



TEAM MEMBER & VOLUNTEER TRAINING MANUAL

PEGASUS SPRINGS THERAPEUTIC RIDING CENTER

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June 2020

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Who is Pegasus Springs?

Pegasus Springs Therapeutic Riding Center serves individuals of all ages with physical and/or developmental challenges. We serve the Northeast Lower Michigan population. Our goal is to overcome the everyday obstacles of this special population and improve overall health with a fun and enriching equine experience.

Therapeutic riding provides opportunities for individuals with varying physical and emotional levels to challenge themselves and set goals to improve the quality of their lives via the horse. The Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship (PATH) certifies and promotes this therapy with more than 650 accredited centers that serve more than 30,000 individuals. PATH and its therapy is recognized as a valuable adjunct to traditional forms of therapy by the American Occupational Therapy Association and the American Physical Therapy Association and is supported by a variety of organizations including Easter Seals, Muscular Dystrophy Association, Multiple Sclerosis Society, Special Olympics, Spina Bifida Association, and United Cerebral Palsy.

Pegasus Springs TRC will soon be a Center Member of PATH, International. This outstanding organization assures compliance with safety procedures, gentle equines, trained staff, and a high-quality facility. Our instructors have extensive equine experience and have been certified by PATH, Intl. and/or CHA (Certified Horsemanship Association) showing high standards and teaching technique compliance.

Our Mission

**The mission of Pegasus Springs Therapeutic Riding Center is to provide
HOPE, HEALING, GROWTH & RESPITE
to children and adults with cognitive, physical & emotional disabilities
in the entire Northeast Michigan area utilizing Equine Assisted Activities &
Therapies in a safe, peaceful and professional environment.**

Our Vision

When founders Barb & Dennis Clare moved north from SW Michigan and retired on the edge of the Huron National Forest in 2016, a warm & generous community welcomed them "home". As they settled in, sharing with their large family, meeting neighbors and new friends, and enjoying the forest around them, they connected with nature and listened to God's gentle whisper that this acreage was meant for something more.

The trees cried out for the laughter of children. The birds sang songs of renewed hope. The wildlife demonstrated its ever-changing circle of life and gave pause to the beauty of nature.

Giving their acreage a name declared that it belonged to the community of individuals in need of it most. They followed their faith that there are many people of *all faiths* who would benefit from the *hope, healing, growth & respite* that Pegasus Springs can bring.

Who is a Team Member?

Team Members are people who give their time and services and who assume the obligations of the program of their own free will. Some bring skills in horsemanship, while others have leadership skills. Some merely bring understanding and acceptance, seeking fuller and more satisfying lives for themselves. Team members are people who reach out to others and help them improve their quality of life.

Team Members are indispensable at all levels of the organization. They may be instructors, assistant instructors, leaders, side-walkers, grooms, tack cleaners, office support, recruiters, fund-raisers, and more. All team members need not be equine-oriented.

Program team members involved with the equines must be able to jog alongside a horse at the trot, while supporting a rider with disabilities mounted on the horse.

We ask that all team members make a weekly commitment to the area they have been assigned and that they give sufficient notice of cancellation when they are unable to attend (at least 24 hours). The time of commitment will be mutually agreed upon in advance.

Team member Roles

Volunteering is a tremendously self-rewarding adventure. At Pegasus Springs, you can choose from some great jobs and committees. All of these jobs or committees are designed to help support our special needs programs. Whatever your talents or interests, we can put them to good use.

□ Administration

Would you like to help with duties like data entry, drafting correspondence, monthly newsletter, preparing meeting notes and communications with supporters? It is preferred that you have some clerical or managerial experience for this job. Hours are flexible and our staff will support you and your efforts.

□ Fundraising

Do you like meeting new people in the community? Are you good at organizing fundraising events? Join this team of outgoing individuals and spread our passion for our programs while raising money to keep kids in the saddle!

□ Volunteer Team Building

Our program revolves around great team members. Be on the team to help develop & assist with training, recognition, and recruiting great people like you. You will be working directly with the community, schools and local agencies to build our teams.

□ Marketing

Do you want to get creative? We need creative people to help tell our story. Create story boards, shoot video, create newsletters, or work on our web site. These are just some of the great marketing ideas we need to spread the word.

□ Horse Leading

Do you have a talent for horses? This position involves a good working knowledge of horse behaviors, training methods, a calm presence, and riding skills. You are in charge of the horse during our lessons. You are expected to be able to warm up the horses in our round pen prior to lessons. Previous horse experience or completed training and no less than 30 hours of side walking experience is required. You will be asked to help with stall maintenance, as well.

□ **Side Walking**

Do you like working with individuals with disabilities? This position will be assisting our riders when necessary to accomplish the tasks involved in grooming, tacking, mounting, dismounting, and riding in the arena. You must be able to assist riders during an emergency dismount, if needed. You should be healthy and strong enough to lift at least 50 pounds and walk or trot beside a horse for a minimum of 30 minutes. This job requires you to be physically fit and free of back and shoulder challenges. Your personal well-being is important to us, too. You will be asked to help with stall maintenance, as well.

□ **Barn Assistant & Grounds Maintenance**

Do you like being around the horses? This position will be helping clean and maintain the horse stalls. You will also clean and fill water buckets. This may require driving a golf cart and 4-wheeler. You should be able to lift a minimum of 50 pounds. and be free of back and shoulder challenges. Fence repair and general beautification of the grounds, fly predator application in the summer along with fly traps, strips and pest control in the barn.

□ **Horse Buddy**

This position is a very close connection with the horses. It requires previous experience with horses and training by our staff. This position helps keep our horses fit, flexible, and happy so they can do their jobs without causing injury to themselves. You may be asked to help with stall maintenance, as well.

Although horse experience is appreciated in many positions, you will not be excluded if you do not have it. We have an extensive training program and are willing to help you learn what is needed to perform the jobs. Horse experience varies from person to person and DOES NOT exclude you from participating in our training program.

***Please be aware that our horses are for program and training purposes only.
Their primary purpose is to provide service to our participants.***

Team member Code of Conduct

Respect All Persons- Abusive, suggestive or inappropriate actions or language will not be permitted.

Respect All Animals- Refrain from loud, abrupt noises or actions and behaviors that may startle the horses. Abusive actions or language toward the horses will not be permitted.

Respect All Property- Inappropriate use of PSTRC facilities, equipment or land will not be permitted.

Conduct, Behavior and Dismissal

As team members, you are representatives of our organization. All team members are expected to set a good example for the students. Inappropriate language, disruptive behavior or behavior which threatens the safety of others and the horses is not acceptable, nor will it be tolerated. After a first attempt to correct the behavior, offenders will be asked to leave the premises by staff and withdrawal from the program will be immediate.

Required Forms and Updates

All staff and team members must complete necessary paperwork prior to participating in any activities on site. These forms include the Volunteer Application online, job descriptions, Volunteer Photo Release, Volunteer Background check, Confidentiality Agreement, Code of Conduct, Release of Liability, Safety Guidelines, and the Authorization for Medical Treatment. This form must be signed by a parent or guardian if team member is a minor. All staff, team members and participants are to receive an annual request for updated information. Staff and team members are required to inform the administration of any changes to their paperwork (phone, emergency contact, health history, etc.) should changes -occur prior to the annual request for updated information.

Dress Code

Appropriate footwear and clothing should be worn at all times. Team members should not wear open-toed shoes or sandals. It is suggested that team members wear shoes or boots that offer foot protection. Dangling jewelry or long hair may be unsafe with some participants. Perfumes can attract insects and be troublesome to riders and other team members. Dress must be appropriate for the weather.

Smoking & Alcohol Policy

Pegasus Springs Therapeutic Riding Center is a smoke-free environment and we have a no tolerance policy with regards to alcohol and other controlled substances. If PSTRC staff has reason to believe that a team member is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, we reserve the right to request a drug test.

Safety

Safety must always be taken into consideration when working with horses and students with disabilities. Team members are taught emergency procedures and accident prevention. We will teach you to understand a horse's body language, how to handle horses in different situations (such as shying or kicking), and proper safety procedures. You will be asked to agree to and sign our Safety Guidelines later in this manual.

Horses and Equipment

Horses, Golf Carts, 4-wheeler, tractors and trailers are for PSTRC use only. The horses are meant to be used by clients and for conditioning/training purposes only. Please do not ask to use the horses for personal enjoyment. Individual lessons can be arranged, but you will be expected to pay for your lessons. The staff of PSTRC may ask if you would like to ride if an extra horse is needed in a class.

Personal Self Protection

We encourage everyone to use safe practices for lifting, bending, working in the stalls and around the barns.

1. Stretch before starting to work.
2. Bend your knees instead of bending your back when lifting buckets, rakes, feed, etc.
3. Align your back/body so you are not twisted and lifting at the same time.
4. Use both arms equally when lifting or handling poop rakes, using one hand to push down on the handle and one to lift.
5. Use the handles and wheels on the poop trailers vs picking up the tongue of the trailers.
6. Ask for help if needed.

Cell Phones

The use of cell phones during any activity with a rider present is NOT PERMITTED, unless in an emergency. Personal calls should not be made, nor texting is permitted while you are volunteering.

