

HAB HUMAN ANIMAL BOND

APPENDIX D

TEMPERAMENT ASSESSMENT FOR DOGS

D-1. HAB dog suitability evaluations

a. For dogs to be utilized in HAB programs, the following evaluations are provided to determine their suitability. They are especially applicable for animals with unknown backgrounds but are also valuable in evaluating other dogs as well. The great variances in therapy use and animal behavior do not allow these evaluations to guarantee a correct selection. In fact, the response categories that are listed with the evaluations do not include every possible behavior that might occur. It is therefore absolutely necessary to utilize an experienced consultant, such as an animal behaviorist, trainer, or veterinarian when assessing the final animal candidates for an animal assisted therapy program.

b. Dog Demographics:

Name _____ Breed _____ Sex (Spayed/Neutered) _____
Age _____ Program _____

c. Rules Of Engagement: Grading (GO/NO-GO): If the dog receives an unacceptable during any of the evaluations, that is an automatic NO-GO and the evaluations should be discontinued. All observations marked questionable require comment. The Evaluator should use his/her subjective evaluation to determine overall GO/NO-GO for each evaluation based on the questionable observations.

d. Condition: Evaluations should be done in a room or fenced yard with minimal distractions. The dog should not be familiar with the area nor should anyone the dog knows be in the vicinity. Some evaluations may require an assistant.

D-2. Suitability evaluation procedures

a. Evaluation 1: Initial observation (table D-1)

Action- Allow the dog to investigate the area for a few minutes without the Evaluator present. The Evaluator, previously unknown to the dog, should then enter the area, stand still at a discreet distance and observe the dog for approximately 15 seconds. Record the very first response.

Table D-1
Initial observation

Eval	Acceptable	Questionable	Unacceptable
1	☐ Holds ground ☐ Approaches Evaluator ☐ Hackles normal ☐ Flew (lips) normal ☐ Sniffs Evaluator	☐ Crouches ☐ Flew (lips) "puffing" ☐ Moves about "stiff-legged" ☐ Barks ☐ Avoids eye contact	☐ Hackles up ☐ Growls ☐ Flew (lips) curled ☐ Bares teeth ☐ Antagonistic*

①

☐ Ignores Evaluator ☐ Relaxed* ☐ Other _____	☐ Stares at Evaluator ☐ Whines ☐ Retreats ☐ Aroused* ☐ Other _____	☐ Other _____
---	---	--------------------------------------

*Terminology refers to overall body posture and facial expression (Overall, Karen. *Clinical Behavioral Medicine for Small Animals*. 1997, 25-26.)

Comments:

(Continue to Evaluation 2 unless an unacceptable observation occurs)

b. Evaluation 2: Approaching the dog (table D-2)

Action- Approach the dog with a level hand extended at the dog's nose, palm and fingers pointed downward. Do not "rush" in, but do not approach the dog in a cautious or apprehensive manner. Walk up to the dog in a normal stride until your hand is within 6 to 12 inches of the dog's nose. Say nothing, and wait for the dog to make the next move.

Table D-2

Approaching the dog

	Acceptable	Questionable	Unacceptable
Eval 2	☐ Extends head or steps forward to sniff hand ☐ Seeks attention by nudging or leaning into Evaluator ☐ Acts playful by barks or actions ☐ Licks hand ☐ Relaxed* ☐ Other: _____	☐ Turns head away or tries to ignore hand ☐ Pulls back or retreats ☐ Flews (lips) "puffing" ☐ Overly exuberant ☐ Stares at Evaluator ☐ Aroused* ☐ Other: _____	☐ Growls ☐ Raises hackles ☐ Barks (not to be confused with playful barking) ☐ Bares teeth (not to be confused with "grin") ☐ Antagonistic* ☐ Other _____

*Terminology refers to overall body posture and facial expression (Overall, Karen. *Clinical Behavioral Medicine for Small Animals*. 1997, 25-26.)

Comments:

2

Circle one: GO/NO-GO

c. Evaluation 3: Handling the dog (table D-3)

Condition- If the dog has not been eliminated by Evaluation 1 and/or Evaluation 2

Action- The Evaluator should attempt to pet the dog, starting with the top of the head. Use the same attitude described in Evaluation 2. Then pet and brush the dog to determine its overall response on especially sensitive areas, such as ears and mouth.

Table D-3

Handling the dog

	Acceptable	Questionable	Unacceptable
Eval 3	☐ Leans into or against Evaluator ☐ Licks hand ☐ Gently nudges with nose ☐ Becomes playful ☐ Relaxed posture during brushing ☐ Other _____	☐ Pulls back or retreats ☐ Flews (lips) "puffing" ☐ Quivers ☐ Barks ☐ Cowers ☐ Rolls over on back ☐ Overly exuberant (jumps up; not calm by end of evaluation) ☐ Shows whites of eyes ☐ Overly sensitive to grooming of certain areas ☐ Aloof ☐ Meets you, but with head lowered, averted eyes ☐ Other _____	☐ Snaps, bites ☐ Raises hackles ☐ Growls ☐ Submissively urinates ☐ Other _____

Comments:

Circle one: GO/NO-GO

d. Evaluation 4: Interacting with the dog (table D-4)

Condition- If the dog has not been eliminated by Evaluation 3. This evaluation requires the use of an assistant for one of the interactions.

