



## Therapy Dog Prep Course

Thank you for joining our Therapy Dog Prep Course! This journey is one that will provide a vast amount of education, hands on training, support, fun and each student will be working towards a very rewarding goal...Therapy Dog Certification. Specialty Dog Training does not provide the testing, but rather the preparation for the test. Testing information and requirements are included in this packet for your records.

Prior to enrolling in our TDPC (Therapy Dog Prep Course), a trainer from SDT will need to approve your participation. Pre-requisites include: foundation obedience, CGC (canine good citizen certificate), signed approval slip from an SDT trainer, up to date vaccinations, no communicable illness/disease and no health issues that would limit your dog from performing the needed training.

### Course Outline:

This course includes a total of 8 group sessions, held once weekly for a total of 8 consecutive weeks.

Classes are held on Saturday mornings at 8 am at our facility (rain or shine thanks to adequate coverage via our new canopy provided by Shazeebo™). Classes start promptly at 8 am, so please arrive a few minutes early. Review our website on the group class page for available class dates.

It is important that you commit and attend each class so that you don't miss any needed curriculum to properly prepare you and your dog.

Course Cost: \$360.00

Class instruction includes:

- Refresher on Foundation Obedience Cues
- Proper leash handling
- Reading Body Language
- Desensitization
- Exposure (dogs, people, walker, crutches, wheelchair, noise stimulus and other real life and distraction elements).
- Increasing focus on handler
- Proofing obedience with distractions
- Introduction to therapy specific cues and 1-3 tricks (not mandated on the TDI test but very welcomed to brighten someone's day)
- Mock TDI exam (final class)

\*There are no guarantees for passing the TDI Test by taking this course. A large part of your success is up to you practicing, doing your homework and following through.

The following policies apply for dog/handler teams interested in taking the TDI Test:

- Dogs must be a minimum of one-year old to be tested.
- The dog must be healthy
- The handler must be of good character.
- There is NO minimum age for handlers who pass the TDI Test without help. Condition: Handlers under 18 must be accompanied by an adult on visitations and the Registration Form must be signed by a parent or legal guardian.
- TDI Associate Members and their dog(s) may not visit, be registered by, or be active under the auspices of another Therapy Dog-related visitation program, organization, or group other than TDI.
- TDI cannot register service dogs.\*
- The Evaluation begins as soon as the Evaluator is able to observe you and your dog, not only when you are going through the test requirements as a dog/handler team.
- Potential applicants are NOT required to take any Therapy Dog classes. At the present time, TDI does not offer or sanction any Therapy Dog classes. Even though we do not require formal obedience classes, we recommend at least basic and intermediate obedience classes plus prep classes to expose the dog to working in various types of settings such as hospitals, nursing homes, schools, etc.
- If a handler wants to visit with more than one dog at a time, all dogs visiting together must be tested at the same time (TDI allows a maximum of 2 dogs to visit together). The team must go through the entire test and work as one unit. All dogs tested together in a multiple dog test must have passed the TDI Test

individually first.

- People with disabilities requiring a service dog cannot use the service dog as a therapy dog. However, they can be tested with another dog which is not a service dog. The service dog and the pet dog must go through the testing procedures at the same time.

### **Therapy Dogs International (TDI) Testing Guidelines**

Prior to being admitted to the evaluation, a brief temperament test will be performed on the dog by the evaluator.

The TDI Test is divided into two phases and has 13 individual tests and additional exercises within each test. The temperament evaluation is not included in this number.

The TDI Test is designed to simulate a visit with a therapy dog at a facility. This test reflects realistic situations and should be helpful in evaluating the potential therapy dog.

	<b>Simulating</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TDI entry table</li> </ul>	Facility check-in desk
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TDI Evaluator</li> </ul>	Volunteer coordinator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helpers</li> </ul>	Hospital personnel
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helper on crutches</li> </ul>	Patient on crutches
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helper in a wheelchair</li> </ul>	Patient in a wheelchair
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helper with a walker</li> </ul>	Patient with a walker
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helper or Evaluator with an object to startle the dog dropping a bedpan, etc.  (Can with pebbles, snapping of a clipboard, or similar object making a loud noise can be used)</li> </ul>	Hospital personnel
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helpers mingling in a crowd</li> </ul>	Hospital personnel, other visitors, or patients
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helpers mingling in a crowd Door or outline of a door  Anything can be used such as chairs, plungers, waste baskets, etc.</li> </ul>	Hospital entrance or exit

**Please note:** Retired racing greyhounds are not required to sit; they either must stand or down instead. This exception is made for retired racing greyhounds only, not for all greyhounds.

### **The Test Consists of Two Phases:**

#### **Phase I, where the dogs are tested as part of a group**

Begins with the testing of all applicants in a group, excluding the part where the dog will be handled by another person out of sight of the handler. The minimum size of the group is two. Dogs will be at least 8 ft. apart and on the left side of the handler. Handlers will be instructed that interaction between the dogs is not permitted at any time while on the premises where the test takes place including outside facilities, like a parking lot etc.