Scheduling and Attendance

PSTRC currently uses a simple binder where you sign in and out each time you report for volunteering. We encourage everyone to check the rider schedule for a two-week period and sign up so we know if the riders will have enough help to ride. PLEASE BE DEPENDABLE. If you are scheduled and an emergency comes up within 3 days of your scheduled assignment, please call the PSTRC barn phone number, **989-820-1787**.

We encourage you to plan your volunteering in 6 week increments so the riders and horses have consistency with their team members. We understand that you have a life but ask that you remember that riders cannot ride if they don't have the proper assistance. Plan ahead.

Management Staff:

Barb Clare: Executive Director

Lead Instructor: Mary Kate Anthony

Barn Manager & Horse Trainer: Kaylin Collins

Volunteer Coordinator: Paige Bleck

Lead Volunteers:

Lead volunteers are those individuals chosen and trained by Pegasus Springs staff to assist the instructor on duty during lesson times. Lead volunteers are responsible for facilitating the tacking and grooming of horses for class, leading, directing and assigning of volunteers for duties in the barn or teaching arena and maintaining order in the barn during lesson times. If you are looking for something to do or have a question, ask a lead volunteer! We ask that you do not go to other staff members because they may not know what is happening with the classes. If you are interested in training to be a lead volunteer, please ask the Volunteer Coordinator.

Sign in:

The volunteer sign-in binder is located in the barn just outside the tack room in the assessment area. Please sign in and out when you are here. The tracking of volunteer hours is used for grant writing purposes and many volunteer awards given at the end of the year.

Name Tags:

Please wear your nametag when volunteering, you will find it near the sign-in binder. Please wear it near your neck so it can be easily read. Please leave your tag at Pegasus Springs when you are finished for the day. If you are a new volunteer, make a note by your name on the sign-up sheet that you would like one.

Class Times:

Class times vary throughout the year. All class time schedules are posted on the scheduling board.

Cancellations:

Pegasus Springs TRC cancels classes during severe weather. During the warmer months, we will cancel classes for severe thunderstorm warning, tornado warnings, and the heat index of 90+. If a thunderstorm erupts during class, we must stop the class and dismount for obvious safety reasons.

Instructors will do their best to contact all volunteers before they leave their homes to come to the barn if classes are cancelled. Our website will post any cancellations on our HOME PAGE. Also, the current weather is posted on our website, www.pegasusspringsmi.com

Please be sure to register your Up TO DATE phone/text/ and email information with our volunteer coordinator so we may send you new information directly as quickly as possible.

If you are unable to come to class, please call and leave a message on the voice mail system.

Promptness and Reliability:

We ask that all our volunteers arrive at least 15 minutes before a scheduled class time and volunteer at least once a week for two hours per session. Your consistency helps our organization deliver the highest quality program to our riders. If you are unable to volunteer due to illness or other reasons, please call the barn so that we may secure a replacement. In many cases your attendance is critical for a client's safety during a lesson.

Working with Individuals with Disabilities

Each of us at one time in our life will have a disability – whether from an illness, injury or old age. A disability is nothing more than a body part – be it arm, leg, organ, or brain – that does not work properly or does not work at all. Individuals with disabilities do not want to be treated any differently than you or me. Respect, friendship and acceptance – these are the qualities that our students seek from us and from the world in general. When working with individuals with disabilities, simply follow the Golden Rule: Treat others as you would want to be treated if you were in their situation:

- Be friendly and accepting. Our students are people just like you and me.
- Respect our students. Many of them have faced hardships that you or I cannot imagine. Their courage and strengths are to be admired, not pitied.
- Speak directly to the student. No one likes to be referred to in the third person. Your attention should be focused on the rider, not on the people around them. If the student has difficulty communicating, their caregiver or instructor will help facilitate communication.
- Offer assistance when asked or needed, but don't overwhelm them with help. Independence is always our goal for our students.
- Choose words with dignity. Avoid phrases such as crippled, deaf, dumb, wheelchair bound. Use phrases such as, "a child who uses a wheel chair."
- Describe and think of our students in terms of their personality or interests, rather than their disabilities.
- Be patient. Give our students time to process their surroundings. Speak slowly and clearly when needed. Learn to listen with your eyes and instincts as well as your ears.

Being around an individual with a disability or unique need may be a new experience to you. You may be overwhelmed at first with things you have never seen before or do not understand. This is a natural reaction. Allow yourself to get to know the students. They do not look upon themselves with pity or sadness, and they don't want you to, either. Pegasus Springs is a place of strength, joy, and hope. Working with individuals with disabilities can be one of the most rewarding experiences of your life. Allow yourself the opportunity to share in our students' joys and accomplishments.

Emergency Procedures

NOTE: Emergency Procedures are posted in the tack room. A landline phone is in the tack room with the following information posted above the phone:

1. Call 911 and give the operator a brief description of accident.
2. State your name and the nature of the emergency and victim's condition.
3. Stay on the line with the 911 operator for instructions.
4. Stay calm and provide directions to the center if required (see below).

Telephone numbers:

- Ambulance: 911
- Fire Department: Fire Alarm ONLY: 911
- Police/Sheriff: 911
- Veterinarian: Alpena Vet, Dr. Laurie Jackowiak, 989-354-2925 office, 989-590-2350 cell

Address:

Pegasus Springs Therapeutic Riding Center
4800 Old State Road
National City, MI 48748

Driving Directions:

Located NE of the intersection of M-55/M-65; 4800 Old State Road, National City, MI 48748

Emergency Plan for Accidents

In Class

In case of an emergency, ***the instructor will be in charge of giving directions to all riders, side-walkers, and horse leaders.*** You are expected to understand the basics of what your actions should be and the instructor will give further direction depending on the situation.

If there is a fall of a rider, or a rider experiences a seizure, all horses are halted.

Leaders remain at the horses' heads. Side-walkers quietly talk to their riders.

The leader of the horse involved in the incident is to take care of the horse only. Leader should carefully and slowly move horse away from the fallen rider, making sure they turn the horse's head to face the rider and whatever is happening.

The side-walkers of the horse involved in the accident stay with and reassure the rider. Be prepared to give the instructor an account of what happened to the rider as he fell, to help in the assessment. Riders should not be moved.

The instructor evaluates the situation to see whether the rider is able to return to the class and ride or needs further assistance.

If the rider is not injured, but chooses not to continue riding, the horse is taken away and the rider is brought to the tack room for further assessment.

If the rider is in serious condition, the emergency plan goes into effect.

Emergency Plan – Rider Injury

This plan goes into effect if the rider has a suspected serious injury or loses consciousness for any period of time. The instructor makes sure that the injured rider is in a safe location. If the injury is back/neck/head related, the rider is not to be moved in any way until medical personnel arrives.

911 will be called and the rider is given any necessary first aid and kept warm. Someone will wait by the street to direct emergency personnel to the rider. The other riders and horses should be taken to another safe location to clear the way for the emergency personnel or vehicle.

Please note: a few riders have a “non-consent” plan for emergency medical treatment. In that situation, a parent/guardian is always on the premises or they have certain procedures they would like to take place.

Parent or guardian will be notified before the injured rider goes to the hospital if at all possible. If contact is not able to be made, the rider goes regardless.

A knowledgeable person from PSTRC will accompany the rider to the hospital (*with the rider file*) unless the person or persons who accompanied the rider are available to go along.

Emergency Horse Handling

If you are leading a horse that becomes involved in an emergency, try to stop the horse. Often if the horse is not moving at great speed, it helps to turn the horse to face the object that frightened him. Side-walkers should try to stay even with the rider’s legs and prepare for an emergency dismount. If the rider has fallen and the horse has bolted or is fleeing, never hold on to a horse that is bolting. It is likely you will end up injured, also. Let the horse go and it will most likely go find a safe place to stand.

If the horse is loose, all other horses and riders should immediately stop. Someone will be instructed to go to the gates. Allow the horse to quiet and calm down. The horse leader or instructor should proceed toward the horse. Some horses will stand and let you approach them, while others will move away.

Body language will tell you their choice. Use a quiet, calm voice and talk to the horse while approaching. Once near the horse’s head, connect a lead rope to the halter, or pick up the lead rope if still attached. Lead the horse to a desirable location and wait for additional instructions.

If you are leading a horse other than the horse involved in the emergency, halt (stop) your horse and stand in front of it while facing it, if it appears to be safe to do so. With an overly frightened horse, modifications to this procedure may be necessary to ensure safety. You may have to quietly move away from the scene of the emergency to a safe area as long as you, the rider and attending side-walkers are able.

You should stop and wait for instructions. If you are side-walking a horse other than the horse involved in the emergency, apply the “arm over thigh” hold, monitor your horse, and communicate quietly your rider’s needs to the leader and/or the other side-walkers. Try to keep the rider calm. You will be given further instructions.

INCIDENT REPORTING

Occurrence reports are to be completed upon any unusual events, including but not limited to injuries of human or horse, hazardous events, or significant disturbance to the operating center’s programming. Blank occurrence reports are available in the file cabinet of the tack room. These reports are to be given to administration as soon as possible for further investigation. All Occurrence reports will be kept on file for a period of 5 years after rider involved has left the program. Repeated occurrences with horses might indicate a needed training opportunity, so don’t keep it to yourself.

