

Equine Guidelines

Hooves of Hope Equestrian Center, Inc.

Introduction

Hooves of Hope Equestrian Center, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit founded in 2006 located in Lancaster Kentucky. The mission of Hooves of Hope is to provide children and adults with diverse needs, a solid foundation for developing life skills through Equine Assisted Activities and Therapies in a safe and caring environment. We have between 12-15 horses on site year-round of multiple breeds. These horses are either owned by Hooves of Hope or are on a free lease from their owners. Our horses come from a variety of different backgrounds; prior to coming to Hooves of Hope, many of our horses have had careers as show horses, driving horses, pleasure horses, lesson horses, trail horses, etc.

Horse Requirements

- Between 7-23 yrs old
- Sound at the walk, trot, and canter both in turn-out, and under saddle (sound at the canter under saddle is flexible based on our needs)
- Willing, kind disposition
- Generally calm demeanor including a calm reaction when startled
- Ability to be used in multiple programs both on the ground and under saddle

Our System

Step 1: Trial Application

A trial application must be filled out for the horse and sent in to be reviewed by the Executive Director and Equine Manager. If the trial application is approved, we will schedule a time to come see the horse at their current site. The horse must be in consistent work for at least a month before the on-site visit. Consistent work should consist of being ridden multiple times a week with consistency in their ground work, grooming, and handling.

Step 2: Onsite visit

During the on-site visit, the horse should be ridden by someone they are familiar with such as their owner, trainer, or a regular rider so that we can view them at their best! After evaluating this ride, one or both of our team will ride the horse and will put the horse through a few exercises that they will come across if they become a therapeutic riding horse. After the onsite visit, the screening team will discuss and decide if they would like to have the horse come for a 90-day trial period at Hooves of Hope.

Step 3: 90-day Trial Period

During the 90-day trial period, staff and volunteers acclimate the horse to our facility and their potential role in our programs. This process consists of learning mounting at our mounting block, desensitizing to props used in lessons, working on rating at a walk and trot in hand, basic lunging and round penning, and learning to be ridden with a leader and two side-walkers- replicating a therapeutic riding lesson. At the end of the trial period, the horse(s) are evaluated for acceptance into our programs. There is the potential for the horse to be accepted or denied in a shorter amount of time than 90 days.

Types of Horse Giving

Donate

If the horse is accepted on trial, they would go through the 90 day trial period. Once the trial period is up, Hooves of Hope would be the new owner if the horse is accepted into the program. A transfer of ownership contract would be signed between Hooves of Hope Equestrian Center, Inc and the former owner.

Free Lease

This is our preferred form of acquiring horses. The horse would go through a 90 day trial period to determine if they would be a good fit in our programs. If they are accepted, Hooves of Hope and the horse's owner would enter into a free lease agreement. In a free lease, Hooves of Hope would take care of all care costs for the horse outside of certain emergency costs. The horse would remain under free lease until Hooves of Hope staff determines that they are ready to retire or the owner requests their horse back.

Retirement Policy

Upon retirement from Hooves of Hope, if the horse is a free lease, they will return to their owner. The owner is responsible for coordinating transportation for the horse. If the horse is owned by Hooves of Hope at the time of retirement, Hooves of Hope will rehome the horse using an adoption application and screening process.

Our Care Standard

Our horses live outside 24/7 unless they are on stall rest. All of our horses receive turn out with at least one other horse for companionship, and each field has a run in shed and automatic waterer or trough that is cleaned and refilled regularly. We have a dry lot, fields with minimal grass, or fields with lush grass. We decide each horse's field placement based on their dietary needs. We feed a grass mix hay twice daily to those who are not on full pasture, and during the winter months horses are either fed grass hay square bales or round bales. We will also muzzle if necessary for weight management, and all horses get fly masks and sprayed regularly during the warm months to help manage any fly irritation.

To help make sure our herd gets their full dietary needs met, they are fed a balancer pellet once a day or a senior feed twice a day based on their personal requirements. We also supply supplements to those who benefit from them, primarily through our supporters Omega Alpha and Equithrive. Our horses are on a regular schedule for farrier, dental, and chiropractic care, with vet care as necessary for either routine care, such as vaccines, or in the case of an injury, lameness, or other medical issue. We also have Equine Bodyworkers who come out to work on our herd with a number of modalities, including PEMF, soundwave, massage, laser, and postural work.

Each horse is brought in at least twice a week for grooming and conditioning, but will be checked over twice a day by morning and evening feeders regardless of if they are working that day. We also have volunteer riders, who have been evaluated by the Barn and Equine Manager, who come out and help exercise the horses to keep them in shape and give them a balanced ride at least once a week.

Facilities

- 8 stall barn
- Outdoor and indoor riding arena
- Round Pen
- Areas for trail riding
- 6 Pastures for turn out
- 3 Indoor grooming bays
- Wash stall and Tack Room
- Waiting Room with restroom
- Office
- Volunteer Room
- Physical Therapy Treatment Room