

**Examination  
for  
CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL DOG TRAINER –  
Knowledge & Skills Assessed**

Handbook for Candidates



Certification Council for  
Professional Dog Trainers

**Spring 2018 TESTING PERIOD**

Application Deadline: Friday, **February 9, 2018**

Testing Period Begins: Thursday, **February 15, 2018**

Testing Period Ends: Thursday, **March 8, 2018**

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## About The Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers

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### Mission Statement

The Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers® (CCPDT®) exists to be the industry leader in defining and maintaining competency in the dog training and behavior profession.

### Guiding Principles of the Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers

- To develop a recognized standard of proficiency based on current scientific evidence for dog training and behavior professionals through an independent certification process of standardized testing.
- To maintain empirically validated certification examinations that are psychometrically sound, based on current scientific evidence in the profession and independent of commercial influence.
- To recognize documented training and behavior experience as valid, functional criteria relevant to the certification process.
- To encourage growth and fluency of knowledge in the profession and thus foster a link in the community of trainers, behavior consultants, academics, veterinarians/veterinary staff, breeders, rescues, shelters and other animal professionals.
- To benefit animal and human welfare by promoting strategies and methods based on humane practices defined by the CCPDT Core Values.
- To promote and protect the Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainer designations as the publicly recognized credential of dog training and behavior professionals committed to education, experience and professional excellence.

### Position Statements

The CCPDT adheres to a humane hierarchy in animal training. Please review our Humane Hierarchy position statement, found in this handbook. We also support the Punishment Position Statement of the American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior (AVSAB) which can be found on their website at [www.avsab.org](http://www.avsab.org)

## Certification

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The Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers (CCPDT) endorses the concept of voluntary, periodic certification by examination for all dog training and behavior professionals. Certification focuses specifically on the individual and is an indication of relevant current knowledge in a specialized area of practice. Certification for dog training and behavior professionals is highly valued and provides formal recognition of basic knowledge.

The CCPDT reserves the right to change any of the requirements concerning its Certified Professional Dog Trainer-Knowledge & Skills Assessed® (CPDT-KSA®) credential including, but not limited to, the eligibility requirements, examination content, recertification requirements, fees, use of the mark, name of the mark and the website. Information published in the current version of the CPDT-KSA “Handbook for Candidates” on the CCPDT website supersedes all other printed or electronic versions of this handbook. Neither the “Handbook for Candidates,” the application, the examination, nor the CCPDT credential constitutes a contract between the candidate or the certificant and CCPDT.

## Purposes of CPDT-KSA Certification

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To promote delivery of safe and effective dog training through the certification of qualified professional dog trainers by:

1. recognizing formally those individuals who meet the eligibility requirements of the CCPDT and pass the Certified Professional Dog Trainer-Knowledge & Skills Assessed examination;
2. encouraging continued professional growth in the practice of professional dog training;
3. establishing and measuring the level of knowledge and skills required for certification in professional dog training; and
4. providing a standard of knowledge and skills requisite for certification, thereby assisting the employer, public, and members of the professional dog care industry in the assessment of the professional dog trainer.

## **Eligibility**

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### **Eligibility Requirements**

1. Hold a current Certified Professional Dog Trainer-Knowledge Assessed® (CPDT-KA®) credential.
2. Complete the online “Application for the Certified Professional Dog Trainer-Knowledge & Skills Assessed Examination.”
3. Confirm understanding of, and compliance with, the CCPDT “Code of Ethics.”
4. Upload a copy of a photo meeting United States passport requirements (see *Application Instructions*).
5. Pay the required fee.
6. Disqualification: An individual convicted of a felony shall be ineligible to apply for certification until release from confinement and completion of any probationary period.

### **Appeals on Eligibility**

Candidates who have been deemed ineligible to sit for an examination may appeal in writing to the CCPDT Executive Committee sent to either the headquarters office of the CCPDT (Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers, Professional Testing Corporation, 1350 Broadway, 17<sup>th</sup> Floor, New York, NY 10018) or by email to [appeals@ccpdt.org](mailto:appeals@ccpdt.org). The letter must be accompanied by supporting documents and must be received within ten (10) business days after the notification of ineligibility is sent to the candidate. The CCPDT will review the appeal and notify the candidate in writing of its decision within ten (10) business days of receipt of the written appeal.

Should the decision be in favor of the eligibility of the candidate to sit for the examination but past the deadline for the current testing window, the candidate will be enrolled to take the examination during the next regularly scheduled testing window.

## **Nondiscrimination Statement**

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The Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers does not discriminate against any individual on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, gender, age, disability, physical limitation, marital or familial status, sexual orientation, religion, political beliefs or any other characteristic prohibited by law.

## **Request for ADA Accommodations**

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It is the policy of the Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers (CCPDT) to reasonably accommodate qualified individuals with disabilities unless the accommodation would impose an undue hardship. In accordance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), accommodations will be provided to qualified individuals with disabilities when such accommodations are directly related to the certification process offered by the CCPDT. Skills examinations offered by the CCPDT provide for the candidate to record on video their training or behavior practices in a place of their choosing.

Those candidates seeking special testing arrangements for the skills examination should direct their requests in writing to the CCPDT Board of Directors' email account at [board@ccpdt.org](mailto:board@ccpdt.org). In his/her correspondence with the CCPDT Board, candidates should: 1) describe the nature of their request; and 2) the desired accommodation sought at least eight (8) weeks before the start of the current testing period. The Board shall consider all such requests and, if the request is deemed appropriate to the circumstances and would not create an undue burden on the resources of the CCPDT, the requested accommodation may be made. In the event the Board determines that such accommodation would create an undue burden on the resources of CCPDT, the Board will try to offer a reasonable alternative. If no alternative is available, the Board will not accept the application of the candidate for the skills examination and will refund the testing fee in full. The determination of accommodation will be made within four (4) weeks of the date of the initial request. A decision of the Board of Directors is final.

