

<http://www.goldcountryloveonaleash.org>

THERAPY DOG CONTROL EVALUATION

GENERAL:

All parts of the evaluation are to be performed with the dog on a 4-foot leash. If the dog shows aggression towards any person or dog, the evaluation will be stopped and the dog disqualified from testing. The handler may talk to the dog and encourage him, but no treats may be used during the evaluation. All dogs should be able to perform items in the evaluation one of the following: Slip lead, choke chain, limited slip, check collar, martingale, regular harness, flat buckle collar. No Gentle Leader, Halti, No-Pull or EZ walk harnesses, collar with shock setting, or prong/pinch collar.

TEST ITEMS/DESCRIPTION:

1. Your dog must be able to execute on command a sit, down, and heel with people close by, come when called on a leash, and do a 2-minute down-stay or sit-stay with owner holding the leash.

The dog must sit and lie down at handlers command. The handler may repeat the command, but no more than two times. It must be obvious that the dog is responding to the handler's command. A hand signal can be used and is encouraged. No shaping is allowed (forcing dog into position by pushing the dog or pulling down on the leash). The dog must stay in position of sit and down for at least three seconds before being released.

The dog should heel by owner's side while walking through a crowd. The dog should be under complete control without pulling excessively on the leash. If the dog is pulling the handler or paying too much attention to other people, the dog should not pass. The criteria however is not be one of competitive obedience.

When called to come, the dog should go directly to handler and not run past. The handler should coax dog to come with voice without using the leash to bring him in.

The 2-minute stay can be done in sit or down and is the handler's choice. The dog should stay in that position for the entire two minutes. The handler can encourage dog with voice. The handler may stay close, but not hold the dog in position. The dog should not switch positions during stay. Dog may move a bit in position (not "frozen"), but cannot crawl, switch positions, or leave his spot. If dog gets up and moves away, the evaluator will start time again, but no more than two total times.

2. You are able to greet a friendly stranger who has a dog. You are able to maintain control of your dog without your dog becoming aggressive or over stimulated.

The handler and dog should approach another dog and handler from about 20 feet distance, stop, shake hands and exchange brief pleasantries, and move on. The dog being tested can show casual interest, but must stay by handler's side. Handler may talk to dog in encouragement.

3. Your dog allows petting including having its head, ears, feet, and tail being touched.

Your dog may sit, lie down, or stand. The owner should hold the dog. The evaluator will approach, kneel to front or side and touch your dog's ears, head, run hands down side, touch and light squeeze paws and tail. Your dog should not show signs of fear, aggression, or shyness. He may move toward evaluator, but no lunging or jumping. He may roll onto his back, but not wiggle too much. He must be in control of handler at all times. He may stand or lie down for attention. The dog should not struggle to the point of

needing restraint when the tester checks the dog. The handler may talk to the dog while being handled by evaluator.

4. Your dog is clean and well groomed.

Your dog should be prepared for this evaluation as he would an actual visit. He should be clean and trimmed if necessary. His nails should be trimmed and filed so they would not easily scratch. He should be in good health and his teeth and ears clean and free of infection. He should be obviously well cared for and smelling good.

5. Your dog is under control with people around.

Your dog should be able to maintain composure when around other dogs and people. He should be attentive to his handler and not wanting to charge or jump. He should show interest in others, but not insist on attention.

6. Your dog is able to maintain composure when a stranger approaches in an erratic manner.

A person who is not known to the dog should approach the dog in an erratic manner. He may be wearing odd clothes. He may be on crutches and falling over as an example. The handler may reassure his dog, but the dog must not lunge, cower, or attack. He may give a short bark but recover quickly.

7. The evaluator will ponder the question, "Would I like this therapy team to visit me or a relative of mine?".

The evaluator will answer this question based on individual teams.

8. Your dog has no mouthing, biting, dodging, or aggression apparent.

Your dog should not touch his teeth to skin or clothing, even in a playful or accidental manner. No growling or snarling is allowed. Excessive shyness should not be apparent. Dodging is an evaluator's judgment call. Evasiveness and intensity will be noted by evaluator. Dogs demonstrating excessive shyness will not pass.

9. Your dog is not sound sensitive.

Your dog will be tested for sound sensitivity with items and will be done no closer than five feet from your dog. Your dog may react or startle a bit, but may not attack the object, bark, or cower away. He should recover within a few seconds.

10. Your dog shows no signs of fear or shyness.

Your dog should welcome attention and seem to enjoy it. If he tries to evade touch or shows signs of stress such as panting or lip licking, he is probably not suitable at this time to be a therapy dog. This should be an enjoyable experience for the dog as well as the people he is visiting.

11. Does your dog or you appear to have any training difficulties or behavior problems that might interfere with the team's ability to work as a therapy team?

This is where an evaluator will note where your team needs more work. These may be areas that disqualify your dog from therapy work or could be something the evaluator feels should be better. This is where the evaluator will offer suggestions to help the team better prepare for therapy dog work and passing the control evaluation in the future.