



## Willow Service Dogs L.L.C. Gluten and Allergen Test Overview

### Overview and Filming

This test may be performed in person, over video chat, or by video recording. When recording, the camera will be turned on, the handler will say the words “begin,” and start performing the test. After the exercise is finished, the handler will say “end,” and the camera will be turned off. The video will be submitted to the evaluator unedited. If at any point the evaluator feels the portion evaluated has been edited, it will be rejected by the evaluator.

The purpose of this test is to evaluate service dog handlers on the team working relationship as well as the service dog’s accuracy while performing gluten or allergen detection. A controlled search will be used to emulate a real-world situation. The controlled search will ensure the handler has the necessary skills to keep the team’s skills sharp. The team will be tested in six key areas:

- Known Controlled Search
- Blind Controlled Search
- Controlled Search™ Public Product Checks
- Controlled Search™ Meal Check
- Three Room Searches for the trained target odor.  
One with a large source, one with a medium source, and one with a trace.
- Hand Checks

Twenty-four hours before the test is to be performed, the evaluator will tell the handler or assistant which items to contaminate.

The test will be performed with all certified gluten- or allergen-free foods. Frozen fruits and vegetables will be taken from new, unopened frozen packages and thawed to room temperature before testing begins. All of the varying degrees of contamination must be used at least once throughout the test. During the public product check, foods will be pulled



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from the store shelves containing the target odor of gluten or allergen and presented to the dog.

The dog will perform either a trained indication behavior for target odor or a trained “All Clear” behavior (absence of target odor) for the absence of target odor after being presented with each sample.

## Contamination List

Gluten contaminants will be as follows:

- 5 g gluten
- 2.5 g gluten
- Trace gluten (contaminated parchment paper)
- Barley 100%
- Rye 100%

Allergen Concentrations will be as follows: (see “How to Make Odors”)

- 100% Tea 10 drops on 100% cotton
- 50% Tea 5 drops on 100% cotton
- 25% Tea 3 drops on 100% cotton
- 12.5% Tea 2 drops on 100% cotton
- 1% Tea 2 drop on 100% cotton

## Handler Bias

Handler bias is when the handler gives subtle cues to the dog, such as verbal cues, hand signals or uses body language or motions based on the handler's beliefs to cause the dog to perform a behavior. This may or may not be intentional by the handler. Often, the handler is unaware that they are providing cues to the dog.

## Scoring

The dog must perform the entire test with above 90% accuracy across the entire test to pass the test. Failure to alert to the target odor will result in an auto fail. The blind controlled search will be performed first followed by the known controlled search.



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On the score sheet, the evaluator will either record if the sample contained the target odor, a correct response, an incorrect response, or a double indication.

After completing the checks on all the sample items, the handler will go back to the item of the double response and present it again. The dog's response will be recorded. If the dog again performs a double indication, the test will be scored according to the last response the dog performs and commits to.

### Automatic fails will be given for

- Failure to alert to the target odor
- If the dog eats or drinks from the items presented in the mealtime check, or knocks the meal out of the handler's hands.
- Damaging merchandise in the public product check, showing aggression, fear, or stress in public.
- The handler performs behaviors that cause the dog stress, fear, or anxiety.
- Failure to focus and the dog is unable to perform a task or is unable to be redirected after a distraction within one minute, or the dog repeatedly loses focus or leaves the testing area.
- Handler bias
- The handler's interactions with the dog are causing fear or anxiety in the dog.

### Controlled Search

This test may be conducted in a gluten/allergen or gluten-free/allergen-free environment. Controlled Search means the dog must be able to check individual samples by sniffing the sample, then upon completion of sniffing behavior, the dog will perform a trained positive indication for target odor and a different trained negative behavior for "All Clear" of target odor.

### Known Controlled Search

The six known controlled search items will contain all certified gluten or allergen-free foods, of which three will be contaminated from the contamination list below. 24 hours before the test, the evaluator will tell the client which items are to be contaminated from the contamination list. The



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dog must accurately perform either the trained indication behavior or the All Clear behavior.

### Blind Controlled Search

The six blind controlled search items will be set up by an assistant who will not be present at the time of testing. The test will require six opaque containers. The container must be breathable so the dog can smell the contents. The handler will not be able to see the contents of the container.

Two of the opaque containers will be contain gluten or the allergen. The other four samples will remain odor-free. Each container will be marked on the bottom with its contents. When checking the samples, the dog must accurately perform either the trained indication behavior or the All Clear behavior.

### Public Product Check

(Can be performed at home if the dog will not be working in the public)

This test is to ensure the Gluten or Allergen Detection Service Dog is able to perform in a 'real world' environment with the distractions of the public. This test creates a more stressful environment for the dog, so the team should remember they are also being evaluated on their team relationship. Collar corrections, yelling at the dog, or redirecting in a way that promotes fear, anxiety, or stress will reflect on the team's overall score and result in an auto fail.

Eight items will be pulled from grocery store shelves or taken from a shopping cart or buggy as the handler shops. The products can be anything from food, cleaning supplies, hygiene products, or even dishes and toys, but should cover a range of products similar to what the handler will be exposed to on a regular basis. Three of the eight items will be known gluten or allergen-containing items. The remaining items will be certified as gluten free, or free of allergens.

As with the previous test, the dog must perform either a trained indication behavior or an all-clear upon being presented with an item.



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The dog may not damage any products. If the dog damages or comes in contact with any products, the items should be purchased out of respect to others.

If the dog becomes distracted, the dog must be able to refocus and check the product in less than 30 seconds.

### Controlled Search Meal Check

This will test the detection dog's ability to check a handler's meal.

Two of the items must be prepared with gluten- or allergen-containing. The dog will perform either a trained indication behavior for target odor or a trained "All Clear" behavior for the absence of target odor after sniffing each sample. If the dog eats from any of the meal, it will be an automatic fail.

### Hand Check

The purpose of the hand check is to verify that the handler's hands are free of gluten or allergen. This is particularly important before eating or preparing meals.

***Note: If the handler is unable to touch their target odor safely, gloves may be worn and removed after this portion of the test is complete***

When performing the hand check, the dog must accurately perform either a trained indication behavior or a trained all clear behavior. The dog will first check and clear washed hands, then one hand will be contaminated. The dog will check each hand separately and must accurately clear the clean hand and indicate on the contaminated hand.

### Room Search



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The room search evaluation is to evaluate a dog's preparedness to search environments for target-odor contamination that could prove harmful to the handler if exposed. The service dog will need to be able to conduct a blind room search, locating and performing the trained alert behavior for target odor on three scent items.

The sample sizes to be used for the searches will be:

- 5 g Gluten or 10 drops of 100% Allergen Tea
- 2.5 g Gluten or 5 drops 50% Allergen Tea
- Trace gluten or 2 drops 1% Allergen Tea

Three contaminated items will be placed in separate, breathable containers and then hidden by an assistant such that the dog and the handler do not know the location of the hidden item. One of the items needs to contain either trace gluten or an allergen tea. The assistant must take care that the scent cannot escape the container after the container has been hidden. Only one container will be hidden at a time. Each container must be hidden in a different room to prevent false indications from residual odor.