

# Welcome to the YYYY/YYYY Program Year at [facility]!

[facility], founded in xxxx, is a PATH Intl. Premier accredited center that offers a variety of Equine Assisted Learning, Activities, and Therapies (EAAT). It is our goal to provide safe, high quality equestrian activities and therapies to individuals in the special needs and at-risk communities.

## **What makes [facility] programs unique?**

- All Instructors are certified through PATH Intl.
- All Therapists incorporating horses into their PT, OT, or SLP sessions are trained through the American Hippotherapy Association
- Volunteers go through extensive training specific to the lesson type in which they help
- [facility] is the leading center in [state] for instructor training and strives to exemplify the best practices for our industry in all that we do

## **There are a few important things to note about EAATs:**

1. Just like other recreational activities, EAAT activities are not a good fit for all individuals. [facility] abides by the PATH Intl. guidelines concerning Precautions and Contraindications for EAATs and each Participant Application is reviewed and screened by the Program Director.
  - a. [facility] has weight limits for mounted activities. If an individual is over 120lbs and interested in mounted activities, please contact the Program Director to discuss suitability and availability in mounted program
2. [facility] participants are assessed on an ongoing basis to ensure that EAAT is still a good, safe, and beneficial activity or therapy. An EAAT activity or therapy may be a good fit for a few months or several years- however the length of time is not guaranteed. In addition to the safety of the participant, we also take into consideration our volunteers, instructors, and horses currently available in the program.
3. Most of the programs that [facility] offers are considered RECREATIONAL. While we do offer some services that are considered 'therapy', it is a very small portion of what we do.
  - a. Recreational: Adaptive Riding, Adaptive Horsemanship, Equine Assisted Learning
  - b. Therapy: PT, OT, or SLP incorporating equines, Equine Facilitated Mental Health
4. Because most of the activities are recreational, insurance does not cover most of the services we offer.
  - a. Alternative funding: ESA, some flex fund accounts, etc.

*[facility] policies and procedures are the result of over 30 years of providing EAAT activities. Because [facility] is a PATH Intl. Premier Accredited Center, leader in education, and strive to consistently follow the industry best practices, we may function differently than other centers and traditional lesson barns. [facility] operates in a delicate balance created by the unique nature of horses, individual needs of our participants, and sustainable safe practices for the program.*

## **Factors Affecting the Cost of Equine Assisted Activities and Therapies**

Due to the unique nature of an EAAT program, we have costs and other factors that we must account for that go above and beyond other traditional therapeutic/recreational service providers or equine lesson barns. We must have our staff, horses, volunteers, and all other factors balanced as much as possible to facilitate a safe and thriving program.

So what are some factors that go into running [facility]?

- Our horses have a maximum workload that dictates the maximum number of ground and mounted lessons each horse can take. Because they are individuals, each horse has their own 'sweet spot' that we must adhere to or risk them burning out and us losing a valuable four-footed colleague.
- The average cost of EACH working horse is about \$2500/year

- We have 70-120 individuals served per week depending on the time of year
- We rely on 150-200 volunteers per week depending on the classes and events that are hosted.
- Staff wages for Executive Director, Program Director, Equine Manager, Volunteer Coordinator and other support staff
- Staff wages for our internationally certified Instructors
- General operation costs: insurance, electric, taxes, etc.

After all of our costs are totaled up, the **total ACUTAL cost per participant to ride is about \$79 per 30 minute Adaptive Riding group class.** The actual cost factors include a paid instructor and volunteers assisting Participants. If our volunteers supporting Participants during a mounted class were paid staff, this would increase the cost \$14-\$42 per class depending on the level of support needed.

Depending on the class and scholarship assistance, **Participants pay \$10 - \$35 per 30 minute Adaptive Riding class.** That means that **PROGRAM NAME subsidizes \$44-\$69 per participant per class** through community support, grants, donations, and volunteerism.

## **PROGRAM POLICY REMINDERS**

### **CANCELATIONS**

**Rider Cancellation:** [facility] does not issue Credit(s) for Participants who are absent due to sickness, vacation, etc. We appreciate notification of an anticipated absence so your horse is not prepped for class but you will not be given a Credit even with notice. Because of our large waiting lists, any Participant who misses more than 3 times in one Session will be re-evaluated for continued service and may result in dismissal from the Program.

**Weather/Emergency Related Cancellation:** Weather and emergency situations are unpredictable in Arizona; Horses Help reserves the right to cancel any classes which it deems unsafe to occur. This will insure the safety of its riders, staff, volunteers and horses. Credit towards the next Session will be issued for cancellations made by [facility].

**Make Up Classes:** [facility] does not typically offer 'Make Up Classes' for canceled classes due to the complexity of scheduling. Credit(s) towards the next Session are used in lieu of 'Make Up Session'.

**Please contact your INSTRUCTOR directly to notify them of any late arrivals, cancelations, etc. Please do not contact the Main Office**

### **Your Instructor's Contact Information**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### **LATE ARRIVALS**

We will wait **10 minutes** past the start of your scheduled class time. Horses will be put away after this 10-minute period and will not be available. Participants arriving late to and/or missing a class will receive NO CREDIT or make up time for class missed. Riding in the next scheduled class is not an option.

