

Pet Partners[®] Aptitude Test

The Delta Society[®] Pet Partners Aptitude Test (PPAT) determines if you and your animal have the ability, capacity, desire, and potential for participating in animal-assisted activities (AAA) and animal-assisted therapy (AAT) programs (see [information about AAA/T](#)). This part of the evaluation is similar to what many people would call a temperament test. Delta did not use the word "temperament" because so many people think that animals are born with a certain temperament and it can never be changed. We know that with training, many animals can learn to be reliable. For this reason, we use the word "aptitude" to suggest that the test applies to the animal's ability or potential for AAA/AAT. The PPAT also evaluates the aptitude of the animal/handler team.

The PPAT is based on research. To develop the test, over 600 qualified evaluators of visiting animals were surveyed. The people surveyed received a list of the 35 most frequently used items on temperament tests from all over the country. Many of those who responded to the survey stressed that the aptitude test should be functional and resemble a visit. There are 10 parts to the PPAT.

The PPAT is a combination of scenarios in which the individual exercises flow from one to another. The order of the exercises allows for escalation of stressors during testing.

During the PPAT, the handler and animal should interact (i.e., role play) with the evaluator and assistants as though they are people being visited at a facility. The handler should be able to work with the animal while at the same time interacting socially with the "client" (evaluator and assistants) as if on a visit.

Exercise A: Overall Exam



This exercise demonstrates that the animal will accept and is comfortable being examined by a stranger and the handler knows how to present the animal on a visit and how to help the animal accept and welcome being touched all over.

Exercise B: Exuberant and Clumsy Petting



This exercise demonstrates that the animal will maintain self-control and will tolerate clumsy petting by people who have differing physical abilities or who do not know proper etiquette around the animal and the handler can work with the animal to help it tolerate such attention.

Exercise C: Restraining Hug



This exercise demonstrates that the animal will accept or welcome restraint and that the handler can assist the animal to accept or welcome such a situation.

Exercise D: Staggering, Gesturing Individual



This exercise demonstrates that the animal will exhibit confidence when a person acting in an unusual manner approaches and then interacts with it and the handler has the social skills to interact with such a person while attending to the animal.

Exercise E: Angry Yelling



This exercise demonstrates that the animal will not be upset when someone exhibits angry emotions and that the handler can help the animal tolerate such a situation.

Exercise F: Bumped from Behind



This exercise demonstrates that the animal is able to recover when a person bumps into it and that the handler can not only tolerate the animal being bumped, but can also assist the animal to recover.

Exercise G: Crowded and Petted by Several People



This exercise demonstrates that the animal will tolerate crowding and petting by several people at once and the handler has the social skills to visit with a group of people while still attending to the animal and maintaining its well-being.

Exercise H: Leave It



This exercise demonstrates the animal will ignore a toy left on the floor.

Exercise I: Offered a Treat



This exercise demonstrates the animal will take a treat politely and gently.

Exercise J: Overall Assessment

This item determines that the handler is proactive, not reactive or inactive, in the handling and management of his/her animal.