

# Equine Outreach

## Volunteer Handbook

*Thank you for choosing to volunteer with Equine Outreach. We look forward to working with you. Please read this handbook thoroughly and sign prior to your first day of volunteering at EOI and keep it for future reference!*

### **General Ranch Guidelines:**

*Equine Outreach is a guest of Sundance Meadows. Please be respectful of Sundance Staff and Guests at all times while on the ranch.*

- No one is allowed in pens or pastures with horses without having signed a waiver.
- The ranch is not open to the public. Only approved volunteers may be on the Sundance Meadows property without escort. If questioned by Sundance Meadows staff or another EOI volunteer, respond politely and present your credentials
- If you see something that seems odd, politely ask for clarification or help. If no one is around to ask, please contact the Ranch Manager or Board President (cell numbers on the white board in sign-in area)
- No smoking anywhere inside the gates. Smoking is only allowed inside vehicles or in the gravel parking lot away from the office entrance.
- No alcohol within the gates. Exceptions may be made for special events.
- No handling of horses or operating ranch machinery under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Do not pet horses or give treats over pasture fences as there is a risk for human or equine electrocution. Only pet pasture horses at the gates.
- Dogs must be leashed and controlled **at all times** anywhere at Sundance Meadows. Dog owners are responsible for cleaning up after their pets and for any damage caused by pets.
- Any horses taken out of pens or pastures must be maintained in close control at all times and only after you receive proper training.
- If you take a horse out of a pen or pasture, you are responsible for picking up any manure in the common areas.
- Put tools, grooming tools, wheelbarrows, hoses, halters, etc. back where they belong after use.
- Pick up your own trash and any other trash you see to help keep the ranch clean.
- Sign in and out record your volunteer hours - we use this information when applying for grants, filing 501c3 tax returns, etc.

- Note in the binder any action taken with equines and any observations that may be important for trainers, vets, farrier or other volunteers.

### **Horse Handling, Safety and Etiquette**

Our goal is to include our Volunteers in activities that promote the health, safety and welfare of the Equines who share our lives at the Rescue. We depend on our Volunteers at Equine Outreach and could not provide the highest standard of care without you! You are a very important part of the team. We strive for this to be a rewarding experience for our Volunteers as well as the horses. We appreciate your service to the horses!

- All volunteers must fill out a Volunteer Information and Liability Waiver before starting your volunteer experience with Equine Outreach. This Waiver will remain active for any and all activities the volunteer participates in, now and in the future at EOI.
- Volunteers shall work in pairs whenever possible, for safety reasons.
- All horse handling is done at the volunteer's own risk pursuant to the Release Of Liability agreement and Oregon Revised Statutes concerning Horse Facilities. Volunteer acknowledges that handling horses as well as simply being in their presence, has inherent risks.
- Volunteers will only work with horses within their skill level. Only work with horses that you have been cleared to work with and in the manor that you have been cleared to work with them.
- Volunteers are a significant resource to provide an extra set of eyes and ears. Always be on the lookout for equine injuries, lameness (limping or favoring a leg), rolling over violently or repeatedly and looking distressed – this may be a sign of Colic, an equine stuck in a fence or cast against a fence or shelter. Report these things IMMEDIATELY to the EOI ranch manager, or if none of these people are on site – call a board member.
- No horse shall be left unattended while tied. Have your grooming tools out and within reach before haltering the horse. Never tie a horse to a fence, a vehicle, or any other object on the premises. NEVER hard tie a horse. Hard tying a horse can lead to injury or even death. If you do not know how to properly tie a horse – ask.
- Only approved handlers may use the Round-Pen. No free lunging is allowed.
- All gates, including those used to enter a pen or pasture area are to be kept closed and chained at all times.

- Never move a horse to a new pen or pasture. Return them to their designated area. The horses are divided up into areas by temperament and nutritional needs. It is important that they stay in their designated areas.
- Wear sturdy footwear. A horse could unintentionally step on your foot. They are 1000-pound animals and will cause painful damage if your feet are not protected.
- Do not feed hay or grain to the horses you are working with unless instructed to do so. Some horses are on special diets. All could become sick if fed too much grain or other concentrates, such as supplements.
- Horses can be given carrots (never a whole carrot) and horse cookies (bagged treats). Use care to give them with a flat open hand and avoid letting any part of your hand enter the horse's mouth. They could unintentionally mistake your finger for a tasty treat! NEVER take treats out into an area with multiple horses. They will likely overwhelm you by trying to all get a treat at the same time.
- Clean up after yourself. Return all tools and supplies back to where you found them. Clean brushes and hoof picks after use. Hang halters and leads up in the designated area.
- NO DOGS ALLOWED. No dogs are allowed within the gates of the Equine Outreach facility.
- NO SMOKING. Smoking of any kind, including Vaping, is prohibited within the Equine Outreach facility.

