

★ HIGH HORSE HILL ★  
*Therapeutic Horsemanship for All Ages*

**VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION FORM**

Volunteer Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

School/Agency name and contact person (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone Number (Volunteer, Staff or Parent/Guardian): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Contact E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer's date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Volunteer's current age: \_\_\_\_\_

If over 18, is the Volunteer their own guardian? No ( ) Yes ( )

Does the Volunteer have any physical limitations/allergies? No ( ) Yes ( )

Explain \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Does the volunteer have cognitive/learning limitations? No ( ) Yes ( )

Explain \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Check areas in which you are interested:

\_\_\_ Horse handling

\_\_\_ Stable management

\_\_\_ Side walking with a Participant

\_\_\_ Grounds work

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

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**1. VOLUNTEER RELEASE:** \_\_\_\_\_ (volunteer) would like to participate in High Horse Hill Therapeutic Horsemanship. I recognize the inherent risk of injury in horseback riding generally and in learning to ride in particular, and working around horses. Under Massachusetts law, an equine professional is not liable for any injury to, or death of, a participant in equine activities resulting from the inherent risks of equine activities, pursuant to Chapter 128, Section 2D, of the General laws. However, I feel that the possible benefits to myself/my son/my daughter/my ward are greater than the risk assumed. I hereby, intending to be legally bound, for myself, my heirs, and my assigns, executor or administrator, waive and release forever all claims for damages against High Horse Hill, its Instructors, Therapists, Aides, and Volunteers for any and all injuries and/or losses I/my son/my daughter/my ward may sustain while participating in High Horse Hill Therapeutic Horsemanship.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Volunteer or Parent/Guardian)

**2. MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION:** Volunteer's name: \_\_\_\_\_

In the event of emergency medical aid/treatment is required due to illness or injury during the process of volunteering, or while being at High Horse Hill Therapeutic Horsemanship, I authorize High Horse Hill Therapeutic Horsemanship to:

1. Secure and retain medical treatment and transportation as needed.
2. Release individual records upon request to the authorized individual or agency involved in the medical emergency treatment. This authorization includes X-rays, surgery, hospitalization, medication, and any treatment procedure deemed life-saving by the physician. The provision will be invoked only if the person below is unable to be reached.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Volunteer or Parent/Guardian)

**3. IF I CANNOT BE REACHED:**

CONTACT: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

CONTACT: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer's Physician: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Medical Insurance Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Policy number: \_\_\_\_\_ Preferred Medical Facility: \_\_\_\_\_

Other Specific Conditions: \_\_\_\_\_

**4. PHOTO RELEASE:** Participant's name: \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby consent to and authorize the use of a reproduction by High Horse Hill of any and all photographs and other audiovisual materials taken of me for promotional material, educational activities, or for any other use for the benefit of the program.

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

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**SAFETY TIPS FOR WORKING AROUND HORSES**

1. Always wear sturdy boots or shoes. (however, please do not wear steel-toed boots; the steel toe may be dangerous if a horse steps on your foot.)
2. Approach a horse at his shoulder (not his face or rear) so as not to surprise him. Speak to the horse before you approach.
3. Give horses treats in their feed buckets only and with permission. Please do not feed treats by hand.
4. Never run, make sudden movements, shout or scream around the horses.
5. We groom horses while tied to the tie rings. You will be trained how to properly tie a horse.
6. When grooming the legs or picking out feet, squat; do not kneel down on the ground. maintain a quick escape position in case the horse moves.
7. Always check tack for safety before putting it on the horse. Please tell the instructor if you find any broken billet, hook, strap, rein, stirrup or stirrup leather.
8. Never leave a saddle on the horse without a girth. If you forget the girth, take the saddle off, go get the girth and then put the saddle on again.
9. Tighten the girth gradually. Do not ever yank hard.
10. Always connect the lead rope to the halter only. Never connect a lead rope to the bridle or the bit.
11. Never wrap the lead rope or reins around your hand, wrist or body. If the lead rope drags on the ground, fold the excess and put your hand around it.
12. It is the instructor's job to re-check the girth for tightness before a rider mounts and, in the lesson, before the rider picks up the first trot. However, if the instructor fails to check the girth at either point, you can remind her.
13. Never let the reins or lead rope hang on the ground. The horse can step on them or get his leg caught in them; such an accident can be dangerous or even fatal to the horse.
14. Before entering the arena, call "Door" and wait for the instructor to answer, "Come."
15. If in doubt about anything, always ask the instructor.

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**WHEN YOU MEET AN HHH PARTICIPANT**

1. Above all, remember that the HHH participant is a person. He or she is like everyone else.
2. Be yourself.
3. Talk about the same things as you would with anyone.
4. Help only when it is needed. Don't do something for an HHH participant if they can do it independently.
5. Be patient. It may be hard for an HHH participant to do something, but it is best to give them the time needed to complete the task. As you know, when you can do things yourself, you learn faster.
6. Avoid being overprotective or patronizing. Treat the participant as an equal in all ways.
7. Keep an open mind. You may be delighted at an HHH participant's interests and abilities.
8. Enjoy your friendship with the participant, but focus on the lesson. Too much chatting while the student is working around horses can lead to danger.
9. Keep all information about the HHH participant confidential. Please respect the participant's privacy.

