

Application: Therapy Dog Qualified Title

Thank you for your interest in being tested to receive a Therapy Dog-Qualified Title from Therapy Dogs of Vermont. Therapy Dogs of Vermont (TDV) offers two options for therapy dog evaluation: Therapy Dog-Qualified Title and Working Therapy Dog Team.

Therapy Dog-Qualified Title: for those seeking a title indicating that their dog has met the temperament and obedience standards to be qualified as a therapy dog but who do not wish to volunteer. It involves taking the TDV test and paying a titling fee. This option does not grant authorization to make therapy dog visits to facilities, nor does it provide insurance, therapy dog identification, membership in TDV or any other ongoing affiliation with TDV. It does grant a therapy dog title issued by Therapy Dogs of Vermont not to be confused with Service Dog Status.

Working Therapy Dog Team Certification: This option is to make therapy dog visits to facilities (as volunteers), insurance for those visits, therapy dog identification, and membership in TDV; it involves taking the TDV test, completing three evaluations, providing required proof of vaccinations, and paying a membership fee. If you wish to become certified, trained, and insured to conduct therapy dog visits on a volunteer basis, there is a separate application and certification process—see our website.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Submit your form:

Therapy Dogs of Vermont **OR** Admin@Therapydogs.org
P.O. Box 1271
Williston, VT 05495-1271

Pay your testing fee:

By check to the **OR** Online by credit card via our
above address PayPal (instructions below)

TITLE FEE: \$45. Please bring payment to the test. Upon successful completion of the test, your personalized certificate will be mailed to you.

Testing Fee: \$20. There is a \$20.00 non-refundable fee for testing--this fee supports TDV's continuing efforts to provide therapy dog support and companionship throughout the many communities we serve. Once candidate completes testing requirements successfully, this fee will be applied toward the \$45 title.

TESTING FEE INSTRUCTIONS (TESTING FEE MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THIS APPLICATION)

If you cancel your appointment less than 48 hours prior to your test, do not appear at your test, or fail the test: your fee will NOT be refunded.

Payment Methods:

1. PayPal (email us your application, and immediately pay the fee via PayPal)
www.therapydogs.org/custom/con_paypal.php
OR
2. Mail a check with your application (check made out to “Therapy Dogs of Vermont”)

You must be tested by an approved TDV tester.

Application: Therapy Dog Qualified Title

Name of Handler: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ (street, city, state, ZIP)

E-mail: _____ (we will contact you by e-mail; please print clearly)

Dog's Name: _____

Dog's age: _____ (must be at least 1 year-old) Breed of Dog: _____

Why do you seek this title?

RELEASE OF CLAIMS FOR ACCIDENTAL INJURY

I, _____, City of _____,
State of _____, hereby certify I am aware of all the inherent dangers of handling dogs (mine and others) and of the basic safety rules for activities connected therewith. I understand that it is not the purpose of Therapy Dogs of Vermont to teach safety rules, obedience or handling of dogs and I'm familiar with Therapy Dog of Vermont Policies for handlers and dogs. I understand and guarantee that while I am participating in this testing session, I am responsible for any incident that might occur, and absolve and agree to hold harmless Therapy Dogs of Vermont from any liability.

I also understand and agree that neither Therapy Dogs of Vermont or its officers, directors, members or agents may be held liable in any way for any occurrence in connection with said activities which may result in injury, death or damages to myself, family, or my dog. In consideration of being tested by this organization I hereby personally assume all risks which may befall me while I am engaged in this activity whether foreseen or unforeseen and further hold harmless the above mentioned entities and persons from any claim by me, or my family or any other party arising out of my participation in this activity.

I further state that I am of lawful age and legally competent to sign this affirmation and release, which I understand. I have fully informed myself of the contents of this affirmation and release by reading it before I signed it. I assume my own responsibility of physical fitness and capability to perform under the normal requirements of this activity.

I have read and agree to abide by TDV Policies during testing. I understand that the Therapy Dog-Qualified Title (TDQ) is for those seeking a title indicating that their dog has met the temperament and obedience standards to be qualified as a therapy dog but that this program does not grant authorization to make therapy dog visits to facilities, nor does it provide insurance, therapy dog identification, membership in TDV or otherwise establish any ongoing affiliation with TDV. I further understand that a TD title does not provide privileges under Vermont law. In Witness whereof, I have executed this affirmation and release on:

Date: _____

Date: _____

Witness:

Prospective Member/Releaser:

Parent or Guardian (if applicable): _____



Updated 7/09

Therapy Dog Title Test

Applicant Name: _____ Dog's Name/Breed: _____

I. INITIAL MEETING	YES	NO	Needs Work	N/A
Was the handler in control of the dog?				
Was the handler clean and well groomed?				
Was the dog clean and well groomed?				
Was any sign of protection/aggression displayed when tester greeted the handler (shake hands, pat on the arm, and step close to handler)?				
Was any sign of protection/aggression displayed in the presence of an odd stranger?*				
Did the handler come prepared for the test per the guidelines (clean dog, required paperwork, short leash, etc.)?				
Comments:				
			Pass: _____	Fail: _____

II. OBEDIENCE	YES	NO	Needs Work	N/A
Is the dog able to walk on a loose lead going at slow, fast, and normal paces?				
Able to turn around as well as walk left and right?				
Was the dog able to stop at the handler's side and wait patiently?				
Was the dog able to perform sits, downs, sit stays and down stays (on leash)?				
Was the dog able to leave/pass by a desired object or food treat at the handler's command?				
Was the dog able to remain at handler's side with a distraction, (i.e., ball bounced nearby; person running from front)				
Is the handler aware of the dog's reactions and needs? Acts proactively?				
Comments:				
			Pass: _____	Fail: _____