Action- Interact with the dog, including the following tasks. Based on the reactions, determine if the dog is a GO/NO-GO for this evaluation.

3

Table D-4
Interacting with the dog

Interaction	Reaction
Social Interaction: walk away briskly, sit on the floor and call the dog	
Lay the dog down, then roll it over, and rub its belly. Does it allow this subordinate position?	
Have an assistant place a novel stimulus such as a large stuffed animal or mirror close behind the dog when it is distracted. Encourage the dog to investigate. Does it have self-confidence?	
Attempt to play tug-of-war with an appropriate toy. Does the dog play this game aggressively? How does the dog react to sudden arm movement?	

Circle one: GO/NO-GO

e. Evaluation 5: Sound sensitivity (table D-5)

Condition- This evaluation requires the use of an assistant.

Action- While casually interacting with the dog, have an assistant make a very loud noise without warning (for example, hitting a metal pan with a spoon).

Table D-5
Sound sensitivity

	Acceptable	Questionable	Unacceptable
Eval 5	☐ Notices, but continues previous activity ☐ Notices and investigates ☐ Startles, but recovers quickly ☐ Other _____	☐ Flees ☐ Cowers ☐ Freezes ☐ Trembles ☐ Other _____	☐ Urinates ☐ Moves as if to attack ☐ Other _____

Comments:

Circle one: GO/NO-GO

f. Evaluation 6: Reaction to uncomfortable tactile stimuli (table D-6)

Condition- muzzle the dog for this evaluation (as a safety precaution)

Action- While playing with the dog, briefly pinch the webbing between its toes or pull a hair from its side to determine the dog's reaction to uncomfortable tactile stimuli. (You will want to know a dog's reaction to sudden pain if its tail is accidentally rolled over by a wheelchair, for instance).

Table D-6

Reaction to uncomfortable tactile stimulus

	Acceptable	Questionable	Unacceptable
Eval 6	☐ Tries to pull away, but immediately relaxes ☐ Yelps, but is not aggressive ☐ Allows further petting ☐ Other _____	☐ Acts fearful ☐ Acts distrustful ☐ Other _____	☐ Growls ☐ Snaps ☐ Other _____

Comments:

Circle one: GO/NO-GO

g. Evaluation 7: Reacting to unexpected events (table D-7)

Condition- This evaluation requires the use of an assistant.

Action- Based on the reactions, determine if the dog is a GO/NO-GO for this evaluation. Choose one of the following options:

Table D-7

Reacting to unexpected events

Interaction	Reaction
Have an assistant hide around a corner, out of sight, with a noisy utility or shopping cart. Walk with the dog toward the intersection, as the assistant rolls the cart in front of the dog as close as possible.	
While the dog is playing with you and distracted, have an assistant hide in a closet or behind a door. Lead the dog to within 6 feet of the hiding place and have the assistant suddenly jump out at the dog and	

5

open an umbrella.	
-------------------	--

Circle one: GO/NO-GO

h. Evaluation 8: Basic training command control (table D-8)

Condition- The owner will demonstrate basic commands and or training techniques. Looking for general compliance with commands to assess animal control.

Action- No attempt is made in this evaluation to obedience train the dog. The object is to determine if the dog is mannerly enough for a visit to the prospective location. Record comments for any areas marked "No." Based on the subjective evaluation of manners, determine GO/NO-GO.

Table D-8
Basic training and commands

Command/Activity	Yes	No
Sit		
Stay		
Down or Settle		
Leash Etiquette/Control (Heal)		
Leave It		

Comments:

Circle one: GO/NO-GO

i. Evaluation 9: Reaction to another animal (table D-9)

Condition- an assistant will have another unfamiliar animal on a leash beginning 15-20 feet away.

Action- the assistant will gradually approach the evaluated dog (on leash) to within 3-4 feet. The object is to determine how the dog reacts to an unfamiliar animal. Record comments for any areas marked "No." Based on the subjective evaluation of manners, determine GO/NO-GO.

Table D-9
Reaction to another animal

	Acceptable	Questionable	Unacceptable
Eval 9	☐ Ignores the animal ☐ Notices new animal ☐ Allows further petting ☐ Other _____	☐ Acts fearful ☐ Barks ☐ Aroused* ☐ Other _____	☐ Growls ☐ Snaps ☐ Lounges at animal ☐ Other _____

6

Comments:

Circle one: GO/NO-GO

j. Overall evaluation

Action- Record an overall evaluation of the interaction based on the responses recorded in the previous evaluations. Rate the dog by your subjective impressions. (If there are any evaluations with a "NO-GO", then the dog does not meet requirements)

☐ MEETS REQUIREMENTS
☐ DOES NOT MEET REQUIREMENTS

Evaluator: _____

Signature of Veterinarian: _____ Date: _____

⑦