Emergencies in brief:

- The leader takes control of the horse.
- One side walker stays with the rider at all times.
- At the instructor's request, the other side walker may call 911 from the office or barn phone, if the need arises.

In the case of a "rider down" situation, all horses in the arena must halt.

The instructor is the only individual responsible for assisting the fallen rider.

All instructors at the Pegasus Springs Therapeutic Riding Center are trained and certified in CPR and First Aid from the American Red Cross and should be the only individuals assisting a rider down.

Mounting and Dismounting

Mounting and dismounting of rider will be done only by trained team members and instructors. Horse Leaders will be trained in the mounting and dismounting, but not necessarily required to perform the tasks. A list of volunteer staff trained in mounting will be kept in the office. (MA2-Path Standards)

There are two ways to mount a rider:

1. Using a mounting block or metal step platform – A trained team member or riding instructor will assist rider to step up the steps from behind, provide instruction to put foot in stirrup, and physical assistance to get right leg over the hips of the horse. They will then ensure that the rider is centered, both feet are in stirrups, and the reins are in the proper position for riding. The side-walker will hold the right stirrup to provide a counterweight as the rider mounts from the left.
2. Using the mounting ramp (for more limited mobility riders) – The trained team member or Riding Instructor will assist the rider to sit on the saddle from the ramp, move right leg over the horse's neck, provide support while horse is moving from the ramp area and watch that rider's leg is not in danger while exiting area. Once out of the immediate mounting area, the team member or instructor will make certain the rider is centered, feet are in the stirrups, and reins are in the proper position for riding. The side-walker will hold the right stirrup to provide a counterweight as the rider mounts from the left. There will be a list of trained personnel maintained and kept in the file box with volunteer files.

There are two ways to dismount a rider:

1. Standard dismount – A trained team member or riding instructor will assist the rider in dismounting the horse by providing support to the left leg while rider stands up in stirrups, shifts weight to left leg, moves right leg back over horse's hips, puts belly in the saddle seat, removes the left foot from the stirrup and slides down the left side of the horse.
2. Crest dismount to ramp – A trained team member or riding instructor will assist rider in moving right leg over the horse's neck, removing left foot from stirrup, and descending to the off side mounting deck. This will not be done with the horse in the same location as mounting, but is done on the outside of the deck. The horse will be led up to the outside of the deck as close as possible. The offside side-walker will assist from the ground.

Leader:

You must be at least 14 years of age or older. As a leader during a therapy class your only responsibility is the horse. You must pay careful attention to what the instructor says during class, for cues for turning the horse around, halting and games. **With regard to our riders, we have a policy that we (volunteers and all staff at Pegasus Springs Therapeutic Riding Center) are NOT able to assist a client in toileting, administering of medication and do not go with them alone in the bathroom. They must have parents/guardians there before, during and after their ride to assist with that**

How to lead a horse:

The proper position for leading a horse is to stand on the left side of the horse, between his shoulder and eye. Hold the clasp end of the lead rope in your right hand (closest to the horse's halter) to lead. The slack of the lead rope should be held in your left hand, looped in a figure eight. **DO NOT** let the end of the lead rope drag on the ground or wrap the lead rope around your hand at any time.

Do not drag the horse or let the horse drag you. A quick pull and release on the lead rope is the most effective way to get a horse to cooperate. Use voice commands such as "whoa" (stop), "walk", "trot" and "easy" (slow down) to communicate as well.

Spacing while leading the horses in the arena is very important. Generally, you should be at least one-horse length away from the horse in front of you. If you find yourself too close, it is recommended to walk a small circle towards the center of the arena and then continue on. **ALWAYS** inform your side walkers that you intend to make a small circle for spacing between the animals so that they can prepare the rider for the change in direction and balancing.

At the mounting ramp: If you are to lead a horse to the mounting ramp, pay close attention to the instructor's directions on where to position the horse. You'll want to position the horse as close as possible to the side of the ramp on which the student is mounting. When leaving the mounting ramp area, pay special attention to any tack or the student's feet in the stirrups to ensure nothing gets caught on a railing during departure.

Your responsibility while the rider is mounting is to keep the horse as quiet as possible. Stand in front and slightly off to the right of the horse with both hands on the sides of the horse's halter. If the horse is wearing a bridle, **DO NOT HOLD THE BIT**, this will cause the horse to toss his head. If you are having horse trouble, alert the instructor. It is better to avoid a potential problem than not say anything.

Do not attempt to help the student mount the horse. The instructor will do all the mounting unless the rider is instructed to go ahead without help.

Once the lesson is underway, please pay close attention to the instructor. Try as much as possible not to interfere with the rider's attention on the instructor. Many of our riders are easily distracted and may often initiate conversation; please try to direct the student's focus back on the lesson when appropriate. Unless you are told to help give specific direction to the rider by the instructor, please do not instruct the client to move or to do anything. Too many voices disrupt our client's concentration.

If another horse is having trouble in the arena, stop your horse and stand in front of him, slightly to the right (as in the mounting ramp procedure). Stay stopped until the instructor gives permission to walk on. If your horse is having problems...remain calm. If you cannot control your horse, ask for an emergency safety dismount



Proper way to hold a horse
at the mounting block



Proper position for leading

Should a horse get loose during class, every leader in the ring must halt their horse and stay with their horse. The instructor will catch the loose horse. If there is a fall, the leader is to remain with the horse. Do not let the horse go to assist a fallen rider. The instructor will take over to help a rider down.

Horses communicate with body language, please refer to the section of this manual on “horse sense” for cues on how to interpret horse language.

Horse Leader Training

Role Description: Maintain a constant awareness of, and/or control over, the horse while at the same time paying attention to the actions of the rider and the direction of the instructor or therapist. Because the horse leader’s responsibility is the horse, the horse leader will have little interaction with the student. In a therapeutic riding class, depending on the level of independence of the rider, the horse leader may or may not have control over the horse. Regardless, the horse leader remains in constant awareness of the horse’s movement and behavior and is prepared to step in to take control of the horse at all times.

Note: Team members with little or no equine experience should perform duties as a side walker consistently for a minimum of three months and demonstrate horsemanship skills at least at the beginner level before becoming a horse leader. (Riding instructors are available at a nominal fee to assist those who need private lessons.) Experienced riders and current or previous horse owners will be given priority on a case-by-case basis. In addition to normal daily routines, horse leaders may be asked to ride the center horses occasionally during extended off periods to “tune” them up.

This team member position reports directly to the Riding Instructor. Responsibilities shall include, but not be limited to, safety of riders, other team members, staff, and participants of the program while handling the horse.

This individual will be responsible for:

1. Maintaining complete and accurate personal information on file in the office at least once per year.
2. Wearing appropriate clothing per Dress Code guidelines.
3. Arriving 30 minutes before scheduled session to ground work, groom, and tack the horse.
4. Grooming horse, using the horses' own grooming tools.
5. Tacking the horse according to assignments on Session Board posted outside of Pegasus Springs TRC tack room.
6. Leading or spotting horse during lesson with rider.
7. Calmly maintaining control of a horse per Pegasus Springs TRC guidelines in the event of an emergency.
8. Ensuring the safety of the team by being acutely aware of your horse and his/her behavior as well as the location of other horses in the arena.
9. Notifying the Riding Instructor of any questionable health or behavioral issues of the horse that has been assigned to leader.
10. Following safety guidelines as detailed by Loving Thunder.
11. When applicable, untacking horse, washing off if so instructed, and turning horse out to applicable pasture or stall.
12. Caring for tack and equipment in a manner to preserve its life of usefulness.
13. Adhering to all Pegasus Springs TRC policies and procedures.
14. Maintaining professionalism at all times.

A team member in this role must have the following qualifications to fill the position of Horse leader:

1. ***Be 16 years of age or older*** unless requirement waived by Executive Director.
2. Complete Pegasus Springs TRC Therapeutic Riding Orientation Checklist and have it signed by appropriate Pegasus Springs TRC staff.
3. Knowledge of basic horse behavior and movement.
4. Knowledge of basic horse handling techniques.
5. Ability to communicate with instructor, other team members, and rider.
6. Ability to recognize possible warning signs and/or hazards pertaining to the horse.
7. Ability to maintain horse at various tempos within different gaits.
8. Capable of leading horse through basic pattern figures at walk and trot.
9. Skilled in leading from left or right side of horse.

Horse Leader Job Description

Reports to: Riding Instructor

Office Responsibilities:

Assist the ED with administrative functions such as mailing, web design and creating promotional and community outreach materials

Maintenance Responsibilities:

Report any observations of items needing repair or attention to the Riding Instructor

Assist in trash pick-up in and around the outdoor arena

Assist in maintenance and repairs of facilities, grounds and equipment

Fundraising & Community Awareness Responsibilities:

Assist ED and Riding Instructor in developing and implementing new fundraisers

Assist in Community Outreach events

Serve as an ambassador for PSTRC.

