

Service Dog Public Access Test[®]

Based on the Public Access Standard from the *Psychiatric Service Dog Society* (PSDS) <http://www.psychdog.org/publicaccess.html>. Permission is granted to individuals who wish to use this form for the purposes of Service Dog training and/or testing. PSDS is released from any liability associated with the use of this voluntary Public Access Standard for Service Dogs.

Date: _____ Place of test: _____

Name of dog: _____ Breed of dog: _____

Sex of dog: _____ Identifying characteristic(s): _____

Name of handler: _____ Name of tester: _____

Result of test: _____

Purpose of the public access standard: The purpose of the Psychiatric Service Dog Society (PSDS) 'public access standard' is to provide a focal point for owner-trainers as they embark upon public access training with their Psychiatric Service Dog (PSD) In-Training. The standard is also helpful to professional dog trainers who are working with PSD clients and training, perhaps for the first time, in the public access arena. Given geographic diversity, not every team will choose, or even be able, to master every element described in this 'public access standard'. In some rural areas, for example, escalators are nowhere to be found. And, for others with mobility issues, especially those affecting balance, an escalator is not a safe place to train one's dog. Handlers in these situations may choose to focus on elevator work, instead, and that's OK. Think of the PSDS 'public access standard' as a series of lesson plans from which you may pick and choose. Taken together they offer a 'roadmap' of sorts for mastering the many challenges of public access.

Disqualifying behaviors: With regard to public access training, specifically, any dog that demonstrates boisterous behavior, hackles-up, growling, showing teeth, lunging, biting, or inappropriate elimination is not ready for public access work.

Equipment and commands: Any necessary equipment may be used on the service dog (e.g. vest, harness, training collar). Tiny dogs may be carried in the handler's arms, using a carrier, sling or other device when necessary, or for handlers using a wheelchair or scooter, the dog may sit on their lap, wheelchair or scooter. Test items should be modified according to the dog's normal working position, and the dog should always appear comfortable and confident in that working position. Commands may be verbal, hand signals, or a combination of the two.

Scoring:

- 1 = Always
- 2 = Mostly (more than half the time)
- 3 = Sometimes (less than half the time)
- 4 = Never

1. Car travel: Dog should be tested in unloading from handler's vehicle. Dog should not exit the vehicle until given the appropriate command, or until lifted from the car if the dog is too tiny to exit safely on its own. Once outside the vehicle, the dog must remain within 4 feet of the vehicle (instead of wandering away) and out of any obvious danger. As soon as the service dog has exited the vehicle, a second team should walk by within 6 feet of the first team. The service dog on the first team should not approach or in any way lunge towards the second team as it strolls past.

- Yes No Dog did not attempt to exit until given the appropriate command
 Yes No Dog was under control while exiting car and immediately thereafter
 Yes No Dog did not interfere with, or become distracted by, a passing dog team

2. Approaching a building: In the absence of any physical disability in the handler, the dog should walk alongside its handler on a loose leash. Said dog should not pull on its leash, stop to sniff objects, greet other people, or eliminate while in transit, unless specifically cued to do so by its handler. Tiny breed dogs may be carried, though they should demonstrate the ability to walk on a loose leash in a safe area, as described above. To assist with mobility or visual impairments, a rigid-handled or other mobility harness may be used instead of a leash, in which case a 'loose leash' requirement is moot. In some cases, handlers with mobility issues use a leash and have trained their dog to pull them forward. Obviously, a 'loose leash' requirement in this instance is also unnecessary.

- Yes No Dog was calm around moving cars
 1 2 3 4 Dog remained in a heel position on a loose leash
 1 2 3 4 When handler stopped the dog also stopped
 1 2 3 4 Dog did not attempt to greet or sniff others
 1 2 3 4 Dog did not attempt to eliminate unless specifically cued to do so

3. Entering a building: In the absence of any physical disability in the handler, the dog should enter the building via a door that its handler must open manually. This should be repeated using a door that opens automatically. While entering the building, the dog should continue to be on a loose lead without pulling. The dog should not rush ahead of the handler as the team enters the building, nor should the dog startle when entry is through an automatic door. Tiny dogs may be carried if this is their usual working position. When a handler is mobility impaired, s/he may choose to forgo entry into the building using a manual door and instead use a designated accessible entrance and an electronic button for opening the door automatically.

- Yes No Dog entered the building in a controlled manner using a manual door
 Yes No Dog entered the building in a controlled manner using an automatic door

4. Moving through a store with distractions: The team should enter a busy store. The dog should be on loose lead in the heel position (save for those situations described above whereby handler is physically disabled and requires an alternate format, or for tiny dogs that are carried as their normal working position). As the team moves through the store, the dog should turn corners synchronously with the handler. Dog should stop when handler stops. Dog should not brush against merchandise or topple items. Dog should not startle or appear frightened by shopping

carts, baby strollers, and small children. Dog should not attempt to greet other people. Rather, the dog should be aware of its surroundings, while at the same time remaining focused on its handler. Tiny dogs that are carried should sit quietly and calmly without attempting to get out of their designated place.

