



Therapy Dog Program

- Established and governed by Intermountain Therapy Animals
- Intermountain Therapy Animals establishes their own rules (these are not Best Paw Forward rules)
- The test has two parts. Part 1 contains all the same test parameters as CGC – (<http://www.akc.org/products-services/training-programs/canine-good-citizen/cgc-test-items-pledge/>) Part 2 is the aptitude portion where you are tested on how **you and your dog** react to different things.
- The Evaluator is a certified Intermountain Therapy Animals Evaluator. On test day, they are acting on behalf of Intermountain Therapy Animals, and therefore, must follow the guidelines and rules established by Intermountain Therapy Animals.

WHAT DO WE DO IN THERAPY DOG CLASS?

Our course is a 5-week class culminating with the test on week 5. The Therapy test is a 2-part test. Part 1 is a skills portion and part 2 is a temperament portion. In addition to the 10 items from the CGC test, there will be common medical equipment and medical situations introduced to help prepare both the handler and dog for Therapy work. We set up mock scenarios with volunteers that come in and help students learn in a realistic therapy environment how to approach patients in wheelchairs or with walkers, or patients who are bedridden. Frequently asked questions and common problems will be discussed to ensure that you feel comfortable when working in the field doing therapy work with your dog. At the end of the session, you may take the Therapy Dog Test administered by a Certified Evaluator. **This is a higher-level advanced class, and therefore, Basic Manners, Level 2 Manners, Intro to Therapy, and Canine Good Citizen class are prerequisites for this class.** Class size is limited. For more information on the Intermountain Therapy Animals Program and **their fees** please visit their website at <http://www.therapyanimals.org/Home.html>

WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO IN ORDER TO TAKE THE TEST?

- You must read the required ITA Manual, which is included in the class fee and supplied on week 1 of class.
- You must bring the Handler's Questionnaire paperwork that is in the back of the manual on test day.
- You must bring Proof of Vaccinations and your Rabies certificate (just having the tags will not be allowed). Even if you have taken classes with us, you will need to bring these records due to the fact that this is an ITA event NOT a Best Paw Forward event.
- You must bring a brush/comb.
- You must not wear jeans on test day.
- Your dog **MUST** be at least 2 years of age by the day of the test.

DO I HAVE TO PASS CGC TO DO THERAPY?

While having taken Canine Good Citizen class is a prerequisite, you do not have to pass the CGC test in order to take the Therapy class. **CGC and Therapy are established and governed by two different organizations and therefore have different rules.** Consideration of the reason why you didn't pass the CGC test will help us determine if going on to Therapy work is appropriate for your team at that time.

WHAT DOES THE COST OF THERAPY DOG CLASS INCLUDE?

Included is the required ITA Manual that contains the Handler's Questionnaire. The testing fee is also included. In addition, you will receive four weeks of instruction with two trainers and an assistant. The only thing not included is the registration fee for ITA once you pass the test and complete your final team registration with ITA.

DO I HAVE TO TAKE THE THERAPY CLASS OFFERED BY BEST PAW FORWARD IN ORDER TO TAKE THE ITA TEST?

In short, yes. In order to really understand what having a Therapy Dog means in the real world, as well as to successfully navigate the test, you do need to take the class. We talk about what it is and means to have a Therapy Dog. The four weeks of the therapy class offer you REAL WORLD scenarios & experience with your dog. We do role playing exercises so that you get comfortable talking with people. We discuss different team options that you may not have considered with your dog as well as the intricacies of being a Therapy team. We review and practice test points (part of which are from the Canine Good Citizen test).

WHAT HAPPENS ON TEST DAY?

Each team is given their own individual time slot (about 30 minutes) to test with the evaluator. We will discuss exactly what to expect during the working weeks of the class session.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I PASS THE TEST?

Once you pass the test, you will then send in the necessary paperwork along with their registration fee to Intermountain Therapy Animals. Every two years, you will need to retest. Since ITA insures their teams while they are volunteering, they need to be assured that nothing has changed with the handler/dog team over time. You do not have to take the Best Paw Forward Therapy class again. You just will need to call early enough to schedule a retest so that a test date is available in time.

HOW CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS?

Here are some links to the FAQ on the Intermountain Therapy Animals website:

http://www.therapyanimals.org/Volunteer_files/Volunteering%20with%20your%20Pet%202018.pdf
http://www.therapyanimals.org/Volunteer_files/ITA%20Self%20Assessment%205.17.pdf

Here is a link to ITA philosophy, and training and equipment requirements:

http://www.therapyanimals.org/Volunteer_files/Teaching%20Training%20Philosophy.pdf

ALWAYS keep in mind that this is to be FUN AND REWARDING for you and your dog! Not ALL dogs are cut out to be therapy dogs...and that's okay! Remember you are a team with your dog.