Session Responsibilities:

Assist by leading the horse during class or spotting an independent rider

Assist in grooming and tacking of equines

Assist team in mounting client on the horse

Participate as an effective side-walker or horse leader as needed

Assist client in dismounting from the horse

Assist Barn Manager in caring for equines after each session

General Responsibilities:

Review and understand all items in the team member manual

Commit to a consistent schedule, particularly if working with clients

Side walker:

You must be at least 14 years of age. In regard to our riders, we have a policy that we (volunteers and all staff at PSTRC) are NOT able to assist a client in toileting, administering of medication and do not go with them alone in the bathroom. They are to have parents/guardians there before, during and after their ride to assist with that

As a side walker, your only responsibility is the safety of the student and making sure they stay centered on the horse. The proper position for a side walker is parallel to the rider's leg about 8-10 inches away from the horse and rider. Do not walk too far behind the rider or too far in front of the rider or you will not be able to be effective if there is a situation where the rider becomes unbalanced. If you walk too far behind the rider you also risk being in one of the danger zones of the horse.



The thigh hold method of stabilizing a rider. Rider sitting astride and rider sitting sideways, using a surcingle.

Please keep conversation to a minimum and redirect the student's attention back to the instructor. In many cases, too many voices, *even if the student initiates conversation*, is an "over stimulation" and can have negative effects on the student after they leave the center.

Thigh hold: Once in a while the instructor may ask the side walkers to use a "thigh hold" method of stabilizing the rider. Using your arm closest to the rider, place your forearm across the top of the rider's thigh and hold the surcingle handle with your hand. The pressure of your forearm will stabilize the rider during walking or trotting.

At the walk or trot, if the rider starts to slip, please tell the leader to halt the horse and gently push the rider back into the correct centered position.

It is better to push a rider back into the center of the horse rather than to let him or her fall. Accidents, although infrequent, can and do happen. Please do not underestimate the importance of paying attention to the rider, no matter how comfortable you have become in your role as a side walker.

Emergency Dismount/Safety Dismount: If the leader or instructor asks for an emergency dismount, the side walker will wrap their arms around the rider's waist and ask the rider to clear their feet from the stirrups (if applicable). If the rider is unable to communicate, the other side walker should clear the rider's feet on that side. The rider is then pulled off the horse and moved to safety.

Know your limitations. If you feel unable to safely dismount a person, please inform the instructor so that they may pair you with a more suitable client.

Side-walker Training

Role Description: Maintain constant safety awareness, while providing physical and motivational support to the rider. In a therapeutic riding class, depending on the independence of the student, the side-walker provides emotional and motivational support to the rider. A therapeutic riding class may or may not be “hands on.”

This team member position reports directly to the Team member Coordinator, but will receive input from the Executive Director, PSTRC and other appointed PSTRC personnel. Responsibilities shall include, but are not limited to, safety of riders, other team members, staff and participants of the program while interacting with the rider in the proximity of the horse.

This individual will be responsible for:

1. Maintaining complete and accurate personal information on file at least once per year.
2. Wearing appropriate clothing per Dress Code guidelines.
3. Arriving 30 minutes prior to schedule riding sessions to meet with instructor and prep for sessions.
4. Safety of the rider as directed by the instructor.
5. Assist rider in grooming and tack of equine.
6. Walking and/or jogging beside the horse providing support to the rider as directed by the instructor.
7. Reinforcing instructor instructions to the rider and assisting where necessary.
8. Encouraging the rider to stretch and grow to the best of the rider’s ability.
9. Following safety guidelines as detailed by Pegasus Springs TRC Policies & Procedures Manual.
10. Caring for tack and equipment in a manner to preserve its life of usefulness.
11. Adhering to all PSTRC policies and procedures.

A team member in this role must have the following qualifications to fill the position of Side-walker:

1. Be 14 years of age or older unless requirement waived by Executive Director.
2. Complete PSTRC Riding Orientation Checklist and have it signed by appropriate staff.
3. Awareness of acceptable horse behavior and movement.
4. Ability to communicate with instructor, therapist, or other team members and riders.
5. Physical and mental ability to support a rider in a crisis situation.
6. Passed competency exam for Hands-On Side-walker functions.

Side-walker Job Description

Reports to: Therapeutic Riding Instructor & Horse Leader

Maintenance Responsibilities:

Report any observations of items needing repair or attention to the Riding Instructor
Assist in trash pick-up in and around the outdoor arena
Assist in maintenance and repairs of facilities, grounds and equipment

Fundraising & Community Awareness Responsibilities:

Assist ED and Riding Instructor in developing and implementing new fundraisers
Assist in Community Outreach events
Serve as an ambassador for PSTRC

Session Responsibilities:

Assist in grooming and tacking of horses
Assist team in mounting client on the horse
Participate as an effective side-walker
Assist client in dismounting from the horse
Assist Barn Manager in caring for equines after each session

General Responsibilities:

Review and understand all items in the team member manual
Commit to a consistent schedule, particularly if working with clients

REMEMBER: Working with horses is a **risky activity** and attention to safety is our first concern for all individuals involved. There are as many ways to do things as there are horse people. When you are here at Pegasus Springs, we ask that you do things the way they are outlined in this training manual.

First things first:

There is absolutely **no smoking** or **solicitation** at Pegasus Springs.

Smoking is prohibited in all of our buildings or paddock areas.

All volunteers must have their completed liability and release and confidentiality forms signed and turned in to the Volunteer Coordinator or Instructor on duty **BEFORE** beginning any volunteer activity at the center.

Volunteers must sign in when volunteering! Volunteer sign in sheet is located by the arena by the volunteer board.

All volunteers must wear a nametag while volunteering.

For program safety and consistency, we ask that all volunteers attend at least one volunteer orientation during their time here at the center.

If a volunteer work group is coming to help with set up, clean up, barn work, special project, they are only allowed to be there when a PSTRC Staff member is present.

Barn Conduct and Safety Rules

For the safety and wellbeing of all individuals and program animals at PSTRC, we ask that you abide by the following set of guidelines when in our barn. These safety rules are posted in various visible locations throughout the barn.

1. All riders must wear a helmet when riding PSTRC horses.
2. No running, yelling, jumping, or screaming in the barn or observation area. “Horsing around” can be harmful.
3. If you take it out, put it away!
4. If your horse makes a mess, clean it up!
5. Know the horse “danger zones” and avoid them (directly behind, in front of and under the necks of horses).
6. Only staff members and lead volunteers may hand feed horses treats. Exceptions may be made with riders for therapy purposes and/or under the direct supervision of a staff member.
7. Close-toed shoes must be worn when working with the horses. No bare, feet inside the barn at any time.
8. Always use a lead rope when moving a horse.

9. Never lead a horse under another horse's occupied cross-ties. Have someone unhook it to go through.
10. Students/volunteers may not be INSIDE occupied horse stalls without an instructor or lead volunteers' permission.
11. You must be at least 14 years old AND have permission from the lead volunteer to bring horses out or in from the paddocks.
12. Riders and volunteers MAY NOT go INSIDE the paddocks except as directed by staff, or lead volunteers to retrieve a horse or when given specific permission.
13. BEWARE! The wire fencing outside is electric.
14. Please do not climb on the hay bales or sawdust bags.
15. Because our horses work so hard on lesson days, we set aside special volunteer appreciation parties. Volunteers are invited to ride at these times.
16. Volunteers that are 15 years old and younger must attend an orientation before volunteering at the center for classes. Pre-approval is based on the ability of the volunteer in the following areas:
 - Demonstrates the willingness and ability to follow directions effectively.
 - Demonstrates the willingness and ability to follow all barn safety rules.
 - Demonstrates the ability to complete given tasks independently.
 - Treats all riders, volunteers, staff and animals with dignity and respect.