## **Foreign Language Policy**

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The CPDT-KSA examination is offered only in English. If a candidate submits a video in a language other than English, the candidate will be notified of this policy and the application fee will be forfeited.

## **Application Process**

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### **Application Procedure**

After becoming a CPDT-KA and before the first CPDT-KSA exam administration the certificant is qualified to sit for, each candidate will be sent an email providing a username, password and a link to the online application form to complete the CPDT-KSA exam application process.

If you do not receive that link, username or password in a timely fashion, contact the testing company for further instructions at:

IQT Testing  
(866) 773-1114 (toll free)  
(727) 733-1110  
Email: [registrations@isoqualitytesting.com](mailto:registrations@isoqualitytesting.com)

### **Application Instructions**

1. Read and follow the directions on the online application form and in this "Handbook for Candidates."
2. Upload a personal identification image to your candidate profile within the online application form. The photo must meet all United States passport requirements. All photos will be checked and verified. Those not meeting these requirements will need to be resubmitted so that the grading of your exam will not be compromised. (Many office supply/shipping stores will be able to assist you with obtaining an appropriate identification photo and digitizing the image for uploading.)

#### *Passport Photo Requirements*

In order for the CCPDT to process your exam, a candidate identification photo **must** be:

- a "passport-style head shot" photo that does not contain: your body, any animals or other humans;
- in color (Do not alter or add color to your photo with filters.);
- 2 x 2 inches (51 x 51 mm) in size;
- sized such that your head is between 1 inch and 1-3/8 inches (between 25 and 35 mm) from the bottom of the chin to the top of the head;
- taken within the last 6 months to reflect your current appearance;

- photographed in front of a plain white or off-white background;
  - captured in full-face view directly facing the camera;
  - shown with a neutral facial expression and both eyes open; AND
  - shot in clothing that you normally wear on a daily basis (e.g., **no** hats, sunglasses, logos, ads, etc.).
3. Do **not** upload a copy of your driver’s license or state/national identification into your online candidate profile.
  4. After uploading, re-check that the identification photo you meant to supply to CCPDT is correct in the system. If your provided image does not meet the criteria in #2 above, the grading of your exam may be delayed and/or your video submissions will not be able to be processed by CCPDT.
  5. Confirm understanding of and compliance with, the CCPDT “Code of Ethics” (provided at the time of your online registration).
  6. Pay required fee in order to complete the application process.
  7. **NOTE.** You will receive an online pop-up confirmation notice after your application has been completed.
  8. Watch for additional information, including the “Examination Handbook,” via email on the first day of the examination period.

**Online Application Guided Support**

The testing company is available to guide candidates through the online application process for an additional support fee of \$25.00 payable to the testing company (see *Test Administrator* for testing company contact information).

**Application Deadline**

For the testing period from February 15 – March 8, 2018 completed applications must be submitted online no later than February 9, 2018.

**Fees**

The application fee due for the Certified Professional Dog Trainer-Knowledge & Skills Assessed examination at the time of online registration is:

Candidate (current CPDT-KA certificants may only apply for this exam).....\$225.00

Visa, MasterCard and American Express are accepted. Please complete the credit card payment information on the online application.

For candidates wishing to pay by check or money order, please make it payable to ‘Iso-Quality Testing’ and mail to:

**Schroeder Measurement Technologies, Inc.**  
**CPDT-KSA Examination**  
**25400 U.S. Highway 19 North**  
**Clearwater, FL 33763**

All checks should indicate the candidate’s CPDT-KA certificant number in the “memo” line.

After the check has cleared, the candidate will receive a voucher number via email to use to complete the online application process.

## Refunds

There will be **no refund** of application fees due to the nature of the CCPDT contract with the testing company.

## Transfer of Application

Candidates unable to take the examination as scheduled may request a transfer to the next examination period by contacting the CCPDT Board of Directors ([board@ccpdt.org](mailto:board@ccpdt.org)) **prior** to the start of the testing period. In order to receive the transfer, the candidate will be required to pay a \$25.00 transfer fee directly to the testing company (see *Test Administrator* for testing company contact information). This transfer fee must also be paid prior to the start of the current testing period. Only one transfer will be granted per candidate. Once the CPDT-KSA exam has been emailed to registered candidates by the testing company, a transfer of application is not possible.

## Examination Administration

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### Test Administrator

The Certification Program is sponsored by the Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers. The Certified Professional Dog Trainer-Knowledge & Skills Assessed examination is administered for the CCPDT by Schroeder Measurement Technologies, Inc. (SMT), 25400 U.S. Highway 19 North, Suite 285, Clearwater, FL 33763, (866) 773.1114, [www.smttest.com](http://www.smttest.com).

### Location and Availability

The Certified Professional Dog Trainer-Knowledge & Skills Assessed examination is offered during an established three-week testing period. Examinations are completed at the candidate's choice of location, according to the *Procedural Requirements* outlined below. Locations may be indoors, outdoors, in a dedicated training facility, private home or any other location that allows the candidate to meet the *Procedural Requirements*.

### Examination Format

Candidates are required to record on video the exercises provided in the "Examination Handbook" following the criteria identified in the "Handbook for Candidates" under *Procedural Requirements* and detailed more specifically in the "Examination Handbook" which the candidate will receive on the first day of the examination period.

Candidates should also review the *Video Recording Tips* provided in this handbook (and located at [www.ccpdt.org](http://www.ccpdt.org)).

