

Service Dog Public Access Test

Public Access Testing is intended to demonstrate that the service animal is able to effectively complete service tasks in a distraction filled public setting thus meeting the requirements of a service animal promulgated under the Americans with Disabilities Act. As an agency, Pawsibilities Unleashed believes the following test is a demonstration of basic obedience skills, general socialization and good manners, and the ability to perform task work which mitigates an individual's disability. According to the Americans with Disabilities Act and other state service dog laws, the handler during this test must be the individual with the documented disability in all states except Virginia. Some items have been adapted from other available public access tests including those from Psychiatric Service Dog Society (PSDS) and Assistance Dog International (ADI) as well as the Canine Good Citizen (CGC) test available through the American Kennel Club (AKC).

Dogs must be tested in either a flat buckle collar or a body harness (no prong collars, slip/choke collars, martingale collars, head collars, etc...). Commands may be hand signals, verbal cues, or a combination of the two. Treats may not be used during testing but verbal praise is acceptable.

Prior to taking the Public Access Test the following will need to be provided to the tester: prescription or a detailed letter from your physician which documents the disability and tasks which the dog is used to mitigate, vaccination records for Distemper, Parvovirus, Bordatella, and Rabies, proof of spay/neuter. It is also recommended that Service dogs are tested for and placed on Heartworm Preventative, are regularly treated for intestinal parasites, and receive year-round flea and tick prevention but documentation of these is not required for testing.

The following behaviors will immediately disqualify the dog: demonstration of aggression towards the handler, tester, a member of the public, or another animal which can include, growling, lunging, showing teeth, and biting; inappropriate elimination; boisterous behavior including jumping, clawing, and barking; and extreme shyness/lack of confidence.

Scoring: 0-Never, 1-Sometimes (less than half the time), 2-Mostly (more than half the time), 3-Consistently (all the time)
In order to pass the dog must score at least 80%, which can be calculated as follows # of points earned/total # of possible points. Complete failure of any section(s) mean that the dog must be retested regardless of their scoring percentage..

Date of Testing _____ Place(s) of Test _____

Handler's Name _____

Tester's Name _____

Dog's Name _____ Dog's Predominate Breed _____

Sex of Dog _____ Age of Dog _____

Color/Markings _____

Travel/Arrival-The dog will be tested exiting the handler's vehicle, and should not unload without a distinct command from the handler. Once outside the vehicle the dog must remain within 4 feet of the vehicle and safely out of the way. As soon as the dog has exited the vehicle a second dog team will walk by within 6 feet of the testing team, and the dog being tested must remain focused on the handler and may not approach the second team.

___ The dog did not exit vehicle until given the proper command

___ The dog was under control and remained within four feet of the vehicle immediately thereafter

___ The dog did not interfere with, or become distracted by, the second passing dog team

Approach to a Building- The dog should accompany his or her handler on a loose leash or in position with mobility handle without stopping to sniff objects, greet people, or eliminate unless specifically cued by handler, and should negotiate traffic and obstacles safely.

___ Dog was calm around moving cars

___ Dog remained in heel or side position on a loose leash

___ When the handler stopped the dog stopped immediately (automatic sit is preferred)

___ Dog did not attempt to sniff object, meet people, or eliminate unless specifically cued to do so by handler.

Entering a Building- If possible the dog should enter the building through both a manually opened door and an automatic door on a loose leash. The dog should not rush ahead of the handler through or startle at an automatic door. If the handler has a mobility impairment and plans to demonstrate the use of an accessible entrance this should occur at this point as well.

___ Dog entered the building in a controlled manner using a manual door

___ Dog entered the building in a controlled manner using an automatic door

___ Dog entered the building in a controlled manner using an accessible entrance including opening the dog using button

Moving through a Store with Distractions- The team should enter a busy store with the dog on a loose leash in the heel or side position and should negotiate corners synchronously, stop when the handler stops (with automatic sit if possible), and should not brush against merchandise or topple items. The dog should not startle or appear frightened by shopping carts, baby strollers, small children, etc... and should not attempt to greet other patrons.