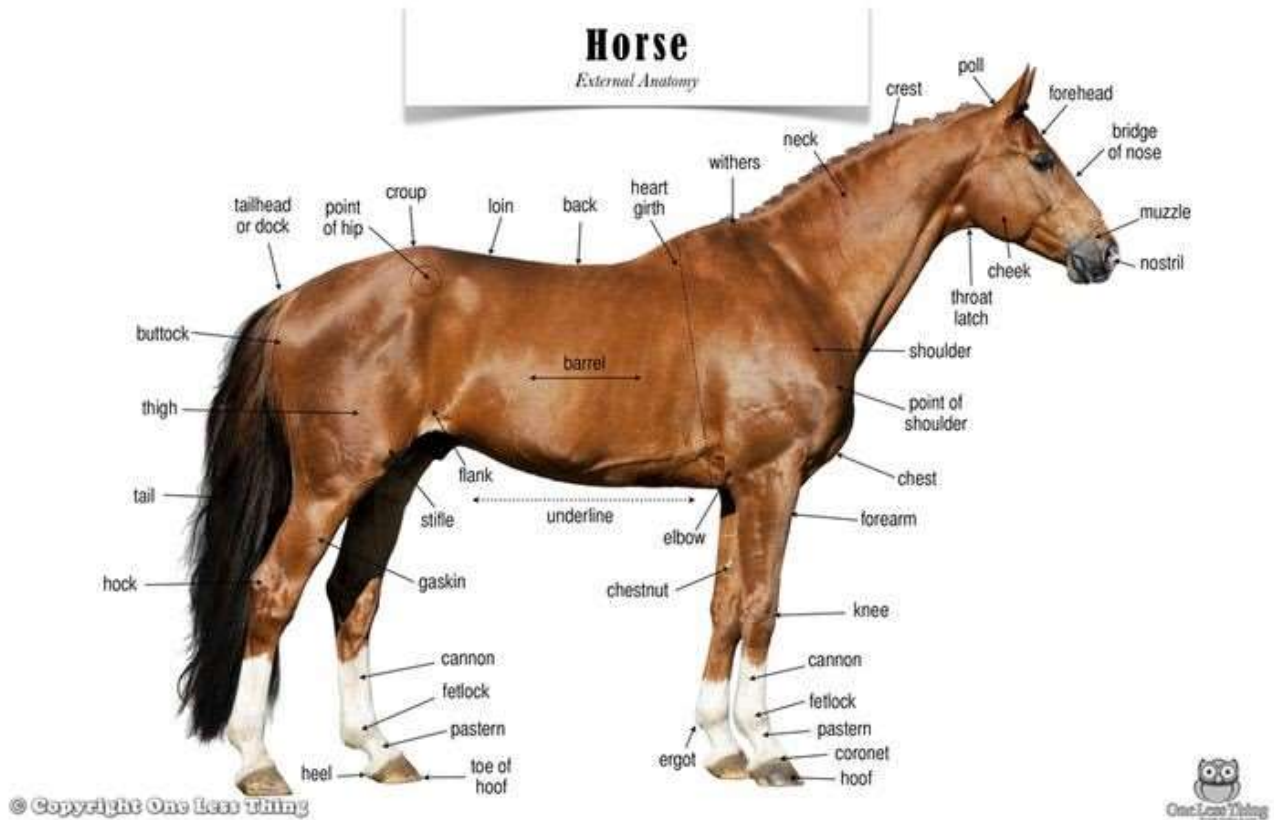
Watch your feet!

While a horse is very sure-footed by nature, it may accidentally step on a human's foot when balancing itself or turning around. Always be aware of where your feet are when working closely beside a horse. If a horse steps on your foot, do not try to pull your foot out from under the horse's foot. Rather, reposition the horse so that he removes his foot from yours.

Gates and Locks

Always lead a horse through a gate that opens away from you. You go through first, and your horse follows you. If your horse starts ahead of you, make him/her stop and wait for you to get through the gate. This is less dangerous. Always close the gate behind you if you opened it. All stalls are double locked. Some horses can manipulate the latches and clips and open the gates. Double locks mean double security. The stalls up top have two clips on each, match the colored markings on the chains with the clips. Pink to pink, red to red, etc.

Horse Body Parts



THE HERD OF TWO

Think of the relationship between you and the horse as a “herd of two”. And in this “herd of two” it will be the horse handler’s responsibility to take the role of “sarge”. This is not done by pulling or jerking the horse around, but with patience and by moving his space with your body language. Horses communicate with body language, i.e. Ears, Tail, Eyes. Just like when a sergeant puts on a certain grimace, the private knows exactly what to do. When you as the sergeant move your horse’s space with your body language, you establish authority and trust.

Horse Sense:

Winston Churchill said, “The outside of a horse is good for the inside of a man”. Many people who work with the horses during their time here at Pegasus Springs say that the bonds made with these special animals is both unique and therapeutic even if they are only brushing and grooming them for class.

Horses do have a “sixth sense” when evaluating the disposition of those around them. They can be hypersensitive in detecting the moods of their handlers and riders. A good therapy horse is chosen for their gentle and sensitive response to a rider. At times there may exist a personality conflict between horses and handlers. It is important to tell the instructor or lead volunteer if you are having a difficult time handling a particular horse. Additionally, do not be embarrassed to tell an instructor that a horse

that acts “strong” might intimidate you. It is better to work with a horse that you are compatible with than risk an accident by putting yourself in a situation that is uncomfortable.

PSTRC will also schedule one on one training for help on groundwork with a horse if you so desire.

In addition to understanding the horse’s “sixth sense”, we need to appreciate and increase our awareness of the horse’s lifestyle and the way they use body language to communicate. This will assist us in responding appropriately to his reactions to situations and his behavior.

Flight as Natural Instinct:

Horses would rather run away from perceived danger than turn and face it. A horse’s sense of hearing is thought to be so acute that “hearing and not seeing” is often the cause of his fright/flight response.

What this means:

- A sudden movement or noise may cause the horse to “spook” or try to flee.
- They might try to bolt sideways or run forwards.
- Remain calm and in control. Speak to the horse in a reassuring manner.
 - A horse may get frightened in the crossties or by being held or tied too tightly and he will try to “escape” by pulling back. Often until something gives—usually his halter or the cross ties. The best way to handle this is to relax your hold on him or untie him quickly and calmly and he will relax.
 - Horses are herd animals. If a horse gets loose, often times they will run back to the herd for safety. In an arena setting this could be you (if there are no other horses in the arena) or the other horses in the arena.

Most horses in the therapeutic riding setting have less of an instinct to flee and are chosen for this reason. The horse may look to you for reassurance. It is helpful if the volunteer remains calm and talks to the horse in a soothing voice.

Please see the end pages for illustrations on basic horse anatomy, emotions and indications to temperament.

Ground Manners:

Groundwork is a term used to describe working with a horse on the ground, not riding. Pegasus Springs horses are chosen, in part, for their proper manners on the ground. This translates into being safe for most people to handle, given the proper instruction. Consistency of handling is the most important part of creating good ground manners in horses. The nature of the program at PSTRC means that horses are handled by many different individuals daily. We ask that if you have trouble with a horse on the ground that you please approach a staff member for the correct way to handle a difficult animal. We try to schedule a Ground Manners Clinic at least once a year that is open to all volunteers. At this clinic we learn in a hands-on method how to work with horses in situations where accidents are most likely to occur or behavior problems can be addressed in a safe and effective manner. Please look for the clinic dates at the Volunteer Bulletin Board area.

Tacking, Grooming and Barn Maintenance:

Many individuals who are unable to help in the arena during class are able to help groom and tack the horses as well as participate in the daily cleaning and maintenance of the barn.

Tacking and Grooming:

It is helpful to become familiar with tack and grooming tools as well as the anatomy of the horse before you begin working with the animals in the barn.

Currycomb: usually made of rubber or plastic, round or oval in shape with “teeth” or a serrated type of edge. To use correctly, place on the body of the horse and rub in circular motions across the body. It is used to loosen and remove caked on dirt, mud and shedding hair from the horse.

Body Brush: usually used after the currycomb to remove loose dust and hair. This is a medium to soft bristled brush. Always brush the hair in the direction it grows.

Mane comb/brush: Looks just like our human equivalents, used to brush the mane and tail.

Hoof pick: Small hand held pick with a curved metal end. Used to clean dirt and debris out of horses feet.

Grooming a horse:

Make sure horse is properly secured in cross ties or in its stall.

Gather all your tools and place them to one side, so that they will not be in the way of others walking through the area.

Feet first! Pick up the horse’s foot and using the hoof pick, remove any dirt, stones, etc...that may be lodged in the hoof with the point of the pick. Be careful not to dig too deeply or hard in the area called the frog (v-shaped area near center of foot), although the deeper “notches” on either side of the frog should be cleaned thoroughly. Tell an instructor if you suspect any problems with a horse’s foot.

Curry the horse’s coat with currycomb and finish with a body brush. Start at the neck and shoulder and work back towards the tail. It helps to talk to the horse in a calm and soothing manner so they are aware of where you are, especially when you are near the hindquarters and tail.

Mane and tail: Horsehair is much coarser than human hair. When brushing the tail, hold it in one hand and brush, while standing OFF TO ONE SIDE (not directly behind). Only in special situations do we brush the mane and tail. If the mane or tail are brushed too often, the hair tends to fall out.

Helpful tips:

Do not use quick, jerking or excessive movements around horses.

Be mindful of a horse's sensitive areas: Face, flanks, girth area, tummy, mane and tail. Think about how you would like to be groomed or touched and apply this to the horse. **Remember:** horses can feel even a tiny insect alighting anywhere on their bodies...for large animals they are very sensitive creatures!

DO NOT go underneath a horse's belly or neck/chest. A horse's first instinct is to go forward when startled, it will not matter if you are in the way of that.

Do not stand directly in front of a horse in the cross-ties or let the horses rub you with their heads. Many horses would love to use you as a scratching post and a nudge from a 1200-pound animal is enough to knock you down or break a bone. It may seem cute or affectionate if a horse wants to nudge you, but please be mindful that the very same horse, if allowed to have that habit, will not discriminate between you and a child or a child with a disability walking with crutches or a walker. If a horse wants to rub you with its head, simply move out of its range or push its head away out of your space. You may have to repeat this as horses are great "negotiators" of what they want and will test you to see if you "mean it."

