet health and nutrition to business management and event planning. Webinars are promoted in your monthly member e-news, *The Scoop*, and a complete schedule can be found in the Members area of petsit.com. Pre-registration is required.



As a PSI member you have access to [past webinars](#).

Resource Library

Looking for cat litter suggestions, tips on handling aggressive pets or information on Lyme disease to share with clients? PSI's ever-growing [Resource Library](#) gives you electronic access to pet care and business-related articles from PSI publications. With an easy to use search tool, the Resource Library is a great source of information for you and your clients.

The Scoop

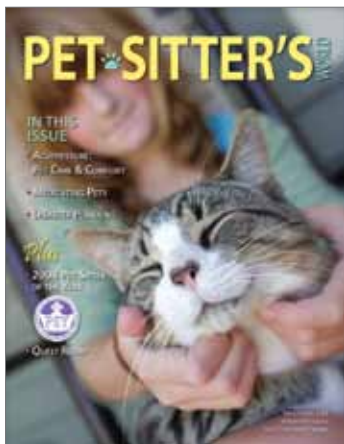
This handy e-newsletter arrives in your inbox every month with news, photo features and entertaining anecdotes from your fellow PSI members. Here are a few features found in every issue of *The Scoop*:

- Member Contributions
- Pet Care and Business Features
- Webinar Topics and Registration Information



The Scoop is a valuable information and communication resource. Make sure you have included thescoop@petsit.com in your "Safe Senders" e-mail list so you won't miss a single issue.

Archived issues of *The Scoop* can be accessed under the Member tools tab in the Member Area of petsit.com.



Pet Sitter's WORLD

The *Pet Sitter's* WORLD is a bimonthly publication produced exclusively for PSI members. Each issue is packed full of information, advice and features to benefit you—the professional pet sitter. The magazine covers topics such as animal health, pet-care needs, and tips on marketing and managing a pet-sitting business. Interested in contributing to the *Pet Sitter's* WORLD? Members are encouraged to submit ideas, suggestions, questions and article submissions. Contact (336) 983-9222, ext. 316, or e-mail editor@petsit.com for more information.

Promoting Your Business

Whether you are just opening your pet-sitting service or are already established but would like to increase your clientele, PSI offers you a variety of promotional products and marketing tools to spread the word. If you are just getting started, be sure to check out this guide for [starting & marketing your new pet-sitting service](#).

As a PSI member, you have access to these valuable resources to promote your pet-sitting business:

PSI Member Logo

Proudly display your PSI Member Logo on your Web site, business cards, brochures, letterhead and other promotional materials. To access the PSI Member Logo Usage Guidelines and downloadable logo files, log in to the Members area of [petsit.com](#) and click on the Member Logo Downloads button located at the bottom right side of the member's landing page. You must agree to the Terms of Use in order to access the logo files.



PSI's Pet Sitter Locator

LOCATE A PET SITTER



The PSI Locator is used by thousands of pet owners every month! Help potential customers find you by keeping your profile information complete and up to date. You can also track the number of times your profile has appeared to pet owners in a PSI Locator search. Just log in to the Members area and click on "[My Account](#)." The new pet-sitting business you gain from the PSI Locator can more than pay for your membership!

Garfield Products

Only Pet Sitters International offers Garfield-branded products to help you promote your pet-sitting services above all others. We have used Garfield and Friends art in member programs, products, campaigns and events. Garfield is known as a demanding, finicky cat. PSI uses his persona to convey that you've got to be a really good pet sitter to please Garfield.

Garfield member exclusive products shown, along with many others, are available for purchase at PSIStoreOnline.com/exclusives.



Promoting Your Business (continued)

PSI Member Resource and Template Gallery

Utilize creative, customizable documents to help you grow your business through promotions, partnerships, special events and local media relations. Log-in and access the [PSI member template gallery](#) and download your new member press release template, as well as a variety of other customizable promotional materials, including Garfield-branded client leave-behinds.



Professional Marketing Materials

The PSISoreOnline offers all of the promotional materials you will need to spread the word about your pet-sitting business. [Check out](#) the marketing materials available and take advantage of your 10 percent PSI member discount!



Branded Materials

Save 30 to 60 percent on business branded materials, such as business cards, brochures and letterhead. Visit the PSI Web site to access the [PSI VistaPrint Gateway](#) and start saving today. You must use this gateway to receive your PSI discount.



