

New Clients to Deposit Exam Fees Before Scheduling Appointments

Effective immediately, Cat Care Clinic is collecting advance payments from **prospective new clients** before scheduling their first appointments.

The payment amount is \$89 per pet to be seen at the appointment—our standard fee for a physical wellness examination—and will be credited to the prospective new client's account and applied to the first invoice.

How It Works

- The prospective new client calls our clinic to schedule a first appointment for one or more pets.
- After gathering the basic information about the client and pet(s), our team member asks for credit or debit card information and authorization to charge the exam fee(s) to secure the appointment.
- If the prospective new client needs to **reschedule** the appointment **and lets us know during our normal office hours at least 24 hours in advance of the scheduled appointment time**, we will reschedule the appointment and the prepayment will remain as a credit in the new client's account.
- If the prospective new client decides to **cancel** the appointment **and lets us know during office hours at least 24 hours in advance of the scheduled appointment time**, we will refund the advance payment.

- If the prospective new client cancels without sufficient notice or simply fails to show up for the appointment, **the advance payment is forfeited** and there will be no refund.

Why the New Policy?

Like any veterinary practice that works by appointment, we have always had the occasional “no call-no show” client who scheduled an appointment and then failed to show up. Sometimes an emergency or an unexpected delay occurs or the client loses track of time or simply forgets. We understand. Life happens.

Unfortunately, as demand for veterinary services has increased and scheduling backlogs have built up, we have seen a sharp increase in the number of scheduled appointments that are neither cancelled nor kept—particularly among prospective new clients.

In addition to all the usual reasons for failing to keep appointments, we believe these pet owners may be calling multiple practices and scheduling multiple appointments, planning to keep only the one with the first available veterinarian at any clinic in town. Unfortunately, they sometimes neglect to cancel the appointments they don’t plan to keep, and one or more veterinary teams is left waiting to care for the new patient who never arrives.

We find this especially frustrating at a time when there are so many clients who would have been happy to have that unkept appointment for their pet, and we would

have been happy to spend that time caring for our patient sooner rather than later.

We hope by implementing this advance payment policy for prospective new clients, we will encourage them to be more mindful of the appointments they make while reducing the number of appointments that go to waste.

This policy also applies to established clients who have a history of failing to keep scheduled appointments.