Tacking up:

A list of class times, riders, horses and their tack is posted on a clipboard outside the feed room. Please refer to it for tacking instructions. If you have tacking concerns or questions, please ask the lead volunteer or instructor.

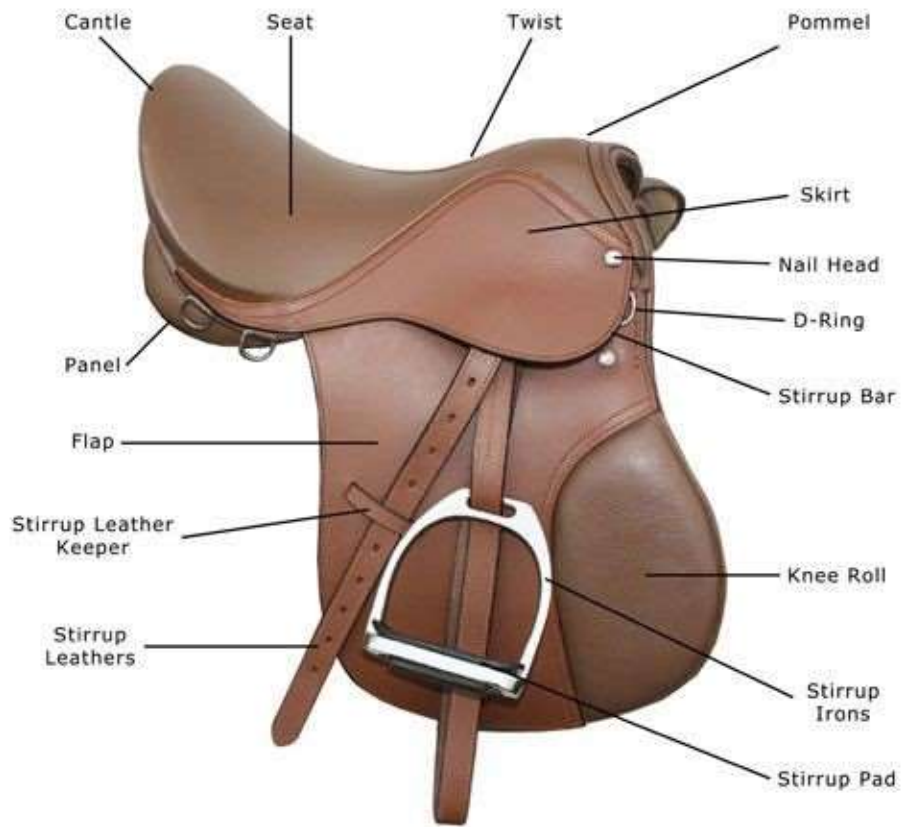
Commonly used tack:

- **Surcingle:** Two or one handled piece of equipment with foot loops on both sides or in some cases, no foot loops. Is positioned on the horse's back behind the withers, but not on top of the shoulders. Is used for most therapeutic horseback riding clients when they are beginning therapy. Allows the rider the most flexibility and mobility on the horse.
- **Western saddle:** Saddle with which most people associate riding. Large, deep leather seat, saddle horn, pommel and long stirrups. PSTRC has a wide range of sizes for horses and riders
- **English saddle:** Saddle that is smaller in size, shape and weight. Again, PSTRC has a wide range of both sizes and types for different disciplines.

WESTERN SADDLE PARTS



English Saddle Parts



- **Bridle:** Harness for the head with several leather straps, a bit and reins.
- **Reins:** Usually, at PSTRC, we use rainbow reins. They are colored rubber reins that attach to the bit or on a halter for steering and controlling the horse.
- **Bit:** Generally, we use a snaffle or a gentle curb bit for our horses. Both are made of metal that is jointed in the middle and goes into the horse's mouth. The rings on either side of the mouthpiece attach to the bridle and the reins. In the winter, we hold the bits in our hands for about 5 minutes to warm them up before placing them in the horse's mouths.
- **Halter:** Made of nylon or leather, the halter is like a head collar that the horse wears while out in the pasture or being led in class. The lead rope is normally clipped on to a metal ring at the back of the noseband when the horse is led. Two metal rings on the cheek pieces of the halters are used when securing the horse in the crossties.
- **Western saddle pad:** Thick, large, square and normally used under either a surcingle for therapeutic riding or a western saddle.
- **Western built-up, cut-back saddle pad:** Similar in size, shape and thickness as the normal Western pad, but has built-up padding in shoulder area and a cut in the top for greater protection of the horse's wither area.
- **English pad:** Smaller and lighter weight than the Western pad. Usually, but not always, similar in shape to the English saddle. Made of cotton or fleece.
- **Girth:** Attaches to the saddle by buckles or a latigo, fastens underneath the horse to the other side of the saddle by either buckles or a latigo. When tacking horses in the crosstie area, girths are tightened only to make sure the saddle or surcingle doesn't fall off. When the horse goes into the arena for class, the instructor will tighten the girth securely.
- **Lead rope:** Usually made of cotton or nylon. Used to lead the horse anywhere in the barn, arena or property.
- Do not let the lead rope drag on the ground or hang from the halter on the ground when the horse is cross tied. A horse, which steps on his lead rope, usually then, becomes frightened and hard to handle. It's best to loosely tie the slack end of the lead rope around the horse's neck when he is cross-tied and waiting to either go to his stall or be led in class.
- **Shims and Neoprene Pads:** These are special pads that are made of foamy material. They help the saddle to fit the horse in a more comfortable way.

Important notes on tacking up:

All saddles and surcingle's use a girth strap to hold them onto the horse. When tightening the girth on any form of tack, please do so in a slow and gentle manner ONE HOLE AT A TIME. Some of the horses here are "girthy", meaning they pin their ears, threaten to bite and sometimes threaten to kick, when their tack is being girthed. Being mindful of this is the best way to deal with the animal when it is uncomfortable. Many times, it is a problem that came with the horse when it came to our center. The instructors will always recheck the girth and tighten as need be before a rider mounts. Do not yell at, slap, kick or hit an animal that acts "girthy". Please inform an instructor or lead volunteer if you are uncomfortable working with an animal that acts aggressive or report any incidents that seem unusual or out of character for an animal you work with on an ongoing basis.

Always check to make sure tack is properly fitted. If you **are unsure, please ask a lead volunteer or instructor**. If you find damaged or broken tack please inform the instructor on duty so that it does not get used. Please put away all tack and grooming equipment after you are finished with it.

Barn Maintenance:

Because it is a home to our therapy animals as well as a teaching facility, we strive to keep the Center property clean and well maintained at all times. There is always an area that needs tidying up or a floor to be swept. The farm is a large area with many different areas to be maintained. Lead volunteers and the instructor on duty are in charge of making sure all barn duties are completed at the end of each night of lessons. Please check with them if you are looking for something to do. If you are feeling particularly creative, go to them with your ideas on getting things done or any special projects you see that we may have overlooked.

There are some volunteers who feel that working with the animals and clients is not appropriate for them for whatever reason, but still enjoy the opportunity to volunteer by helping out with farm maintenance. If you would like to volunteer your services in this way, please speak with the Volunteer Coordinator about suitable choices.

Stall Maintenance

It is a fact of life; this job is one that must be done. We would hope that you would not be opposed to helping with the dirty chores as well. Sometimes there will be down time from a rider not showing up, more team members than are needed show up to sidewalk, or it just needs to be done, etc. So we appreciate everyone helping with the stall maintenance. This can include picking up poop, raking the stalls, shoveling dirt, picking up rocks around the facility, weeding, cleaning and refilling water buckets, helping repair stalls, etc.

Cleaning the stalls involves using a wheelbarrow and raking up the poop in the stalls or the arena (if the horses have been turned out). You should pull the trailer alongside the stall and pick up the poop with the poop rakes. The horses may or may not be in the stalls. Unless the horse has scattered it all over (some do) it is most effective to pick up each pile, rather than rake it together in a big pile. Do not rake the piles into the aisles as we try to keep them as poop free as possible.

Do not fill the wheelbarrow so full that you can't move it comfortably. There are handles and wheels on the tongue, please use them and save your backs. There is a manure pile across the drive where you will wheel your poo to. This pile is regularly spread onto various fields on our property to provide an effective and cost-saving fertilizer.

Please put your tools back where you got them. Never leave tools or carts within the reach of the horses. They can stretch their neck up to 6 ft to eat the wooden handles.

Water Bucket cleaning- This can be a judgement call. Horses need clean water and in the summer can drink 20-25 gallons/day and in the winter, only about 5 gallons/day. But they should be checked daily. If they are dirty, the water is removed by dumping in the run, as the horses could use the moisture on their feet.

Scrub brushes for cleaning the algae are located near the stand pipe in the barn. If they are still relatively clean but have hay in them, use the skimmer to take out the hay.

If they are fairly clean just leave them for re-filling.

Filling the water buckets when empty or partially full. Fill them completely to where you stop the water just before it overflows. This is full. Even in the winter, the fuller the better when we are fighting with ice due to the cold weather.

If the buckets are more than $\frac{3}{4}$ full and dirty, please do not re-fill. It is a judgment call, but if you wouldn't want to drink it, neither will they. Horses can become very ill with out clean water.