Web Site and E-mail Marketing

A strong Web presence is essential for any small business. From a professional-looking Web site to a strong e-mail marketing campaign, connecting with current and potential clients online are key components of a successful marketing plan. As a PSI member, you have immediate access to these quick, easy and affordable tools to establish an impactful and effective online presence for your pet-sitting service.

Web Wizard

Do you have a desire to launch your business online, but you're not sure where to begin? PSI's [Web Wizard tool](#) allows you an easy, step-by-step way to design a simple Web page and have it hosted by PSI for a small annual fee of \$49.

Web Site Design and Marketing

PSI partners with [Market Hardware](#), the leading provider of Web site marketing services for pet-care professionals. With this discount service, you have access to the best in Web site design-and-build services, search engine advertising, Google Maps optimization and local search directory submissions. Use these services to create a consistent pipeline of new leads and new clients.



E-mail Marketing

Creating, managing and tracking spectacular-looking e-mail campaigns, online video marketing and corporate communications is easy and affordable with [Mail Dog](#). As a member of PSI, you receive a discounted rate on this valuable service.



Health Care Resources for PSI Members

Health Insurance

As a small business owner, finding access to affordable health care and insurance plans can be one of your biggest challenges. Current legislation prohibits American associations from offering true group plans, so PSI has partnered with [WorldWide Insurance Services](#) to bring you the best resources available. WorldWide is an independent broker that represents more than 50 major insurance companies and they specialize in helping association members. Other services include policy writing for life, disability, critical illness, long-term care and travel coverage.



The [advantage](#) of working with WorldWide [experts](#) is the free, personalized guidance you receive to sort through hundreds of plans to narrow your choices to those that fit your budget and preferences.

PSI members also receive a complimentary prescription card and have access to WorldWide's vast [online library](#) of health and wellness resources.

Pet Insurance

As a PSI member, you receive a group discount rate on [VPI Pet Insurance](#). Your clients can take advantage of this discount, too!

VPI plans cover dogs, cats, birds and exotic pets for medical problems and conditions relating to accidents, illnesses and injuries. Optional vaccination and routine care coverage is also available. Plus, you have the freedom to visit any licensed veterinarian anywhere, even when you are away from home.



Business Services to Build and Grow Your Business

As a PSI member, you have access to a wide range of additional business services at special rates to help you build and grow your business. While you may not need all of these services now, keep these member benefits in mind as your business develops and your business needs grow.

Pet-Sitter Software

PSI members have access to Internet-based pet-sitting software at a special rate, offered through PowerPetSitter.com. This software enables you to run your business more efficiently. Features include processing payments, scheduling and managing appointments, maintaining database records and much more. Whether you are a sole proprietor or operate a larger service with staff sitters, PowerPetSitter.com allows you more time to devote to running your business—instead of letting your business run you!



Background Checking Services



There is no doubt that the clients of service providers such as pet sitters are growing in prudence when it comes to safeguarding their homes, families and pets. If you have not yet been asked about your hiring policy in relation to checking the criminal history of your employees, no doubt you will be. PSI members have access to custom-designed, comprehensive criminal background investigation packages. Whether you would like proof of your own clean criminal background to share with clients or need to screen a potential employee or independent contractor, [Certified Background](http://CertifiedBackground.com) offers PSI members the screening services needed at very competitive rates.

Legal services

As the business owner of a professional pet-sitting company, do you ever have the need for legal advice? Perhaps you need information on the best way to establish your business or have questions about the employment laws that affect using independent contractors in your state. Avoid expensive legal fees and take advantage of unlimited phone consultation with an attorney by taking advantage of the affordable monthly packages offered to PSI members through Pre-Paid Legal Services.



Strength in Numbers: Networking Opportunities

As a PSI member, you have access to a network of nearly 7,500 other pet-sitting business owners. From online forums to annual conventions, PSI offers opportunities for members to share, learn and interact with one another.

Quest for Excellence Convention

Whether you are just starting your pet-sitting service or are an industry veteran, attendance at PSI's annual *Quest for Excellence* Convention is one of the most valuable investments you can make in yourself. Learn from industry experts, the PSI staff and fellow pet sitters through optional workshops, general and break-out sessions and special networking events at this annual convention. The convention is held in an exciting, new location annually and attracts PSI members from across the U.S. and abroad. [Learn more](#) about PSI's upcoming convention.



