



VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Thank you for choosing to volunteer with White Horse Equine Assisted Services, LLC! We can not complete our mission without you. Volunteers are the backbone of our Equine Assisted Programs and the success of our participants and their progress. Volunteers provide support and build rapport with our riders, as well as provide the safety needed to conduct a program such as this. We need dedicated volunteers that are willing to stick with us for the long haul and watch our riders make big and small strides.

We hope your experience with White Horse will bring you satisfaction, personal growth, and fulfillment. A 'thank you' is simply not enough to express the gratitude we have for you and your time. We welcome you to the team and are excited to partner with you!

HOW TO CONTACT US:

Volunteer Coordinator: Tom Morrison

Email: whitehorsevolunteercoordinator@gmail.com

Phone Number (text/call): 317-792-1039

Program Location: Indian Creek Stables (5349 W 700 S, Morgantown, IN 46160)

Feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns.

ABOUT WHITE HORSE EQUINE ASSISTED SERVICES, LLC

White Horse was founded on January 17th, 2024 by CEO Elizabeth Davis. It began with the need to expand and prioritize professionalism as a Certified Therapeutic Riding Professional, and help grow these professionals' knowledge, education, and technique when it came to teaching individuals with a disability. As the company grew the desire to help able bodied riders improve in their riding based on their own biomechanics also grew. Individuals who are stuck in their riding come to us to help them get through a difficult spot. This led to launching an Adaptive Riding Program where we also focus on rider biomechanics (the mechanics of biological and especially muscular activity (as in locomotion or exercise), focusing on body awareness, proprioception, balance, and more! Lastly, we provide services for our equine friends. We call these services Body Support Services, where we will focus on a horse's overall body health, fitness, and their own biomechanics. We are excited to see how White Horse Equine Assisted Services, LLC expands and how else we can support our community!

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Our Mission at *White Horse Equine Assisted Services, LLC* is to provide knowledge and resources to increase professionalism within the Therapeutic Riding and Horsemanship field, in addition to providing safe and effective riding lessons to individuals of all abilities focusing on body awareness through movement.

OUR VISION STATEMENT(S)

#1 Harness the intuitive and forgiving nature of horses to empower individuals in their journey of learning effective and safe riding techniques.

#2 Design a professional, safe, and efficient method to better expand the knowledge, expertise, and development of therapeutic riding instructors and centers, while forming an atmosphere that allows for continual growth.

#3 Support a horse's longevity and happiness using a holistic approach that enhances suppleness, body awareness, and proper mobility needed for a long and successful career.

OUR CORE VALUES

Integrity- we hold strong moral principles, always putting the client and their goals first.

Continuous Improvement- we improve ourselves and the way we operate.

Collaboration- we work together to produce quality services and resources for our clients and community.

Vulnerability- we promote authenticity and humbleness that allows an opportunity for self- understanding and self- growth.

Learning- we promote curiosity and the desire to seek and share knowledge to others to better improve the equine professional industry.

WARNING

Under Indiana law, an equine professional is not liable for an injury to, or the death of, a participant in equine activities resulting from the inherent risks of equine activities.

34-31-5-5 Contents of warning notice

VOLUNTEER BASICS

Volunteering Requirements

- Minimum age to volunteer is 16 years old (case by case basis)
- Volunteers must be in good health and able to be physically active
- Volunteers must have a positive attitude and adapt to change and be flexible
- Volunteers must be able to tolerate heat, cold, dust, and wind
- Volunteers must be able to possess the ability to follow directions and take instruction
- Volunteers must comply to a background check (as needed)

Current Days and Times You can Volunteer:

Our Adaptive Riding Program will take place on Saturday afternoons (11:00am to 4:00pm) at Indian Creek Stables and are taught by a Certified Therapeutic Riding Professional through PATH Intl. Currently, this program is small but with a lot of potential for growth. Each rider will have a horse leader and at least one sidewalker as needed. Volunteers will have both an active role as well as a passive role in lessons. These lessons are 45 minutes from start to finish. Riders will help tack if they are able or if this is a goal for them. In addition to teaching riding, we will work on life skills needed in everyday life. Of course, we want to make this an enjoyable experience and incorporate fun! We want our riders to want to improve and have a love for riding.

When to Arrive:

We require our volunteers to plan for a minimum of 15 minutes before and after your scheduled class begins in order to have the horses and facility ready for class, unless told otherwise by your instructor.

Scheduling a Volunteer Shift:

Each Friday (before noon) an email will go out with volunteer needs for Saturday. You can then let our volunteer coordinator know which times you are able to volunteer for.

Breaks:

We will break over holidays allowing for a natural horse break as well. These breaks will be sent to you once you are confirmed as a volunteer.

Training:

We train all volunteers to be a horse leader as well as a sidewalker so the roles are interchangeable if needed. We begin each volunteers as a side walker first to learn how the program runs, then if interested, we will transition a volunteers to a horse leader role.

Attendance and Cancellations:

Commitment and consistency are vital to the success of our program. If you are unable to attend a lesson you have signed up for, please call or text Tom Morrison at 317-792-1039 or email us at whitehorsevolunteercoordinator@gmail.com as soon as you are aware you are going to be absent.

If your instructor needs to cancel a class for any reason (emergency, weather, etc.) they will send out a text/email/or call to all scheduled volunteers as soon as possible.