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## THE HORSE LEADER/HANDLER

Leading the horse in an HHH is one of the most challenging volunteer duties. Most important: The horse leader's first responsibility is to the horse, not to the rider.

### AT THE MOUNTING RAMP

1. Walk the horse as close as possible to the area of the block from which the rider will mount.
2. Do not push on the horse's side. If the horse is not close enough, walk him around and try again.
3. Once the horse is positioned for mounting, stand directly in front of the horse, facing his head.
4. Do not hold the lead rope too tight; that can make the horse anxious.
5. Do not let the lead rope drape on the ground.
6. After the rider mounts, wait until the instructor gives you the go-ahead to move the horse away from the mounting block.
7. As the instructor is adjusting the stirrups and girth, again stand directly in front of the horse, facing his head.

### MOUNTING IN THE ARENA

1. Wait for instructions from the instructor. Please do not attempt to assist the rider to mount by yourself.
2. While waiting with the horse, be careful that the rider doesn't go behind the horse but stands quietly beside you or the side walker.
3. When the horse is at the mounting block, stand directly in front of the horse, facing his head.

### LEADING AT THE WALK

1. Be considerate of the side walkers; make sure that there is enough room along the rail and around obstacles for them to pass.
2. Allow the rider time to follow instructions.
3. Reinforce the rider's attempts to control the horse.
4. Avoid temptation to talk to rider and/or side walkers.
5. Always maintain a safe distance between your horse and the other horses.

### LEADING AT THE HALT

1. Halt the horse, then stand directly in front of him, facing his head.
2. Hold the lead rope with a bit of slack to keep the horse calm and relaxed.

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3. If the horse gets restless, rub his neck or shoulder. Do not rub his face. Do not let him rub on you.

#### LEADING AT THE TROT

1. Wait for the instructor to give the command to trot. Never take it upon yourself to trot the horse.
2. Before you begin to trot, glance back to make sure that the side walkers are positioned properly and the rider is holding the reins or the handhold.
3. Begin the trot simply by picking up your pace. Do not pull on the horse's head.
4. If the horse is reluctant to trot, let the instructor know. She will either encourage the rider to use leg to ask for the trot or instruct the side walkers or spotters to help the rider use leg aids to encourage the trot.
5. Stay at the horse's head; do not run in front of him or fall back to the shoulder.
6. Listen for signals from the side walkers. Transition to a walk or halt immediately if you hear any signs of distress from the rider or side walkers.
7. When asked to transition from the trot to a walk or halt; do so in a straight line so as to not unseat the rider.

#### DURING GAMES

1. The instructor will give you the rules of the game. If you do not understand how the game is to be played, please ask for clarification.
2. Before you begin, glance back to make sure the rider and side walkers understand the directions.
3. Allow the rider to play the game to the best of his or her abilities. Do not play the game for the rider.

#### FALLS

1. If a rider falls from the horse you are leading, your only concern is with that horse. The side walkers and the instructor will take care of the rider.
2. Stay calm as you work to get your horse under control. Do not shout.
3. If the horse gets away from you, and you can approach him safely, walk (never run) toward him and calmly retake the lead rope. Take him to a clear area, away from the other horses and people, and wait until the instructor tells you what to do.
4. If the horse gets away from you and is truly panicked (rearing, bucking or racing around the arena), and you do not feel that it is for you to approach the horse, leave it to the instructor to get the horse under control.
5. If a rider falls from another horse in the arena (not the one you are leading), halt your horse, step in front of him, and hold him as you would at the ramp. Stay at the halt until the leader tells you otherwise.

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## THE SIDE WALKER

Either one or two side walkers will be assigned to a rider as needed. The job of the side walker is to watch the rider at all stages of the lesson. The instructor will inform you how much the support the rider needs; do not give more support than is necessary. Also, do not try to control the movement of the horse; that is the job of the horse leader.

### AT THE MOUNTING BLOCK

1. As the horse is being led to the mounting block, the instructor will ask you either to walk with the rider up the block or wait on the ground.
2. If you are up on the steps of the mounting block with the rider, the instructor will let you know how much help to give the rider during the mounting process. Do not touch the rider or the reins or stirrups unless the instructor tells you to do so.
3. If you are on the ground, your job is to act as the offside barrier for the horse so that the horse does not step away from the ramp while the rider is mounting. Do not take hold of the rider or the reins or stirrups unless the instructor tells you to do so.

### MOUNTING IN THE ARENA

1. Wait for instructions from the instructor. Please do not attempt to assist the rider to mount by yourself.
2. While waiting with the rider, be careful that the rider does not go behind the horse but stands quietly beside you.
3. When the horse is at the mounting block, you may be asked to stand on the other side of the horse to act as an offside barrier as the rider mounts. The instructor may also have you hold the stirrup down to ensure that the saddle does not slip.

