

## LAH Evaluation Exercises

Lend A Heart Evaluation exercises focus on you and your dog as a team. They are designed to show us your dog's temperament and level of obedience, along with how you work together with your dog and how you both relate to others. You do not need to memorize the exercises, as they will be explained to you by your Tour Guide, a Lend A Heart member who will walk you through each exercise. You'll perform the exercises together with assistants who are Lend A Heart members. On Evaluation day, bring your dog's brush and a treat. Give both to the Tour Guide.

### ***Evaluation Part 1—Team Skills***

#### **Exercise 1: Accepting a Friendly Stranger**

In this exercise, the assistant greets you and shakes your hand. Your dog may change positions but not advance forward or retreat backward.

#### **Exercise 2: Appearance & Grooming**

Next the assistant greets you and your dog. Your dog may sit, stand, or lie down. The assistant will approach, let your dog sniff his/her brush, gently brush your dog's back, examine ears and teeth, pick up front feet, and then circle behind you.

#### **Exercise 3: Out for a Walk**

You will walk your dog on a loose leash along an L-shaped pattern marked by cones. When you reach the end, turn around. On the way back stop at the black cone, and then return to your starting position.

#### **Exercise 4: Walking Through a Crowd**

We are in a crowded hallway at an assisted living center. The "hallway" is the area in the center of the room. Clients are walking in the hallway and there is a Lend A Heart team at the edge of the hallway. You'll walk to the end of the hallway and wait. The clients will not interact with your dog.

#### **Exercise 5: Reaction to Distraction**

We are in the same hallway on a different day. One of the clients is using a walker and one will drop a cone behind you as you walk through the hallway. The clients may speak to you but will not interact with your dog.

#### **Exercise 6: Sit on Command**

Have your dog sit for 3 seconds.

#### **Exercise 7: Down on Command**

Have your dog remain in a down for 3 seconds.

#### **Exercise 8: Stay in Place with Distraction and Come When Called**

We'll replace your leash with a long lead. One of our assistants will ask to visit with your dog. She/he will kneel or sit by your dog, pet your dog calmly, and you'll put your dog in a wait or stay. You'll walk out ten feet. After three seconds, the assistant will stop petting your dog, and you'll call your dog to you.

#### **Exercise 9: Reaction to Neutral Dog**

In this exercise you will encounter a Lend A Heart team walking toward you. Only the handlers will interact. You and the LAH team will approach each other and meet close to midway in the room. Both teams will stop and settle their dog. You should position your dog

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so that the dogs do not meet. When you are ready, greet the other handler, shake hands, and continue to the opposite side of the room.

### ***Evaluation Part 2—Team Visiting Skills***

You and your dog are attending LAH animal-assisted therapy programs. Interact with your dog and with others as you would on a visit.

#### **Exercise A: Reaction to Diverse Clients**

A client asks to visit your dog. Your dog may sit or stand, but should not lie down at the start of this exercise. Small dogs are placed on a table. There are several parts to this exercise and the Tour Guide will coach you through each part. Support your dog and interact with the client as well. The client will touch your dog's ears and all four paws. The client will use a high voice and a low voice while touching your dog's back with knuckles and elbows. The exercise will end with the client giving your dog a body hug.

#### **Exercise B: Staggering Individual**

A client using a cane and wearing a shawl will stagger forward, speaking loudly. Your dog may sit, stand, or lie down. Small dogs may be held. The client will stop and ask for a visit. You and your dog will move toward the client and visit.

#### **Exercise C: Crowded Petting in a Lobby**

You are visiting in the lobby of a care facility. A client is visiting with a Lend A Heart team close by. A nurse and a client in a wheelchair will approach you and your dog. They'll stop and the client will ask to meet your dog. You will approach them and position your dog to receive petting from the client. Hint: position your dog to the side of the wheelchair, rather than directly in front to mitigate the risk of a client leaning over to pet your dog and falling out of the chair. Small dogs may be held by you or visit on the client's lap using a blanket. Hint: ask if the client would like to hold the dog on his/her lap. The nurse will ask to pet your dog, and the client who was visiting with the LAH team will approach and ask to visit. There are now three clients visiting: one seated, one kneeling, and one leaning over. The LAH team that is present will walk in a circle about four feet from you.

#### **Exercise D: Leave It**

This exercise demonstrates your dog's ability to leave interesting objects. The Tour Guide will place a toy at the side of the room. You'll walk your dog across the middle of the room.

#### **Exercise E: Offer a Treat**

The Tour Guide will approach your dog and offer the treat that you brought. You may state whether or not your dog should accept the treat. If no, your dog must not take the treat. If yes, your dog must take the treat gently.

**This concludes the Lend A Heart Evaluation exercises.**

After completing the exercises, you and your dog may take a quick break outside. Then the Evaluator will discuss your Evaluation with you. If you are ready to begin visiting as a trainee, you will sign paperwork and be given further instructions. If you are not ready, you will be provided suggestions for training and/or opportunities to work on areas needing improvement.