

## **ASSISTANCE DOG PUBLIC ACCESS CERTIFICATION TEST**

**PURPOSE-** The purpose of this Public Access Test is to ensure that dogs that have public access are stable, well-behaved, and unobtrusive to the public. It is to ensure that the client has control over the dog, and the team is not a public hazard.

This test is **NOT** intended as a substitute for the skill/task test that should be given by the program. It is to be used in addition to those skill/task tests. It is expected that the test will be adhered to as closely as possible. If modifications are necessary, they should be noted in the space provided at the end of the test.

**DISMISSAL-** Any dog that displays any aggressive behavior (growling, biting, raising hackles, showing, teeth, etc.) will be eliminated from the test. Any dog that eliminates in a building or shows uncontrollable behavior will be eliminated from the test.

**BOTTOM LINE:** The bottom line of this test is that the dog demonstrates he/she is safe to be in public and that the person demonstrates that he/she has control of the dog at all times.

**TESTING EQUIPMENT-** All testing shall be done with equipment appropriate to the needs and abilities of the team. All dogs shall be on-lead at all times except in the vehicle at which time it is optional.

This test is to take place in a public setting such as a mall where there are a lot of people and natural distractions. The individual will handle the dog and can use any reasonable/humane equipment necessary to ensure his/her control over the dog.

The evaluator will explain the test thoroughly before the actual testing, during which he/she will follow discreetly to observe when not directly interacting with the individual on a test related matter. The only things an evaluator needs are an assistant, a clipboard, a dog, a plate of food, and access to a shopping cart.

**COMMANDS:** Commands may be given to the dog in either hand signals or verbal signals or both.

**1. CONTROLLED UNLOAD OUT OF VEHICLE:** After a suitable place has been found, the individual will unload the dog and any necessary equipment (wheelchair, walker, crutches, etc.) out of the vehicle. The dog must wait until released before coming out of the vehicle. Once outside, it must wait quietly unless otherwise instructed by the individual. The dog may not run around, be off lead, or ignore the commands given by the individual. Once the team is out of the vehicle and settled, the assistant should walk past with another dog. They should walk within six (6) feet of the team. The Assistance Dog must remain calm and under control, not pulling or trying to get to the other dog.

The emphasis on this is that the Assistance Dog remains unobtrusive and is unloaded in the safest manner possible for everyone.

**2. APPROACHING THE BUILDING:** After unloading, the team must maneuver through the parking lot to approach the building. The dog must stay in a relative heel position and may not forge ahead or lag behind. The dog must not display a fear of cars or traffic noises and must display a relaxed attitude. When the individual stops for any reason, the dog must stop also.

**3. CONTROLLED ENTRY THROUGH A DOOR-WAY:** Once at the doors of the building, the individual may enter however he/she chooses to negotiate the entry safely. Upon entering the building, however, the dog may not wander off or solicit attention from the public. The dog should wait quietly until the team is fully inside and then should calmly walk beside the individual. The dog must not pull or strain against the lead or try to push its way past the individual but must wait patiently while entry is completed.

**4. HEELING THROUGH THE BUILDING:** Once inside the building, the individual and the dog must walk through the area in a controlled manner. The dog should always be within touching distance where applicable or not greater than a foot away from the individual. The dog should not solicit public attention or strain against the lead (except in cases where the dog may be pulling the individual's wheelchair). The dog must readily adjust to speed changes, turn corners promptly, and travel through a crowded area without interacting with the public. In tight quarters, the dog must be able to get out of the way of obstacles and not destroy merchandise by knocking it over or by playing with it.

**5. SIX FOOT RECALL ON LEAD:** A large, open area should be found for the six-foot recall. Once found, the individual will perform a six foot recall with the dog remaining on lead. The individual will sit the dog, leave it, travel six feet, then turn and call the dog to him/her. The dog should respond promptly and not stop to solicit attention from the public or ignore the command. The dog should come close enough to the individual to be readily touched. For Guide Dogs, they must actually touch the person to indicate location. The recall should be smooth and deliberate without the dog trudging to the individual or taking any detours along the way.

