



Nashville Therapy Pets Canine Training Test

Teams being administered the NTP Canine Training Test must pass each qualification task or command in order to receive a final passing score. Teams must pass each task according to the evaluator's best judgement. Partial passes are not allowed.

The NTP Training Test must be administered by a registered AKC CGC evaluator. AKC CGC evaluators have passed AKC guidelines for trainers and/or being able to evaluate animal behavior.

If the handler and dog complete a therapy training class in preparation for their application process (which is not required), the evaluator that teaches that class cannot be the certified evaluator that administers the NTP Training Test, in order to avoid team bias.

Dogs that jump, bark or whine excessively will not pass the NTP Canine Training Test, even if the noise is happy vocalizations. Please bear in mind that some dog breeds tend to be more vocal than others. However excessive and/or loud whining or barking is not acceptable behavior for therapy pets working on visits as it may scare or startle those we serve.

Treats may not be administered during the NTP Canine Training Test tasks. Treats can be administered upon completion of the NTP Canine Training Test, but not at any point during testing.



Nashville Therapy Pets Canine Training Test

Initial Greeting

Pass

Fail

Initial Meeting with another human (evaluator) while the dog is waiting calmly the handler's side. The evaluator greets and shakes hands with the handler. The evaluator loudly states the dog's name and walks around the team while the handler remains standing, and the dog is waiting calmly at the handler's side. Evaluators will take note of the dog's appearance in this task. All NTP dogs are required to be clean, well groomed, and odor-free during visits. The team gets 2 attempts at this task for happy or excited dogs. If the dog shows aggression towards the evaluator, even on the first attempt, the team automatically fails the entire Canine Training Test and must do additional behavioral training prior to testing again.

Allowing Pets

Pass

Fail

The handler stands while the dog is waiting calmly at the handler's side as the evaluator approaches the team. The evaluator asks the handler, "May I pet your dog?" The evaluator may bend over or kneel in front of the dog to pet it. The evaluator should pet the entire body of the dog including head, ears, feet, and tail. The dog should have a positive response to being pet and enjoy the encounter. Dogs should allow petting without mouthing or nipping at the evaluator. Dogs should not start excessively licking the evaluator (1-2 licks are okay). Dogs that flinch, dodge, growl, cower, or show aggression will immediately fail this task. The team gets 2 attempts at this task.

Following Commands

Pass

Fail

The team must pass all five commands in order to pass this step of the test.

Walk – The handler should be able to walk their dog without it pulling at the leash or attempting to drag the handler in a different direction. Leashes should be loose, and the dog should be responsive to the handler's commands. The team has 2 attempts at this command.

Sit – The handler gives the command for the dog to sit (verbally or by hand signal). The handler may give the command multiple times but may not physically touch the dog to make them obey the command. The team has 2 attempts at this command.



Down – The handler gives the command for the dog to lie down (verbally or by hand signal). The handler may give the command multiple times but may not physically touch the dog to make them obey the command. The dog should remain in a down position for 2 minutes with the handler keeping a loose leash. The team has 2 attempts at this command.

Stay – Using a long lead/leash, the handler attaches the lead and gives the command for the dog to stay in either a sit or down position. The handler walks to the end of the lead, approximately 20 feet away from the dog, pauses 10 seconds, and then returns to the dog at a normal walking pace. The dog must stay in place until the handler returns to the dog. The dog is allowed to rise from down into a sit position or from a sit position to a down position but must not change locations. The handler may give the command multiple times but may not physically touch the dog to make them obey the command after they walk away. The team has 3 attempts at this command.

Come - Using a long lead/leash, the handler attaches the lead and gives the command for the dog to stay or wait from either a sit or down position. The handler walks to the end of the lead, approximately 20 feet away from the dog, pauses 10 seconds, and then calls for the dog to come to the handler. The dog must stay in place until the handler calls for it. The dog must go directly to the handler. The handler may give the command multiple times but may not physically touch the dog to make them obey the command after they walk away while the dog is in the stay command. The team has 3 attempts at this command.