Why do we test in a group?

1. We will have a chance to see how the dog reacts around other dogs.
2. It is a time saver.

#### **Phase II, where the dogs are tested individually**

Dogs will be tested individually.

### **TDI TEST**

#### **Phase I**

The dog must wear either a flat buckle or snap-in collar (non corrective) or a harness (non corrective). **THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS.**

All testing must be done on a 6 ft. leash.\*

*\*If the dog is on a longer leash, a knot must be made in the leash to mark 6 ft. The handler must drop the extra leash.*

## **TDI Entry Table (Simulated as a Hospital Reception Desk)**

This part of the test is to simulate the arrival at a facility where the coordinator first greets the visiting dog team and instructs the handler on proper grooming before a therapy dog visit.

**Test #1:** *The dog/handler teams are lined up to be checked in (simulating a visit). The evaluator ("volunteer coordinator") will go down the line of registrants and greet each new arrival including each dog. At the same time the collars will be checked, as well as nails, ears and grooming and lifting of all 4 paws and tail. If the dog has a short cropped tail it should be touched.*

**Pulling, lunging, jumping up (unruliness), shyness, aggressiveness, or resisting any part of the examination is an automatic failure.**

### **Check-in and out of sight (time: One minute)**

This part of the test is to simulate the dog being able to be left with someone while the handler has to be briefly absent.

**Test #2:** *The handler will be asked to check in. After the check-in has been completed the handler will be escorted by a helper to where the handler is supposed to sit. All dogs will be placed in a down position on the handler's left side keeping teams at least 8 feet apart. Now the handler will start completing the paperwork.*

*Once all teams have been placed, the helper(s) will ask the handler(s) if they can hold their dogs. Now the handler(s) will leave for "one minute". The handler(s) can give the "stay" command verbally or by hand signal or both. The helper(s) can talk to and pet the dog(s). The dog(s) can sit, lie down, stand or walk around within the confines of the leash.*

**Whining, barking, or pulling away from the helper is an automatic failure.**

### **Getting around people**

In this part of the test we will be observing if the dog has been taught to heel properly on leash without pulling or lagging and at the same time is capable of interacting with multiple people in a friendly manner.

**Test #3:** *As the dog/handler team walks toward the patients' rooms, there will be various people standing around. Some of the people will try visiting with the dog. The*

*dog/handler team must demonstrate that the dog can withstand the approach and touching by several people from all sides at the same time and is willing to visit and walk around a group of people.*

**Pulling on the leash, jumping up, shyness, not wanting to visit, showing aggressiveness, or not walking on a loose leash is an automatic failure.**

### **Group sit/stay**

In this part of the test we will be able to see if the dog is under control even if the handler is not very close to the dog and other dog/handler teams are close by.

**Test #4:** *The evaluator will ask all the participants to line up with their dogs in a heel position (w/dog on left or right), with 8 ft. between each team. Now the handlers will put their dogs in a sit/stay position.*

*The handlers will give the sit command to the dogs.*

*The evaluator will tell the handlers to leave their dogs.*

*The handlers will step out to the end of their 6 ft. leash, turn around and face the dog(s) and wait for the evaluator's command to return to their dog(s). (The evaluator will give the return command immediately).*

**Not sitting, not staying when the handler leaves, or not staying until the handler returns is an automatic failure.**

### **Group down/stay**

The same procedure as in the sit/stay.

**Test #5:** *Same as test number 4, except dogs will now be in a down/stay.*

**Not sitting, not staying when the handler leaves, or not staying until the handler returns is an automatic failure.**

## **Recall on a 20 ft. leash**

In this part of the test we will be able to see how close the working relationship is between the dog handler/team. Does the dog come willingly and happily if recalled on a 20 ft. lead? It will also show us if the dog is under control of the handler.

**Test #6:** *All handlers will be seated.*

*Three dogs at a time will be fitted with a long line. The reason we fit more than one dog with a long line at the same time is to save time.*

*The handler will continue to hold the 6 ft. leash while the long line is fitted by a helper. To avoid any kind of incident, the evaluator will make sure that the handler is holding the 6 ft. leash until the dog has been placed and is ready to be tested for the recall.*

*One handler at a time will take the dog to a designated area which is out of reach of the other dogs even with a 20 ft. line.*

*The evaluator will then give the command:*

*Down your dog!*

*The handler can down the dog either by voice and or by hand signal.*

*The evaluator will give the command:*

*Leave your dog!*

*The handler will tell the dog to stay either by voice and or by hand signal.*

*The handler now will turn away from the dog and walk in a straight line to the end of the 20 ft. lead.*