Weather Cancellation Policy:

Lessons will be canceled if any of the following conditions occur:

- The low temperature or wind chill for the day is 25 F degrees or lower
- The high temperature or heat index for the day is 95 F degrees or higher
- The following conditions exist 2 hours prior to lesson time:
 - Winds exceeding 25 MPH
 - Tornado warnings, severe rain, hail, snow (dangerous to drive in), or thunderstorms close by
 - Hazardous driving conditions

Dress Code:

- Professional, based on the environment
- Safe
- Comfortable but practical
- Clean and neat

- Appropriate for the weather
- Safe and protective footwear (closed toed shoes that won't slip off feet)

Emergency Procedures:

In the event of an emergency:

- All instructors are CPR and First Aid Certified!
- Follow the instructor's directions
- If a rider falls, do not panic. Stay calm and follow directions. Keep other riders safe.
- In the event of severe pop up weather, ALL riders will be dismounted.

The 'DO's' and 'DON'Ts' of Volunteering

DO:

- Arrive on time
- Listen to and follow instructions provided by the instructor
- Alert instructor to potential safety hazards
- Physically help riders when instructed
- Spot riders at all times
- Ask if you are uncertain
- Prompt riders to use physical and verbal cues, as instructed

DON'T:

- Mount/ dismount riders
- Attempt to adjust tack
- Distract your rider
- Teach your own lessons or override instructor
- Chat excessively with other volunteers or the rider
- Touch horse during lesson unless necessary
- Leave rider unattended
- Look at or answer texts/calls while with a rider or horse
- Pick up equipment from ground i.e. rings, bean bags used during an ongoing class

VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

Horse Leader:

The horse leader controls and guides the horse during the lesson, ensuring the safety of the students and volunteers. The horse leader must be able to take direction from the instructor, allow the student to guide the horse when appropriate, but still maintain control of the horse at all times. Horse leaders must be safety minded at all times. Volunteers with horse experience are preferred for this position.

Age Requirement: 16 and over

Physical Requirement: walk 60 min, jog short distances, and control horses at all times.

Time commitment: 1.5 hours per lesson

Active Horse Leading-



- The horse leader is in control of the horse, but waiting for the rider to initiate steering, stopping, backing, trotting, etc.
- Lead line should never be looped around your hand
- Lead line should ALWAYS be held by two hands at all times during the lesson

Passive Horse Leading-



- Lead line is still held with two hands
- Lead line is held further away from the horse's face allowing the rider more control
- Lead line should never be looped around your hand
- Lead line should ALWAYS be held by two hands at all times during the lesson unless instructed differently

Unclipped Off Lead Line-



- Lead line is unclipped from horse
- Horse leader is ready to help rider as needed
- Horse leader keeps eyes on the horse at all times
- Horse leader walks next to horse's head

Spotter-



- Horse leader is unclipped and standing in the center of the arena
- Horse leader keeps eyes on rider at all times
- Horse leader can quickly jump in as needed

Side Walker:

Side walkers walk alongside the riders to ensure safety and help facilitate the lesson under the guidance of the instructor. Side walkers may be asked to demonstrate or help the riders with specific tasks, support or assist the rider physically, or facilitate games or activities as directed by the instructor. Side walkers may also be asked to assist with the mounting and dismounting of riders from the horse. Side walkers must be able to take direction from the instructors, work cooperatively with others, and be safety minded at all times. Side walking does not require prior knowledge or experience with horses and specific training will be provided.

Age Requirement: 16 and over

Physical Requirement: walk 60 min, jog short distances

Time commitment: 1.5 hours per lesson

Support Holds:**Thigh Hold-**

- Grip the front of the saddle and lay your forearm over the rider's thigh, without resting the elbow on the horse or saddle – it naturally acts as a clamp, especially if the horse suddenly goes forward quickly
- Side walker must make sure their grip is not too tight or interfering with the rider's posture, and that it's even on both sides – the volunteers' arms lie across the thigh in the same place on both sides – uneven location or pressure can cause a rider to lean
- Use when: rider has poor balance and/or restricted use of their legs; rider feels very insecure; always use in an emergency regardless of the rider; in the mounting area; when adjusting stirrups; when you don't know the rider (always assume the most support then remove as needed)
- Don't use when: thigh pressure increases the rider's spasticity

Ankle Hold-



- Hold behind the ankle, or with a thumb on top of the ankle to add some downward weight; hold the ankle, not the shoe (or the rider's heel/foot could come out of the shoe)
- Use when: the rider's lower leg needs help staying in place; the rider needs only a little balance support (enough that some downward pressure on the ankle will keep them in place); the rider's feet tend to slide in the stirrups; a thigh hold would increase the rider's spasticity

Thigh and Ankle Hold-



- Use when: all the reasons above + a thigh hold is not enough and the rider needs additional stability of the lower leg

Floater-



- Stay near the rider's leg but no holds – constantly ask yourself “am I close enough that if the rider were to fall off, I could catch them?”
- Your hands should be by your sides
- Use when: the rider is progressing to independent riding; needs someone there just in case (slight balance issues, if horse makes unexpected movement, certain seizures); needs the moral support or additional focus/verbal prompts; needs a spot for mounting/dismounting

Feel free to contact us if you ever have any questions. We are a collaborative team, and together we can help our riders reach their goals!

Let's get started!