### Procedural Requirements

- 1. Examination Handbook.** On the first day of the examination period, an "Examination Handbook" will be emailed to all candidates. The "Examination Handbook" will include instructions for the four (4) exercises to be performed, recorded on video and uploaded by the last day of the examination period. The exam exercises cover basic skills. Scoring of the exercises is based on the training process **not** the end result of the exercise.
- 2. Training Area.** The training area must be no larger than 10 x 10 feet. In a larger area, designate the 10 x 10 training space by placing tape or another visible marker such as traffic cones around the established training area. All four (4) corners of the training area must be visible on the video (see *Sample Training Area Set-ups* for acceptable examples).
- 3. Clock.** A clearly readable, physical clock showing *seconds* as well as *minutes* must be visible at all times. When reviewing your videos prior to submission, make certain your digital or analog clock can be easily read by CPDT-KSA raters during the entire exam. Examples of an acceptable physical clock are: the digital timer on a smart phone/laptop/tablet, a digital clock that displays the time via numerals (or other symbols) or an analog clock

with moving hands and hours marked from 1 to 12 showing raters the actual time of day. Use of the video camera's timer is **not** acceptable.

4. **Proctor.** Each exercise must be witnessed from start to finish by a proctor who is **not** the client being coached in the current exercise being filmed. You may use one proctor for all exercises or multiple proctors. A proctor is someone who will attest to the fact that the examination instructions were followed correctly. The proctor is selected by the candidate but may **not** be the candidate's employer, supervisor, co-worker, classmate, relative, household member, employee, independent contractor, assistant or intern/apprentice. Each proctor must sign a *Proctor Acceptance Form* (provided in the "Examination Handbook" on the first day of the exam) attesting that he/she meets these requirements. Your videographer and proctor may be the same person.
5. **Examination Dogs.** The dogs trained during the examination are provided by the candidate. Said dogs may not live with the candidate and must not have been trained by the candidate or have participated in any previous formal training sessions (classes, seminars, workshops or lessons) with the candidate. Examination dogs may be from any source available to the candidate including, but not limited to: shelter/rescue dogs or neighbor/friend's dogs. The candidate may know the dog, but the candidate must not have ever conducted formal training sessions (as detailed above) with the dog. The candidate **must** use a different dog for each of the four (4) required exercises. At the beginning of each exercise, the candidate will be required to demonstrate on video that the dog is **not** familiar with the skill being taught. The method of demonstration is specified for each exercise in the "Examination Handbook." Two of the exercises require that the dogs have little to no previous training. One of the exercises requires that the dog has not been handled extensively by others. Dogs and/or clients may **not** be re-used from other candidate's CPDT-KSA exam submission videos.
6. **Clients.** "Client" (owner/handler) coaching exercises may be done in private sessions or in a group setting. Three (3) clients, each handling a different dog, will be required for this examination. A different client **must** be the subject of the training in each of the client coaching sessions.
7. **Video.** Videos should be formatted as .AVI, .MPEG4, .MOV, .MPEGPS or .WMV. The video quality must be suitable for the CPDT-KSA Evaluation Committee to clearly see and hear everything on the video. Any editing, especially the addition of text in your submission (including providing your name and/or certificant number at the start, during or end of the video) is strictly prohibited. Each of the four (4) videos will be a maximum of five (5) minutes in length and will be submitted online. Online video submission instructions are included in the "Examination Handbook."

Violation of any of the rules listed above may lead to forfeiture of fees and a failing examination score.

## Equipment

The candidate shall provide all equipment necessary to complete the examination. Any required equipment will be household items or tools commonly used in the dog training profession (e.g., bowls, brushes, leashes, targets, etc.). Further details will be provided in the "Examination Handbook."

## Sample Training Area Set-ups

Required elements for the training area are:

- clearly delineated 10 foot by 10 foot space (use cones, tape, rope, X-pens, ring gates, etc.)
- clearly visible physical clock (showing digitally or by its analog face with minutes and seconds at **ALL** times)

Optional elements:

- a small table used to hold equipment needed for the exam (may be located just outside the training area)
- chairs, rugs or other equipment necessary to make the client and dog comfortable

**NOTE.** The following "set up" photo samples provided in this handbook are for explanation purposes only and do not demonstrate all acceptable ways a candidate may utilize their examination training area. However, the minutes and seconds of your digital or analog physical clock **must** remain visible during the entire video.



**Sample Set Up 1:**



**Sample Set Up 2:**



**Examination Submission**

All videos must be completely uploaded by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time (GMT-5) on the last day of the examination period. Details concerning the upload process are provided in the “Examination Handbook” distributed on the first day of the examination period. Candidates should begin the submission process in advance of the exam deadline.

### **Video Upload Guided Support**

The testing company is available to guide candidates through the video upload process for an additional support fee of \$50.00 payable to the testing company (see *Test Administrator* for testing company contact information).

## **Results & Scoring**

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### **Scoring of Examination**

The CPDT-KSA examination is scored using a rubric with 231 items. There are 55 gated items, with the remaining 176 not gated (see *Gated Items*).

### **Reporting of Results**

Candidates will be notified by email within eight (8) to ten (10) weeks of the close of the examination period whether or not they have passed the Certified Professional Dog Trainer-Knowledge & Skills Assessed examination. Information regarding the proper method by which to contact the CCPDT about understanding your score report will be included in the exam results notification email

### **Pass-Fail Standard**

The examination is graded as Pass or Fail only. The method used to determine the passing score for the examination is in accordance with standard criterion-referenced passing score standards. The passing score is set by the Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers using generally accepted psychometric principles and methods to determine what constitutes a competent canine training professional. Each candidate is measured against a performance standard not the performance of other individuals taking the examination.

### **Automatic Regrading of Examination**

Prior to the reporting of results to candidates, the Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers will automatically review for scoring accuracy any examination in which the candidate receives a failing score:

- 1) that is within five points of the passing score, and/or
- 2) because a single gated item was performed incorrectly (see *Gated Items*).

