

Monmouth County SPCA Pet Therapy



Certification Requirements

In order to pass the certification test, you and your domestic animal will be tested as a team. You are required to pass every aspect of the test.

General qualifications for a Monmouth County SPCA Pet Therapy Team

- 🐾 Domestic animal must be at least a year old.
- 🐾 Be temperamentally sound in any circumstance.
- 🐾 Show absolutely no aggression under any circumstance.
- 🐾 Must wear a regular collar, Martingale collar or harness. No prong collars or choke chains are allowed.
- 🐾 Must be on a leash no longer than 6 feet. Retractable leashes are not allowed.
- 🐾 Must be fully housebroken.
- 🐾 Your potential therapy animal must be comfortable being around walkers, wheelchairs, crutches, and canes.
- 🐾 Animals should be neutered unless special permission is obtained

Dogs must demonstrate the ability to:

- 🐾 Say hi without jumping or barking
- 🐾 Know basic commands (Sit, stay, down, come, leave it).
- 🐾 Be able to walk on a loose leash.
- 🐾 Maintain composure when people run.
- 🐾 Maintain composure around loud and sudden noise.
- 🐾 Maintain composure when being pushed from behind.
- 🐾 Maintain composure when being crowned and touched all over.
- 🐾 Be okay with getting its tail pulled.
- 🐾 Be okay with getting a hug.
- 🐾 Walk amongst or next to a group of people.
- 🐾 Be able to coexist with other dogs and/or cats.
- 🐾 Be calm and obedient around one or multiple children.

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Cats must demonstrate the ability to:

- 🐾 Must wear a harness or collar and leash.
- 🐾 Must not use claws or teeth.
- 🐾 Must be able to be passed from person to person without using claws.
- 🐾 Must be able to be held for long periods.
- 🐾 Must be able to maintain composure when being handled and hugged.
- 🐾 Okay getting its tail pulled.
- 🐾 Must be able to coexist with other dogs and cats.
- 🐾 Be Calm and Obedient around one or multiple children.

Please note - The use of treats is not allowed during testing. Testing begins as soon as you and your potential therapy animal are on the premises.

Since all of these requirements need to be met in order to pass the certification test, please request to be tested only if you are fairly sure that you and your animal are ready.

Once you pass, you will receive, if needed, your volunteer T-shirt, photo ID and you will be asked to fill out additional paperwork to be kept on file with the Pet Therapy Leaders. You may be asked to pay a nominal fee for the annual dues (used for team supplies). We'll determine what size therapy vest is needed for your pet. It is your responsibility to assure your pet is at all times up-to-date on rabies vaccine. You must have on file with us at all times documented proof of rabies vaccine.

If you need suggestions on how to improve your pet's behavior in order to prepare for the certification test, or if you do not pass the test, but want to work on your animal's issues in order to re-test at a later date, please contact Stacy Handler (stacyh@monmouthcountyspca.org).