The Forum



No one knows the joys and pains you go through better than a fellow pet sitter. With this online [Forum](#) you can chat with pet sitters from around the world, request advice and offer helpful tips.

PSI-Registered Networks

PSI offers you opportunities to network with thousands of pet sitters throughout the world, but also provides you with the tools to take advantage of networking opportunities right in your own backyard. PSI members can locate their local pet-sitter network on the PSI [Web site](#) and also access a free start-up guide to help start a local pet-sitter network.



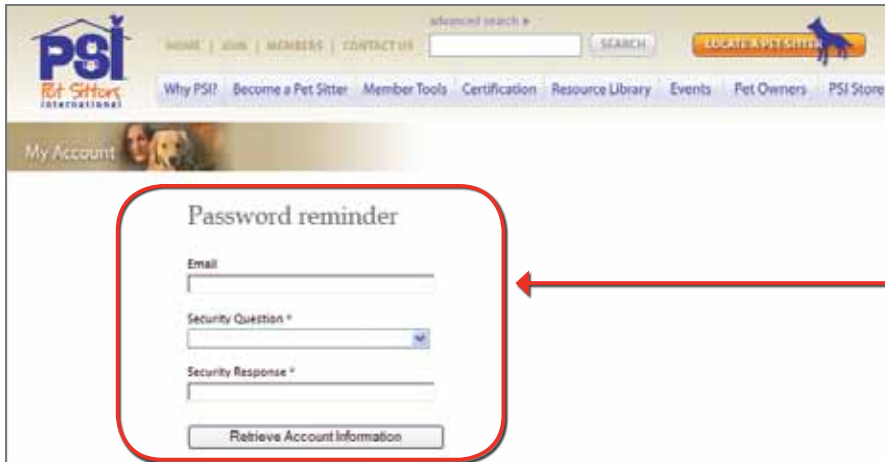
Social Media



You can find PSI on two of the world's largest social networking sites: Facebook and Twitter. Check out PSI's social media pages for great pet-sitter tips, up-to-date event information and to network with fellow PSI members. Join the conversation today!

Get Plugged in to Your PSI Membership

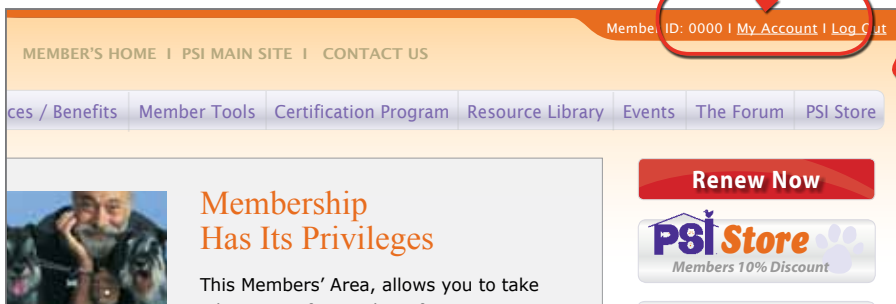
Whether you need to renew your membership, update your account information, view your Locator hit count or seek pet-sitting advice, contacting PSI's Member Services Department during normal business hours is not always possible—or practical. We are proud to offer you the PSI Members area, allowing you to do all this—plus much more—at your convenience with the click of a mouse.



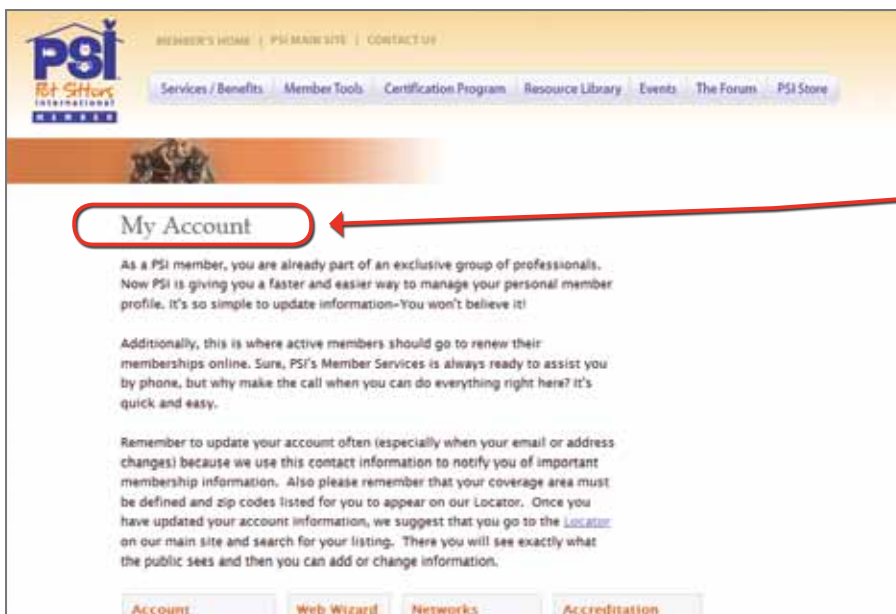
Accessing the Members Area of the PSI Web site