### **Gated Items**

Gated items are skills or actions that candidates must perform correctly in order to pass the examination. Failure on any one gated item is considered a critical error and results in failing the entire examination regardless of how well a candidate performs on any other part of the examination.

The following gated items ensure (1) validity of the test, (2) test security and/or (3) video/audio quality.

1. The candidate must provide evidence that the dog does not already know the skill to be taught by following the directions in the *Examination Dog Demonstration* section of the *Exercise Instructions* in the “Examination Handbook.”
2. The candidate must not use an examination dog and/or “client” (handler/owner) in more than one exercise video. (This includes using a dog and/or client that has already been filmed in **any** previous CPDT-KSA exam videos, even those submitted by a different candidate).
3. A clearly readable digital or analog physical clock showing minutes and seconds must be visible at all times.

4. The candidate, examination dog and all handlers/owners must stay in the frame for the duration of the video and the whole body of each must be visible at all times and include facial expressions, physical prompts (if appropriate) and body language.
5. The candidate and all handlers/owners must be heard clearly on the video at all times.
6. In a larger area, a 10 foot by 10-foot training space must be clearly marked with four corners visible at all times.

**NOTE.** Any editing especially the addition of text in your submission (including providing your name and/or certificant number at the start, during or end of the video) is **strictly prohibited**.

The following *Gated Items* are skills or performance standards determined to be essential to a practicing Certified Professional Dog Trainer-Knowledge & Skills Assessed:

1. application of the “Humane Hierarchy” position statement and the “Dog Training and Behavior Intervention Practices” policy (both are located in this handbook);
2. correct application of modality, if specified (see the “Content Outline” section of this handbook for a more detailed listing);
3. accurate use of scientific terminology pertaining to dog training;
4. correct use of equipment worn by or applied to the dog;
5. alteration or discontinuation of training if the dog becomes stressed or fearful;
6. adaptation of training techniques if the dog is repeatedly unsuccessful in progressing forward on the training task; and
7. increase in training criteria if the dog is repeatedly successful at a given step in the training process.

### **Examination Challenges**

It is the policy of the Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers to provide every candidate with an opportunity to question the reliability, validity and/or fairness of a test. Candidates may submit comments, content challenges or administrative complaints to the CCPDT headquarters or by email to [info@ccpdt.org](mailto:info@ccpdt.org) no later than fourteen (14) calendar days after taking the examination. The CCPDT will **not** consider challenges or complaints sent after this deadline. Content challenges and administrative complaints **must** be communicated in writing and include all relevant information and any remedy being sought.

The CCPDT shall investigate the challenge or complaint and respond in writing by letter or email to the candidate. The candidate may appeal a negative decision, but the CCPDT will only reconsider its decision if the candidate provides a rationale for why the original disposition of the challenge or complaint was arbitrary or capricious.

Examination material is not available for review by candidates, unless such review is mandated by state law.

### **Re-examination**

The Certified Professional Dog Trainer-Knowledge & Skills Assessed examination may be taken as often as desired upon filing of a new application (including all application components as defined in *Eligibility Requirements* above) and payment of the examination fee. There is no limit to the number of times the examination may be repeated.

## Certification Policies

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### Certification and Recertification

Eligible candidates who pass the Certified Professional Dog Trainer-Knowledge & Skills Assessed examination may use the designation, “Certified Professional Dog Trainer-Knowledge & Skills Assessed (CPDT-KSA),” after their names. Successful candidates will be mailed a certificate within two (2) weeks of final scores being reported. The certificate remains the property of the CCPDT.

A registry of Certified Professional Dog Trainers–Knowledge & Skills Assessed will be maintained by the CCPDT. Certified Professional Dog Trainer-Knowledge & Skills Assessed names and contact information will be posted on the CCPDT website, [www.ccpdt.org](http://www.ccpdt.org). If you do not wish to have your information publicly available on our website, please notify the CCPDT at anytime and we will remove you from the listing.

The Certified Professional Dog Trainer-Knowledge & Skills Assessed designation is recognized for a period of three (3) years at which time in order to recertify the certificant must have accumulated continuing education units (CEUs) at CCPDT approved programs and meet any new requirements or measures of qualification.

CPDT-KSAs do not retain their CPDT-KA designation as this is incorporated into the CPDT-KSA designation. Any CEUs attained towards maintaining the CPDT-KA designation prior to obtaining the CPDT-KSA designation will be void. Accrual of CEUs begins anew upon receipt of the CPDT-KSA designation. Certificants’ new expiration date will be three years from the date they were awarded their CPDT-KSA designation and certificate.

**NOTE.** Passing the CPDT-KSA examination in the testing administration prior to the expiration of your CPDT-KA credential not only bestows upon you a credential reflective of your knowledge and skills, but also effectively provides a three year extension on your certificant expiration date for a lesser cost than a CPDT-KA renewal (when accounting for the renewal application fee and certificant time/financial investment in earning the required CEUs).

If upon renewal, a CPDT-KSA has not obtained the CEUs necessary to maintain the skills portion of the credential, but has obtained the CEUs necessary to maintain the knowledge portion, the certificant’s credential will revert to CPDT-KA. Alternatively, a certificant may opt to register (including paying all appropriate fees) and retake (with a passing score) the current Certified Professional Dog Trainer-Knowledge & Skills Assessed examination as an alternative to the CEUs required for the skills portion of the designation.

### Revocation of Certification

Certification will be revoked for any of the following reasons:

1. falsification of any part of an application
2. felony convictions that occur during the certification period
3. misrepresentation of certification status
4. violation of the CCPDT Code of Ethics

The Certification Compliance Committee of the CCPDT provides the appeal mechanism for challenging revocation of CCPDT Certification. It is the responsibility of the individual to initiate this process.

