

## Animal Guardians Horse Rescue, Inc.

### Volunteer Safety Rules & Procedures

(Revised 6/16/21)

- All Volunteers MUST attend all scheduled CDC Compliance Meetings, read / review thoroughly the Disease Prevention / C-19 Safety and Hazard Maintenance / Regulations Business Plan, and sign a Disease Prevention Plan Affidavit, ensuring that they understand and are willing to comply completely with City, County, and State Guidelines and Ordinances to prevent the spread of COVID-19. All Volunteers must provide proof of full COVID vaccinations in order to refrain from using a face mask, must maintain 3+ feet social distance from other people on the sites, sanitize hands upon arrival and before departure, and sanitize all surfaces after touching objects at every site during every visit for Rescue Organization activities. All Volunteers must report to Rescue Directors and Site property owners immediately if they have been exposed to anyone with C-19 positive symptoms, and must immediately leave the property and report directly to the nearest emergency hospital. Any Volunteer exhibiting symptoms of any illness, especially C-19, must stay home and report an absence from their service appointment with illness reasons. Should a Volunteer be exposed to, or be tested positive for, Coronavirus or SARS virus, the Volunteer must fill out a reporting form and turn it in to the Rescue Directors immediately within 24 hours of exposure to positive C-19.
- Direct Horse Care Volunteers must complete the Volunteer Safety and Procedure Training - Volunteer Purpose Training Module 1, 2, and 3 Video Lessons (“Equine Safety Tips”, “Equine Body Language”, “Knots, Tying, & Tool Handling”) and the Groundwork Purpose Training Module “Catching” before visiting our horses.
- Once completed, Direct Horse Care Volunteers must attend all Volunteer Experiential Learning Trainings assigned, and must attend Volunteer Orientations on a regular basis while working with our horses.
- All Direct Horse Care Volunteers must participate with a minimum of 6 hours per month actively working with the AGHR Training Program with our horses as assigned. All Direct Horse Care Volunteers begin at Level 1 and Move Up Through Levels Evaluations twice a year. Volunteers will participate in regularly scheduled Volunteer Meetings, Play Day / Evaluations, and Trainings / Clinics as assigned. Volunteers Must Participate in Planning and Executing at Least 2 Community Outreach Events per year. All Volunteers Must Join the Organization with a Completed Volunteer Registration Packet, Membership Dues, and Liability Waiver signed and submitted Before visiting Horse Sites.
- Direct Horse Care Volunteers (Level 1, 2, and 3) must check in/out at the Horse Care Sites in the Binder provided at the designated area, as directed by the Lead Volunteer. Data Charts must be completed with each horse at each site, with assigned tasks attempted and completed, and notes documented on the back of the form for each visit.
- No litter/waste on/around foster care site properties or common areas
- No dogs/pets on/around foster care site properties or common areas

- No smoking/alcohol/illegal substances on/around foster care site properties or common areas
- Check & double-check all gates/locks are securely fastened as they were when you arrived. If questions, ask foster caregiver or Rescue Directors for details.
- Check & double-check all electricity/water is securely off & rubbish is properly removed/disposed of as they were when you arrived. If questions, ask foster caregiver or Rescue Directors for details.
- Place all grooming supplies, halters, lead ropes, tack, & equipment back in the designated storage location with our rescue supplies where they were when you arrived. If questions, ask foster caregiver or Board Member for details. All rescue supplies are marked with “AGHR” and some have the horse’s name on them.
- No loud radios, boisterous behavior, or disrupting the foster caregivers in their personal residences.
- Telephone calls or texts/emails to boarding stable or foster care homeowners are preferred if you need to contact them while on site. In case of emergency that cannot wait, you may respectfully knock on the door to report veterinary emergency that needs immediate attention. Otherwise, please refrain from disturbing the residents, while on their properties. Vet emergencies should be reported to the Rescue Directors immediately or within 24 hours of the incident. Accidents / injuries to horses / humans while on the property must be reported within 24 hours to Rescue Directors, and Accident Form must be filled out and turned in immediately after the occurrence.
- Only Trained Volunteers whom have attended the Experiential Learning Training are permitted to handle our rescue horses. Trained Direct Horse Care Volunteers are permitted to halter and hand-walk our horses in and around the foster care site properties. They are not permitted to leave the property with the horse without explicit permission by the Board Members. If questions, or you need assistance in moving a rescue horse, ask foster caregiver or Rescue Directors for details. Volunteers are not permitted to move or handle other horses that do not belong to the rescue without explicit instruction by foster caregivers.
- All horses must be hand-walked in a controlled & safe manner using halters & lead ropes in/out of stalls, through gates, through herds, near washing/grooming areas, & in common areas / turn outs. Volunteers must be specifically trained in safe horse handling to do this. Foster caregivers can give you specific tips about safely moving horses about and the role of our rescue horses in the herd hierarchy / behaviors you may experience. Safety is critical for horse & human. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not move the horse alone. You may enter the stall if and when the horse is in a safe state of mind. Do not enter any stall when the horse is upset, frightened, or aggressive, unless you are specifically trained to do so. You will receive ongoing Experiential Learning Trainings to improve your “Approach & Retreat” / “Catching & Leadership” Skills. If you are insecure or unsure of your safety, use common sense and do not approach the horse in the stall. This is for your own safety and well-being.
- No unannounced visitors with the Volunteer. Any/all visitors must be pre-approved and written on the Volunteer’s Liability Waiver in advance. This is a liability issue taken seriously.