Your log-in information consists of your Member ID # (listed on your membership card) and the password you established when joining PSI.

If you do not know your password, click on the “Forget your password?” link and answer your designated security question on the log-in screen to have it e-mailed to you or contact PSI Member Services at (336) 983-9222, option 1, or info@petsit.com.



To access your member profile once logged in to the site, select the “My Account” link in the upper right corner of the page.



From here, you can update your profile, renew your membership, change your password and find your Locator hit count and your Certification transcript.



Recommended Quality Standards for Excellence in Pet Sitting

The mission of Pet Sitters International is to foster excellence and continuous learning in the pet-sitting profession by providing the best education and tools of the trade. Our Recommended Quality Standards for Excellence in Pet Sitting reflect the values that exemplify industry leaders. These practices set the benchmark for professional pet sitters and serve as a set of guidelines for every PSI member to use in decisions that affect business ethics, procedures and professionalism. Professionals earn the pet-owning public's trust and loyalty by consistently using these practices:

Best Business Practices

- The pet-sitting business provides references, screens pet sitters adequately, and, upon request, provides proof of clean criminal history of all they assign to enter the homes of pet owners.
- The pet-sitting business provides initial and ongoing training for its sitters and/or establishes standards that its independent contractors must meet to qualify for pet-sitting assignments.

The sitter:

- maintains current and adequate bonding and liability insurance.
- visits the client's home before the first pet-sitting assignment to meet the pets and obtain/record detailed information about specific needs.
- provides materials or online access to descriptions of services and fees.
- utilizes a legally compliant, written service contract to clarify services, fees, visit schedule, time allocated per visit and all other agreements, thereby establishing clear expectations in advance for both parties.
- takes precautions to make sure a client's absence from home is not detectable because of careless actions or disclosures by the sitter.
- has systems in place to ensure the security of home keys in his or her possession.
- confirms client's return and has pre-agreed arrangements for continued care in the event that the client is delayed or detained by emergency.
- has a contingency plan for pet care in case of inclement weather or personal illness.
- solicits service feedback from clients and responds appropriately.
- responds to client inquiries and complaints promptly.
- has a veterinarian on call for emergency service.
- is courteous, interested and well-educated in the disciplines of pet sitting.

Animal Care & Stewardship

The sitter:

- learns as much as possible about the routines, behaviors and needs of animals in his or her care.
- has adequate experience in caring for pets and is knowledgeable in pet first aid to best protect their safety and well being.
- understands and upholds local ordinances and laws applicable to animals in their service areas.

Ethical Conduct

The sitter:

- exhibits courtesy and professionalism in all dealings with customers, staff and industry colleagues to positively represent the pet sitter and the pet-sitting industry.
- conducts business with honesty and integrity and observes all federal, state and local laws pertaining to business operations.
- refrains from criticizing competitors and voices concerns to industry associates in a respectful manner.
- demonstrates ethical standards in all business transactions.

Member Conduct

Member Code of Conduct and Ethics

As a PSI member, you agree to the following:

Honesty and Integrity

Members should deal with clients, other pet sitters and PSI with honesty, integrity and candor, and should avoid any conduct that could put clients or their animals, residence or property at risk. Conviction of a crime against persons or property or listing as a registered sex offender are grounds for termination of membership.

Quality of Services

Among many other benefits, membership in PSI entitles members to display the PSI Logo and to hold themselves out to the public as PSI members. This is a valuable benefit, and will continue to have value only if each member exhibits excellence in all dealings with the public and the profession.

Appropriate Channels for Criticism and Feedback

Members should conduct themselves as professionals, and should not engage in public criticism of fellow pet sitters or of PSI, but instead should air the issue in the appropriate forum.

