

CHAPS
CHILDREN, HORSES AND
ADULTS IN PARTNERSHIP FOR
EQUINE ASSISTED THERAPY

VOLUNTEER
HANDBOOK

8TH EDITION
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CHAPS
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Welcome to CHAPS!

Thank you for your interest in CHAPS and Equine Assisted Therapy. We are dedicated to enriching the physical, emotional, mental and social well-being of our clients, in an environment that is safe, nurturing, challenging and fun. Our mission statement says it all:

“Our mission is to provide high quality equine assisted activities and therapies to people with special needs in Sheridan and Johnson Counties.”

Our slogan is also apt: *“Providing Possibilities for Exceptional Equestrians.”*

Volunteer training is an ongoing process. What you learn in our volunteer training course will start you off on the right path with the information and tools you need to be an effective and productive volunteer. Our hope is that this training will provide you with a good foundation for your association with CHAPS, and that your time spent with us will be safe, rewarding and fun. We want you to experience those positive gains, too! Many of our volunteers tell us that they feel they are getting as much therapy as the clients by being here and helping. We will have free ‘Volunteer Roundups’ every other month with interesting guest speakers that will provide you with information to help you do your job.

CHAPS is deeply appreciative of our volunteers. Without you and the gift of your time, energy and skills, we would not exist to offer our services to our community. Whether you clean a stall, assist during therapy sessions, staff fundraising events or hold a horse for the farrier, your service is valued. My door is always open to you, and I am never more than a phone call away to give you the support you need.

Warm regards,

Sue Suddith
CHAPS Executive Director
NARHA Registered Instructor
NARHA Wyoming State Chair 2007 - present

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CHAPS Staff and Board of Directors Contact information

Executive Director:

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Board of Directors:

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Treasurer:

At Large:

Del Acker
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Veterinarians: Moxey Schreiber Veterinary Hospital; Bischoff Veterinary Service
Farriers: Brian Roetering, Dan Walter

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Sheridan, WY 82801

Telephone: 307.673.6161

Email: chaps @ fiberpipe.net

Volunteer email list: CHAPStherapeuticriding@yahoogroups.com

Website: www.chapsequineassistedtherapy.org

North American Riding for the Handicapped Association (NARHA): www.narha.org,
1-800-369-7433

About CHAPS General Rules and Guidelines

Do not bring family and friends to help or watch as you volunteer, as they are not covered under our liability or confidentiality clauses. Please encourage them to attend a volunteer class and join in as a certified volunteer instead!

CHAPS is a member center of the North American Riding for the Handicapped Association (NARHA), and we follow their rules and guidelines, as well as using their forms and procedures in all aspects of our activities. NARHA was founded in 1969, and they are widely recognized as the Platinum Standard for Equine Assisted Activities and Therapeutic Riding. Their emphasis – and ours - is on safety and appropriate conduct, and outstanding service to equestrians with special needs.

We believe that NARHA has developed an outstanding system of keeping equine assisted activities and therapeutic riding sessions safe, challenging and satisfying for everyone involved. If you have a question about any of our rules and guidelines, please do not hesitate to ask a staff member for an explanation. We also have a library of books and videos available, including the NARHA Standards and Guidelines, for you to check out to read.

CHAPS volunteers must be at least 16 years of age and complete the volunteer class before handling horses or participating in any volunteer activities. Volunteers aged 16 – 18 must have parental permission. Some exceptions may be made for younger volunteers on a case-by-case basis and with approval from the Therapeutic Riding staff and Executive Director.

Other rules, like our dress code, are for your safety and comfort during a session. We do not wish to restrict personal style or individuality – we just want to keep you free of injury, harm or frustrations. As with everything in this handbook, if you have a question about why we ask you to do something a specific way, please ask. ***Remember that you are leading by example for clients and other volunteers, and follow the rules to keep yourself and everyone around you as safe as possible.***

Dress Code

Wear comfortable shoes that protect your feet and ankles. Waterproof is preferred for walking outside, especially in the spring and winter. No sandals, open toed shoes or open backed clogs or slides.

Long pants to protect your legs. We have rattlesnakes in the summer! Shorts will not provide you with protection from the elements.

Gloves if you are doing stable work (muck boots too if you have them) or leading a horse in the winter. No mittens as you will need to use your fingers.

Hats, sunglasses and sunscreen are advised during the summer. However, some of our clients may remove your hat without warning – be prepared.

No jewelry other than small earring studs and a watch. Dangling jewelry can get caught in manes, tails, or be snatched by a client or distract them during a session. Excessive jewelry can also distract clients.

No clothing with offensive or suggestive messages or slogans or that promote alcohol or drug use. Some of our clients are here to learn to cope with addictions.

Everyone on a horse **MUST** wear a helmet. ***NO EXCEPTIONS!*** When mounted, please wear long pants – jeans or riding breeches and a boot with hard sole and low heel. Please, no tennis shoes.

Barn Etiquette

Please park in front of the metal shop in front of our arena or on the North side of the arena unless otherwise instructed. The front door parking area is for clients and client drop off only. The parking space in the aisle between the arena and metal building is reserved for the director. Please do not park around the green house, that area is reserved for the people living there.

