



## Temperament Assessment

Registrants must print this out and bring to the assessment. Please write your name, your dog's name and date in the correct area at the bottom of this form. All registrants must also bring a collar, leash, food bowl, water bowl and treats.

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.

Dogs need to have a relaxed disposition at all times! They should not be pawing, leaping, licking and body slamming.

**What to bring with you:** The dog must be on a fixed-length (no more than six feet) leather, nylon, or fabric leash. Retractable leashes are not allowed. The dog will wear a leather, nylon, or fabric collar with a metal buckle or plastic quick-snap closure or harness. Halters, slip collars, metal collars, choke chains and special training collars (e.g. "pinch", "spike", prong, electric, or spray collars) are not allowed during the evaluation.

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.
12. **For smaller dogs:** Can be picked up by the evaluator and will cuddle into them. A dog that jumps off the lap is too independent for the job of visiting or assisted. The dog can be placed there by the handler. This could be either in the temperament assessment or the final evaluation.

**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]**

**Noise:**

Drop Metal Bowl and shake a container with rocks.

Dogs that exhibit the following will be rated as "Not Ready"

- **The dog shows panic, tries to run away or shows aggressiveness**
- **The dog does not respond to the handler's commands**
- **The dog shows fear**
- **The dog continues to bark**

### 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