## Confidentiality

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The CCPDT will release the test results ONLY to the candidate by email at the address provided during the application process. Any questions concerning test results should be referred to the CCPDT.

## Content & Sample Exercise

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### Content of Examination

1. The Certification Examination for Professional Dog Trainers-Knowledge & Skills Assessed consists of four (4) hands-on training exercises. Three (3) of the exercises involve dogs and their handlers/owners (also known as the candidate's exam "clients"). One (1) exercise involves the candidate working with the dog alone as no additional "client" handler/owner will be present or required in that exam video.
2. The content for the examination is described in the "Content Outline" of this handbook.
3. The Certification Examination for Professional Dog Trainers-Knowledge & Skills Assessed is scored based on a candidate successfully demonstrating the domains of the "Content Outline" (see below) and will be weighted in approximately the following manner:

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Instruction Skills                             | 39% |
| Training Skills                                | 53% |
| Application of Modalities                      | 2%  |
| Training Equipment                             | 4%  |
| CCPDT Training Policies & Positions Statements | 2%  |

### Content Outline

- I. Instruction Skills
  - A. Interpersonal Skills
    1. Client communication
      - a. Verbal communication skills
    2. Client interaction
      - a. Clients with special needs
      - b. Client compliance during exercises
      - c. Classroom management
  - B. Teaching Skills
    1. Introduction and motivation
    2. Instructional procedures
      - a. Directions and demonstrations
      - b. Using different teaching styles for different learning styles
      - c. Adequate information based on current scientific understanding
    3. Closure
      - a. Ensuring client understanding
      - b. Creating an interest in future learning
  - C. General Behavior
    1. Professionalism
    2. Pace
    3. Establishment of positive learning climate
- II. Training Skills
  - A. Reading Canine Body Language
    1. Stress
    2. Fear

3. Discontinuation or alteration of training, if required
- B. Managing the Training Environment
  1. Safety
  2. Physical layout
  3. Distractions/disruptions
- C. Canine Training Procedures
  1. Establishment of rapport
  2. Criteria and/or task splitting
  3. Adjustment of criteria, if applicable
- D. Application of Learning Theory
  1. Use of reinforcement
    - a. Positive
    - b. Negative
    - c. Schedules and delivery
  2. Use of punishment
    - a. Positive
    - b. Negative
    - c. Timing and delivery
  3. Use of reinforcers
    - a. Primary
    - b. Secondary
  4. Cues
    - a. Adding or changing cues
    - b. Environmental cues
    - c. Generalization
    - d. Discrimination
- III. Application of Modalities
  - A. Luring & Prompting
  - B. Capturing
  - C. Shaping
  - D. Body Blocking
  - E. Targeting
- IV. Training Equipment
  - A. Availability
  - B. Correct usage
- V. Application of CCPDT Training Policies and Position Statements
  - A. Humane Hierarchy
  - B. Electronic Training Collars
  - C. Dog Training and Behavior Intervention Practices
  - D. Code of Ethics

## Sample Exercise

Task: Client Coaching –Sit Position

Objective: To teach the client how to train his/her dog to sit via verbal cue or hand signal from a standing position and remain in the sit position for a minimum of five (5) seconds.

Modality: You may use any technique to train this behavior, e.g., luring, capturing, targeting, etc.

Required Equipment: None

Examination Dog: This dog must not have been through prior training with a professional instructor and must not know how to sit when requested by the candidate via verbal cue or hand signal.

Client: You must have a handler/owner (“client”) present in this video.

Instructions:

1. *Examination Dog Demonstration:* The candidate must provide evidence exactly as follows to demonstrate that the examination dog has not been through prior training with a professional instructor and does not know how to sit via verbal cue or hand signal from a standing position and remain in the sit position for a minimum of five (5) seconds.

**Failure to follow these demonstration directions exactly may result in failure on the entire exam.**

- A. You must ask the client if the dog has had known prior training with a professional instructor.
- B. You must ask the client if the dog will “sit” from a standing position when requested.
- C. You must give the verbal cue "sit" once while the dog is in a stand position.
- D. After the verbal cue, you must give a hand signal (hold out palm flat with your fingers facing up, parallel to the floor or ground and then move your palm in an upward sweeping motion).

**NOTE.** Do **not** lure or distract the dog with a treat during this evidentiary procedure.

If the dog sits in response to your verbal cue or subsequent hand signal, stop the exercise. You will need to use a different dog for this exercise.

2. *Client Instruction.* Coach the client through the steps involved in training his/her dog to sit via verbal cue or hand signal from a standing position and remain in the sit position for a minimum of five (5) seconds. You may use props, the examination dog, or any other dog, to demonstrate this exam exercise to the client.
3. *End of Exercise.* You may end this exercise when the dog sits from a standing position in response to the *client's* verbal cue or hand signal and remains in the sit position for a minimum of five (5) seconds OR after five (5) minutes of training/coaching has occurred. Videos may be no longer than five (5) minutes.

## Video Recording Tips

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### Video/Computer Equipment

Practice. Work with your video recording devices (e.g., camcorder, digital camera, smart phone, tablet, etc.) and/or computer prior to the three (3) week testing period so once you begin the examination, you can be sure to have the time necessary to complete and submit your videos before the end of the testing period.

Battery. Be certain your recording device's battery is fully charged prior to recording and check it periodically throughout the recording.

Memory. Make sure you have plenty of memory available and have your proctor or assistant check it periodically throughout the recording.

### Video Format/Resolution

Format. Videos should be formatted as .AVI, .MPEG4, .MOV, .MPEGPS or .WMV. The quality must be suitable for CPDT-KSA Raters to clearly see and hear everything on the video.