Please do not place personal garbage from your vehicle or home in the dumpster.

Leave pocketbooks and personal items in your vehicle. We are not responsible for items brought into the barn and left unattended while you are volunteering.

No running, screaming or boisterous behavior.

Please leave pets at home, therapy animals are allowed with prior permission.

Please practice courteous behavior with staff, clients, horses and each other.

If the office is closed, the telephone and emergency contact information is located outside the office on the windowsill by the tack room door.

The computer is for CHAPS staff only unless you are providing office support.

If a gate is closed when you need to go through it, make sure it is closed when you have passed through. If it is open, leave it open. When in doubt, ask, if no one is around to ask, shut the gate.

Gates to the outside turnout areas are to be kept shut and latched at all times. ***Don't plan to go back and shut them later – shut them right away!!!***

If you use the hose to water horses, be sure to unhook it and drain it from the spigot in winter. We only have 1 source of water – don't let the pipe freeze by leaving the hose on the spigot in winter! The hose is occasionally kept in the office if the weather is freezing.

The bathroom is located in the west end of the indoor arena. Please report any problems to the Director. The toilet is an Incinolet, and requires 'special' procedures, listed above the toilet on the wall. There is no lock on the door for safety reasons – please knock before entering.

The Human first aid kit is located in the office on top of the file cabinets. Please alert the Director or Therapy Instructor if it is needed for any reason. If someone is injured in a way that is beyond what can be cared for by the first aid kit, the Therapy Instructor or Director will call for emergency medical treatment. Each client has an emergency protocol that the Therapy Instructor will follow, please wait for instructions by the instructor.

Stall and Barn Safety and Procedures

The horses need privacy in their stalls. Please do not reach in between the bars, or attempt to attract their attention to you unless you are ready to take them out.

When horses are wearing a halter and lead rope or bridle, they are not allowed to graze, put their heads down to sniff the floor, or rub their faces on their front legs. For safety reasons, when horses are under tack or halter and lead, they are at work and must have their heads up. Please do not pet horses on the muzzle, or hand feed, as it encourages them to enter your space or nibble.

Clean up your area at the end of your session:

- ❑ Pick manure up from arenas after every session – basket and fork are located in the northeast end of the arena or stable area.
- ❑ After the last session, turn lights off and shut all outside doors (lights are located in the far northwest corner by the walk out door)
- ❑ After last session of the day, please take all therapy props and equipment out of the arena and place them behind the panel fence across from the mounting ramp (not blocking gates).
- ❑ Make sure all tack, brushes and equipment are returned to its proper place after each session unless the next session requests that you leave it out for them. Each horse has its own space for personal equipment and a common area for reins, girths and tools and equipment used for all of the horses in the tack room.
- ❑ When sweeping the aisle, **please pick up the remains at the end rather than sweeping it out the door.**
- ❑ If you borrow a helmet, put it back.

When there is a session in progress that you are not a participant in, please do not enter the arena unless it is absolutely necessary, as this is distracting to the client and may startle the horse and cause a safety issue. If you must enter the indoor arena while a session is in progress, call out 'Door' and wait for the OK from the Therapy Instructor to enter. In the outdoor arena, stand outside the arena and wait for acknowledgement from the Therapy Instructor.

Last person out at night does a safety check:

- ❑ Are all gates securely shut?
- ❑ Do the horses have ample water (full buckets or at least ½ full tank in the pen, or working waterer in the south field)
- ❑ Are the horses behaving normally? Eating, not rolling excessively or stretching, exhibiting symptoms of colic or injury? Did they finish their food? Are they coughing or appear to be choking? Breathing heavily?
- ❑ All outside doors or gates to the barn aisle shut
- ❑ All lights out

- ❑ Office locked and telephone set outside for emergencies in the windowsill by the tack room
- ❑ Cats have a 'cat door' to go in and out of the office at will. Please make sure they have cat food and fresh water in the evening before leaving.

Notify the Therapy Instructor or Director immediately if you notice anything out of the ordinary on a horse (swelling, cuts, blood), facility (broken door or gate, leaks, fire or other damage) or tack (broken or worn straps, frayed girth/cinch, missing pieces).

Horse Handling Safety Procedures

Because our horses could be handled by up to 20 people every day, it is essential that everyone follow the same procedure for activities, including haltering a horse or grooming, saddling and leading. Whatever methods you employ at home may or may not be the same as the ones we request that you get in the habit of using at CHAPS – but for the well being of our horses, ***we insist on consistency*** so that they do not become frustrated or sour.