Glossary of Physical and Cognitive Disabilities

The following are brief, non-medical descriptions of some disabilities and conditions of participants one might encounter in a therapeutic riding setting. This is not intended to be a comprehensive explanation of specific disabilities. Rather, it is a general overview with an explanation of how therapeutic riding can be beneficial.

ARTHRITIS: term for inflammatory process of the joint.

Types: Osteo, rheumatoid and juvenile rheumatoid.

Can occur in children, working-age individuals, and the elderly. Disease can be mild to severe.

Characteristics: Pain, stiffness/lack of mobility, loss of strength.

Benefits of therapeutic riding: Gentle rhythmic movements of horse and rider promote joint mobility, relieve pain, and increase strength.

AUTISM & PERVASIVE DEVELOPMENT DISORDER (PDD): Various disorders ranging from mild to severe which affect thought, perception, and attention. Usually noticed in early childhood, but milder forms can manifest later in life.

Characteristics: Impairments in social interaction and communication, repetitive patterns of behavior, impairments in the use of non-verbal behaviors such as eye contact and facial expressions, lack of social or emotional reciprocity, delays in or lack of the development of spoken language, impairments in ability to initiate or sustain conversation with others, abnormal responses to sensory input (sight, hearing, touch, balance, smell, taste, reaction to pain), and deficits in gross and fine motor skills.

Benefits of therapeutic riding: Provides sensory input and promotes sensory integration, promotes communication skills (expressive and receptive), promotes socialization, develops strength, coordination, muscle tone and gross and fine motor skills.

CEREBRAL PALSY: Brain damage occurring before or shortly after birth. Usually noticed in early childhood, it is a muscle problem that is considered to be stable over time (as opposed to muscular dystrophy, described later).

Types and characteristics: 1. Spastic – increased muscle tone (muscles seem tight or rigid; limbs can become “stuck” in certain positions), muscle asymmetry, and balance problems. Increased startle reflex and other pathological reflexes. 2. Athetoid – Muscle tension of group of muscles called extensor muscles (back of arms and front of legs), involuntary movements, difficulty maintaining upright posture. 3. Ataxic – Weakened muscles, poor balance, and difficulty with quick, fine movements.

Benefits of therapeutic riding: Normalization of muscle tone, muscle strengthening, development of posture, balance and motor coordination, opportunity for promotion of expressive skills, socialization and confidence.

CEREBRAL VASCULAR ACCIDENT (CVA)/STROKE: Brain hemorrhage (bleeding) or brain emboli (blood clot), which causes varying degrees of functional impairment. Seen more commonly in adults and elderly but can occur in children.

Characteristics: Flaccid (floppy/loose) or spastic (rigid/tight) paralysis of arm and leg on same side of the body. May impair thought, memory, speech, sight, balance, coordination, and strength.

Benefits of therapeutic riding: Promotes symmetry; stimulates balance, posture, motor planning, speech, socialization, and confidence.

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (DD): A diverse group of physical, cognitive, psychological, sensory and speech impairments that begin anytime during development up to 18 years of age.

Characteristics: Varied, but can include processing delays and delays in physical, motor and social development.

Benefits of therapeutic riding: Increases confidence and self-esteem, stimulates processing, speech and body awareness; provides opportunity for sport and recreation, promotes socialization.

DOWN SYNDROME: A genetic disorder in which a person is born with an extra chromosome (chromosome 21). Can be diagnosed by prenatal testing or at birth.

Characteristics: Mild to severe learning disabilities, low muscle tone, speech impairments, distinctive facial features, often associated medical problems (obesity, sleep apnea, heart problems).

Benefits of therapeutic riding: Promotes expressive and receptive language skills, promotes social skills, increases confidence and self-esteem. increases gross and fine motor skills, balance, coordination, posture, and muscle tone.

EMOTIONAL DISABILITIES/EMOTIONAL IMPAIRMENT: Social, emotional or behavioral functioning which is not age- appropriate and affects a child's academics, social relationships and self-care.

Characteristics: Difficulty coping with everyday life situations and interpersonal relationships, inappropriate attitudes or behavioral responses, depression, anxiety, physical symptoms, difficulty learning, withdrawal, and aggressiveness.

Benefits of therapeutic riding: Increases confidence and self-esteem, provides opportunities for accomplishments, promotes positive socialization.

HEARING IMPAIRMENT: Hearing difficulty varying from mild to profound. Can be born with hearing loss or develop hearing loss over time, both in childhood and as an adult.

Characteristics: Difficulties in communication or communication through sign language, lip reading or finger spelling. May use hearing aids or surgical techniques (i.e. cochlear implant, Baha) to help with hearing.

Benefits of therapeutic riding: Increases confidence, self-esteem, and sense of accomplishment; provides recreational activity with opportunity for socialization; stimulates balance, posture, and coordination.

LEARNING DISABILITIES: Neurological disorders that interfere with a person's ability to store, process or produce information. Usually noted in childhood, but milder forms may be diagnosed later in life.

Characteristics: Difficulties with reading, writing, math. May affect development and social skills.

Benefits of therapeutic riding: Promotes processing, language skills and attending skills, increases confidence and self-esteem, provides opportunity for success, increases balance, coordination and posture, provides opportunity for socialization.

MENTAL IMPAIRMENT OR MENTAL RETARDATION (MR): A disorder in which a person's overall intellectual functioning is below average with an IQ of 70 or less. Can be mild to profound. Impaired ability to cope with common life demands and daily living skills.

Characteristics: Impairments in learning, communication, social interactions, self-care.

Benefits of therapeutic riding: Increases balance, coordination, strength and posture, improves gross and fine motor skills, promotes socialization, increases confidence, reinforces life and vocational skills.

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS (MS): Neurological disease of the covering layer (myelin) of the spinal cord and brain; can lead to permanent damage/scarring in these areas.

Characteristics: Most commonly starts between age 20 and 40; more common in women. It has periods of exacerbation (worsening) and remission (improvement). MS is progressive, meaning that it tends to get worse over time. Symptoms include weakness, visual impairment, fatigue, loss of coordination, and emotional sensitivity.

Benefits of therapeutic riding: Maintains and strengthens weak muscles, maintains balance, increases confidence and self-esteem.

MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY (MD): Deficiency in muscle with degeneration of skeletal muscle. Muscle cells die over time, leading to weakness. Hereditary disease that mainly affects males, but there are multiple types with different patterns. This is usually noted in childhood and some forms have a shortened life span.

Characteristics: Progressive muscular weakness, fatigues easily, sensitive to temperature extremes. Some individuals also have mental impairment/cognitive issues, behavior issues, speech or vision problems.

Benefits of therapeutic riding: Provides opportunity for recreational, physical, and social activity, may help slow progressive loss of strength, stimulates postural and trunk alignment, allows for movement free of assistive devices.

POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD) is a disorder that causes the re-living of a traumatic experience. The person is not able to control their thoughts and can often be completely immobilized with fear and un-rational thoughts. It is quite complicated and can be caused from any trauma such as wartime activities, rape and sexual abuse, child hood abuse, etc. PTSD can be present in anyone you see, not just Veterans.

Benefits of therapeutic riding: Horses are prey animals and that is often how the PTSD sufferer feels. The horses give immediate feedback and act as a mirror to the person triggering a change in their response and reactivity. They are unconditional in their acceptance and if treated well will respond

with kindness and understanding to the person. Often this will break down the walls of mistrust in the person.

SCOLIOSIS: Disease where the spine is abnormally curved/deviated. The spine normally looks like a straight line from behind, but individuals with scoliosis have a varying degree and pattern of spinal curvature. Can be genetic and present at birth or can develop later in life.

Characteristics: Shoulder, trunk and waistline asymmetry. May have back pain and postural fatigue.

Benefits of therapeutic riding: Stimulates postural symmetry, strengthens trunk muscles.

SPINA BIFIDA: Prenatal developmental problem where part of the spinal cord does not get covered by the normal lining tissue and hard bone (failure of vertebral arch closure). This results in spinal cord exposure and damage.

Characteristics: Varying degrees of paralysis of the lower limbs coupled with sensory loss (cannot feel pressure/pain/temperature normally). May also be associated with hydrocephalus (increased fluid around brain), scoliosis and hip dislocations.

Benefits of therapeutic riding: Stimulates posture and balance, increases strength, balance and coordination, promotes confidence and self-esteem.

SPINAL CORD INJURY (SCI): Trauma to the spinal cord resulting in a loss of neurological function.

Characteristic: Paralysis of muscles below the level of injury – can be flaccid (loose/floppy) or spastic (tight/rigid). Individuals may also have fatigue, sensory loss and pressure sores.

Benefits of therapeutic riding: Stimulates posture and balance, strengthens trunk muscles and provides opportunity for recreational and social activity.

TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY (TBI): Physical injury to the head resulting in impairment of cognitive, emotional and/or physical functioning.

Characteristics: May include deficits in gross and fine motor skills, balance, coordination and strength. May have deficits in language, communications, processing, memory and perceptual skills.

Benefits of therapeutic riding: Increases confidence, provides interaction with other individuals, improves coordination.