*The handler will turn and face the dog.*

*The evaluator immediately will tell the handler to call the dog.*

*The handler will call the dog, either by voice, hand signal or both.*

**Not staying in place or not coming when called is an automatic failure.**

## **Visiting with a patient**

**Test #7:** *The dog should show willingness to visit a person and demonstrate that it can be made readily accessible for petting (i.e. small dogs will be placed on a person's lap or held; medium dogs will sit on a chair or stand close to the patient to be easily reached, and larger dogs will be standing).*

**Shyness, aggressiveness, jumping up, or not wanting to visit is an automatic failure.**

## **Phase II**

### **Testing of reactions to unusual situations**

**Test #8:** *The dog handler team will be walking in a straight line.*

*The dog can be on either side, or slightly behind the handler; the leash must not be tight.*

*The evaluator will ask the handler to have the dog sit (the handler may say sit or use a hand signal or both).*

*Next the evaluator will ask the handler to down the dog (the handler may say down or use a hand signal or both).*

*Next continuing walking in a straight line, the handler will be asked to make a right, left and an about turn at the evaluator's discretion.*

The following distractions will be added to the heel on a loose leash.

a. *The team will be passing a person on crutches.*

**The dog must visit with a person on crutches, in a wheelchair, or using a walker.**

b. *Someone running by calling "excuse me, excuse me" waving hands (This person is running up from behind the dog. This person will begin by running up from the start line. If the test is being held outdoors, it could also be a person on a bicycle, roller blades, or a skateboard etc.).*

The dog can be slightly startled, but must recover immediately.

*c. Another person will be walking by and drop something making a loud startling noise (a tin can filled with pebbles or a clipboard). At an indoor test there may be a running vacuum cleaner (realistic in a facility).*

*d. Next the team will be requested to make an about turn.*

*e. And then a left turn.*

**To make it more realistic the left turn will be around some people. The people will be shuffling, moaning, coughing and also talking loudly. Various health care devices will be used by the people (wheelchairs, crutches, etc.)**

*f. Then the team will be requested to make a right turn, going back parallel toward the starting point in a straight line.*

**To make it more realistic the right turn will be around some people. Same scenario as (e)**

**Not behaving well in public, heeling on a loose lead, turning when indicated or visiting happily with all the people is an automatic failure.**

### **Leave-it; part one**

The leave-it exercise is extremely important. A treat from a stranger could be potentially lethal as could medicine dropped on the floor of a health care institution. Drinking or licking up water or liquids from a floor could also be dangerous. The dog must be trained to avoid all of these situations.

**Test #9:** *The dog handler/team meets a person in a wheelchair.*

*The dog should approach the person and visit.*

*The person in the wheelchair, after briefly interacting with the dog, will offer the dog a treat by holding the treat steady in the hand while enticing the dog.*

*The handler must instruct the dog to leave it. It is up to the handler as to what kind of verbal command they use to keep the dog from licking or taking the food.*

*The handler should explain to the patient why the dog cannot eat a treat while visiting (i.e. dog has food allergies).*

**Licking on the food or eating it, or drinking the water is an automatic failure.**

## **Leave-it; part two**

See Leave-it part one.

**Test #10:** *The dog handler will be walking in a straight line with the dog at heel.*

*There will be a piece of food in the path of the dog.*

*The dog is not allowed to lick or eat the food.*

*There should also be a bowl of water in the path of the dog.*

*The dog is not allowed to drink.*

**Licking on the food or eating it, or drinking the water is an automatic failure.**

## **Meeting another dog**

This test will show us if a dog is well behaved around other dogs.

**Test #11:** *A volunteer with a demo dog will walk past the dog handler/team, turn around and ask the handler a question. After a brief conversation, the two handlers part.*

**Pulling, growling, lunging, barking or showing other aggressive behavior like eye contact toward the neutral dog is an automatic failure.**

## **Entering through a door to visit at the facility**

A person should be able to go through the entrance ahead of the dog/handler team.

**Test #12:** *The dog handler team is ready to enter through a door to a facility.*

*The handler first has to put the dog in a **sit**, **stand**, or **down stay**, whatever is most comfortable for the dog.*

**Not obeying the handler's command readily is an automatic failure.**

## Reaction to Children

### Test #13:

This test can only show us reactions to the presence of children since we do not allow physical contact with the unregistered dog.

**Test number 13 will be given last and only if the dog/handler team has passed all other segments of the TDI test.**

The children will be running and yelling, playing ball, dropping objects, and doing what children usually do while playing.

1. *The handler will walk with the dog past playing children.*
2.
  - a. *The dog must lie down beside the handler.*
  - b. *The handler will simulate reading a book while the dog is lying down.*
  - c. *The dog MUST have his back to the children.*

**Any negative reaction of the dog like being startled (without recovery), aggressively barking, jumping up, growling, or lunging toward the children is an automatic failure.**