

# Seminole Sitters, LLC

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<http://www.SeminoleSitters.com>

## Family-Client Handbook and Policies

Seminole Sitters is a locally-owned childcare agency for families in Tallahassee and the surrounding areas. All of our Sitters are 18+ years old, CPR and First Aid certified, and have had years of childcare experiencing prior to joining Seminole Sitters. They have passed thorough and extensive background checks. Nearly all are majoring in or hold their degree in child-related fields.

Seminole Sitters reserves the right to remove clients from our service if, in our sole discretion, removal is in the best interest of the Sitter or Seminole Sitters.

### **Babysitters' Responsibilities:**

- Your instructions will be followed as long as they don't conflict with company policy or the law. If a Sitter is uncomfortable with a legal request, she will speak openly with you and try to find a compromise.
- It is the Sitter's responsibility to notify Seminole Sitters if she accepts a playdate directly from the family, though it is a strongly discouraged practice and preferable that parents scheduled playdates directly through Seminole Sitters. If the Sitter fails to report any confirmed playdates, she will face disciplinary measures, which may include suspension and/or termination. As a responsible client, please do not jeopardize the Sitter's position or compromise her integrity by requesting he/she work for you "under-the-table." If a Sitter informs Seminole Sitters that he or she has been asked by a client to work directly for them, the client will no longer receive services from Seminole Sitters.
- If the Sitter becomes ill or if an emergency arises, he or she will contact Seminole Sitters immediately. If you wish and one is available, a substitute Sitter can serve as a replacement. Under no circumstances will a playdate be passed on to a substitute Sitter without your consent. Unfortunately, we do not guarantee back-up, but working with an agency offers much better chances of having a last-minute substitute Sitter.
- No child will be hit, spanked, belittled, or otherwise intimidated. No corporal punishment will be used. Children will be treated with courtesy, respect, and patience. Discipline will be administered according to age and understanding level. Infants, toddlers, and very young children will be redirected to another activity. Older children will be given timeouts depending on the severity of the offense (almost always one minute per year of age, never to exceed 10 minutes) and the child will not be left unattended. If a child's behavior becomes a persistent problem, the Sitter will make Seminole Sitters aware of the situation and address it with the parents in an effort to resolve it together. At no time will a child be subjected to physical punishment or shaming, frightening, or humiliating methods, or any type of verbal abuse, threats, derogatory remarks, or deprivation of a meal or any part of a meal. No child will ever be punished for bathroom/toilet accidents.
- Sitters will bring their own meals, and will not eat food from your home. They will only eat when the children are eating or sleeping.
- Sitters will not bring guests with them to playdates, including other children, under any circumstances. They will also not perpetuate the negative stereotype of a babysitter who spends time on the phone, Internet, or watches television while the children are awake. The Sitter is only authorized to pick up phone calls from Seminole Sitters, the parents, or a caller the parents have asked the Sitters to intercept.

### **Family-Clients' Policies:**

- An interview with a representative of Seminole Sitters will be scheduled before a Sitter may care for your children. Though all Sitters have passed thorough background checks, you as the parent have every right to

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see the results of those checks and tests, run your own background checks, and request references. If you would prefer to use a Sitter other than the one you were matched with, you may request a different Sitter with no questions asked. If you are satisfied with your Sitter, the same Sitter will be sent to you as often as possible, to ensure you always have someone who knows your child's routine and with whom your child is comfortable and feels safe. Families must be aware that this is a goal, not a guarantee, and sometimes your primary Sitter may be unavailable, and an alternative offered.

