




Canine Good Citizen & Pet Therapy Class Part 1



Welcome to our **Pet Therapy and AKC Canine Good Citizen Preparation** group class! This class will help you evaluate if your dog is suitable for pet therapy and will also prepare you and your dog for the AKC CGC evaluation.

Attending this group class does not guarantee that your dog will pass the CGC exam and obtain the CGC title or that your dog will successfully become a pet therapy dog but it will help educate you about what is appropriate for a pet therapy dog and what is required for the CGC evaluation. If your dog doesn't pass the CGC exam there is no need to stress about it, sometimes dogs have a bad testing day or they may just not be ready to test yet. Your instructor will guide you in how well your dog is doing and what further training may or may not be required to meet your goals.





CGC Test Items

The AKC evaluation will happen during the last class and will consist of the following test items quoted from the AKC website:

1 *Accepting a friendly stranger* This test demonstrates that the dog will allow a friendly stranger to approach it and speak to the handler in a natural, everyday situation.

The evaluator approaches the dog and handler and greets the handler while ignoring the dog. The dog should show no resentment or shyness.

2 *Sitting politely for petting* This test demonstrates that the dog will allow a friendly stranger to touch it while it is out with its handler.

While the dog sits at the handler's side the evaluator greets and pets the dog. The dog may stand but should show no shyness or resentment and shouldn't lunge for or jump on the evaluator.

3 *Appearance and grooming* This test demonstrates that the dog will permit someone, such as a veterinarian or groomer to examine or groom them. It also demonstrates the owner's care and responsibility for them.

The evaluator will examine the dog in ways such as brushing them and picking up a paw. Dog should appear healthy and cared for and remain under control without jumping at or excessively pulling from the evaluator.

4 *Out for a walk (on a loose lead)* This test demonstrates that the handler is in control of the dog when the dog is walking on a leash.

The dog should walk with the handler on a loose lead but does not need to be in a heel. The walk should consist of a right turn, left turn, about turn, and should have at least one stop where a sit is allowed but not required.

5 *Walking through a crowd* This test demonstrates that the dog can move about politely in pedestrian traffic and is under control when on leash in public.

The dog walks on a loose lead with handler and passes by people. The dog may show interest in the people but shouldn't pull, jump, or show shyness.



6

Sit, down, and stay in place

This test demonstrates that the dog has training, will respond to the handler's cues to sit and down and will remain in place (sit or down position, whichever the handler prefers).

Dog must do a sit and down when cued by handler. The handler then chooses a sit or down to leave the dog in for a stay while they walk away and then return to dog when instructed to do so. The dog may be on a long line.

7

Coming when called

This test demonstrates that the dog will come when called by the handler.

With the dog on a long line the handler will go ten feet from the dog and call them to which the dog should come to the handler.

8

Reaction to another dog

This test demonstrates that the dog can behave politely around other dogs.

Two handlers and their dogs approach each other, stop and briefly exchange pleasantries, then continue to walk. Dogs should remain by their handlers and not go to the other dog or handler.

9

Reaction to distraction

This test demonstrates that the dog is always confident when faced with common distracting situations.

Evaluator will present two distractions, likely one visual and one sound distraction. The dog may show curiosity or slightly startle but should recover and not panic. Some examples of distractions are opening a door, a moving wheelchair, dropping something, etc.

10

Supervised Separation

This test demonstrates that a dog can be left with a trusted person, if necessary, and will maintain training and good manners.

Evaluator will take the dogs leash and owner will go completely out of sight for three minutes. Dog doesn't have to remain in a stay but should not show excessive concern or anxiety and should retain good manners.

Direct and partial quotes have been taken from the AKC.org website in reference to the CGC test items.





Working Dog Differences

Here are some helpful definitions to help you understand the differences between different terms used in the United States for identifying dog jobs of emotionally assisting, cheering people up, or performing service work for a person with disabilities.

Emotional Support Animals



Emotional support animals, or ESAs, provide emotional support and comfort to their owner or family member



Legal Requirements

Helps a person with mental or emotional illness through companionship but is not trained to do any specific task for the person

Need to be prescribed by mental health professional or physician



Training

No official training required

Courteous Canine, Inc. recommends evaluation of suitability and training to be sure the recipient is set up for success and that the dog does not make any life-altering mistakes

Public Access



Gets special accommodation in housing such as allowance in apartments



Cannot go into public places - no indoor restaurants, grocery stores, or other place where pets aren't allowed



Cannot fly in the cabin on an airplane

Therapy Dogs



Therapy Dogs provide comfort to various individuals in locations which they've been invited



Legal Requirements

Provide affection and comfort for various people

Accompany owners to various places such as hospitals, schools, nursing homes, and assisted living facilities to cheer up patients and staff

Must have insurance



Training

Should have basic training and may have some variation of other training specific to pet therapy

It is beneficial to join a therapy dog organization. Courteous Canine recommends Hearts of Gold which provides testing in the Tampa Bay Area for therapy dogs to allow them access to insurance. For more information contact Ginger from Hearts of Gold at grrmftherappups@grrmf.org

Public Access



Does not get special accommodation for housing



Have no special public access rights for places like indoor restaurants or grocery stores, can only go to places they've been invited



Cannot fly in the cabin on an airplane

Service Dogs



Service dogs are legally classified as medical equipment and are allowed most places their handler is



Legal Requirements

Trained to perform specific tasks directly related to a person's disability

Considered medical equipment not pets

Legally defined and protected by the American with Disabilities Act



Training

Highly trained in public access skills and also trained to perform specific tasks which help their handler

Have an extremely high standard for the dog's temperament so that the dog is completely free of issues and willing and safe to go into various types of public places and environments

Public Access



Gets special accommodation in housing such as allowance in apartments



Can go almost anywhere the public can go



Can fly in the cabin on an airplane





Moving Forward

For any of these three jobs we recommend our Canine Good Citizen & Pet Therapy Class Parts 1 and 2 to better prepare you and your dog for their job ahead. For a pet therapy dog we recommend that after completing pet therapy training and testing, trick training can be a fun addition to your therapy dog's repertoire. Tricks are sure to bring a smile to anyone's face! We host several trick training classes, learn more [at our website](#).

Happy AKC Canine Good Citizen and pet therapy learning, we're thrilled to have you!

If not already signed up for Canine Good Citizen & Pet Therapy Class, learn more and sign up [here](#).



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Canine, Inc.**
Results the FUN way!



Contact Us

 (813) 949-1465

 LoveDogs@CourteousCanine.com


 www.CourteousCanine.com




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Designed and Copyedited by Kimberly Archer, CPDT-KA, CTDI

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