



GROUP EVALUATION EXPLANATION FOR TEAMS

REMINDERS:

1. Your Post Orientation Review form will be collected at the beginning of the Group Evaluation.
2. You must have your dog's shot records with you.
3. Please complete the top part of both pages of the evaluation form.

Group Evaluation Rating Scale:

1 - Advanced 2- Appropriate NR - Not Ready NA- Not Applicable

Both handler and pet receive a rating for each exercise. A skilled handler who is proactive at handling their dog's behavior is just as important to a team as a dog with an appropriate temperament and adequate training.

1 – Advanced performance for the handler means they are always aware of what their dog is doing, in control of the dog, have good leash handling skills, demonstrate an awareness of KPETS visiting guidelines, are proactive and involved with supporting and advocating for their dog, connecting with body position, voice, eye contact and verbal and physical reassurance and praise.

1 – Advanced performance for the pet means they are relaxed and confident during each exercise, maintain focus on handler, (except when they are being greeted/petted) and follow handlers' directions promptly.

2- Appropriate performance for the handler means they have control of their pet, are able to refocus them as needed, may need to use multiple commands, may have occasional tight leash, and they demonstrate an awareness of KPETS visiting guidelines.

2- Appropriate performance for the pet means they may need some reassurance and redirection, can have some lagging or pulling, and may need multiple commands, but they enjoy visiting.

Not Ready for the handler could include: not in control of pet, (could not control pulling, barking or reactivity to other pets) did not advocate for pet, constant tight leash, unsuccessful obedience commands, use of harsh corrections, unwilling to follow KPETS guidelines.

Not Ready for the dog could include: shies away from handling, any sign of aggression (growling, snapping), excessive barking, eliminating indoors, overly fearful of equipment or noise, is not under handler's control – continual pulling, lunging, overly reactive to other pets.

Both handler and pet will receive a final rating of **Ready** or **Not Ready**. If either receives a Not Ready as their overall rating, the team does not pass the Group Evaluation and will be given suggestions for additional training or to consider other activities.

Dog or handler may receive a Not Ready in some exercises and still have an overall Ready rating. Obedience commands, crowded petting, restraining hug, greeting another team, and ignoring distractions on the floor are examples, where a dog could receive Not Ready rating, but still pass, if the handler is able to work with their pet so that they are both safe and confident to visit appropriately.

The following are considered to be "core" capabilities (identified by shaded boxes on the evaluation form and with an asterisk in the list below) for the handler and the pet and a "Not Ready" rating for any of these individual exercises will result in an automatic overall rating of "NOT READY."

Handler: Clumsy Petting, Restraining Hug, Crowded Petting, Loud/Excited Person, Loose Leash Walking (in a group) and Reaction to Other Dog

Dog: Friendly Stranger, Gentle Petting, Loose Leash Walking (in a group), and Reaction to Other Dog

It is paramount that the handler always keep focus and advocate for the animal to prevent harm to the animal or prevent the animal from harming another person or pet. The handler must have the skills to intercede in those situations where the dog requires an advocate. Further, pet therapy teams must be able to move about walking on a loose leash. Finally, in all fairness to the animal, they must exhibit a desire to greet friendly strangers, enjoy gentle petting and be comfortable around other dogs to have a happy and rewarding experience as a therapy dog.

SKILLS/BEHAVIORS

APPEARANCE AND GROOMING –HANDLER should be casually professional, dress modestly and conservatively. Pet should be recently bathed, ears clean, nails short and smooth. Evaluator will touch front paws, check nails and gently lift ears taking note of any mouth odors which could indicate dental issues. Evaluator will check to see that the dog's collar is properly adjusted and that the leash is between 4-6 feet in length.

INTERACTIONS

***FRIENDLY STRANGER**- Evaluator greets handler, pet is under control, should not jump up or pull.

***GENTLE PETTING** - Evaluator greets and pets on head, body, tail, throat, and ears. Pet is well behaved and relaxed, eager to greet. Note: Small dogs can be held or placed in the handler's lap for this exercise; however, handlers must be tested the way the dog will be petted.

***CLUMSY PETTING** – As might be done w poor motor control. Pet should tolerate, handler should advocate as appropriate.

***RESTRAINING HUG** – Evaluator will turn face away from pet, and gently hug. Handler should demonstrate skills to protect and advocate for pet.

***CROWDED PETTING** – Animal is greeted and petted by several volunteers at once, handler should advocate for pet as needed.

LOUD/EXCITED PERSON- Evaluator will exhibit erratic, noisy behavior and then stops and behaves normally to approach dog to greet and pet. Pet may need reassurance, should accept petting. During this particular exercise, it is not uncommon for other dogs to react to what is going on with the loud/excited person. The Evaluator will take note if any of the other dogs over react following the Evaluator's erratic and noisy display of behavior towards the dog being tested.

NOISE DISTRACTION- Evaluator will make a sudden loud noise, like dropping a metal bowl. Handlers will be informed beforehand. Pet may react but should settle quickly.

MOVING EQUIPMENT DISTRACTION – While the handler and pet are stationary (seated or standing), the Evaluator will move a wheelchair, walker or cart around, coming near to pet. Pet may react but should settle quickly.

BASIC COMMANDS

SIT, DOWN, STAY (to end of leash, approximately 30 second pause and return).

STAY/COME (to end of leash, approximately 30 second pause and call dog to handler). These will be performed as a group or small group as needed, may be combined with loose leash walking.

EXERCISES/ACTIVITIES

***WALKING ON LOOSE LEASH** – This test demonstrates that the handler is in control of the dog on a loose leash. The handler should maintain loose leash as much as possible, pet should keep focus on handler and be under control, teams will all be moving at same time, usually in a circular pattern with a stop and direction change. Pause or go around another team as needed to maintain 2 foot safety distance.

WALK AND GREET ANOTHER TEAM– Performed in pairs, 2 teams will move towards each other from opposite sides of the room and pause briefly for handlers to greet each other before continuing in a forward direction, moving away from each other. Dogs should remain under control and not jump or pull towards other team.

***REACTION TO OTHER DOGS** will be evaluated as part of the WALK AND GREET ANOTHER TEAM exercise, as well as throughout the evaluation.

LEAVE IT - Loose leash walking around distractions (such as dog toys, covered kibble, paper napkin, jelly beans to represent pills). Dog should stay focused on handler, may use “leave it”

command, move briskly, can change sides, walk around distractions, not up to them. Dog may show interest but should not pick up anything.

WALK WITH OBSTACLES - Loose leash walking around obstacles scattered on the floor. The team will walk by the distractions and then enter the obstacle area and continue walking around as the next team passes the distractions and then both teams navigate the obstacle area together maintaining the two foot safety distance. The first team is directed to leave the area while the second team continues walking around while the next team passes the distractions and then enters the obstacle area.

WALK AROUND MOVING TEAM(S) – Another team will also be moving around obstacles at the same time. Teams should maintain the 2 foot safety distance. Handlers may change sides and change their path or pause as needed.

WHEELCHAIR VISIT – This will provide an opportunity to practice approaching a wheelchair and demonstrate proper positioning for petting, and variations for different sizes of dogs and different situations. It is appropriate for the evaluator to offer guidance on how to position the dog given its size.

ACCEPTING A TREAT NICELY –It is required if pets will be given treats by other than handler. Pet must wait briefly to be told to take treat and take it gently. It is not necessary to do a lengthy “leave it” beforehand. Handler should instruct evaluator on how to present treat.