- ❑ Always approach a horse from the side or front, speaking to them to alert them to your presence. Never approach them from the rear. Encourage them with your voice to get them to turn towards you.
- ❑ When haltering a horse, first place the lead rope over its neck, then standing with your right shoulder by their head, place the halter on. Take the lead rope down, and hold it in a figure 8 pattern with your left hand, with your right hand app. 8” from their chin. You are ready to lead them now.
- ❑ Always lead on the horse’s left side, unless you are asked to change sides by the therapy Instructor during session.
- ❑ When leaving a stall or walking through a gate, make sure that the gate is opened all the way. Stall doors should be opened flat against the wall. Pen gates should be opened far enough to comfortably move the horse in or out, but not wide enough for other horses to escape. If you are not comfortable turning out or bringing in horses when they are in a group, ask for help. ***Make sure the horse you are leading is all the way through the gate before turning them so that they do not hit their hips on the door.***
- ❑ When using the cross ties, always face the horse towards the center of the barn so that if they pull back they do not leave the barn. Make sure the front gate or barn door is shut before bringing horses out or cross tying them. ***Do not tie a horse with a bridle and reins or to their halter if the bridle is still on – wait for therapy instructor or appointed volunteer to remove the bridle before tying.***
- ❑ Always groom and tack horses in the cross ties unless otherwise instructed by the therapy instructor.
- ❑ ***Do not leave horses alone in the cross ties. Set out grooming equipment and tack before you get your horse.***

- ❑ ***When walking behind a horse, always keep a hand on them so that they know you are there. Do not walk under a horse's neck – always go around the front of their head. Do not crawl under a horse's belly. When reaching under the horse for the girth/cinch, stand facing the horse's front, bend from the waist and reach under with your arm only. Do not kneel on the ground, or sit next to the horse to groom.***
- ❑ If a tied horse pulls back on the crossties, they are fastened so that they should break off and free the horse. Go to the horse and make sure they are not injured, then walk him back up and have someone either hold him while you retie the cross tie to the eyehook, or hold him while they retie it. If you, another volunteer or client or the horse is injured, alert the therapy instructor.
- ❑ Never leave a halter or tack on a horse unattended in a stall or the cross ties.
- ❑ After riding or grooming, when releasing a horse, turn them around so that they are facing you and your back is to the door or gate before taking the halter off. Shut the door or gate before you begin to release the horse so that they will not escape. If you are unsure of the horse or if they are being troublesome, place the lead rope over their neck to give you something to hold onto while you remove the halter. After releasing them, turn and walk calmly away. Do not encourage them to take off as soon as the halter is off.
- ❑ Do not drag the lead rope (or reins) on the ground at any time. When hanging them up, make sure they are not hanging on the ground. Please do not lay tack on the ground. Use racks and hooks provided in the aisle and tack room. Do not allow girths or cinches, etc., to drag on the ground.
- ❑ Clean up manure immediately if your horse soils the aisle, take to the basket by the back door or to the basket in the arena. Return shovel and broom to the feed room when done.

General Rules

No smoking anywhere on the property except in your vehicle. Please do not throw butts on the ground.

No personal stereos or music.

No weapons, alcohol or illegal drugs. If you are taking medications that are prescribed please make the therapy instructor and or Director are aware of it in the event that you require emergency medical attention and are not able to communicate. If you require an epi pen for bee stings, please let the staff know and show us where it is when you are at CHAPS. Especially during summer, please do this EVERY TIME you are at CHAPS. If you have seizure disorder or any medical condition that requires a protocol, please make sure the staff is aware of it by filling out your volunteer application completely.

No unattended children, and please leave pets at home.

The therapy session is to be under the control of the therapy instructor at all times. If you disagree with a Therapy Instructor or have issue with session content or activities,

please take it up with the instructor before or after the session rather than having a disagreement or making a suggestion during the session. Therapy Instructors will have a brief meeting with session assistants prior to the session to let you know what goals and activities are planned – this is your opportunity to make suggestions or ask questions.

All information that you are privy to concerning clients and their disabilities, other volunteers or staff members is confidential. Please do not discuss – other than in general terms – the content of sessions to the general public. Do not divulge client names, history, or the names of other volunteers to the general public.

Please do not make derogatory statements about the clients, staff, volunteers, horses or other aspects of the program in public. If you have a complaint, please take it up with the therapy instructor or director. We honor your suggestions and will implement them if appropriate.

No foul language – refrain from cursing or lewd, racist, or insensitive comments or remarks. Example: “I’m such a retard.” “Nigger-rigged.” “Don’t try to Jew me down.” (All of these comments have been made in front of clients!) Remember that when you call CHAPS, the answering machine is not a secure line and others may hear your message.

Do not represent yourself as an agent of CHAPS to request money, donations or funding without first speaking to the director. Please join the fundraising committee if you are interested in helping CHAPS raise money for the program.

Emergency Procedures

Stable Emergencies

- ❑ Never leave a client alone in the barn during an emergency. Have them wait in the office or in the parking area, depending upon where the emergency occurs (keep clients at farthest possible point from the situation for their safety) with another volunteer or staff member, or caregiver that comes with them.
- ❑ Protocol for encountering a rattlesnake is posted on the outer office wall facing the aisle on the bulletin board.
- ❑ If a horse gets loose, alert other staff, take a halter and lead rope and bucket of grain and attempt to head the horse back towards the barn and away from the highway. If the horse enters the highway, attempt to coax him back with a bucket of grain. If there are enough people (NOT CLIENTS) to flag down traffic FROM A SAFE DISTANCE without entering the highway, do so. Do not risk your life to get the horse back. Never allow clients or their caregivers to help catch a loose horse (unless the caregiver has completed the volunteer training and has signed a liability release). Have clients wait with another volunteer or their caregiver(s) in the barn *by or in* the office or a safe location (vehicle, empty stall, etc.) where they will not be run down by a running horse.
- ❑ Keep in mind that horses are herd animals and would prefer not to leave their companions. Try to allow the horse to circle back to the barn by going out and around them, blocking their exit to the driveway and beyond.