Dog to Dog Interaction

Pass

Fail

Two handlers and their dogs approach each other from approximately 20 feet away. They talk with one another as they approach and stop to let their dogs greet one another for approximately 10 seconds. They then turn and walk together towards the other end of the room. If the dog being tested is too interested in their new friend and is ignoring their handler's commands to leave the other dog alone, they will fail this task. The dog being tested may show interest in the other dog but must remain under the handler's control for the duration of the task. Teams get 2 attempts at this task.

Other Therapy Teams

Pass

Fail

Two handlers and their dogs approach each other from approximately 20 feet away. They talk with one another as they approach and stop to let their dogs greet one another for approximately 10 seconds. The handlers then place both dogs into a sit or heel position about 4 feet apart. Both dogs must remain in place for 15 seconds, dogs may sit or stand or lay down but must not change locations. Teams get 2 attempts at this task.



Equipment Encounters

Pass

Fail

The team must pass four out of the five encounters in order to pass this step of the test. Some equipment is required as part of the test and is marked with an asterisk (*). Additional optional items of equipment that can be used instead of those listed below include: a stroller, knee scooter, or IV stand.

The dog should remain calm and not over-react to any of the pieces of equipment. The person passing the team with the piece of equipment should stop and interact with the team, the dog should enjoy the interaction and react positively.

Cane (preferably clawed foot or wooden cane) – While the dog is waiting calmly at the handler’s side a friendly stranger approaches the team while using the cane to walk towards the team. The handler encourages the dog to interact with the friendly stranger using the cane. The friendly stranger greets the dog positively once approached and then walks away. Teams get 2 attempts at this task.

Crutches – While the dog is waiting calmly at the handler’s side a friendly stranger approaches the team while using the crutches to walk towards the team. The handler encourages the dog to interact with the friendly stranger using the crutches. The friendly stranger greets the dog positively once approached and then walks away. The stranger safely drops a crutch as they leave, while the evaluator observes the dog’s sensitivity to noise and distraction. Severe negative reactions should result in a fail of this task. Teams get 2 attempts at this task.

*Sliding Walker with Tennis Balls on the Feet (4-foot walkers or 2-wheel/2-foot walkers) – While the dog is waiting calmly at the handler’s side a friendly stranger approaches the team while sliding the walker towards the team. The handler encourages the dog to interact with the friendly stranger using the walker. The friendly stranger greets the dog positively once approached and then walks away. Teams get 2 attempts at this task.

*Rolling Walker or Rollator (4-wheel walker) – While the dog is waiting calmly at the handler’s a friendly stranger approaches the team while rolling the walker towards the team. The handler encourages the dog to interact with the friendly stranger using the walker. The friendly stranger greets the dog positively once approached and then walks away. Teams get 2 attempts at this task.

*Wheelchair – A friendly stranger sits in a wheelchair and allows the team to approach them from across the room. The handler asks the friendly stranger “Would you like to meet/pet my dog?” Upon a negative response, the handler should react appropriately and move the pet away. Upon a positive response from the friendly stranger the handler encourages the dog to interact with them in the wheelchair once the stranger has locked the wheels. The friendly stranger greets the dog positively once approached and then rolls away. Teams get 2 attempts at this task.



Quiet Unsteady Stranger

Pass

Fail

Meeting an unsteady stranger with a quiet piece of mobility assistance equipment (cane, rolling walker). While the dog is waiting calmly at the handler's side, a friendly stranger approaches the team with the device, walking unsteadily, and hunched towards the team. The friendly stranger pets the dog once approached. The friendly stranger should pet the dog gently as well as with a cupped hand or clumsily or with a shaking hand and then walk away. The dog should remain calm and not over-react when the stranger approaches the dog. The dog should enjoy the interaction and react positively. Teams get 2 attempts at this task.

Loud Unsteady Stranger

Pass

Fail

Meeting an unsteady stranger with a loud piece of mobility assistance equipment (4-legged walker or wheelchair). While the dog is waiting calmly at the handler's side a friendly stranger approaches the team with the device, speaking loudly or with jumbled speech, walking or rolling unsteadily, and hunched towards the team. The friendly stranger greets the dog once approached and then walks/rolls away. The dog should remain calm and not over-react when the stranger approaches the dog. The dog should enjoy the interaction and react positively. Teams get 2 attempts at this task.