### **DRESS CODE**

**Mandatory Attire:** Appropriate attire is essential for the comfort & safety of the participant. **Long pants** such as jeans or khakis are required (special exceptions may be made in cases involving sensory processing issues) Please avoid pants made of nylon, polyester, or other 'slippery' materials as this can cause a Participant to slip off of a horse or become easily off centered. **Close-toed athletic type footwear** with a closed back is mandatory for all riders. Please avoid excessively bulky or thin shoes such

as work boots, skate shoes, converse, etc. Additionally, all riders should wear a semi-close fitting shirt so posture is visible for the instructor. Long hair should be pulled back into a low ponytail. The rider may not ride if not dressed appropriately and NO CREDIT will be issued. Please provide a jacket, sweater, gloves, etc. for the cooler morning and evening ride times. Remember – you are outside for at least 30 minutes of class time. Please dress accordingly. If a dress code accommodation is required, you must contact the instructor prior to the day of the lesson.

## **INSTRUCTORS VS. VOLUNTEERS**

Please speak with your Instructor directly with any questions or concerns regarding your class and/or Participant as they are the individuals responsible for lesson planning, class activities, Participant progression, flow of the night, etc. The Volunteers that work with your participant are there to support the Instructor and are not the individuals responsible for passing on information, answering questions about the class, Participant progression, etc. You can let your Participant's Volunteer know that you need to get in contact with the instructor, but please pass on all important information and/or questions to the Instructor.

## **MOUNTED CLASSES- RIDER WEIGHT RESTRICTIONS**

At [facility], safety is our primary concern. We must insure the health and wellness of our participants, volunteers, instructors, and horses as mandated by PATH Intl. Horses are selected for participants based on a Rider's skill set, stability on the horse, equipment available, appropriateness of volunteers available, horse conformation and movement, and Rider weight. [facility] has maximum weight limits of 220lbs for balanced Riders and 140lbs for unbalanced Riders. [facility] can accommodate Riders up to 120lbs in PT, OT, or SLP incorporating equines. All Adaptive Riding and therapy Participants will be evaluated to ensure the safety of their participation in mounted programs. Among the factors to be considered will be the availability of appropriate horses, volunteers, and tack. Additionally, in the Adaptive Riding Program, [facility] is unable to accommodate unbalanced riders who are above 140lbs. An unbalanced Rider is an individual who may demonstrate one or several of the following: lean to one side, cannot sit without support, needs help supporting the upper body, needs physical assistance during the mount or dismount, is easily left behind the horses movement, etc. Please note that the herd, volunteers, and tack at [facility] is dynamic and due to this fact, we may not always have horses, tack, or volunteers available to safely accommodate every individual who wishes to participate in our Program.

**Rider Weigh-ins:** It is our policy that all Riders will be weighed on-site at [facility] prior to their first class of the Program year to ensure accuracy of the weight given by parents/guardians on paperwork. Riders known to be over 120 lbs. may require a minimum bi-annual weigh in prior to their first class of both Session 1 and 3 but may be asked to weigh in at the beginning of each session if they are close to their assigned horse's weight limit. This will ensure we have achieved the best possible match between horse, rider, and volunteers. [facility] reserves the right to weigh any Rider before any given class to ensure proper horse/Rider match.

## **PAYMENT PROCEDURES & PROGRAMS OFFERED**

**Invoices & Payments:** Invoices will be sent out during 'Break Weeks'. We accept cash, check, and credit/debit card. Invoices are to be paid in full by your first class of the Session. See Program Year Calendar for payment deadlines.

**Late Fees:** Late Fee of **\$35.00** will be assessed for each Invoice that is not paid by your second class of the Session. Repetitive Late payment may be cause for a Participant to be re-evaluated for continued service and may result in dismissal from the program.

**Billing Contact: email@email.com**

## **INFECTIOUS DISEASES**

Please be considerate of our Participants, volunteers and staff by staying at home if you are not feeling well. Cold, fevers, and runny noses can be passed on to others. Refer to [facility] Sick Policy' Handout for details.

## **OBSERVING CLASS**

Families and friends of Participants are welcome to observe classes as long as they remain in **Designated Observation Areas**. If an observer is disruptive to any Participants in a class or is not acting in a safe manner they may be asked to leave the [facility] property. There are specific areas designated for observation. Any [facility] staff or volunteer reserves the right to ask an observer to leave an area that is not meant for observation. We also ask that activities in the Observation Areas such as running and throwing/swinging/rolling objects does not occur as it may scare a horse as this is a safety hazard.

**Photo/Video Policy:** You are welcome to take photos/videos of your Participant as long as it is not disruptive to the class. Please ask approval from the Instructor/Staff on-site **before leaving a Designated Observation Area** to capture a photo/video. Please avoid photos/videos of other Participants as they may not have a photo/video release. Please do not take photos/videos of any horse that is not assigned to your Participant as this horse may not be released for photos/videos yet due to their status in our program.

## **INTERACTION WITH HORSES**

Please **DO NOT PET HORSES** without approval from [facility] staff. Our horses are considered working animals and we ask that you respect their space. **Absolutely NO feeding of the horses, climbing on stall/arena railing, and/or reaching through enclosures to pet the horses**. Barn aisles are considered Off Limit areas unless directly escorted by a [facility] Staff member.

## **PETS**

We have a high commitment to safety for our participants and horses and seek to minimize distractions wherever possible. Therefore, **NO pets are allowed on the premises**. Exceptions are certified companion or working therapy support animals, proof of certification/training must be provided and on file in the [facility] Main Office.

## **PARKING**

Please park in the designated areas. Do not block gate access or walk way areas. If there is no parking available please ask a staff member for direction. **Please observe the 5 MPH sign when entering and exiting the property for safety of horses and humans**. Your cooperation is appreciated.

### **Your take home materials:**

- Welcome to the Program Year/Policy Reminders
- Sick & Social Media Policy
- Cancelation Policy
- YYYY-YYYY Program Year Calendar

*We look forward to another wonderful program year with you 😊*

*Questions? Comments?*

*Contact [facility] Program Director at email@email.com*