- Any Volunteer under the age of 18 MUST have supervision by a Volunteer parent or guardian over the age of 18, MUST be written on parent's liability waiver, and MUST wear a safety helmet at all times while around our horses (riding helmet preferred, bicycle/motorcycle helmet acceptable). Minor children under the age of 14 MAY NOT handle the horses' feet at any time.
- **No riding the rescue horses, nor privately owned horses, on / around any rescue-related property.** This is a liability risk that our rescue is not willing to cover. Our organization does not provide riding experiences. However, on the ground, or in the saddle, we highly encourage all Members to wear a safety helmet at all times around the horses. Horses can be unpredictable and should a horse rear over you & come down, it is recommended to keep your head protected at all times.
- **No hand-feeding the rescue horses treats.** You are welcome & encouraged to bring carrots, apples, or natural (no molasses, no sugar, & no filler junk) treats in small bits to some of our horses during your visits. Make sure you check the horse's profile sheet in the Volunteer Binder at the site to see if there is a medical reason why that particular equine CANNOT have treats in his / her diet. Not all of our horses can eat treats. Many have metabolic issues (diabetes, Cushings, laminitis) and are on regulatory medication. For those horses who CAN have natural treats, we ask that you feed the horses on the ground or in their feeder bowls / buckets / troughs, NOT BY HAND. This avoids creating nippy, biting horses, and liability problems.
- Once properly Trained to do so, you may lunge & play specific ground games with our horses. You will be trained to do the Parelli 7 Games (that horses naturally play with each other in the wild herd), as well as other fun games on the ground to encourage horses to be desensitized to spooky things, to use their right / left brains, and to develop stronger respect for & partnership with, humans. Your responsibility as a human is to play the games CORRECTLY and with respect for the horses as well. If you are unsure or insecure about playing the games, ask the Rescue Directors or the Volunteer Mentor that is working with that specific horse, how to improve your skills. If something is not "working", then don't try to force the horse to do it. You probably are not communicating the task clearly and we don't want to confuse our horses or get them in bad habits by disrespecting people. Remember, the most important thing is SAFETY. So don't get into a power struggle with a horse to get the horse to step over something. You will not win. Come to our Trainings, ask the Rescue Directors, Volunteer Mentor, or Trainer, and step back 1 notch to something that is fun, easy, and successful for you and the horse. Your role, as a Direct Horse Care Volunteer is not to "train" our horses. It is to PLAY with our horses & enjoy their company, help them learn to interact with you in a positive and willing manner. Remember, most of our horses have been abused & neglected, so they will not "take to you" right away, or maybe at all. That's ok. It takes time, patience, & understanding to really LISTEN to the horse & discover what he/she needs.
- **Visits to the foster care sites should be between the hours of 9am and 6pm Monday through Sunday.** However, some sites vary on hours of operation. Sunnysdale and Buckboard sites are closed on Sundays. Buckboard site is open from 10am to 4pm only. If you need to arrive before sun up, or leave after dark, for some reason, please notify the foster caregiver & Rescue Directors in advance. Our foster care sites do not have lights, and this will put you at a higher liability risk.