Resolution. Preferable video resolution sizes are 800 x 600 **or** 1024 x 768. If possible, each video file size should be kept under 1 Gigabyte (1,048,576 KB). If the video camera allows a resolution to be specified, select a resolution **no less than** 640 x 480, but **less than** 720p. Choosing video resolution of 720p (1280 x 720) or 1080i (1920 x 1080), "High Definition" or "Wide Screen" is **not** preferred due to the large file size.

### Audio and Lighting

Recording Outside. If working outside, be aware that wind noise can obscure voices and reflected glare may make it difficult for the CPDT-KSA Evaluators to read your digital or analog physical clock.

Body Positioning. Be aware of your body position in relation to the dog and client and the camera. Make sure everyone is positioned so they can be seen and heard at all times. Be aware of any recording issues that may prohibit CPDT-KSA Evaluators from seeing events or hearing dialogue at any point during the video, as submitting a video where it is difficult to see/hear risks you failing the exam. Visual and audio quality of the video are gated items (see *Procedural Requirements* and *Gated Items* in the "Candidate Handbook").

Camera Position. Be sure that the camera is positioned so the entire training space is on the video at all times.

Clock Position. Place your physical clock at the front of the training area so that it cannot be blocked by you, your client or the dog. Be aware of any lighting or glare issue that may prohibit CPDT-KSA Evaluators from reading the clock at any point during the video. Submitting a video where the clock is difficult to read risks you failing the exam. This is a gated item (see *Procedural Requirements* and *Gated Items* in the "Candidate Handbook").

Practice. Practice recording videos in your training area with non-examination dogs and people to ensure you have proper positioning, adequate lighting and voices can be heard.

**NOTE.** Any editing, especially the addition of text in your submission (including your name and/or certificant number at the start, during or end of the video), is **strictly prohibited**.



## CCPDT Training Policies and Position Statements

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### Position Statement: Application of the Humane Hierarchy

#### PURPOSE

The “Humane Hierarchy” serves to guide certificants of the Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers (CCPDT) in their decision-making process during dog training and behavior modification. Additionally, it assists the public in understanding the standard of care to be applied by dog training and behavior professionals when determining the order of implementation for applying training practices and methodologies.

#### POSITION OF THE CCPDT

The standard of care for CCPDT certificants is that the Humane Hierarchy will be used as a guide in their decision making process when implementing training and behavior protocols. This standard of care should be followed when the certificant is working directly with a dog, creating a training plan for the client to follow or assisting a colleague.

#### HIERARCHY OF PROCEDURES FOR HUMANE AND EFFECTIVE PRACTICES

Please utilize the following steps to modify or manage a behavior.

**1. Health, nutritional and physical factors.** The certificant ensures that any indicators for possible medical, nutritional or health factors are addressed by a licensed veterinarian. The certificant also ensures that factors in the physical environment that have a potential to impact the dog’s health, nutrition and physical condition are addressed.

**2. Antecedents.** The certificant implements environmental management strategies to prevent the behavior from occurring.

**3. Positive Reinforcement, Classical Conditioning (not listed in order of preference)**

**a. Positive Reinforcement.** The certificant ensures that reinforcement is delivered for the desirable alternative behavior and that such reinforcement is of higher value to the dog than the reinforcement the dog has received in the past for the unwanted behavior.

**b. Classical Conditioning.** The certificant changes the dog’s association with an aversive stimulus while presenting the aversive stimulus at a sub-threshold intensity.

**4. Live with or Manage the Behavior, Negative Punishment, Negative Reinforcement, Extinction, Consult Another Professional (not listed in order of preference):**

**a. Live with or Manage the Behavior.** Certificant elects to cease modification techniques and implement a management plan.

**b. Consult Another Professional.** At times, it may be beneficial for the certificant to consult another professional such as a dog trainer, veterinarian or behaviorist for additional advice. Consulting with other professionals can be beneficial, particularly when a problem behavior does not resolve with the previously mentioned interventions.

**c. Negative Punishment.** The certificant withdraws a positive reinforcer when the undesirable behavior occurs to reduce the probability that the behavior will occur in the future.

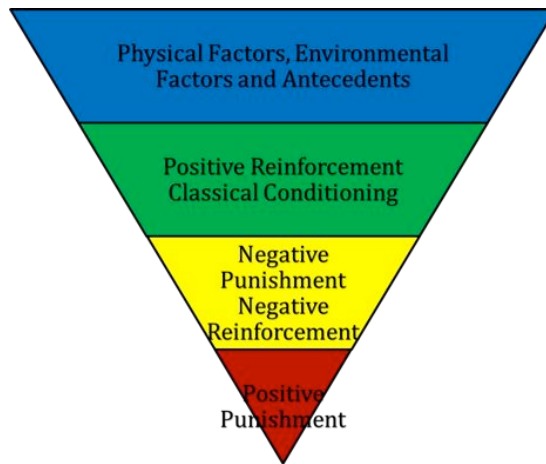
**d. Extinction.** The certificant withholds any reinforcement of a previously reinforced behavior with the goal of extinguishing the behavior.

**e. Negative Reinforcement:** The certificant withdraws an aversive stimulus when the desired behavior occurs in order to increase the probability that the behavior will occur in the future.

**5. Positive Punishment:** The certificant delivers an aversive consequence in response to the undesirable behavior in order to reduce the probability that the behavior will occur in the future.