### SIDE WALKING AT THE WALK

1. ALWAYS keep your focus constant on the rider.
2. Ask the rider if you may touch them.
3. Stay directly beside the rider's side; do not get ahead and, most important, do not fall behind the horse. If you cannot keep up, or need to change sides, tell the instructor!
4. Make sure that the rider is holding the reins or the handhold at all times unless the activity specifically calls for hands-free riding.
5. Make sure the rider's feet are in the correct position in the stirrups at all times unless the specific activity calls for having the rider's feet out of the stirrups.
6. If the rider's hands or feet are not where they should be, give a signal to the horse leader to halt the horse. Fix the problem, and signal the leader to continue.

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7. If a rider starts to slip forward, backward, or to the side, gently maneuver him or her back to the correct position. You may need to ask the horse leader to halt the horse.
8. If the rider becomes unbalanced to the point where you cannot get him or her back into a safe position, ask the horse leader to halt the horse, take hold of the rider and lower him or her slowly to the ground.
9. Keep an eye on the horse's tack. If you see a problem with the reins, saddle, saddle pad, girth or stirrups, signal the leader to halt immediately and alert the instructor to the problem. Let the instructor handle the tack problem; do not attempt to fix it yourself.
10. Since you will be close to the rider, you may find that the rider will want to talk to you a great deal. Do not ignore direct questions, but do try to redirect the student's attention to the instructor.
11. If your rider is not paying attention or doesn't hear the instructor, you can help by reinforcing the directions. However, avoid talking over the instructor or giving contrary instructions.
12. Please do not converse with the horse leader or other side walker during the lesson.
13. If the rider or horse leader is steering the horse too close to the rail or to obstacles, speak up for safety.

#### SIDE WALKING AT THE HALT

1. Listen carefully for instructions to halt so that you do not run into the horse leader.
2. Wait quietly beside the rider. If the rider gets restless, encourage him or her to stay still and listen for the next instruction.

#### SIDE WALKING AT THE TROT

1. Listen carefully for the instructor to give the command to trot. Never take it upon your self to tell the horse leader to trot.
2. Give physical support to the rider if necessary, but do not touch a rider who is capable of trotting without physical support.

#### DURING GAMES

1. The instructor will give the rules of the game. If you do not understand how the game is to be played, please ask for clarification.
2. Before you begin, check briefly with the rider to make sure he or she understands the directions.
3. Allow the rider to play the game to the best of their abilities. Do not play the game for the rider.

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**FALLS**

1. If a rider loses his or her balance and a fall is inevitable, your job is to catch the rider before he or she hits the ground.
2. If the rider does hit the ground, stay with him or her until the instructor comes.
3. Stay calm. Do not shout. Do not attempt to control the horse (that is the horse leader's job).
4. If another rider falls in the arena (not the one you are side walking with), stay with your rider. Do not go to the other rider unless the instructor specifically tells you to do so. Keep your rider on the horse at the halt; do not dismount your rider unless the instructor tells you to do so.
5. If the instructor does tell you to dismount your rider, do so quietly, and take your rider to a secure location outside of the arena.

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**FAQS (FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS)**

How much should a volunteer do in the lesson?

1. The volunteer does not teach, but should reinforce what the instructor says. He or she should aid the instructor by keeping the student's attention on riding.

As a horse handler/leader, how should you control the horse?

1. The leader should be walking alongside the horse's head with his or her hand about eight inches below the horse's chin. The lead rope should be kept slack. A steady pull will not accomplish anything and in many cases will even excite a horse unnecessarily. The pull and release, pull and release method is the best way to work with the horse. If for any reason the horse needs something stronger, a quick firm pull of the lead rope should do the trick.

When should a volunteer aid the student?

1. When you see a possibility of trouble, use common sense. Don't let a rider get too close to another horse or allow a student to walk behind a horse. You should allow riders to use their legs and hands to make the horse walk, halt, and turn; do not do the work for them.
2. Do not touch the rider unless instructed to do so and always with the rider's permission.

Should the leader and the side walker work together?

1. Yes! The leader, looking ahead most of the time, should take quick checks of the rider. The side walker will be more aware of the rider and should note such things as a foot out of the stirrup or loss of balance. This information should be relayed to the leader and then the instructor.

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## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

1. If the horse becomes overexcited, side walkers should:
  - Place an arm across the rider's thigh and grip the saddle securely until the mount is under control.
  - If a safety dismount is required, the instructor will tell the side walkers. If this becomes necessary, the side walker on the inside (i.e., closest to the instructor) tells the rider.
  - The side walker wraps her arms around the waist of the rider and instructs him or her to clear her feet from the stirrups. The leader makes every effort to control the mount. The rider is pulled off the mount and removed to a safe place. The second side walker helps with the stirrups. The leader continues to attempt to control the horse.
  - If the horse gets loose, everyone in the ring must halt immediately. Leaders stand in front of their horses. Side walkers are alert and listening for instruction.
  
2. If a rider falls from the horse, everyone in the ring must halt immediately. Leaders stand in front of their horse. Side walkers are alert and listening for instruction.
  
3. In case of injury to a fallen rider:
  - All other riders go to one end of the arena. One person will be placed in charge by the instructor.
  - The instructor will direct one side walker to call for an ambulance: 911.
  - Follow emergency directions posted by the telephone in the tack room for handling 911 calls.