- 1 2 3 4 Dog remained in heel position on a loose leash or calmly in place
- 1 2 3 4 Dog was focused on handler
- Yes No Dog did not brush against or topple any merchandise
- Yes No Dog was not bothered by shopping carts and other distractions

5. Grocery Store: Team should enter a grocery store, and the handler should push a shopping cart, while the dog keeps pace alongside its handler on a loose lead. For handlers with physical disabilities, a shopping cart may be replaced by a scooter or wheelchair, and the individual may require use of a harness or taught leash. Tiny dogs carried in their normal working position should sit calmly and quietly without attempting to get down from their designated place. As the team moves through the store, the dog should not sniff any food products or people while moving through the aisles. Handlers should be especially attentive when the team is near meat and cheese sections of the grocery store, as these represent greatest olfactory temptation for a dog! While in the grocery store, the handler may wish to challenge the dog's training by placing it in a sit or down-stay (tiny dogs may remain in their normal working position) in an area where shopping carts and people are whizzing by. The dog should not break the stay, nor be fearful of the shopping carts and people, as they move about. The dog should remain focused on its handler until cued otherwise.

- 1 2 3 4 Dog was calm and kept pace alongside handler pushing shopping cart
- 1 2 3 4 Dog did not sniff any food products or people
- Yes No Dog remained calm around shopping carts and people

6. High-distraction behaviors:

1) Handler puts dog in a down-stay in a busy public space. An assistant will step over the dog, and observe the dog's reaction. The dog should not react other than to note the individual's behavior. Dog should not startle, vocalize, or break the down-stay. If small dogs have been trained to move closer to their handler in these situations, or do another behavior for their safety, that trained response should not be counted negatively. For tiny dogs in carriers, the carrier in its normal position should be jostled unexpectedly instead of stepping over the dog.

- Yes No Dog did not break the down-stay (if appropriate), startle or vocalize

2) Handler puts dog in a sit or down-stay in a busy public space (tiny dogs may remain in their normal working position). An assistant will recruit a child to come and pet the dog. The dog should not startle, vocalize, or appear threatened by contact from the child. The dog should remain impassive, tolerate the petting from the child, but not engage with the child further. Indeed, the dog may be trained (reinforced) that under these circumstances, it should

remain focused on its handler, rather than the child. Finally, the dog should persist in its position until cued by its handler to do otherwise.

Yes No Dog tolerated contact from the child

Yes No Dog did not break its position

Yes No Dog was largely focused on handler

3) Handler puts dog in a sit-stay or a down-stay. If the dog's tail is not already tucked, then an assistant should **lightly** press the dog's tail with her shoe. The dog should not startle or display aggression towards the assistant. The dog should be trained to tuck its tail in response to such a light touch. This item may be omitted if the dog has an extremely short tail, or if the dog is carried in its normal working position.

Yes No Dog successfully tucked its tail

7. Mass transit: If public transportation is available in the handler's geographic area, then the team should practice boarding and riding as many forms of public transportation that are available to them. Examples may include a subway, bus, trolley, para-transit vehicle, taxicab, or airplane. The dog should remain calm throughout the trip and disinterested in other persons present. The handler may choose to put the dog in a sit-stay or down-stay, as conditions permit. Generally speaking, a Service Dog should ride on the floorboards of a subway, bus, trolley, para-transit vehicle, taxicab or airplane, rather than the seat. On rare occasions, a service dog may be placed on a seat, when doing so is absolutely necessary, in order for the dog to provide its handler a disability-related service, or when instructed by airline personnel on board a small aircraft where the dog may not otherwise be stowed safely. Tiny Service Dogs may need to be protected from other passengers' feet by riding in a front carrier, shoulder bag, scooter basket, or in the lap of its handler.

1 2 3 4 Dog boarded and exited public transportation calmly

1 2 3 4 Dog remained in position without disturbing others

8. Restaurants: The team should enter a restaurant and take a table, or wait to be seated. While transiting the restaurant, the dog should not lunge at any food or crumbs that may be on the floor. The dog should be placed into a down-stay under the table, if possible, and remain there silently for the duration of the meal. If the setting will not allow the dog to remain under the table, then it may be placed in a down-stay next to, or under, the handler's chair and out of the way of other patrons and staff. Tiny dogs should remain calmly and quietly in their normal working position during the meal. At no time is a service dog of any size acceptable on a table. The dog may only be in a chair if it is in a carrier. Peeking-out from under the table or the carrier, sniffing around, or begging for food is not permitted.