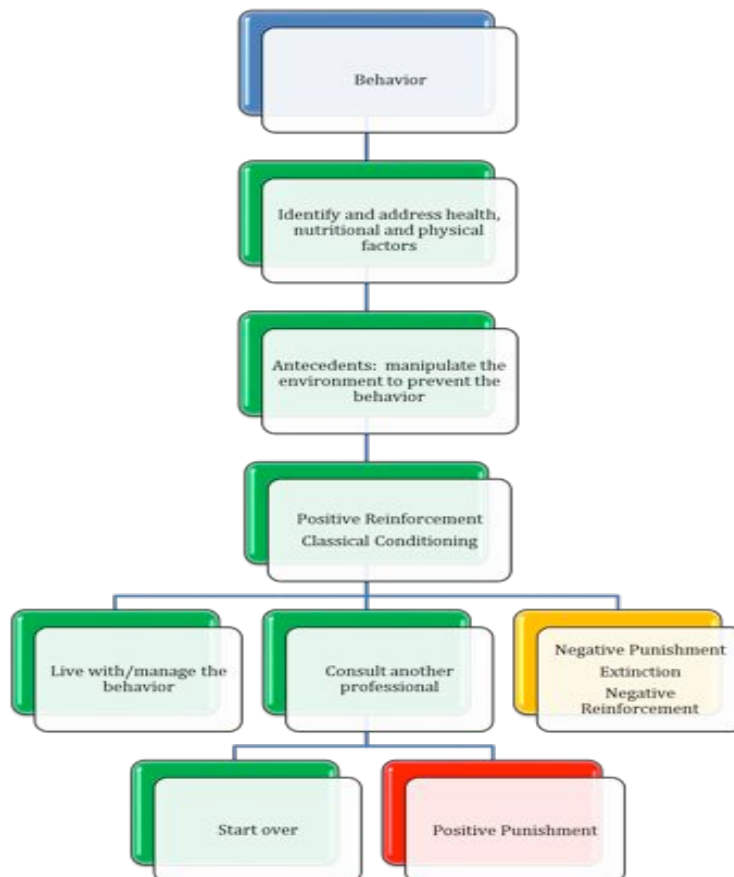
**THE HUMANE HIERARCHY:**

This graphic depicts the “Humane Hierarchy” as adopted by the CCPDT and as adapted from Dr. Susan Friedman’s Humane Hierarchy.



**THE APPLICATION OF THE HUMANE HIERARCHY FLOWCHART:**

This graphic visually explains the intended sequence of events as described by the CCPDT Application of the “Humane Hierarchy.”



Please direct any questions regarding this standard of care to our administrator at [board@ccpdt.org](mailto:board@ccpdt.org) .

Amended 5/23/2014

## **Position Statement: Electronic Collars and the Humane Hierarchy**

The Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers (CCPDT) recognizes that there are many disciplines in the world of dog training. The CCPDT does not limit its certificant profile to one type of dog trainer or one type of training discipline. With that understanding, the CCPDT does not forbid the use of electronic collars that are used within the constraints of the “Humane Hierarchy.” (Please see the position statement on the “Application of the Humane Hierarchy” found in this handbook and at [www.ccpdt.org](http://www.ccpdt.org).)

The CCPDT believes that the administration of an electric stimulus during training should only be used after all other training options have been considered and rejected. A CCPDT certificant should never authorize or employ the use of electric stimulation as an initial training option. We strongly believe that the use of an electronic collar should be the last form of training considered before its use.

A CCPDT certificant is expected to exhaust all other training strategies before considering the use of an electronic collar. The CCPDT certificant should attempt or carefully rule out the following training strategies prior the use of electrical stimulation:

- rule out medical issues that may be affecting behavior
- changes in antecedent stimuli
- positive reinforcement of alternative behaviors
- a comprehensive program of counter conditioning and desensitization
- negative punishment
- negative reinforcement
- consultations with other behavior professionals for alternative training suggestions

In the event that a CCPDT certificant determines that an electronic collar is the appropriate course of action for a particular dog, that trainer should never apply more than one electronic stimulation to a dog at the same time. Furthermore, the electronic stimulation should never be administered to any location other than the neck of the dog.

A CCPDT certificant who violates these directives in this position statement risks losing his or her certification. A certificant who loses his or her certification as the result of violating the directives in this position statement will have his or her name published on our website with the reason for the decertification.

Amended 5/23/2014

## **Policy: Dog Training and Behavior Intervention Practices**

### **Purpose**

This policy serves to govern those practices that a Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers (CCPDT) certificant may not use during the practice of dog training or behavior modification. This policy will clarify for dog owners and dog care professionals those practices in which a CCPDT certificant may not engage.

The CCPDT recognizes that this policy does not address every practice under debate in the dog training industry. The goal of this policy is to ensure that CCPDT certificants do not engage in certain practices which can in no way be considered humane or sound by scientific standards. It also acknowledges that certain additional practices remain under debate such as the use of electronic stimulation collars. This policy is intended as a first step in ensuring that CCPDT certificants are not using practices that are potentially egregiously harmful to dogs either physically or emotionally.

### **Definition**

For the purposes of this policy, an electrical stimulation collar is defined as a collar which is used in a mode that causes electrical energy to pass through any part of the dog's body.

### **Policy**

The following practices are never acceptable for use by a CCPDT certificant, for any reason:

- helicoptering or hanging a dog (defined as lifting the dog off of the ground and either holding it off of the ground or swinging the dog off of the ground by the collar or leash for any period of time) or otherwise restricting the airway of the dog in any manner.;
- purposely lifting a dog by the collar, leash or scruff such that two or fewer of the dog's legs remain on the ground;
- applying a collar that delivers an electrical stimulation to a dog without first exhausting alternative intervention strategies including, at a minimum, positive reinforcement of alternative behaviors, changes in antecedent stimuli and either negative punishment, negative reinforcement or extinction;
- applying more than one (1) electrical stimulation collar to a dog at the same time;
- applying an electrical stimulation collar to the genital region or abdomen area of the dog;
- applying a toe or ear pinch (defined as applying a pinching pressure either with the hand or with a tool of any sort, including but not limited to a cord or wire, to a toe, ear or any other body part of the dog with the intention of causing the dog to perform or cease a behavior);
- drowning (defined as submersion of the dog's head in water for any period of time); and/or
- applying a cattle prod to any part of the dog's body.