Complaints About Another Member – PSI does not mediate pet sitter-to-pet sitter complaints. A member who believes that another pet sitter has engaged in improper or illegal conduct should, depending on the nature of the conduct, either contact the offending pet sitter directly, contact the local Better Business Bureau or, if the misconduct is sufficiently serious, report it to law enforcement authorities and/or obtain legal representation to pursue redress in the courts. PSI appreciates being advised if a judgment is entered finding that a member engaged in dishonest conduct or conduct that could put clients or their animals, residence or property at risk.

Providing Feedback to PSI – Member comments and concerns directed to PSI Member Services are welcome and encouraged. We regard your feedback as our best opportunity to improve, and we will respond promptly to all comments, complaints and requests, usually by the next business day.

Complaints By Pet Owners – As a matter of responsibility to pet owners who trust our registry for referrals, we do make an effort to mediate complaints that come to us by pet owners against member pet sitters. This process begins with full disclosure regarding the complaint to the pet sitter and an opportunity for the pet sitter to respond in writing. Members should respond with full information about the complaint within 30 days. Responses will be reviewed by the PSI executive cabinet and further action taken as appropriate.

Dealings With PSI Staff

Members are expected to treat the PSI staff respectfully in all interactions. Abusive language, profanity or threats directed to staff or the organization are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

(continued)

Member Conduct

Member Code of Conduct and Ethics (continued)

Intellectual Property Rights

Members should acknowledge and respect PSI's intellectual property rights, and use the PSI name, logo and copyrighted materials only as authorized by PSI. In particular, PSI Logos may be displayed only by an active PSI member in good standing. A PSI member may not allow a separately owned or managed business to display the PSI Logo, use PSI copyrighted materials or enjoy other benefits of membership unless a separate membership is obtained. This applies regardless of whether there is any franchise relationship or other business relationship with the member.

Following membership expiration or revocation, PSI logos on Web sites and/or electronic communications must be removed within seven days. All logo use on business cards, brochures, and other promotional materials must cease within 30 days. PSI logos in Yellow Pages and other subscription ads must be removed at the next renewal following expiration of membership.

All logo use must utilize the current trademarked logo for PSI and follow the PSI Logo Usage Guidelines. Following new logo issuance, members must replace old logos on Web sites and/or electronic communications upon notification. Business cards and other promotional materials must be corrected at the next printing. Yellow Pages and other subscription ads must be corrected at the next renewal following new issue of a logo.

Members Operating Competitive Membership Organizations

PSI welcomes other pet-sitting membership organizations to the industry and recognizes the valuable services many of them provide to pet sitters. Nonetheless, it is inappropriate for those who own, operate or serve in an executive or advisory capacity in such competing member associations to maintain membership in PSI, due to the potential for conflict of interest and misuse of the proprietary information and intellectual property assets that PSI makes available to its members.

Focus On Pet Sitting

PSI recognizes that many pet-sitter businesses are rapidly growing and diversifying, and welcomes members who offer complementary services such as boarding, grooming or training. Nonetheless, PSI's mission and identity require that membership be limited to those whose primary business is pet sitting. PSI members must receive at least 51 percent of their receipts from pet sitting. Meeting this requirement also ensures that when pet owners use our locator, anyone listed will provide this service primarily. PSI reserves the right to randomly audit member businesses to determine if this requirement is being met. Web sites listed on our locator also must be primarily dedicated to providing pet-sitting services. We do not allow links that are not relevant to pet sitting on our locator.

Sanctions

Failure to comply with this Code of Conduct and Ethics, if substantiated in the opinion of PSI, will be grounds for immediate revocation of membership.

Get Plugged in to Your PSI Membership

CONTACT US

In addition to online access at www.petsit.com, PSI membership gives you direct access to real people ready to help you access your member benefits. Our staff is just a phone call or e-mail away during our regular office hours of 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (ET), Monday through Thursday. We're here for you, and helping you succeed is our highest priority!



www.petsit.com

To Reach Member Services Contact: info@petsit.com

Phone: (336) 983-9222, option 1 • **Fax:** (336) 983-5266

PSI OFFICE HOURS: Monday - Thursday 9:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. ET
201 East King Street, King, NC 27021

The PSI Offices are closed for the following holidays:

New Year's Day
President's Day
Memorial Day
Independence Day
Labor Day
Thanksgiving Day
Christmas Eve
Christmas Day