Multiple Strangers

Pass

Fail

Scenario 1: The team enters a space and goes to interact with a friendly stranger. The friendly stranger is using a piece of medical equipment and is the person the team is there to visit. Before the team can reach the person, two strangers enter the space. One person aggressively tries to pet the dog and the other asks if they can take the dog for a walk while reaching for the leash. The handler should appropriately respond and redirect the attention back to the person with medical equipment.

Scenario 2: The team enters a space where a group is gathered. One person is terribly afraid of dogs and wants the dog to leave. The handler should appropriately respond to the scenario.



Crowded Small Spaces

Pass

Fail

A group of people (3-6) and other pets (if possible) are present near the team along with mobility assistance equipment. The team must navigate through the group of people with a loose leash with ease. The people within the group may move about as the team practices maneuvering through them three times. The dog must stay calm and listen to the handler's instructions as they weave between the low murmur of chatty people and equipment. The friendly stranger greets the dog positively once approached and then walks away. The dog should remain calm and not over-react when the stranger approaches. The dog should enjoy the interaction and react positively. Teams get 2 attempts at this task.

Loud Small Spaces

Pass

Fail

A group of people (3-6) and other pets (if possible) are present near the team. Items may be dropped on the ground as the team goes by to create additional noise such as a metal bowl or clipboard. People within the group should speak loudly, high five, clap, have cell phones ring, or move abruptly past the team. The team must navigate through the group of people with a loose leash and with ease. The people within the group may move about as the team practices maneuvering through them three times. The dog must stay calm and listen to the handler's instructions as they weave between the loud distractions and chatty people. Evaluators should pay special attention to dogs that show sensitivity to sound at this stage. Severe negative reactions to loud noises will result in a failure of this task. Teams get 3 attempts at this task.

Food Distraction

Pass

Fail

The evaluator stands approximately 10 feet away from the team with a food item (ideally one with a strong odor). The handler has the dog in heel position when the evaluator drops the food to their side. The team walks past the handler and the food item in one direction. The team then turns and walks back to their original starting point with the handler stopping to pick up the food item on the way back. The dog must remain in a heel position and not grab at or lunge after the food. The food can serve as a treat for the dog at the end of the test. Throughout the duration of the test, there should be a hidden food item to tempt the pet as well, such as a trash can with an odorous item within. The handler should be able to redirect the pet to remain on task, should the pet locate the item during the test. Teams get 2 attempts at this task.



Tight Spaces Scenario

Pass

Fail

Scenario 1: A group of people and another animal (if possible) are gathered in a tight space, simulating an elevator. The team approaches the elevator doors and presses the button. The team should then move 3-5 feet from the door and maintain a comfortable distance. When the elevator door opens, one occupant should be afraid of dogs. The handler should give an appropriate response.

Scenario 2: A group of people and another animal (if possible) are gathered in a tight space, simulating an elevator. The team approaches the elevator doors and presses the button. The team should then move 3-5 feet from the door and maintain a comfortable distance. When the elevator door opens the crowd welcome the dog to join them. The handler should enter the elevator, and the dog should remain calm and not overreact to the crowd or animal.

- If elevators are occupied with people when the doors open, let the people exit before you ask any remaining people if they are okay with sharing an elevator with your pet. If they seem hesitant or say no, wait for the next elevator. Most pets should be able to handle elevators well when doing visits and should remain calm and controlled during an elevator ride. If they are unable to do so, take the stairs.



Nashville Therapy Pets Canine Training Test Signatory Page

Date Test was Administered _____

Final Test Results:

Pass

Fail

Handler Name _____

Cell Phone Number _____

Email Address _____

Dog Name _____ Breed _____

Dog's Age _____

Evaluator Name _____

AKC Evaluator Number _____

Cell Phone Number _____

Email Address _____

Testing Location _____

Additional Notes _____

I, the undersigned do hereby attest that this team attempted the NTP Canine Training Test, and my results are true, honest, and acceptable by the guidelines that were provided in the testing protocol.

Signature of Certified Evaluator _____