



Temperament Assessment

The purpose of the 30-minute temperament assessment is to establish both that the dog is not a safety risk and both dog and handler are suitable for - their respective designations.

The Assessment is to confirm:

- Level of Aggression
- Protectiveness
- Stability
- Confidence
- Friendliness

A Good Therapy Dog should be:

- Of Calm Temperament.
- Very well trained.
- Very friendly.
- Great with people of all ages and not aggressive to people or other dogs.

Guidelines:

1. Testing is performed Indoors
2. A volunteer Tester or a video of the Assessor performing the assessment, is required for review and confirmations.
3. Have another dog available for the dog to dog intro and dog to dog food parts of the assessment. The decoy dog must be suitable for the assessment with a good temperament. Including calm, gentle, kind and loves people and other dogs. It is a pre-screening. Assessor is the Tester if a video is being used.
4. Have a bowl of water available.
5. Owner will bring their dog's favorite toy, favorite high valued treats, food and food bowl.
6. If any of the red text areas on the Assessment below are marked off during the assessment, the dog will be marked as not-suitable for our program.
7. The utmost care must be taken to ensure your safety at all times. If at any time the assessment shows signs of danger, the assessment must stop immediately, the dog must be removed from the situation by the handler and - the dog will be marked as not suitable as a therapy dog in our program.
8. Reaction stops everything. 1 fail in the red and you don't continue with the rest of the assessment.
9. One of the greatest challenges will be assessing and working with people and/or dogs that just don't qualify or align with our program.
10. Assessing the handler is also very important for suitability. Please observe the behavior of the handler. If you feel that something is amiss or you are not comfortable with the handler, please let us know. Your feedback is always taken into full consideration and we appreciate your complete honesty on suitability of handler and dog. Everything is always kept confidential.
11. Visiting and Assisted therapy dogs need to be the kind of dogs who adore people, all people, and want nothing more than to connect with them. Personal therapy dogs are for one's self and for this reason, it is not necessary for the dog to want to connect with everyone, as long as Personal is the only designation the handler is requesting.

The Assessment Summary:

1. Approach
2. Possession
3. Touch and Handling
4. Food
5. Responsiveness to Redirection
6. Pressure Stimuli
7. Dog to Dog Introduction
8. Dog to Dog Food Issues
9. Overall Behavior

Designation Request:

Assisted _____ Personal _____ Visiting _____

Approach:

On Leash

Approach, wait, observe. - Stop, turn sideways and crouch when dog makes eye contact, but no closer than 6 feet. Talk to the dog in a calm voice while keeping your face turned sideways. Observe dog's behavior.

- Approaches with calming signals and soft wagging tail ____
- Pushes into hand for petting, contact-seeking ____
- Relaxed, playful ____
- Excitable response to presence Jumps or attempts to jump on the person approaching
- Withdrawal without signs of fear or aggression;
- Freeze (tense, still) ____
- Withdraws with growling
- Growls or barks, and/or pulls towards Tester: may be accompanied by baring teeth hackles, stiff posture, hard eyes locked on ____

Possession:

On Leash

Use a toy or ball with a rope attached to one end. Once the dog is engaged, attempt to remove the toy by use of the rope. Offer the dog a treat in exchange for the toy.

- Gives up easily, may display overall playful attitude ____
- Slight resistance to toy removal, but gives up the toy ____
- Plays keep away but will trade for treats ____
- Possessive over toy: strong resistance/no aggression ____
- Playful growling/engaging ____
- Dog takes toy and hides or runs away, displaying avoidance/stress signals ____
- Growls, freezes, snaps when approaching. The Tester must withdraw before "follow-through" occurs ____

Touch and Handling:

On Leash

Gently touch head and body. Touch backside and underneath dog – front and back. Apply slight pressure to shoulders, back and hips. Stroke tail and hold for a brief moment. Rub ears and cover one eye. Approach dog from the side.