- ❑ If a horse falls in the aisle or is cast in a stall do not attempt to get them up alone. Alert other volunteers or staff. Try to let the horse get up alone in the aisle, move any obstacles out of the way. If they are cast in the stall do not try to grab their legs. Let the Therapy instructor or Director direct the rescue efforts, do not go in the stall alone. If you are alone when this happens, call the director or other emergency contacts on the telephone list.
- ❑ If a horse becomes agitated and bites or kicks a client, staff member or volunteer, help that person to a chair or safe location away from the horse and alert the therapy instructor and or director. Allow them to perform any first aid necessary.
- ❑ You may be asked to call for emergency assistance. The directions to CHAPS from Sheridan and Buffalo are posted by the phone and other locations for you to give to 911 operators. Follow any directions given to you by the therapy instructor, director and 911 operator.
- ❑ Fire: Get out of the building, take your client with you, and use any available cell phone or go to one of the houses on the property to have them call 911. Do not attempt to save belongings or items. Do not attempt to save horses. Your life and the client's life are the priority.
- ❑ Building emergencies – broken equipment, such as gates or doors breaking, fences down, etc.: Alert a staff member to the problem, make sure you and the client are safe, then assist the staff member if asked.
- ❑ Every 6 months, we will have unannounced emergency preparedness drills at CHAPS during sessions or day to day activities. Knowing and understanding emergency protocol will make your job easier and safer.

Mounted Emergencies

- ❑ **Client has a seizure or loses consciousness:** Sidewalkers alert the therapy instructor, follow emergency dismount procedures to remove the rider from the horse. Follow direction from therapy instructor. Leader stops horse for dismount and takes horse to the center of the arena. Other riders and horses move to the center of the arena or far corner until 'all clear' is announced by Therapy Instructor or you are asked to help dismount the rider.
- ❑ **Rider falls from the horse:** Leader stops the horse, make sure the client is clear of the horse, takes horse to the center of the arena and wait for instructions from the therapy instructor. Sidewalkers get client out of the way of the horse, either by leading them or pulling them. If the client is caught on the tack or stirrup, the leader makes sure the horse stands calmly while the therapy instructor and sidewalker(s) free the client. If there are other horses and riders in the arena they should go to the center of the arena or far corner as indicated by the instructor and wait for the all clear.
- ❑ **Horse attempts to run away with the client:** Attempt to safely stop the horse. If the horse has left with the rider, attempt to calmly pen the horse in a corner of the arena, catch him and remove the rider **ONLY IF** instructed to do so by the therapy instructor. Sidewalkers should always be alert to the possibility that they will have to perform an emergency dismount. Listen carefully for instructions from the Therapy Instructor at all times, not just when the horse misbehaves.
- ❑ **Horse pulls backwards with rider:** Leader follows the horse and speak to them calmly, attempt to stop the horse with gentle tugs, not a steady pull. Do not hang back on the horse or attempt to outpull them. Sidewalker(s) remove

the client from the horse with an emergency dismount if instructed to do so by the therapy instructor.

- ❑ **Horse bites leader:** Alert the therapy instructor, then follow their directions.
- ❑ **Horse kicks sidewalker:** Alert the therapy instructor and follow their directions.
- ❑ **Client has outburst, agitated episode or other unusual or excited behavior:** Leader stops horse, stands at their head to calm them if needed, sidewalkers may be asked to help remove the client from the horse.
- ❑ **Client bites or otherwise injures sidewalker:** Alert therapy instructor and follow directions.
- ❑ **Client slips to the side, losing balance:** Alert therapy instructor and other volunteers, leader stops or slows horse as directed by therapy instructor, attempt to help client regain balance with help of other sidewalker and therapy instructor.
- ❑ **In any emergency with more than one horse in the arena:** all horses come to the center or corner of arena as indicated by Therapy Instructor and wait for further directions.
- ❑ Leaders are responsible for the behavior of the horse **only**.
- ❑ Sidewalkers are responsible for the safety of the client **only**.

Reasons for Volunteer Dismissal

Volunteers are subject to rules and regulations to help produce a safe experience for everyone involved with activities at CHAPS. While it is not pleasant to think about, there are 'zero tolerance' instances that call for dismissal:

- ❑ Creating an unsafe situation through careless behavior, disregard for rules, or ignoring the needs of the client or horse.
- ❑ Arriving at CHAPS for volunteer duties under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or abuse of medication.
- ❑ Bringing a weapon – firearm or knife, hunting tools, etc. to CHAPS. If you carry a sidearm for your profession (sheriff, police officer, etc.) please leave the weapon locked in your vehicle.
- ❑ Breaking confidentiality. If you are found to have distributed confidential information about clients, incidents occurring at CHAPS, financial information regarding clients or CHAPS activities, or any information that you have been instructed by CHAPS staff as being confidential, you will be asked to retire from the program.
- ❑ Physical or emotional mistreatment or abuse of a client, horse, staff member, volunteer or visitor to CHAPS.
- ❑ Acting as an agent or representative of CHAPS to request money or fundraise without prior consent of the Director or Board of Directors.
- ❑ Stealing or destroying CHAPS property.