III. HANDLING THE DOG	YES	NO	Needs Work	N/A
Able to remain calm after a loud noise?				
Dog comfortably allowed tester to pet their head?				
Dog was comfortable with tester petting their body?				
Tester could hold dog's tail?				
Tester could hold each of dog's paws?				
Dog allowed the tester to scratch the throat under the chin?				
Tester could gently pet and stroke dog's ears?				
Tester could lean over the dog?				
Dog was comfortable a hand on its back?				
Dog was comfortable with the tester lifting its lips several times?				
Dog was comfortable with gentle pressure on the collar?				
Was dog comfortable with rapid, direct approach and sustained, direct eye contact?				
Was dog comfortable with exuberant/clumsy patting? Erratic noises/behavior/approach?				
Was dog comfortable with being hugged for several minutes?				
Was dog comfortable being bumped into?				
**Was dog able to take a treat gently (in presence of other dogs)?				
Was dog comfortable with being petted by several people at once in a crowd?				
<p><i>**Unless dog is aggressive, not being gentle with a treat is not cause for failure – but handler should be aware that dog may not be given treats by people.</i></p> <p><i>NOTE: A dog that spooks at any of the above may not be cause for failure – depends on severity, how quickly the dog recovers, and how the handler manages and supports the dog. However, a fear-aggression response is grounds for failure</i></p>				
Comments:				
			Pass: _____	Fail: _____

IV. DOG TO DOG INTERACTION (not necessary for dogs to meet face to face)	YES	NO	Needs Work	N/A
Did the handler demonstrate having control over the situation?				
Did the dog bark or lunge at another dog?				
Was the dog's interest appropriate with another dog?				
Was any sign of aggression displayed?				
Comments:				
			Pass: _____	Fail: _____

V. DOG TO HUMAN INTERACTION	YES	NO	Needs Work	N/A
Did the handler demonstrate having control over the situation?				
Did the dog bark or jump at any person?				
Was the dog's interest appropriate with another person?				
Was any sign or aggression displayed?				
Was there any sign of excessive licking or lunging or barking?				
Comments:				
			Pass: _____	Fail: _____

Date of Test: _____ Location/Facility: _____

Tester's Signature: _____

Explanation of TDV Test Standards by Section

Even though training and educating a dog is an ongoing process, TDV expects that teams coming for TDV testing have a solid foundation in obedience and a positive working relationship. Thus, we are looking at a dog and handler who already have an established partnership—involving training, socialization, trust, and respect; this takes time and work. When we are evaluating this teamwork and training, we are looking for a balance, for moderation in approach and attitude of working together. For example, a handler who uses treats constantly may signal a problem—a dog will not work unless offered a bribe.* Likewise, a handler who administers constant or unfair correction may also signal a relationship/training level that's not ready/suitable for therapy dog work. So, when we consider a team, we're looking at a big picture, clues to which may be in such things as:

- Is there a mutual respect—a dog and handler that for the most part understand each other and a handler who understands the dog and can communicate what is expected to the dog?
- Is the handler aware of the dog's reactions and needs? For example, if a dog is nervous or overwhelmed by a large group of large children, does the handler support the dog (or remove it from the situation)?
- The too much or too little guideline. Too many treats? Too many corrections? Too little praise? Too little guidance?

Further explanation of the reasons and purpose behind some of the test standards are indicated below.

I. INITIAL MEETING

- Being able to control your dog under normal as well as unexpected circumstances is critical to a successful interaction of dog, handler and those being visited. Volunteer sites will present teams with unexpected situations/noises/human behaviors.
- Both handler and dog are expected to be well groomed and dressed appropriately as if they were on an actual volunteer visit. This demonstrates the professionalism of the team.
- It is expected that you are able to correct your dog for poor behavior. Corrections are expected to be gentle and constructive, not punitive. Therapy work can be stressful for your dog. It is expected that you will reward your dog, from time-to-time, as appropriate for good behavior, as is consistent with good team behavior.

II. OBEDIENCE

- This part of the test shows that the dog has some good manners and training. The dog must readily respond to handler's commands. Force should not be used.

III. HANDLING THE DOG

- Handling the dog builds on obedience by evaluating how the dog responds to unexpected noises and behaviors such as clumsy petting, and being touched on paws, tail, collar, etc by a friendly stranger. Handler must have sufficient control to help guide dog gently through unexpected events and behaviors when volunteering.

IV. DOG-TO-DOG INTERACTION

- Since teams often work together, it is important that all therapy dogs who are working together are focused on their therapy task, and not interested in inappropriate interactions with fellow team member dogs.
- This part of the test demonstrates that your dog can behave politely around an approaching dog. Also, it shows that the handler can anticipate his/her dog's response to other dogs and respond proactively.

V. DOG TO HUMAN INTERACTION

- This part of the test looks at whether the dog has suitable social skills for interacting with other humans and demonstrates that dog can greet strangers appropriately.

*The use of spraying collars (such as citronella) or electric collars, spray bottles or spraying devices of any kind, and clickers and other such noise-making devices are prohibited per the visitation guidelines (see above) and are not allowed during the testing. Testers may also prohibit the use of any food treats (or toys used as reward) during the test as the purpose of the test is to determine if the dog can be controlled by the handler if no special incentives are offered.