**6. SITS ON COMMAND:** The team will be asked to demonstrate the individual's ability to have the dog sit three different times. The dog must respond promptly each time with no more than two commands. There should not be any extraordinary gestures on the part of the people approaching the dog. Normal, reasonable behavior on the part of the people is expected.

The first sit will be next to a plate of food placed upon the ground. The dog must not attempt to eat or sniff the food. The individual may correct the dog verbally or physically away from the food, but then the dog must maintain a sit while ignoring the food. The dog should not be taunted or teased with the food. This situation should be made as realistic as possible.

The second sit will be executed, and the assistant with a shopping cart will approach within three feet of the dog and continue on past. The dog should maintain the sit and not show any fear of the shopping cart. If the dog starts to move, the individual may correct the dog to maintain the sit.

The last sit will be a sit with a stay as a person walks up behind the team, talks to the person and then pets the dog. The dog must hold position.

The dog may not break the stay to solicit attention. The individual may repeat the stay command along with reasonable physical corrections.

**7. DOWNS ON COMMAND-** The down exercises will be performed in the same sequence as the sits with the same basic stipulations. The first down will be at a table where food will be dropped on the floor. The dog should not break the down to go for the food or sniff at the food. The individual may give verbal and physical corrections to maintain the down. There should not be any extraordinary gestures on the part of the people approaching the dog. Normal, reasonable behavior from the people is expected. The second down will be executed, and then an adult and child should approach the dog. The dog should maintain the down and not solicit attention. If the child pets the dog, the dog must behave appropriately and not break the stay. The individual may give verbal and physical corrections if the dog begins to break the stay.

**8. NOISE DISTRACTION-** The team will be heeling along and the tester will drop a clipboard to the ground behind the team. The dog may acknowledge the noise, but may not in any way show aggression or fear. A normal startle reaction is fine - the dog may jump and/or turn - but the dog should quickly recover and continue along on the heel. The dog should not become aggressive, begin shaking, etc.

**9. RESTAURANT-** The team and tester should enter a restaurant and be seated at a table. The dog should go under the table or, if size prevents that, stay close to the individual. The dog must sit or lie down and may move a bit for comfort during the meal, but should not be up and down a lot or need a lot of correction or reminding. This would be a logical place to do the food drop during a down. **(See # 7)**

**10. OFF LEAD-** Sometime during the test, where appropriate, the person will be instructed to drop the leash while moving so it is apparent to the dog. The individual must show the ability to maintain control of the dog and get the leash back in its appropriate position. This exercise will vary greatly depending on the person's disabilities. The main concern is that the dog be aware that the leash is dropped and that the person is able to maintain control of the dog and get the leash back into proper position.

**11. DOG TAKEN BY ANOTHER PERSON –** To show that the dog can be handled by another person without aggression or excessive stress or whining, someone else will take the dog's leash and passively hold the dog (not giving any commands) while the dog's partner moves 20' away.

**12. CONTROLLED EXIT-** The team will leave the building in a similar manner to entering, with safety and control being of prime importance. The team will proceed across the parking lot and back to the vehicle. The dog must be in appropriate heel position and not display any fear of vehicle or sounds.

**13. CONTROLLED LOAD INTO VEHICLE:** The individual will load the dog into the vehicle with either entering first. The dog must not wander around the parking lot but must wait patiently for instructions. Emphasis is on safety and control.

**14. TEAM RELATIONSHIP -** It is important for an Assistance Dog Team to have a positive and close relationship. Both the handler and the dog should be relaxed; there should be positive reinforcement for the dog's good behavior; the dog should be under control; and the team should present a positive image to the public.

# Scoring Factors of the Public Access Certification Test

**A** = Always

**M** = Most of the time (more than half the time)

**S** = Some of the time (half or less of the time)

**N** = Never

## **1. CONTROLLED UNLOAD OUT OF VEHICLE**

Dog did not try to leave vehicle until given the release command.