In extreme cases where a client is put in an unsafe situation or is harmed due to the behavior of a volunteer, legal action may be taken.

Less serious infractions of rules, such as failure to hand in signed releases, tardiness, failure to attend mandatory volunteer classes or seminars/meetings, dressing inappropriately, use of foul language, etc. will be dealt with first with a verbal warning, then written, and then possibly dismissal. Volunteers who are late or disruptive during sessions may be reassigned to other activities where they will be more comfortable.

Volunteer Duties and Standard Operating Procedures

All Volunteers:

Please sign in to record your hours at the time card file by the client board. Keeping track of volunteer hours helps CHAPS apply for grants and other funding by demonstrating 'in kind' donation of service hours.

If you are unable to make your shift, please call the center as soon as possible to let the staff know and plan accordingly. Many of our clients cannot participate in Therapeutic Riding without the help of volunteers.

Therapy Assistants – Session Preparation

Grooming

Arrive 20 – 25 minutes before your client is due to arrive for their session.

A general rule of thumb is for the leader to get the horse ready and for the sidewalker to attend to the client – getting their helmet on, etc.

If you are assisting with a therapy session, check the client board to see who they are riding and with what tack, and follow the procedure listed there. Set out grooming equipment and tack even if the client grooms or saddles as part of their therapy (unless otherwise indicated on the client board). Take the horse from their stall or pen to the grooming area, crosstie your horse and groom thoroughly, **picking out feet first**. Make sure the horse is clean and has no burrs or dirt on their coat, mane or tail. If the client grooms as part of their session, you must still groom the horse to make sure they are in good condition – shoes on tightly, no cuts or health concerns – before the client arrives. If there is a problem alert the therapy instructor as soon as possible in case a change of plans needs to be made. ***It is imperative that the horse is thoroughly groomed before the client arrives for its health and the safety of the horse and client.***

When picking out feet, be aware of the condition of the shoes, if any (loose? Missing?) Pick away from yourself and hold the horse's foot correctly (hand closest to horse cupping the hoof to hold the bottom facing up without cranking the horse's joints tightly). Use the currycomb to raise loose dirt to the surface, and the dandy brush to flick it off and smooth the coat. Use a towel to wipe eyes, ears and muzzle, and a comb to untangle mane, forelock and tail and to remove burrs or sticks.

Tacking and untacking

If you are to tack the horse, check the saddle, **saddle pad**, bridle, halter (if used) and girth to be sure they are free of burrs or excessive debris or excessive wear/weakness. Place the saddle pad up app. 6" ahead of the withers and slide back slightly to smooth the hair. If a back saver device is used, it will be placed on top of the saddle pad. Then place the saddle on the horse, lifting up the front of the saddle pad to meet the bottom of the pommel to keep it from pressing on the horse's withers when the client is mounted. Do not tighten the girth immediately, slowly increase the pressure in stages. The Therapy Instructor will bridle the horse. If you are asked to bridle the horse, first place the reins over the horse's head, then undo the crossties. The therapy instructor may ask you to put the bridle on over the halter to lead the client and allow them to steer with the reins. If the horse uses a bit, make sure it does not bang on their teeth when bridling or

unbridling. If they have a curb chain or strap unbuckle one side of it before bridling or unbridling. To untack, wait for instructor to remove bridle (unless you are asked to do so) and then attach the lead rope to the halter or leave the reins over the neck until a halter is on the horse's head. Place the lead rope over the neck until the crossties are in place, then remove the lead rope. Remove the saddle after the bridle is off. You may put the tack back in the tack room immediately if there is someone to stay with the horse, if not, use the rack in the barn aisle until the horse has been put away. Western saddles – leave girth connected on the off side, with English saddles, remove the girth completely and put it on the girth rack. Remove reins from bridles and place on the rein hangers.

Pre-ride procedure

When the client is ready to go to the arena, the horse handler/leader will either take the horse in or may assist the client if instructed to do so by the therapy instructor. The leader may be asked to walk or trot the horse on lead or ride the horse around the arena first to warm up. Before going in the arena, the tack should be checked to make sure the girth is snug and that the tack is fitted properly, either by the Therapy Instructor or by a designated volunteer. Another safety check should be done at the ramp before the client mounts, and another after the rider mounts, before and after entering the arena. There should be no less than three safety checks each session:

- ❑ Properly fitting tack
- ❑ Stirrups are at correct length and safety stirrups, if used, are on the foot correctly
- ❑ Helmets are properly fitted
- ❑ Girth is the appropriate fit and tightness
- ❑ Rider's clothes are comfortably fitted to avoid rubs

Mounting Procedures

Safety first! Never mount the client without the therapy instructor, or before the safety check. All clients mount from the ramp for safety and comfort of the horse.

