

## What is a Therapy Dog?

Therapy dogs are dogs who go with their owners to volunteer in settings such as schools, hospitals, and nursing homes or do community service work. From working with a child who is learning to read to visiting a senior in assisted living. Therapy dogs and their owners work together as a team to improve the lives of other people.

PDT's overall mission is to foster the therapy dog movement in the community.

My goal is to start a group "THERAPAW's" to provide:

- \*reading sessions with children in libraries
- \*assistance "reindeers" with meeting Santa
- \*a day in the park for abused or foster children
- \*and other community programs

As part of this mission, PDT seeks to promote the responsible use of access rights in the community. In response to many inquiries from interested citizens who want to train their dog to be a therapy dog, tell me they do not know how much training or what kinds of training to give the dog. IAADP/AAT has developed a set of Minimum Training Standards for Public Access along with AKC Canine Good Citizen (CGC) Test to follow for commands and dog safe training.

THE TEST WAS DESIGNED TO BE ADMINISTERED BY PROFESSIONAL DOG TRAINERS for public service. Dogs must meet or exceed the minimum standards set forth for training and testing a therapy dog.

## Do you certify or register a Therapy/Service animal?

*Certification means that the dog has been certified as a Therapy Dog.*

Certification is not required in the USA because many states lack programs willing to certify dogs that did not go through a program's training course. **However, even though it doesn't require certification, you are still required to have proof of training and testing by a professional trainer.**

*Passing any Public Access Tests does not mean any organization officially certifies your dog. It is up to the trainer giving the test to provide the desired credentialing. Most furnish a complete registration of tests and items.*

*Registration means the professional trainer keeps proof of all records of the dog's performance and stands behind the dog for any questionable concerns.*

Fake certification is for sale over the Internet. They are scam businesses selling fake certification by doing a Google search. A scam is apparent from a quick review of their website because they will sell their certification and registering to anyone for a fee without ever actually training or evaluating the dog themselves. The Registration database of animals signed up doesn't go anywhere. It is a for profit business.

PDT includes testing, vest, IDcards, patches, certification award, proof of registration booklet and support as long as your dog continues to serve on the **THERAPAW** team will be a full package to meet all tasks and guideline requirements



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# HAVING A THERAPY OR SERVICE DOG



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## **PDT THERAPAW or PTSD Service Training**



A therapy dog is a pet that has been trained, tested, registered, and insured to accompany his owner to visit patients and residents of facilities like hospitals and nursing homes to cheer up the people living there. A therapy dog is legally a pet. It is not permitted to go anywhere that pets aren't without permission from the facility owner. The objective of registration is to show facility managers that this dog is well behaved, safe around people, and insured against liability. It is not a license to walk into a hospital or nursing home without permission.

I am a trainer of both companion and working dogs. A therapy dog is a dog who works with a person as an adjunct or aid in a professional relationship, as well as a pet dog.

Dogs who provide AAT (Animal Assisted Activities) training and testing are therapy dogs. A service dog is a dog who is trained to mitigate or help a person with their disability. A therapy dog provides comfort and companionship to a person who needs love and attention for loneliness or that of a child who needs a smile.

So what makes a good AAT therapy dog? I start with providing the training to prepare your dog to pass the tests and feel comfortable to be in public places. Passing the State and Federal Guidelines to get certified helps for liability purposes (getting insurance in case, gasp, something happens). These would be places like hospitals and places with lawyers on staff. On the other hand, nursing homes where many residents are lonely, have fewer requirements for people to bring their dogs, but none the less should be liable for any surprises with their dog and a person with Alzheimer's or mental illness. The thing about nursing homes is often residents can act unpredictably so you just want to be mindful of how they react to all the novel sounds, scents, surfaces (slippery floors!), etc.

In hospitals dogs must be freshly cleaned and brushed for dander to be as clean as possible and you would be limited to areas of the hospital where infection control is not an issue. It's very exhausting for dogs. So visits should be kept to under 45 minutes. There are dogs who may not like being in places like nursing homes or hospitals, that might otherwise be great dogs in other areas. Even if the dog is calmly lying on a patient's bed or next to a wheelchair and seems to be doing a lot of nothing, that can be exhausting. Think how you are when you have to be super well behaved, especially when you're young.

PDT (Purrfect Dog Training) believes that animals make an invaluable contribution to human health and mental well-being. PDT will provide a full course of training for testing to maintain the regulations of the testing process. First training course will take place in Saint Germain at the Purrfect Dog Facility following an AKC CGC testing at the end of the course. Once completed and you would like certification, a scheduled time to have your dog perform in public places and tested for AAT (Animal Assisted Activities) State and Federal Requirement. Upon successful completion of the PDT **THERAPAW** Program, dogs and their owners will be certified and registered as a team.

**We'd like you to become part of our team.**

8-week training course in Saint Germain @ Purrfect Dog Facility.

AKC Canine Good Citizenship Test at the end of the course

Full Certification: AAT State and Federal Testing will take place in public entities: Includes full packet, S&F testing, vests, patches, ID cards, certificate, registration booklet and full support as long as the dog stays on the team.

