



Requirements for Full Membership

STEP I

A: Members must submit a completed application.

STEP II (STEP II & III may be completed and forms submitted at the same time if you pass all exams)

Candidates with an approved application will be asked to complete a background check and testing of their pet handling skills and pet performance. Background check information will be provided by ATP.

Canine certification and handler/pet evaluation are summarized in the following guidelines.

B. The first test is the CGC Test. Dogs must pass the Canine Good Citizen (CGC) Test, submit your evaluation to the AKC, and obtain your AKC CGC Certificate. If you have previously completed the AKC CGC certification you would only be required to provide a copy of your certificate. Information about the CGC may be obtained from one of our recommended trainers or approved evaluator. You may also find information on the American Kennel Club website at <http://www.akc.org> and search for CGC.

C. The next test, the Canine Evaluation Therapy Dog Test, allows your dog to serve as a therapy dog. The evaluation is to be conducted by an ATP approved evaluator. The important information focuses on your dog's interaction in various situations, such as with children, elderly, disabled and other animals. Handlers and dogs must successfully complete five evaluation areas. The Canine Evaluation focuses on the following five key areas -

1. **Preparation and Appearance:** You and your dog should arrive well prepared with the proper leash (4-6 feet), collar/harness, and long line (15-20 feet).

Choke, shock, prong, pinch, gentle leaders/haltis, flexi-leads and leads/leashes, collars made of or containing chain(s) are not allowed.

You should be properly dressed in a professional appearance as if you were going to conduct a client visit. Your dog should be clean and well groomed.

2. **Handler Abilities:** The evaluator will observe your ability to work with your dog on a loose leash as well as follow instructions given to you by the evaluator.
3. **Obedience:** You and your dog will be evaluated on the following.
 - a. Sit-stay. Leaving your dog on a long leash in the sit stay position, walk out and back 8-10 feet.
 - b. Down-stay. This is the same evaluation as the sit-stay while having your dog in the down position.
 - c. Wait: Prior to entering a room/doorway you will have your dog wait and not precede you as you enter through doors. This exercise simulates stopping to request entry into a room or waiting for someone who is leaving the room.
 - d. Walking: Multiple directions and turns will be given to you as you navigate amongst other people and/or obstacles.



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4. **Discipline:** “Leave-it” command for both food offering and food left on the floor to determine your pet’s ability to obey your command and refrain from lunging for or eating the food items.
5. **Socialization/Temperament:** You and your dog will be evaluated on the following.
 - a. Ability to approach and stand calmly at a table or counter.
 - b. Calmly accepts passerby’s
 - c. Calmly accepts children
 - d. Calmly accepts handicapped and disabled, including medical devices such as wheelchairs, walkers, crutches, canes, IV poles, etc.
 - e. Meet and greet – Handlers and their dogs approach each other from a distance of approximately 15 feet, stop, shake hands, exchange pleasantries, and continue on. The dogs should show no more than a casual interest in each other. Neither dog should go to the other dog or its handler.
 - f. Contact – dog accepts petting, touching of the face, ears, feet, tail and remains calm, patient and a willing participant.

The evaluation form must be returned to ATP within 30 days of the exam date.

D. Dogs must be one year of age or older.

New dogs must be in the home for a minimum of six months to allow for socialization, bonding and relationship building before applying for membership.

E. At this time, ATP requires handlers to be 18 years of age or older.

Other animals would have an appropriate evaluation that will be given upon request.

STEP III

F. Applicants complete the remaining forms. Policies and procedures and release forms.