As a volunteer, if you are riding, do not mount under trees, building overhangs, on concrete or from a fence.

At the ramp for mounting, the leader will stand to the front and one quarter to the side of the horse's head with their toes pointing at the horse's left shoulder to keep them still.

Make sure your horse is standing with all four legs squarely under them for the client to mount. The horse should be stopped close enough to the ramp that the client cannot get their leg or foot in between the horse and the edge of the ramp, no more than 2-3 inches. ***The leader is not responsible for helping the client mount, dismount or put feet in stirrups – just the behavior of the horse.*** Keep the horse relaxed by not restricting their head. If he attempts to back up, encourage the horse to walk forward, and reposition. If your horse is fussy, use the bight of the lead rope in a propeller motion in front of your body.

If the horse pulls back or swings his hips away from the ramp, and the client is not ready to mount yet, walk forward, make a circle and come back and reposition. If the rider is mounting and the horse attempts to move, keep the horse calm and still. The sidewalker on the off side should help by gently pressing on the horse's hip to keep them aligned with the ramp. If at all possible, avoid backing the horse out of the ramp area.

If a sidewalker is present, they are to stand on the off side ramp at the horse's right side to help the client position their leg with the instruction of the therapy instructor. A second sidewalker, if used, would wait at the end of the near side ramp or at the gate (listen for instructions). The therapy instructor is responsible for mounting the client and adjusting stirrups, checking girth, performing a safety check before the session begins. Do not put feet in stirrups until the horse and rider have safely cleared the ramp. Sidewalkers may need to help hold the riders feet up until they have safely cleared the ramp to keep them from being crushed between the horse's side and the ramp.

Once the client is safely mounted and balanced on the horse, the therapy instructor will ask them to tell the horse to 'walk on.' Once the client complies, **lead the horse straight out of the mounting block** and then halt for the sidewalkers and therapy instructor to get in position, perform a safety check, and then you will enter the ring. The Therapy Instructor or designated volunteer or observer is responsible for making sure that the gates are shut whenever there is a rider mounted in the arena. If more than one horse/client are participating in the session, volunteers may be asked to walk around the ring with their client or wait at different points until all riders are mounted and have entered the ring.

Dismounting Procedures:

To the ramp (Only riders needing the lift or special consideration): leader positions horse as when mounting. Do not allow the horse to charge to the ramp. If the horse is overanxious to get to the ramp, request help from the therapy instructor. The sidewalker on the near side will walk up the ramp alongside the client until they reach the top and then the therapy instructor will come up to assist the client in dismounting. It is up to the client and therapy instructor as to whether the client may lead the horse out.

To the ground: the horse leader will help the client guide the horse to the center of the ring per the therapy instructor's direction and stand to the front of the horse to keep them still. The off side sidewalker will help guide the client's leg over the back or crest of the horse per the therapy instructor's direction. The near side sidewalker will assist the therapy instructor in landing the client safely to the ground.

Using the Electric Lift

The electric lift is used for physically challenged clients only and is not to be used for 'amusement rides.' The Therapy Instructor or specially trained volunteer is responsible for operating the lift. Sidewalkers will be asked to stand on the off side to help guide the rider's right leg over the horse's neck, and place it correctly on the horse's side. During especially cold months, the lift tends to be slow without proper warm up, and a side walker may be asked to go in ahead of the lesson and run the lift up and down several times to warm it up.

Session responsibilities for leaders/horse handlers

Leaders are to stay with the horse at all times and are responsible for controlling the horse's movement and speed, following the direction of the therapy instructor and client. They are responsible for the safety of the horse and assisting the client in controlling the horse and reinforcing the client's directions.

- Hold lead rope app. 8" from the snap with your right hand and allow them to move their head naturally
- Do not allow the horse to nuzzle you or 'invade your space/bubble.'