- There is no restroom at our foster care sites. Please take care of your personal business before or after your visits. Again, these are private residences, and we are graciously renting stalls on their facilities. Thank you for your cooperation.
- No feeding our horses, or any of the stabled horses, at the foster care sites at any time. This is the responsibility of the foster caregivers and stable managers at the sites. If we ever need your assistance in doing this, we will give you explicit instructions to do so. (i.e. food treats for particular training tasks, etc.). Our horses are on a specific diet for health & rehabilitation, as directed by our equine veterinarians. Please leave the feeding to us. Thanks.
- While grooming / bathing the rescue horses, do not spray them in the faces with water, grooming supplies, or fly spray. Instead, wipe their faces with a wet washcloth, soft brush, or your hand. This prevents them from throwing their faces up in the air and becoming headshy.
- All tack & training equipment is to be used under specific direction by the foster caregivers & trainers working with the horses. Volunteers are not permitted to saddle, bridle, spur, hobble, or use a crop on any horse for any reason. Training equipment is specifically selected for each horse based on individual needs. During our Monthly Trainings, we will demonstrate the proper use and care of specific equipment for certain games with certain horses. Please properly clean off and stow equipment where you found it before you leave the foster care sites – Please notify us if we are running low on grooming supplies, or if something is lost/broken and needs to be replaced. Please be courteous of others and put things back where they belong to assist our rescue collaboratively. Thank you.
- All Volunteers & visitors must dress in proper equestrian attire: long pants (jeans or breeches preferred), work or riding boots, well fitted shirts - no loose or dangling jewelry, and all women/girls should have hair pulled back away from their faces so as not to become caught in any tack / equipment.
- Please turn off, or switch, your cell phone to vibrate, so as not to spook or scare the horses when you are visiting them. It is a good idea to keep cell phones charged before your visit, and do not visit the horses alone without a cell phone in case you need to call 9-11 or call the foster caregiver or Board of Directors for an emergency. Again, safety first.
- All participants must be properly trained at the Monthly Training, and must have all Membership Packet paperwork filed with the rescue prior to beginning the scheduled visits with the horses. This includes:
  - a.) Fill out, sign, & return your Membership Dues Application with Your Tax-Deductible Dues Donation by mail or in person
  - b.) Fill out, sign, & return your Volunteer Application by mail or in person
  - c.) Fill out, sign, & return you Equine Liability Waiver & Hold Harmless Agreement by mail or in person
  - d.) Fill out, sign, & return your Confidentiality Affidavit form by mail or in person
  - e.) Notify the Rescue Directors & Site Property Owner of your Monthly Visit Scheduling by the 3rd day of that month.
- In case of inclement weather or natural disaster, follow the Safety Rules and Procedures posted in the Binders at each site. Dial 9-11 and notify the Property Site Owner and Lead

Volunteer and Rescue Directors immediately in the need for site evacuations or emergency first responders.

- Violence, slander, libel, discrimination, negative judgment, unprofessionalism, or inhumane treatment towards horse or human will not be tolerated in our Rescue Family. Please be kind, professional, communicative, mature, responsible, and safe.
- Respect the privacy and confidentiality of the contact information of those Members on our Contact List in the binder. You are welcome to email / call the members on that list in a courteous, friendly, honest manner only. Drama and slander will not be tolerated in our organization and is cause for dismissal.
- We welcome and encourage photography and videography during your visits with our horses, and love to receive updates and stories to include in our website / newsletter / social media pages. Out of courtesy and professional collaboration, we remind you that we have all signed a Confidentiality Affidavit form, ensuring that no names / locations will be used when publishing photos / videos for public view. Also, it is best practice to email / text any individuals besides yourself, to ask permission to post in advance. We ask that you respect others' privacy if they prefer not to be published for public viewing. Disputes need to be handled between Volunteers, and the Rescue Directors will not take liability for any photos / videos posted for public viewing after a Confidentiality Affidavit is signed.
- Enjoy your experiences. Be proactive. If there is a special talent you would like to share, a special event you would like to plan / host, a special committee you would like to start / participate in, a special assignment you would like to take a leadership role for, please ask. We can provide more enrichment and excitement with more motivated, proactive Volunteers.
- If you choose to participate in our EAL (Equine Assisted Learning) Horse Powered Reading (and Math) program, you will receive specialized training in this. Participation in the training and planning meetings will be mandatory for this special program.
- If you choose to move up in our Volunteer Training Levels, you will need to view Training videos, participate in hands-on training, and do some outside research and studying in Parelli Natural Horsemanship. Please come prepared with basic knowledge of horse handling / training tools and terminology, and keep yourself educated.
- SMILE! Think Positive! Learn, relax, breathe. Give and receive love from our amazing equines, but also from each other. We need to serve as a TEAM / FAMILY. This organization is only as strong as our Member Supporters.

CONTACT: (805) 368-9123 / [animalguardianshorsescue@gmail.com](mailto:animalguardianshorsescue@gmail.com)  
[www.animalguardianshorsescue.org](http://www.animalguardianshorsescue.org)