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Getting Paid To Play: Dog Sitting And The Sharing Economy

(NAPS)—A growing number of people are finding it may be to their benefit to have their career go to the dogs.

For example, consider the case of Dr. Jen Tserng, who left medicine to join the sharing economy as a dog sitter.

She cares for several dogs a day and earns more than she did as a doctor. "I love what I do now and so I do a great job, which keeps clients coming back to me," she said. "I can rely on a certain level of income that I can dial up or down however I choose."

It's not just about the money. "It's hard to not be happy when you are playing with dogs all day," she explains.

She gets her dog-owner clients through Rover.com, a nationwide network of dog lovers for hire. Rover offers the largest network of dog sitters in the United States, and an alternative to traditional caged boarding facilities, eliminating the need to impose on family and friends who are often asked to sit in a pinch. The sitters provide in-home day care, dog walking and overnight dog boarding in the owners' home or their own.

In addition to full-time dog sitters, there are part-timers, who may be students, stay-at-home parents, retirees or office professionals. Some do it because they love dogs and just want to spend time with them, while some use it as a way to earn extra money to buy a home, afford a wedding, pay off debts or set aside a travel fund. Sitters set their own schedule and can work as little or as much as they want.

"Having a dog of my own was out of the question," explains Cate Hassett, a research assistant at Boston Children's Hospital. "My landlord didn't allow pets but I missed having a dog in my life. Becoming a sitter seemed like a great way to spend time with dogs



An online service makes it possible for dog sitters to set their own schedule and work as little or as much as they choose.

while making some extra money."

Initially, Hassett tried to become a pet sitter on her own but found it was time consuming and she had trouble building her clientele. Then, she explains, she found Rover. "I was amazed at how easy and flexible it was for both the sitter and the owners. Now, my weekends are full of fun time with local dogs. I'm meeting great people along the way and Rover gives me the opportunity to explore new neighborhoods I wouldn't normally see if I didn't have the dogs to walk with me!"

To get started, sitters create a profile and set their prices for the services they offer. Then they choose the age and size of dogs they want to care for and set their scheduled availability. The company's customer service team is available to help sitters get established. The site even includes sitter training videos and business promotion tips.

In addition to connecting owners with dog sitters, the Rover platform offers free premium insurance, 24/7 vet consultation, mobile apps, photo sharing, videos of stay highlights, around-the-clock emergency support, sitter background checks and customized tags. The site also handles client billing and makes payments electronically to ensure sitters get paid quickly.

To learn more about becoming a Rover sitter or to book a stay for your dog, visit www.rover.com/sitters.



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