- ❑ Do not stroke or fondle the horse's head while they are at work
- ❑ Hold the remainder of the lead rope in a figure 8 in your left hand
- ❑ The lead rope should hang between the reins attached to the halter, not over the reins
- ❑ Walk by the horse's throatlatch, not in front of them or back by the shoulder. If you are having trouble keeping the horse moving, ask for a riding crop to prompt the horse. If they are moving too fast, use half halts by bumping the horse every other stride with the halter.
- ❑ **Wait until the rider initiates action and follow through, offering support at the direction of the therapy instructor.** You may glance back occasionally to see when the rider uses rein aids to make sure you are not clashing aids with the rider but do not walk backwards or turn to look constantly to avoid disrupting the horse's forward gait.
- ❑ Look up and plan where you are going. Looking up helps you to plan ahead and make smooth turns and corners. If the therapy instructor asks the rider to look at a focal point, that also means you should look there too. Make turns and circles large and sweeping, as sharp turns can unseat an unstable rider. **Remember that when the therapy instructor is telling the rider what to do, she is also letting you know what to expect.**
- ❑ Do not allow the horse to put his head down, graze, sniff the ground or rub their nose on their leg. Keep your horse attentive and on the job.
- ❑ If working with another horse in the arena, stay back 2 horse lengths from their hind legs. Pass well to the inside, not between the horse in front and the wall or fence.
- ❑ Short tugs, sharp snaps and rattling the lead rope work better than a prolonged pull on a horse that is charging ahead or inattentive. The horse will win a tug of war every time.
- ❑ Do not make conversation with the client so as not to distract them. If they attempt to engage you in conversation, be polite, but direct their attention back to the therapy instructor.
- ❑ The leader's sole responsibility is the horse and its behavior. Leaders should not attempt to correct rider position or make adjustments to their reins, stirrups, etc. unless you have unhooked and are requested to do so by the Therapy Instructor.
- ❑ If there is a problem with the client and there is no sidewalker, please alert the Therapy Instructor in a calm manner. **When in doubt, stop the horse.**
- ❑ If you have suggestions for improving a session, please feel comfortable about bringing them to the Therapy Instructor's attention – *after the session*. Having too many people discuss activities during the session is confusing to the client.
- ❑ If the horse is nibbling, hold your right hand up in a 'STOP' motion with the lead rope draped between your thumb and index finger. If you are having an excessive amount of trouble with a mouthy horse, alert the Therapy Instructor.
- ❑ **Never hit or swat at the horse when a client is mounted or handling the horse. BE PROACTIVE – don't get into a situation that puts you at risk of being bitten or shoved by the horse.**

Session Responsibilities for Side walkers

The Sidewalker should stay with the client from the time they are mounted until they are off the horse and out of the arena. Your assignment is to assist the therapy instructor and help the client carry out their instructions.

Position yourself by the client's leg *and keep pace with the horse* so that you can look up and observe the client regularly. Alert the therapy instructor if there is any change in the rider's balance, behavior or health.

The sidewalker is responsible for helping the client maintain balance and follow directions of the therapy instructor. A variety of holds may be used:

- ❑ One hand cupping or holding the ankle for a fairly stable client that needs help holding their legs still on the horse
- ❑ Over the thigh hold for a client that shifts weight. This hold should only be practiced with two sidewalkers so as not to throw the client's balance off
- ❑ One hand on the small of the client's back – to support longitudinal balance
- ❑ One hand on the client's hip to support lateral balance
- ❑ No hold, acting as spotter

It is important to always ask the client if it is ok to touch them, particularly at the beginning of your partnership. This gives the client respect and an opportunity to decline your help. Be aware of how tightly you are gripping with your hold. Always follow the therapy instructor's directions over the client – however, make the therapy instructor aware if there is a problem with the client's balance, consciousness, wishes, etc. Give only as much support as the rider requires. Use as light a touch as possible, but be firm with your hand so as not to tickle.

The client may not follow the direction of the therapy instructor, and you may be asked to reinforce directions by helping them hold their arms up or out, reaching for ears and tail, tapping on or indicating which hand to use for steering, reaching, etc. Give the client time to process the therapy instructor's directions before stepping in to help. It is important to let the client attempt to perform the activities as independently as possible, and each client has their own individual needs for processing time. Your therapy instructor should make you aware of when to step in.

Limit conversation with the client, attempt to redirect them to listen to the therapy instructor if they get off track or engage you in conversation. If you are waiting for another rider in the arena to complete a task or activity, or for other riders to mount and join you in the arena, please do not 'chat' with the client you are working with. Redirect their attention to the other rider working in the arena ("Watch what Susie is doing"), or to the therapy instructor if they are speaking ("Listen to {instructor's name} so that you'll know what to do"). The time for visiting is AFTER the session ("I'd like to hear about that – can we wait until you are done riding to tell me?").

Don't lounge against the horse or lean on them or expect them to support your weight as well as the client.

If your supporting arm gets tired alert the therapy instructor and ask to switch sides. Change sides ONE AT A TIME. Do not leave your client without assistance.

After the session, the client will dismount to the ramp or to the ground depending upon their abilities. Follow the directions of the therapy instructor to safely dismount the client.

- Croup Dismount: Traditional dismount with rider standing in the stirrups, swinging their right leg over the horse's rump, and dropping down to the horse's left side)
- Crest Dismount: Reins are moved to the horse's poll. Rider's right leg is lifted up over horse's neck (left leg is lifted at the same time by therapy instructor) with assist from the side walker, rider swivels to their left, places both hands on the front of the saddle or surcingle, and drops down facing the horse's head
- Electric Lift: Rider is lifted from horse in a similar fashion to the crest dismount.

Some clients may lead their own horses out – the leader would switch to the horse's off side to assist the client and make sure they are safe by keeping the horse controlled. The sidewalker may be asked to help with the door or gate, or walk on the client's left side.

After the client and horse return to the grooming area in the crossties, wait for instruction from the therapy instructor as to how much assistance is needed from that point on. Return to the arena to make sure manure is picked up before the next session. If it is the last session of the day, you may be asked to help remove therapy tools/equipment from the arena, turn lights off, or shut doors.