### **General Horse Handling Safety Guidelines**

When working with a horse, it is helpful to know where a horse's center of gravity is. Picture a horse standing in front of you – from the side. Imagine a straight line running through the middle of the withers and down through the front leg. This is a horse's center of gravity.

When trained, most horses are trained to move away from pressure. When applying pressure in front of the center of gravity, a trained horse should move its front end away from the point of pressure. The same applies to applying pressure in back of the center of gravity. A trained horse should move its hind end away from the pressure. Knowing this may be helpful when working with a horse to position them for grooming or picking feet.

### **General Policies**

#### **Anti-Harassment Policy**

It is our intent to provide a volunteer experience free from any verbal, physical and visual forms of harassment. All volunteers are expected to be sensitive to and respectful of their co-workers and others with whom they come in contact while representing EOI. We prohibit all

forms of harassment, whether due to sex, sexual orientation, marital status, race, color, national origin, citizenship status, creed, religion, age, disability or any other reason. Harassment is defined as unwelcome verbal, visual or physical conduct creating an intimidating, offensive or hostile work environment that interferes with work performance. Examples of harassment include verbal (such as jokes, slurs, insults, epithets, or teasing), graphic (such as offensive postures, symbols, cartoons, drawings, computer displays or emails) or physical (such as touching, gestures, physically threatening another person, blocking someone's way, etc.) conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversions toward an individual because of any protected characteristic.

If you experience or witness sexual or other harassment in the workplace, you should report it immediately to the barn manager. If the barn manager is unavailable or you do not feel comfortable contacting that person, you should contact one of the Board of Directors. You can raise concerns and report harassing conduct without fear of reprisal or retaliation. Phone numbers in their handbook?

### **Chain of Communication**

If you have an unresolved issue with another Volunteer, we request that you take the following steps:

Try to discuss and resolve the matter with the Volunteer involved at an appropriate time. If you feel you were unable to resolve the problem, discuss the matter with a member of the EOI Board of Directors and try to resolve the problem.

If either party feels that further action is required, a meeting will be arranged with the Board of Directors and those involved. We request that you do not discuss the matter with others on the ranch.

### **Shift Coverage**

We appreciate the time you devote to the horses at EOI. The horses rely on you to care for them on the days you are scheduled. We understand that sometimes things come up and you may be unable to make it in for your scheduled shift. Please contact the Volunteer Supervisor as soon as possible if you are going to miss a shift on the ranch or cannot fulfill a commitment.

### **Dress Code**

All Volunteers are required to wear closed toe shoes. Sturdy shoes must be worn at all times for your protection.

### **Use of Ranch Property**

Unless specifically authorized, use of EOI property for personal use is strictly prohibited. Loaning or donating any property must be authorized by a member of the Board of Directors.

### **Disciplinary Policy**

Upon infraction of the regulations in this handbook or other ranch policy, the Volunteer Supervisor or a member of the Board of Directors will discuss the problem with the Volunteer. Repeated offenses may result in termination of volunteer eligibility with EOI.

### **Social Media Policy**

Volunteers are personally responsible for their commentary and photos on their personal blogs, accounts, webpages, etc. Volunteers shall not use the Internet to harass, threaten, discriminate against, or disparage other Volunteers or anyone associated with EOI. In addition, negative statements about EOI, our products and services, our clients, Volunteers, business supporters, volunteers or any other related entity may lead to termination of volunteer eligibility with EOI. In addition, appropriate legal action may be taken if warranted.

Any Volunteers who identify themselves as EOI Volunteers must state that the views expressed are their own and not those of the Ranch or of any person or organization affiliated with the Ranch.

### **Injury Report Form/Worker's Compensation Insurance**

Should an injury or illness occur, no matter how minor, Volunteers are required to inform the Volunteer Supervisor and file an OSHA *Injury Form* documenting exactly what happened including the time and date. Submit this report to the Volunteer Supervisor as soon as possible and before leaving the premises on the date of the injury if possible. **EOI's workers compensation insurance program will provide medical treatment for injury or illness sustained while volunteering at EOI at no cost to the Volunteer. Treatment must be sought at a participating provider; your supervisor will inform you of where you can seek treatment.**

### **Alcohol and Substance Abuse**

EOI is committed to maintaining a safe and productive environment for all Volunteers and for our horses. Volunteers are prohibited from using drugs or alcohol while volunteering on the ranch. The manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, consumption and/or use of illicit drugs are prohibited. Alcohol is not allowed on the premises unless permission was specifically obtained from the Board of Directors for a special event or function relating to EOI.

Please sign and return this sheet to the Volunteer Supervisor before your first shift at EOI.

Your signature acknowledges that you have read and understand policies and procedures set forth in this Volunteer Handbook and that you will adhere to the rules and regulations provided in order to remain in good standing with the organization.

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Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date