___ Dog remained in heel/side position

___ Dog negotiated all obstacles effectively

___ Dog was focused on handler

___ Dog was not bothered by distractions

Grocery Store- The team should enter a grocery store in which the dog accompanies handler by shopping cart, wheelchair, or motorized scooter and keeps pace on a loose lead. The dog should not sniff food products or people while in store, and must negotiate either the meat or deli section. The dog should be placed on a sit/stay or down/stay in an area where patrons and shopping carts will be passing by and must focus on handler until he or she returns and gives the release command.

___ Dog was calm and kept pace beside the cart, wheelchair, or scooter

___ Dog ignored people and food products

___ Dog remained calm on sit/stay or down/stay, focused on handler, and did not break command while carts and shopping patrons passed by

Restaurant- The team should enter a restaurant and secure a table. As the dog negotiates the restaurant he/she should not attempt to eat any food or crumbs from floors, tables, or trays. The dog should be placed under the table in a down position with his/her tail tucked under, which it must hold for the duration of the meal. If the setting is not conducive to the dog remaining under the table it may hold a down next-to or under the handler's chair. During the test the dog will be challenged by a piece of dropped food which he/she must ignore, and may not break position. Getting up from beneath the table or any begging, sniffing, or eating from the floor is cause for an immediate failure of this portion of the test. When the dog exits the restaurant he or she must not shake off until exiting the facility, and is also cause for an immediate failure.

___ Dog negotiates the restaurant ignoring food and crumbs

___ Dog remains successfully in position and out of the way with tucked tail

___ Dog does not get up, sniff, beg, or otherwise create a disturbance

___ Dog successfully ignores the dropped food item

___ Dog does not shake off until safely outside of the facility

Bathrooms- The team should enter a public restroom. If possible, the dog should enter the stall with the handler without attempting to escape, peeking under other stalls, or otherwise causing a disturbance. Upon exit, the dog should move out synchronously and wait as directed by the handler while he/she washes hands. If necessary the dog may be placed on a sit/stay or down/stay instead of entering stall where it must remain until the handler approaches and gives the appropriate release command.

___ Dog entered the bathroom without fear

___ Dog remained in position while using bathroom and while washing hands

___ Dog did not peek into adjacent stalls or cause a disturbance

Elevators- Dog and handler team should enter an elevator and ride both up and down before exiting in a controlled fashion. The dog should not startle, cower, or otherwise appear fearful, and should attend in a confident manner to his/her handler. If the dog operates elevator buttons the task should be demonstrated at this time.

___ Dog entered, rode, and exited the elevator in an appropriate manner

___ If operation of elevator buttons is demonstrated, the dog successfully carries out the task

Stairs- If it is physically possible the team should negotiate ascending and descending stairs. The dog should negotiate these obstacles at the handler's side in a controlled manner which does not present an additional hazard.

___ The dog negotiates the stairs in a controlled manner

Off Lead Recall with Distractions- The dog should be allowed to move at least 50 feet from the handler in the presence of a high value distraction (people moving, children playing, other animals, food, etc...) and should be recalled by the handler. The dog must return to the handler in a rapid, deliberate, and focused manner. Ambling along, sniffing, failing to return directly to handler or choosing to attend to the distraction is a cause for an immediate failure of this portion of the test.

___ Dog came immediately to the handler without hesitation or distraction.

Surfaces- The dog should encounter a variety of surfaces during the course of the test which can include: carpet, tile, asphalt, gravel, cobblestones, metal grating, wood, open holes, glass, rubber flooring, and linoleum. Then dog must not hesitate to cross any of the presented surfaces.

___ Dog walked confidently on a variety of surfaces

High Distraction Behaviors-

Handler puts dog in a down in a busy public place while an assistant steps over the dog. The dog should not react other than to notice the individual's behavior, and must not startle, vocalize, or break the command.

___ Dog did not startle, vocalize, or break command

Handler puts the dog in a down or sit in a busy public place. The handler will recruit a small child to come and pet the dog. The dog should not startle, vocalize, or break the command, nor should it appear threatened by the contact with the child. In addition, it should not engage with the child but must tolerate petting and remain impassive and focused on handler.