YES\*       NO      The dog waited in the vehicle until released.\*

YES       NO      The dog waited outside the vehicle under control.

YES       NO      The dog remained under control while another dog was walked past.

## **2. APPROACHING THE BUILDING**

Relative heel position, not straining or forging.

A       M       S       N      The dog stayed in relative heel position.

YES\*       NO      The dog was calm around traffic.\*

A       M       S       N      The dog stopped when the individual came to a halt.

## **3. CONTROLLED ENTRY THROUGH A DOORWAY**

YES\*       NO      The dog waited quietly at the door until commanded to enter\*

YES\*       NO      The dog waited on the inside until able to return to heel position.\*

## **4. HEELING THROUGH THE BUILDING**

A       M       S       N      The dog was within the prescribed distance of the individual.

A       M       S       N      The dog ignored the public, remaining focused on the individual.

A       M       S       N      The dog readily adjusted to speed changes.

A       M       S       N      The dog readily turned corners-did not have to be tugged or jerked to change direction.

A       M       S       N      The dog readily maneuvered through tight quarters.

## **5. SIX FOOT RECALL ON LEAD**

- YES\*     NO    The dog responded readily to the recall command - did not stray away, seek attention from others, or trudge slowly.\*
- YES\*     NO    The dog remained under control and focused on the individual\*
- YES\*     NO    The dog came within the prescribed distance of the individual.\*
- YES\*     NO    The dog came directly to the individual.\*

## **6. SITS ON COMMAND**

- A     M     S     N    The dog responded promptly to the command to sit.
- YES\*     NO    The dog remained under control around food - not trying to get food and not needing repeated corrections.\*
- YES\*     NO    The dog remained composed while the shopping cart passed – did not shy away, show signs of fear, etc. The shopping cart should be pushed normally and reasonably, not dramatically.\*
- YES\*     NO    The dog maintained a sit-stay while being petted by a stranger.\*

## **7. DOWNS ON COMMAND**

- A     M     S     N    The dog responded promptly to the command to down.
- YES\*     NO    The dog remained under the control around the food - not trying to get food and not needing repeated corrections.\*
- YES\*     NO    The dog remained in control while the child approached – child should not taunt dog or be overly dramatic.\*

## **8. NOISE DISTRACTIONS**

If the dog jumps, turns, or shows a quick startle type reaction that is fine. The dog should not show aggression, or continue to be affected by the noise.

- YES\*     NO    The dog remained composed during the noise distraction.\*

### **9. RESTAURANT**

- YES\*       NO      The dog is unobtrusive and out of the way of patrons and employees as much as possible.\*
- YES\*       NO      The dog maintained proper behavior, ignoring food and being quiet.\*

### **10. OFF LEAD**

- YES\*       NO      When told to drop the leash, the team maintained control and the individual got the leash back in position.\*

### **11. DOG TAKEN BY ANOTHER PERSON**

- YES\*       NO      Another person can take the dog's leash and the dog's partner can move away without aggression or undue stress on the part of the dog.

### **12. CONTROLLED EXIT**

- A    M       S       N      The dog stayed in relative heel position.
- YES\*       NO      The dog was calm around traffic.\*
- A    M       S       N      The dog stopped when the individual came to a halt.

### **13. CONTROLLED LOAD INTO VEHICLE**

- YES       NO      The dog waited until commanded to enter the vehicle.
- YES       NO      The dog readily entered the vehicle upon command.

### **14. TEAM RELATIONSHIP**

- A    M       S       N      When the dog did well, the person praised the dog.
- A    M       S       N      The dog is relaxed, confident, and friendly.
- A    M       S       N      The person kept the dog under control.
- YES       NO      The person was prepared with proper working materials and equipment in case of an access confrontation (laws, etc.)

## Scoring:

The team must score all "Always" or "Most of the time" responses on the A-M-S-N parts of the test

The team must score at least 80 % "yes" answers on the "yes" "no" portion of the test.

All quotations marked by an asterisk must be answered by a "YES" response.

Were there any unique situations that made any portion of this test not applicable?