- It is your responsibility to notify Seminole Sitters via E-mail of days and times in which you'd like to schedule a playdate with at least two weeks' notice. We do not charge extra for last-minute emergency playdates because "life happens," though for the sake of our Sitters' personal lives and to ensure the continued efficiency of scheduling for all the families we serve, we only arrange last-minute babysitting in the case of real emergencies. Again, please reserve last-minute requests for actual emergencies, and not as a solution for poor planning.
- Our base rate is \$12/hour for one child and \$2/hour for each additional child; one Sitter will care for a maximum of six children. We have a three-hour minimum on each playdate, which means a three-hour minimum payment is required regardless of the number of hours worked by the Sitter. At the end of each playdate, you and your Sitter will fill out an Hours Log together, agreeing upon the hours worked and how many children were present. (If only some of your children were cared for, you do not have to pay as if all were present.) Families who wish to tip their Sitter may do so at the end of the evening, or by adding an additional amount to their payment.
- You will be billed by an E-mailed invoice, and your payment must be postmarked within 15 days of the date on the invoice. There is a \$25 late fee for payment sent after the "postmark by" date on the invoice. For every 30 days that the payment is overdue, a \$5 late fee will be added to the invoice. There is a \$40 charge for bounced checks, in addition to the standard late fee. A second bounced check will require you to prepay only.
- On certain days, the rate increases by 50%. This enables Seminole Sitters to pay our Sitters time-and-a-half on days that are often in high demand or would otherwise mean low Sitter availability. These days are: New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Valentine's Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day as well as the Wednesday preceding it and Friday following it, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and all Florida State home football games. The rate increase applies to the entire 24-hour day on these days.
- Family-clients living within Tallahassee limits will be charged an additional \$3 per playdate, which will go directly to your Sitter to assist with the cost of gas. Family-clients living in Woodville, Crawfordville, Havana, Quincy, Monticello, Midway, and any other towns outside of Tallahassee proper will be charged an additional \$8 per playdate, which goes directly to your Sitter to assist with the cost of gas.
- Seminole Sitters will care for your children if they are ill, though circumstances may prevent your usual Sitter from caring for them. (i.e. If your child has chicken pox and the Sitter has never had it.) Your Sitters practice regular hand-washing habits to reduce the spread of germs and illness, and will encourage your children to do the same. Your rates will not increase for sick care – kids get sick, and we understand that – but we do ask that you let your Sitter know, so he or she may be sensitive to your child's needs.
- All playdate cancellations must be reported by the family-client to Seminole Sitters with as much notice as possible. If you like, you may also contact your Sitter if you have his or her contact information. If you are unable to contact the service within 36 hours, you must reimburse the Sitter for a minimum of two hours at the rate specified for all of your children. (i.e. \$14/hour for two children). You will be sent an invoice for this amount in the same fashion you would have been billed if the hours had been worked.
- The primary responsibility of our Sitters is childcare, and no housework may be required of them beyond cleaning up after themselves and the children. Our insurance policy does not cover this task, and Sitters are required by company policy to devote their full attention to the children. However, they are instructed to

leave your home as clean as they found it, and many will creatively involve the children in games that make clean-up time fun.

- It is your responsibility to inform your Sitter if you have pets, as some may be allergic to or uncomfortable with some pets.
- Please do not allow your children to invite guests or friends to your home while your Sitter is caring for them. These children's parents have usually not met with us, read our policies, or signed our waivers, and thus our insurance policy does not allow us to care for them.
- If a parent or any other person is prohibited by a restraining order or custody arrangement from picking up or having contact with a child under our care, a copy of these legal documents must be on file with Seminole Sitters.

**Indemnity Agreement:**

I hereby agree to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless Seminole Sitters, LLC, and its subsidiaries and affiliates, and their respective officers, directors, agents, employees, subcontractors, successors, and assigns from and against any and all actions, cost, suits, demands, claims, damages, losses, and liabilities (including reasonable attorney's fees) of any type or kind whatsoever arising out of or caused by my child or children being under the supervision of a Seminole Sitters childcare provider.

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**Safety of Children and Sitters:**

I will always leave my phone numbers, home address, and a local emergency contact for the Sitter to contact me if any questions or emergencies arise. If I am in a location where my phone must be silenced, I will also leave the name and number of the venue, as well as any applicable seating information, so I may be paged through the venue.

Just as the Sitters have had their histories thoroughly investigated, I understand that a criminal background check may be run on me to ensure the safety of the Sitter, who will be alone in my private home.

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**I have read all of the above, and understand and agree to what is written.**

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**Signature of Parent / Guardian**

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**Date**

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**Signature of Parent / Guardian**

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**Date**