



## **PAWSOME ASSISTANCE DOGS**

**Uses Public Access Standards Assessment that comply with  
the IAADP Standards**

**IAADP  
International Association of  
Assistance Dog Partners**

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### **IAADP Minimum Training Standards for Public Access**

IAADP's overall mission is to foster the assistance dog movement in the USA and other countries. As part of this mission, we seek to promote the responsible use of access rights in the disabled community.

IAADP has developed a set of Minimum Training Standards for Public Access. These are drawn from the Minimum Training Standards for Service Dogs first established by Assistance Dogs International (ADI) with consumer input from IAADP. Visit [www.assistancedogsinternational.org](http://www.assistancedogsinternational.org)

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## **IAADP Minimum Training Standards for Public Access**

### **1. Amount of Schooling- 120 hours:**

An assistance dog should be given a minimum of one hundred twenty (120) hours of schooling over a period of Six Months or more. At least thirty (30) hours of which should be devoted to outings that will prepare the dog to work obediently and unobtrusively in public places.

### **2. Obedience Training:**

A dog must master the basic obedience skills: "Sit, Stay, Come, Down, Heel" and a dropped leash recall in a store in response to verbal commands and/or hand signals.

### **3. Manners:**

A dog must acquire proper social behaviour skills. It includes at a minimum:

- No aggressive behaviour toward people or other animals - no biting, snapping, snarling, growling or lunging and barking at them when working off your property.
- No soliciting food or petting from other people while on duty.
- No sniffing merchandise or people or intruding into another dog's space while on duty.
- Socialize to tolerate strange sights, sounds, Odors etc. in a wide variety of public settings.
- Ignores food on the floor or dropped in the dog's vicinity while working outside the home.
- Works calmly on leash. No unruly behaviour or unnecessary vocalizations in public settings.
- No urinating or defecating in public unless given a specific command or signal to toilet in an appropriate place.

### **4. Disability Related Tasks:**

The dog must be individually trained to perform identifiable tasks on command or cue for the benefit of the disabled human partner. This includes alerting to sounds, medical problems, certain scents like peanuts or situations if training is involved.

For a definition of a "task" and "individually trained," and "what is not a task" and many examples of tasks performed by different kinds of assistance dogs.

### **5. Prohibited Training:**

Any training that arouses a dog's prey drive or fear to elicit a display of aggression for guard or defence purposes is strictly prohibited. Non aggressive barking as a trained behaviour is permitted in appropriate situations.

### **6. A Trainer's Responsibilities:**

Trainers function as ambassadors for the assistance dog movement. This includes a disabled owner trainer, a provider's staff or a volunteer with a puppy or adult dog "in training." It also includes an assistance dog partner or able bodied facilitator helping a disabled loved one to keep up an assistance dog's training. At a minimum, you should:

- Know pertinent canine laws (i.e. leash laws and public access laws)
- Ensure the dog is healthy, flea free and vaccinations are up to date
- Take time to make sure your dog is well groomed and free of any foul odour
- Show respect and consideration to other people and property.
- Use humane training methods; monitor the dog's stress level; provide rest breaks.
- Carry clean up materials. Arrange for prompt clean up if a dog eliminates or gets sick.
- Be polite and willing to educate the public about assistance dogs and access rights.

\* The 120 hours of schooling includes the time invested in homework training sessions between obedience classes or lessons from an experienced dog trainer.

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## **PUBLIC ACCESS TEST**

How will you know when your dog is ready to graduate from an "in training" status to the status of a full fledged assistance dog with whom you are entitled to have public access rights?

An excellent tool for evaluating a team's readiness to graduate [e.g. finish up formal training] is the Public Access Certification Test (PACT) which can be found on the website of Assistance Dogs International at [www.assistancedogsinternational.org](http://www.assistancedogsinternational.org)

The Public Access Test evaluates the dog's obedience and manners and the handler's skills in a variety of situations which include:

### **A. The handler's abilities to:**

- ( 1 ) safely load and unload the dog from a vehicle;
- ( 2 ) enter a public place without losing control of the dog;
- ( 3 ) to recover the leash if accidentally dropped, and
- ( 4 ) to cope calmly with an access problem if an employee or customer questions the individual's right to bring a dog into that establishment.

### **B. The dog's ability to:**

- ( 1 ) safely cross a parking lot, halt for traffic, and ignore distractions;
- ( 2 ) heel through narrow aisles;
- ( 3 ) hold a Sit-Stay when a shopping cart passes by or when a person stops to chat and pets the dog;
- ( 4 ) hold a Down Stay when a child approaches and briefly pets the dog;
- ( 5 ) hold a Sit Stay when someone drops food on the floor; hold a Down Stay when someone sets a plate of food on the floor within 18" (30 cm) of the dog, then removes it a minute later. [the handler may say "Leave It" to help the dog resist the temptation.]

( 6 ) remain calm if someone else holds the leash while the handler moves 20 ft. (6m) away;

( 7 ) remain calm while another dog passes within 6 ft. (2m) of the team during the test. This can occur in a parking lot or store. Alternatively, you could arrange for a neighbour with a pet dog to stroll past your residence while you load your dog into a vehicle at the beginning of the test.

IAADP agrees with ADI's ethical position that the amount of training given to an assistance dog should NEVER fall below the minimum level needed to pass this Public Access Test.

**NOTE: Passing the Public Access Test does not mean the organization, ADI, officially "certifies" your dog, since ADI does not certify any dogs and neither does IAADP.** It is up to the program or trainer giving the test to provide the desired credentialing.

**AKC Canine Good Citizen (CGC) Test:** Another way to document you have made an effort to train your dog to be safe around other dogs and people while working out in public is to pass what is known as the “CGC” test. Many obedience training centres offer the test to handlers who take their six week “Canine Good Citizen” class after a six week Beginner obedience class. Others may offer it once or twice a year to members of the public who want to earn that credentialing. IAADP urges owner trainers to at least train an assistance dog to the point where he or she can pass it with flying colours.

## **DEFINITIONS**

### **What is a Task?**

A task is a certain desired behaviour or set of behaviours the dog is trained to habitually perform in response to a command or a particular situation such as the onset of a seizure, which cues the dog to perform a task. The task must be related to your disabling condition, helping you in some way.

### **What is meant by “individually trained”?**

A dog has been “individually trained” to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a disabled individual when the dog is deliberately taught

to exhibit the desired behaviour or sequence of behaviours by rewarding the dog for the right response(s) and communicating, if only through silence, when the dog has made the wrong response in a particular situation. A task is learned when the dog reliably exhibits the desired behaviour whenever needed to assist his/her partner on command or cue. Examples of individually trained tasks include retrieving a phone, providing deep pressure therapy during a panic attack or providing balance support on a staircase to prevent a fall.

### **Why are individually trained Tasks so important?**

Trained tasks that mitigate the effects of a disabling condition are the legal basis for granting access rights to disabled handlers. An assistance dog with this special training is viewed as assistive technology / medical equipment, not as a pet