



## **The Pet Industry Association of Australia's**

### **Position Statement on**

### **Pet Minding Operations / In Home Pet Boarding / Back Yard Boarding.**

2016

Definition of Pet Minding or In-Home Pet Boarding / Back Yard Boarders – The operation of an overnight pet care business from the minder's home (not from the pet's home), that is not licensed, registered and insured as a Boarding Kennel or Pet Resort. A person or persons who may receive money for the purpose of taking care of pet(s) in the persons home or away from the pets registered residence. These businesses can also take the form of online websites who match minders with the general public for the purpose of taking care of a pet away from the pet's usual residence for a fee.

The Pet Industry Association of Australia (PIAA) does not support the operation of Pet Minding / In Home Pet Boarding / Back Yard Boarder businesses for the following reasons...

- Animal Welfare issues
- Licensing concerns
- Lack of Insurance
- Inadequate Staffing
- Lack of Formal agreements
- Environmental concerns
- Tax avoidance

#### **1: Animal Welfare**

Pet Minding / In Home Pet Boarders / Back Yard Boarders are generally unqualified members of the public who take pets in to their home as a means to supplement their income. Pet minder share websites allow any person to sign up (with minimal checks) and register themselves as a minder. No experience or qualifications needed, merely a love of pets. PIAA believes that to do this job correctly, industry qualifications, training and experience is essential to ensure the wellbeing of the pet.

Pet Minding / In Home Pet Boarding / Back Yard Boarders, in many cases being unskilled and unqualified, do not have in place or enforce the many animal welfare factors that are involved in taking care of pets such as:

- infectious disease management
- vaccination policies
- hygiene management
- human contact management
- pet interaction management

This places all the animals that come into their home at risk

## **2: Licensing**

Pet Minding / In Home Pet Boarding services / Back Yard Boarders are generally not licensed with local council. They are not inspected by local authorities, they do not meet the National Code of Practice (which takes into consideration pet exercise times, sleep and play area sizing, and other welfare elements). They do not meet EPA regulations covering waste management and noise.

In many instances these services also exceed the number of pets allowable by the local council on the property. Their homes may pose dangers that are not found in professional boarding establishments including but not limited to:

- secure fencing to ensure animals are contained and unauthorised entry prevented
- dangerous items in their homes and yards that could cause injury or poisoning
- unsanitary conditions due to reduced cleaning or inappropriate cleaning materials

## **3: Insurance**

Pet Minding / In Home Pet Boarding / Back Yard Boarders are typically not insured to the full extent that a licensed boarding facility is.

Professional Boarding establishments, as registered businesses, are required to hold public liability insurance as a minimum. This offers protection for the pet and the pet owner. This protection does not exist with many Pet Minding / In Home Pet Boarding / Back Yard Boarders.

## **4: Staffing**

Pet Minding / In Home Pet Boarding / Back Yard Boarders operations tend to be run by one person, creating a risk to pets when they are left alone. Not all Pet Minders stay at home while offering this service – many are away from the property for lengths of time. Licensed boarding kennels and pet resorts have staff on hand at all times to continue the care of the pets.

## **5: Formal agreements**

Pet Minding / In Home Pet Boarding / Back Yard Boarders operations commonly have no formal agreements and terms of stay other than a verbal agreement. This kind of practice is dangerous for both pets and the pet's owner. Formal agreements allow the client to clearly understand what is expected and agreed to by both parties. A formal agreement is crucial to the pet's welfare in the event of an emergency.

## **6: Environment**

These animals are being cared for in a foreign environment that may also house other humans who may not be as concerned for the welfare of the visiting animals. There may also be children in the

home who may not understand the pet's behavioural signs. Any negative encounter between a child and an animal will have long term negative consequences for both the child and the pet.

## **7: Tax**

Pet Minding / In Home Pet Boarding / Back Yard Boarders commonly operate off the books, accepting cash only, thus not operating as a registered business.

### **SPECIAL NOTE: This position of the PIAA does not include Pet Sitters.**

*A Pet Sitter (or In home visiting service) is a person or service provider who comes into your home and cares for your pet in your home. They may stay in the pet's homes while the owners are away or they may visit the home once or twice a day, depending on services rendered, to attend to your pets.*

Additional Definitions:

**Pet Nanny** – *This may be a Pet Sitter or a Pet Minder.*

**Pet Resort or Boarding Kennel / Cattery** – *A registered, licensed business whose sole concern and daily efforts are to create a safe, healthy, loving environment for the care of pets while their owners are unable to care for them. These businesses are strictly regulated and are commonly inspected annually by their local councils to ensure that they meet the strict Boarding Codes.*

**Doggy Day Care** – *A registered, licensed business that cares for dogs during the day times. Dog do not stay at these facilities overnight. In these environments large pack play is often part of the daily regiment and as such trained and experienced dog attendants are required to be with the dogs at all times. These businesses are strictly regulated and are inspected annually by their local councils to ensure that they meet the strict Day Care Codes.*

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