1 2 3 4 Dog successfully ignored food or crumbs on restaurant floor

1 2 3 4 Dog remained in position out of the way of others

1 2 3 4 Dog did not beg, sniff, or create a disturbance in the restaurant

Mid-way through the meal, an assistant may challenge the dog's training by dropping a small piece of food near the dog. A well-trained Service Dog will not break its position, nor will it attempt to sniff or otherwise consume the dropped food item. When a dog behaves appropriately under these circumstances, be sure to offer it positive reinforcement for good behavior.

- Yes No Dog did not break its position during this challenge
- Yes No Dog did not sniff the food item
- Yes No Dog did not try to consume the dropped food item

9. Bathrooms: The team should enter a public restroom. The dog should follow its handler into the bathroom stall, if physically possible. The dog should not squirm or attempt to escape the bathroom stall, nor should it peek into adjacent stalls or whine to get out. When the handler exits the bathroom stall, the dog should move synchronously and effortlessly with its handler. When the handler washes his/her hands and/or is unable hold the leash, the dog may be placed out of the way, either in a sit-stay or a down-stay, until cued by the handler to exit the bathroom. In cases where there is no accessible bathroom stall, or where stalls are too small to fit dog and handler, the handler should place the dog in a down-stay, out of the way, while the handler uses the toilet. Carriers with tiny Service Dogs inside may be hung on the hook on the back of the bathroom door or held as appropriate.

- Yes No Dog entered the bathroom without obvious fear
- Yes No Dog remained in position while handle washed his/her hands
- 1 2 3 4 Dog did not whine or peek into adjacent stalls

10. Elevators: The team should enter and exit a building elevator in a controlled fashion. The dog should ride both up and down on the elevator. The dog should not startle or cower out of fear. The dog should be at ease, confident, and attentive to its handler throughout the ride. The dog may, or may not, be trained to operate elevator buttons, depending upon the handler's disability-related needs.

- 1 2 3 4 Dog entered, rode the elevator without fear, and exited appropriately

11. Escalators (NOTE: This part of the test is optional): The team should practice using an escalator (ascending and descending), only if it is physically possible for the handler to do so safely. In other words, escalator work is optional, because if not done correctly, your dog's feet could be seriously injured. When preparing to embark on the escalator one should do so in a full and confident stride. In order to step off the escalator safely, you will need to be walking at full stride. This is why you should allow at least six empty steps between you and the person in front of you when you first get on. Some dogs prefer to pace themselves more quickly than the handler when getting off the escalator. So long as the handler is always in control of the dog, and the dog is not getting in the way of others who are stepping off the escalator at the same time, this is OK. Smaller Service Dogs may be carried when using the escalator.

- Yes No Dog got on the escalator without incident
- Yes No Dog rode the escalator calmly
- Yes No Dog got off the escalator in a controlled manner

12. Stairs: If physically possible, the handler and dog should master stairways (ascending and descending). The dog should not run up the stairs, nor should it be fearful of them. A team should be climbing stairs together in a controlled manner. Service Dogs may be trained to take a certain number of steps and then wait for their handler according to the handler's disability-related needs or the dog's size. Tiny dogs may remain in their normal working position.

Yes No Dog climbed stairs with handler in a controlled manner

13. Off lead recall with distraction: Dog should 'come' when called by the handler at a distance no less than 30 feet and in the presence of high distraction. Relevant distractions may include a group of people moving or standing around, and/or children playing, and/or the presence of another dog or multiple dogs. Dog's recall should be rapid, deliberate, and focused. Dog should not amble along, sniff, or otherwise become distracted by extraneous stimuli. All Service Dogs, regardless of normal working position, need to demonstrate this ability.

Yes No Dog came immediately to the handler without hesitation or distraction

14. Surfaces: Your Service Dog will likely encounter a variety of surfaces in the course of its travels. It could be asphalt, gravel, linoleum, cobblestones, or a metal grating of some kind. It may be glass blocks over an urban commercial kitchen, a propped-open manhole cover, or a piece of iron sheeting in a construction zone. All Service Dogs, regardless of normal working position, need to demonstrate this ability.

1 2 3 4 Dog walked confidently on a variety of surfaces

15. Basic commands:

Sit

1 2 3 4 Dog sat on command

Down

1 2 3 4 Dog laid down on command

16. Team relationship:

1 2 3 4 Handler positively reinforced dog when commands were followed correctly

1 2 3 4 Dog was confident, relaxed, and friendly

1 2 3 4 Dog was under the handler's control

Scoring:

Team must score a 1 or a 2 on all 1-2-3-4 parts of the test.

Team must score "yes" 80% of the time on the yes/no parts of the test. There are 24 such items, so the team must score "yes" on at least 19 items if all optional items are included.