___ Dog did not break command

___ Dog tolerated contact from the child

___ Dog remained focused on the handler

Handler puts the dog on a down/stay or sit/stay in a busy public place and leaves the dog with the tester for a period of three minutes during which he/she goes entirely out of sight. The dog must remain calm with an alternate handler and may not break command.

___ Dog remained calm while handler was out of sight for the entire three minute period

___ Dog did not break command with alternate handler

Handler and dog team meet a stranger and shake hands. Dog should sit politely at the handler's side and should not attempt to engage the stranger.

___ Dog remained seated at handler's side politely

___ Dog did not try to engage the stranger

Dog should be startled by at least two unexpected noises, obstacles, or experiences. The dog may initially display a brief startle, but must then react by approaching the object immediately after without undue coaxing.

___ Dog displays an appropriate response to the startle by approaching it immediately

Dog should meet another dog/handler team in a public setting and approach it both from the front and from behind passing within four feet. The test team should remain focused on the handler and must not display any aggression, interest, or attempted interaction with the second team.

___ Dog approaches and passes within second team from the front and back

___ Dog does not display any aggression, interest, or attempt to interact with the second team

___ Dog remains focused on handler

Task Work- Prior to beginning the test the handler and team will report which three tasks they will demonstrate. In situations where an alert is a part of the task the behavior must be distinct and clear, and cannot be confused with a typical behavior that may be exhibited by an animal that has not been specially trained for service work. Tasks should be specifically geared toward mitigating an individual's disability and may include things such as:

Diabetes Alert- clear alert to fluctuations in glucose levels and distinct signals for high and low levels, prompting the individual to test blood sugar level...

Seizure Alert- clear alert to an impending seizure, prompting the individual to seek a safe setting, getting help if needed, bringing medication...

Seizure Response- remaining with the individual while the seizure occurs, getting help, preventing injury during seizure, stimulating alertness, bringing medication, food, drink, etc...

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder /Emotional or Psychiatric Response- blocking, obvious redirection/refocus behaviors, alerting to stress levels and intervening, bringing and encouraging handler to take medicine, stimulating wakefulness, bringing phone, water, and getting help among others.

Hearing Alert- demonstrating a clear alert to at least three sounds

Visual Impairment- tasks that facilitate independence which can include helping an individual negotiate traffic flow, maneuvering around hazards, and crossing streets among others.

Autism- blocking, alerting to various moods/emotional states, tethering, tracking, getting help if needed, calming, and preventing unintentional/unwanted behaviors

Alzheimer's/Dementia- tracking, finding help, directing the individual to safety

Mobility- assisting with balance, rising, sitting, gathering and returning dropped items, opening and closing doors, bringing medications and other needed items, turning on lights, opening drawers, helping to undress, etc...

Other examples of task work are acceptable and may include medical alert or emotional support tasks that correspond to the disability(ies) outlined in the physician's documentation.

___ Dog successfully completes first demonstrated task.

Notes:

___ Dog successfully completes second demonstrated task

Notes:

___ Dog successfully completes third demonstrated task

Notes:

Team Relationship-

___ Handler positively reinforced the dog when commands were followed correctly.

___ Dog was confident, relaxed, friendly, attentive, and obedient.

___ Dog was under the handler's control at all times.

(Optional) Escalator Testing- The team can ascend and descend on an escalator if physically possible. In this situation it is acceptable for the dog to exit the escalator more quickly or slowly than the handler as long as the animal remains under the handler's control at all times.

___ Dog successfully negotiates the escalator

(Optional) Mass Transit- The team should practice boarding, riding, and exiting public transportation of varying types (subway, bus, taxi, airplane, trolley, transit vehicle, etc...). The dog should remain calm throughout the trip and disinterested in other passengers. The handler must put the dog on a sit or down on the floor of the transit vehicle where it must remain unless it is performing a disability related service or the team is specifically directed otherwise by the transit operator.

___ Dog boarded and exited public transportation safely and calmly

___ Dog remained in position without disturbing others