No trainer or behavior consultant who has been certified through a CCPDT certification program shall engage in any of the above-named acts for any reason. To report any such conduct by a trainer or behavior consultant whom you believe has been certified through one of the CCPDT's certification programs, please refer to the CCPDT's Certification Compliance and Disciplinary Procedures or contact our administrator at [administrator@ccpdt.org](mailto:administrator@ccpdt.org).

(Adopted 8/4/11)

## **Policy: Code of Ethics**

### **Purpose**

The Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers' (CCPDT) "Code of Ethics" provides CCPDT certificants/candidates with a set of guidelines and goals designed to assist certificants/candidates in the ethical challenges of their work and elevate the level of professionalism in dog training and behavior consulting. Additionally, the CCPDT will apply the "Code of Ethics" as a set of enforceable standards which certificants/candidates must agree to abide by in order to retain certification by the CCPDT.

### **Policy**

A certificant/candidate of the CCPDT affirms to abide by the following:

1. to operate as a certificant/candidate without discrimination on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, gender, disability, physical limitation, marital or familial status, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs;
2. to assist clients in establishing humane, realistic, training and behavior goals in accordance with the CCPDT "Humane Hierarchy Position Statement;"
3. to understand and fully comply with the CCPDT "Training and Behavior Practices Policy;"
4. to utilize training and behavior modification methods based on accurate scientific research, emphasizing positive relationships between people and dogs and using positive reinforcement-based techniques to the maximum extent possible;
5. to always provide for the safety of clients and animals in training programs and behavior consultations;
6. to act with honesty and integrity toward clients, respecting their legitimate training and behavior goals and the autonomy of their choice, provided they conform to societal and legal standards of humane treatment for their pet;
7. to refrain from public defamation of colleagues, respecting their right to establish and follow their own principles of conduct, provided those principles are ethical and humane according to the CCPDT "Humane Hierarchy Position Statement;"
8. to provide truthful advertising and representations concerning certificant/candidate qualifications, experience, performance of services, pricing of services and expected results; to provide full disclosure of potential conflicts of interest to clients and other professionals;
9. to refrain from providing guarantees regarding the specific outcome of training.
10. to use properly authorized logos and credentials provided by the CCPDT when marketing in print or electronic media;
11. to obtain written informed consent from any client prior to photographing, video or audio recording a dog training session;
12. to work within the professional boundaries of the CCPDT certifications and individual expertise and refrain from providing diagnosis, advice or recommendations in areas of veterinary medicine or family counseling unless certified to do so. This does not preclude referring the client to a veterinary or behavior consulting professional;
13. to maintain and respect the confidentiality of all information obtained from clients in the course of business and to refrain from disclosure of information about clients or their pets to others without the client's explicit consent, except as required by law;
14. to be aware of and comply with applicable laws, regulations and ethical standards governing professional practices, treatment of animals (including cases of neglect or abuse) and reporting of dog bites in the

state/province/country when interacting with the public and when providing dog training or behavior consulting services;

15. to keep accurate and complete records of clients, their animals and the training and behavior services provided and to ensure secure storage and, when appropriate, confidential disposal of such records;
16. to continue professional development as required for maintaining the CCPDT credentials in accordance with the policies of the CCPDT;
17. to refrain from making material misrepresentations as part of the application for certification or recertification; and
18. to maintain and respect the confidentiality and security of the contents of any and all certification examinations of the CCPDT including, but not limited to, refraining from: stealing portions of, or the entire examination(s), removing written examination materials from a test or meeting site without authorization, reproducing and/or disseminating examination materials without authorization, using paid test takers for the purpose of reconstructing an examination, using improperly obtained test questions to prepare person(s) for the examination, cheating during an examination and/or impersonating an examinee or having an impersonator take an examination.

#### **Enforcement of the CCPDT Code of Ethics**

The CCPDT “Code of Ethics” must balance the ability of the certificant/candidate to ethically function within the dog training and behavior consulting professions while providing provisions for the CCPDT to enforce the standards by which certificants/candidates have agreed to abide. The CCPDT Board of Directors will use the following enforcement provisions:

- “Code of Ethics” violations will be investigated using the timeline and procedure outlined in the CCPDT “Certification Compliance and Disciplinary Procedures” (found at [www.ccpdt.org](http://www.ccpdt.org)). Except for a certificant whose certification was revoked as the result of a felony conviction (see CCPDT “Certification Compliance and Disciplinary Procedures”), a former certificant may reapply for certification after one (1) year from the revocation date. If certification is revoked, the individual may contact the CCPDT Board of Directors to request to reapply for certification. The Board of Directors will respond to the individual within thirty (30) days of receipt of the request for recertification. If approved, the individual will be eligible to take the current version of the examination during the next available testing period. No CEUs will remain valid from the recertification period wherein certification was revoked.
- Former certificants seeking recertification may only recertify for the credential that was revoked. If the individual successfully applies for recertification status and passes the current version of the examination, then the individual may apply for other examinations per the current guidelines of the CCPDT Candidate Handbook.
- If certification is revoked and recertification is not sought, the individual is ineligible for all other CCPDT examinations.
- If a candidate does not pass a CCPDT examination and is notified of a violation of the Code of Ethics, the individual may provide the CCPDT Board of Directors with an appeal as to why the violation of the Code of Ethics should not disqualify him/her from taking the certification examination again. The Board of Directors will respond to the individual within thirty (30) days of receipt of the request for examination. If approved, the individual will be eligible to take the current version of the examination during the next available testing period.

I have read the Code of Ethics of the Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers and agree to abide by this code in my dog training and/or behavior consulting practice.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(Adopted 12/22/11)