- Softens with petting, engages Tester. Licks, nuzzles, seeks attention, rolls onto back ____
- Moves away in a relaxed manner__
- Accepts in a relaxed manner, but does not seek additional contact ____
- Puts mouth on hand ____
- Skittish, avoidant touches, including on hind quarters and/or tail ____
- Actively avoiding, freezes or flinches when approached or touched ____
- Growls, freezes, snaps. (The Tester must withdraw before "follow-through" occurs) ____

Food:

Off Leash

Offer a dog a treat, allow dog to take it. Offer another treat, as he begins to eat, gently remove/pull back treat. Drop a treat on ground. When dog sees it, cover it with your foot. When dog is eating treat, begin some mild general handling. Repeat with the food bowl.

- No reaction, or invites petting or play from the Tester ____
- Makes soft eye contact ____
- Dog digs at the treat, gets pushy for treat, follows treat with focus, but no jumping up or pulling it out of Tester's hand ____
- Growls, freezes or snaps. (The Tester must withdraw before "follow-through" occurs) ____

Responsiveness to Redirection:

On Leash

Walk dog near other people and distractions. Let him/her sniff or become interested in something for five seconds and then gently apply slight tension on the leash and a verbal redirection "Puppy-puppy, this way!" in a high-pitched (inviting) voice.

*This is not a correction for doing anything wrong. We are only looking for a reaction to the pressure on the leash.

- Easily directs to handler. Is compliant ____
- Slow to follow. Needs second or multiple encouragements to follow ____
- Ignores Tester's redirection, and continues engaging in the distraction ____
- Drops in fear, defensive posture ____
- Becomes unresponsive ____
- Fights against correction and becomes stubborn to comply ____
- Redirects aggressively towards Tester and attempts to or does bite ____

Pressure Stimuli:

On Leash

Push down on the dog's shoulders using hands and/or forearm. Maintain pressure for two seconds.

- Melts under slight pressure/submissive ____
- Remains neutral
- Stiffens uncomfortably or defensively ____
- Tense and turns towards Tester ____
- Growls/snaps at Tester ____ [The Tester must withdraw before "follow-through" occurs]

Dog to Dog Introduction:

On Leash and with a safe barrier for this test through a fence.

Perform this test through fence. Walk dogs parallel with each other in the same direction for a distance of 50 feet while maintaining a distance between the dogs of 20 feet, (giving praise/reward for good behavior), then funnel together and allow the dogs to go and greet each other. Keep leashes loose. Allow sniffing for 3-4 seconds, then redirect as in "Redirection" section above and reintroduce. Discontinue the test immediately if the assessed dog displays behaviors marked in red below.

- Interested. Social toward other dog. Soft body ____
- Approaches neutral or playfully (play bow) ____
- Uninterested in an aloof way. Remains indifferent, doesn't engage with other dog ____
- Approaches stiffly but participates in sniffing exchange and comes away when redirected ____
- Places head or paw on shoulders of other dog ____
- Barks, growls or snaps at decoy dog at any time during this test ____

Dog to Dog Food Issues:

On Leash

Introduce the decoy dog into the immediate (through a fence) vicinity of assessed dog. Bring dogs close together and drop treats for the assessed dog and then some for the decoy dog.

- Ignores treats while other dog eats ____
- Does not react when the decoy dog is eating ____
- Calmly takes treats from the ground. ____
- Lunges or pushes towards the decoy dog for his/her treats ____
- Barks or growls at the decoy dog ____

Overall Behavior:

General overall observations. This is a general picture of your experience with the dog during your entire interaction with him/her.

- Relaxed, friendly, easy to handle, calm and playful ____
- No signs of stress ____
- Not seeking attention, neutral, cautious, slow to engage, calm ____
- Signs of stress, anxiety, spinning, pacing ____
- Jumps on Assessor. Mouthy ____
- Checked out, shaking, hiding, avoids interaction, fearful ____
- Aggressively interacts, aggresses towards assessor, pursues assessor aggressively (The Tester must withdraw before "follow-through" occurs) ____

Assessor Notes:

Date: _____

Assessor: _____

Handler: _____

Dog: _____

Certification Number: _____

First Assessment _____ Second Assessment _____ Annual Re-Assessment _____ Suitable _____ Not Suitable _____