

Horse Handler Training

Intro Letter

Horses Help congratulates you on being selected to participate in one of the most important areas of training. We want you to understand that the Horse Handling Training segment is one of the highest levels of training that we offer our volunteers. Horse handling is not for everyone and if this position is not the best fit for you, there are other ways you can volunteer with the horses. Horse Handler Training is a hands-on evaluation/training to assess your equine handling skills and to show you the ropes; it is not meant to train you how to halter, groom, etc. as a foundation of skills must already be present. Completion of one or all of the training classes does not necessarily guarantee a volunteer to be signed off as a Horse Leader.

Because of the number of riders in our program and the number of regular volunteers, our training is about the consistency in which we work with the horses. In other words we are teaching you the 'Horses Help Way' of handling our horses. We recognize there is often more than one way to do some things in the horse world; however we ask that while at Horses Help you follow our system for the sake of consistency and safety.

During the training, you will be asked to complete several tasks. Please be prepared to take constructive criticism. If we see you shaking while haltering a horse or being tentative, we will give you feedback concerning this. You may not feel like you are nervous or shaking, we just want to make you aware and confident. You will not be signed off until we are certain you can pass the skill set measurement. If you are every uncomfortable with a specific task, please let the Horse Handler Trainer know so we can set aside time for you to gain more practice. Mock Classes and Mentoring are not mandatory and are assigned at the discretion of the Horse Handler Trainer if they feel you need a little more practice.

Horse Handling is a privilege and with these privileges comes responsibility.

At the end of the training you will be expected to:

1. Handle the horse with confidence
2. Understand the role of a Horse Leader
3. Maintain the utmost safety and respect for volunteers, staff, horses, and riders
4. Must always be consistent with every aspect of horse handling, putting safety first
5. Listen and have an open mind
6. Use appropriate language and manners
7. Wear appropriate attire
8. Smile and have fun

Finally, as a Horse Handler we are entrusting you with the health and wellbeing of horse and human. This is not a position to be taken lightly. This is not a position of 'I'm going to do it my way'. We are going to hold you to a higher standard because if something is done wrong or goes wrong, people can be seriously hurt.

We hope you enjoy this training program. The Equine Manager would be happy to hear your comments and suggestions. If you would like to know why we do something a certain way...just ask!

Sincerely,

The Horses Help Team

By signing below, I acknowledge the standards and responsibilities of a Horse Handler. I also understand the liability and risk associated with handling horses on the ground while walking, leading, and/or warming them up.

Name (printed): _____ Name (signed): _____ Date: _____