VISUAL IMPAIRMENT: Moderate to total loss of sight. Can be born with problems or develop visual loss over time.

Characteristics: May include insecure posture, lack of visual memory, altered center of gravity, and fearfulness.

Benefits of therapeutic riding: Stimulates spatial awareness, proprioception, posture, balance and coordination; provides opportunity for socialization, structured risk-taking and freedom of movement.

Facility Tour

Facility Orientation will cover the following:

1. Introductions to staff, instructors, team members, riders
2. Parking designation:
 - a. Team member
 - b. Riders
 - c. Visitors
3. Tour of facilities:
 - a. Assessment Area
 - b. Arena
 - c. Sensory Trail
 - d. Stalls
 - e. Tack & Feed Room
4. Pegasus Springs Tack Room:
 - a. Team member Sign In process
 - b. Emergency Information location
 - c. First Aid Kit locations (equine and human)
 - d. Program Schedule Calendar
 - e. Tack locations/explanation of specific tack to be used for riders
 - f. Specific Tack location per horse
5. Session Board
6. Therapy Horses
 - a. Introduction to Therapy Horse
 - b. Stalls for Therapy Horse
 - c. Tack to be used for individual horses
7. Emergency evacuation locations
 - a. Introduction
 - b. Stalls for Therapy Horses

Safety Guidelines (A26.5 Path Standards)

At Pegasus Springs TRC we are concerned about your safety and the safety of our horses. Please remember that horses are prey animals. They can be unpredictable if put into a “fear for life” situation. You are responsible to keep yourself, your horse and others around you safe.

1. Parking is only permitted in the designated parking lot. Do not park on roadway.
2. Team members are required to sign in and out using the available Volunteer Log provided in the tack room, or just outside on table.
3. Names tags must be worn while signed in for volunteering.
4. Parents are responsible for the conduct of your children while on Pegasus Springs property.
5. Visitors should remain at the picnic table or in their vehicles during lessons.
6. Do not go into arena, stalls or round pens where horses are present unless an equine staff member has cleared you.
7. No alcoholic beverages or smoking are permitted on premises.
8. Wear boots or sturdy shoes with ample ankle support and low heel – no open toe shoes.
9. Wear jeans or appropriate riding pants – no dresses are allowed. Reasonable shorts are acceptable during the summer months.
10. Riders are required to wear an approved ASTM/SEI riding helmet at all times during lesson participation and riding of any equine. Team members are required to wear an approved ASTM/SEI riding helmet while riding any equine on the facility premises.
11. Adult veteran participants are allowed to perform ground work without a helmet, but a helmet must be worn during mounted activities. (A32-Path Standard)
12. Never feed the horses treats. Some of our horses have special dietary needs and treats may cause illness.
13. For our horses’ safety, a weight limit for participants is 170lbs for all riders needing assistance. For Veterans, or riders not needing side-walker assistance, the weight limit is determined by the horse assignment. If you have concerns with this, please ask a member of the equine team for details. We reserve the right to perform a weight check to insure proper horse assignment.
14. Never stand directly in front of or behind a horse.
15. Always be aware of your surroundings. Be aware of the people and animals around you.
16. Always be aware of your safety in working with equines at all times
17. Always close a gate behind you (your horse will know the second you don’t and make his or her escape). Gates must be latched when horses are left alone. If you are with the horses inside a stall or arena (i.e. during lessons or stall maintenance),make sure you are aware of your exit strategies
18. Be aware of what you place in proximity to your horse or horse’s stall. Their necks are amazingly long at times.
19. If your horse is not tied, never let go of your lead rope or reins (also to be covered during lessons). The exception is if a horse is bolting – you could be injured if you do not let go.
20. Notify the staff immediately of any injury to yourself or your horse – no matter how small it may be. Occurrence reports are filed on all injuries even if the injury is not horse-related.
21. Always inspect your horse and equipment prior to any lesson and notify staff of any issues.
22. Most of all – have fun but please be responsible.

TEAM MEMBER SIGNATURE: _____ Date: _____

PARENT SIGNATURE : _____

Phase I -Team member Training Requirements

(A-37 Path Standards)

Team Member Name: _____

*NOTE: Under no circumstances are you required to perform any function that you are not comfortable doing or that you have not been trained to do.

___1. Interview with a member of the staff to relate your experience level in working with equine and special needs participants. Also discuss any areas of expertise you might be able to share in your team member work with the center. There is no requirement to have any previous special training. If you don't want to work around horses, there are other jobs available at the center. *Riding instructors are available at a nominal fee to assist those who would be interested in private equine lessons.

___2. Complete and return all required registration forms given to you by staff personnel. *Must be completed prior to trainings or program interaction can be initiated.

___3. Handed in Safety Guidelines acknowledgement form.

___4. Conducted tour of Facility.

___5. Review introduction/safety related PATH DVD during first training session at facility.

___6. Review the Pegasus Springs Therapeutic Riding Center Team member Manual, either online on our website, www.pegasusspringsmi.com, or viewed in our barn (tack room) or main office. Training will be conducted during orientation (about 2-3 hours). The manual not only covers general standards, emergency procedures, emergency evacuation, roles responsibilities, job descriptions, introductory information to equines, introduction to working with persons with disabilities but also contains PATH standards and additional resources for those who want to learn more about horses or working with special needs persons. Immediately following orientation, a competency exam may be conducted.

Orientation Training Complete:

Date: _____ Vol. Cord. Initials: _____ Vol Initials: _____

___1. Observe minimum two classes of therapeutic riding classes – from beginning to end of lesson. Observe the functions performed by horse leader, sidewalkers, and instructors. Pay close attention to each of the above roles/responsibilities: equine workout, student greeting, helmet fit, equine tack, grooming, mounting, session, dismounting, removal of tack, grooming and prep for next session.

Observation Training Complete:

Date: _____ Vol. Cord. Initials: _____ Vol Initials: _____

Phase II - Side Walker Evaluation- Hands-on-Horse

(A-37 Path Standards)

- ___ 1. Demonstrate Emergency Procedures:
Notification of emergency situation
Evacuation Procedure

- ___ 2. Demonstrate/Explain:
Session Board
Location of Tack
Team member Sign-In Procedures

- ___ 3. Review how to assist a participant put on a helmet properly prior to the ride.

- ___ 4. Demonstrate how to tie a quick-release knot with the horse's lead rope and to tie the knot at the proper height from the ground and have the proper spacing from the knot to the halter.

- ___ 5. Practice grooming a horse and assist in preparing them for a class.

- ___ 6. Practice putting on the proper tack for the class (with the aid of an instructor or horse leader).

- ___ 7. Mounting and Dismounting:
 - ___ Practice assisting a client mount and dismount safely from the ground, block or mounting ramp. (This is the job of the instructor/therapist, but you need to know where to stand and what to do during this potentially critical moment.)

 - ___ Practice at least one emergency dismount in a role-playing situation. Instructors will demonstrate this activity. Follow through with what to do if anyone were hurt and how to summon help as might be required.

- ___ 8. Know and practice arm-over-the-thigh hold and therapeutic hold where the ankle and/or knee are supported. Be aware that instructor may modify your holds as required for the clients.

- ___ 9. Practice changing sides of the horse with the other side walker.

- ___ 10. Observe the use and ride the Sure Hands mechanical lift (if one is available at our barn)

CONGRATULATIONS YOU ARE A SIDE-WALKER

Side Walker Evaluation Complete:

Date: _____ Vol. Cord. Initials: _____ Vol Initials: _____

Phase III – Horse Leader Evaluation

(A-37 Path Standards)

- ___ 1. Successfully passed Sidewalker Evaluation.
- ___ 2. All elements of sidewalker training must be completed.
- ___ 3. Catch horses from the pasture, paddock, or stall. Demonstrate proper halter techniques and properly tie with safety knot in the grooming area.
- ___ 4. Demonstrate how to work or warm up a horse in the round pen and on the lunge line.
- ___ 5. Be thoroughly familiar with the characteristics unique to each horse you lead.
(Although not required, please try to ride all horses you lead).
- ___ 6. Demonstrate how to tack up horses using all of the various types of equipment available. Safely bridle the horse.
- ___ 7. Demonstrate how to lead a horse into a mounting ramp and depart the ramp safely.
- ___ 8. Demonstrate how to lead the horse at the walk and trot. Hold excess lead rope appropriately and at an appropriate length from the halter. Look up and ahead in direction of travel with soft eyes for awareness of surroundings. Allow horse to move freely forward and relaxed with complete freedom of head and neck. Walk with clearly balanced rhythm and arm swinging in harmony with horse's movement.
- ___ 9. Demonstrate how to square a horse at halt and maintain safe distances between other teams. Give the horse plenty of room to turn in a fluid circle (no immediate turns).
- ___ 10. Know the limits of correction that can be used for a horse when a Rider is on its back.
- ___ 11. Able to assess issues and use correct training methods/aids within scope of Natural Horsemanship Skills.

CONGRATULATIONS YOU ARE HORSE LEADER

Horse Leader Training Complete:

Date: _____ Vol. Cord. Initials: _____ Vol Initials: _____