Session Support Staff.

Many sessions cannot be held without volunteers, and your input and presence is very important not only to the Therapy Instructor but also to your client and horse. It is essential to develop a team atmosphere with a clear-cut leader: the Therapy Instructor. If you have questions or concerns, suggestions or issues with the way session is conducted, your opinions and ideas are valued. ***Please save comments or questions for after the session unless it is a matter of safety requiring immediate attention.***

Being part of a team at CHAPS is a special feeling. Please respect your Therapy Instructor's authority, as they will respect your contribution to the client's safety and well being. The Director is always available to hear suggestions, complaints or ideas as well.

Stable Duties

Morning stable duties include bringing horses in for feeding and watering, or feeding, watering and turning out depending on the season, and cleaning stalls (and occasionally pens or the arena in the winter).

- ❑ Horses should be fed by 7:45 AM each morning, and the stalls and barn should be clean and ready to greet clients no later than 8:45 AM.
- ❑ Morning duties typically last 1 – 1 ½ hours.
- ❑ Specific instructions and check list will be listed on the feeder board outside of the feed room for each shift.
- ❑ Always check the feed chart to make sure no changes have been made – don't rely on your memory! Always make sure water in buckets and tanks are clean and full before you are finished. In winter, check to make sure heaters in buckets and tanks are working and that the water is free of ice. The feed chart is in the feed room and is updated regularly.
- ❑ After cleaning stalls, whether you have used the 4Wheeler or wheelbarrow, check the stable scheduling board on the outside wall of the feed room to find out where the current dumping area for manure is.

PM Stable Duties include feeding, watering, turn out and occasionally stall cleaning.

- ❑ Depending upon the season and weather/temperatures, instructions will be found on the stable schedule located on the feed room wall in the aisle.
- ❑ Horses are fed in the evening at 5:00 PM and stable duties in the evenings last approximately 1 hour.
- ❑ Never leave without making sure every horse has at least 1 full bucket of water available. If they have a tank in their pen, make sure it is no less than ½ full of clean water. If you are asked to distribute hay, be sure to make at least 2 piles per horse, spread out to avoid fighting (Ex: 3 horses, 6 piles of hay (1 flake per pile)

All Stable help:

Always check each horse's feed chart to be aware of feed changes or medications each time that you feed. Don't rely on your memory to give the horse's their feed and meds as they change occasionally.

Always empty, wipe out and fill water buckets at feed time to keep grain, hay and shavings from accumulating in the bottom of the buckets. When horses are out, check the outside water source to make sure it is filled or working (south field waterer is automatic and located in the corner of the field by the main house's driveway on Highway 14, the tank in the North Pens is located by the gate post leading to the lower area of the pens)) A brush for wiping out the buckets and tanks is located on the shelf in the feed room.

Persons feeding or performing barn maintenance duties will find directions on the staff board outside of the feed room. Always check the board first before feeding for changes in instructions. Turn out, stall assignments, etc. can change occasionally and this is where you will find that information.

Miscellaneous Info

The out buildings and houses at the ranch are off limits to CHAPS volunteers, clients and visitors. CHAPS activities are restricted to the stable and indoor/outdoor arenas, the fields behind the stable area, and the turn out areas north and south of the houses. There is a sitesmap with work and off limits areas, location of fire extinguishers, emergency protocol/info/phone numbers on the volunteer board located on the outside of the office facing the stalls. There is a telephone and emergency numbers on the front wall of the office between the two windows.

The ranch where CHAPS leases it's facility is a working ranch. Please be respectful of the other people who live and work there. While we are fortunate to have a great landlord and fellow tenants, it is important to maintain a good relationship by allowing them their privacy and peaceful enjoyment of the ranch. Keep excessive noise and other disturbances to a minimum whenever possible, and pick up after yourself. If there are problems with the cows or cattle owners, tell the director immediately.

Volunteer class notes:

CHAPS Equine Assisted Therapy
PMB 201 1842 Sugarland Dr. Ste. 108
Sheridan, WY 82801
307.673.6161

General Liability Release

The undersigned is aware that all activities involving horses including but not limited to riding, driving, grooming, leading or events involving horses pose many inherent dangers, risks and hazards including but not limited to bodily injury and physical harm to rider, groomer, leader, handler, side walker, photographer, spectator and/or helper. I (the undersigned) freely and fully assume all such risks, dangers, and hazards and the possibility of injury, death, property damage or loss resulting from such risks, dangers and hazards. I hereby agree as follows (initial each number to indicate that you have read, understand and agree):

- _____1) To assume and accept all risks, dangers and hazards in connection with my use or my minor child's or ward's use of the facilities at CHAPS or any off site activities sponsored by CHAPS
- _____2) To waive any and all claims that I may have against CHAPS and the property owners as a result of my, my minor child or ward's use of the facility or participation in any off site activity sponsored by CHAPS
- _____3) To release CHAPS, it's employees, board of director members, volunteers, spectators, clients, property owners and all people involved with CHAPS from any and all liability, rights of action, or causes of action arising out of contract, tort or otherwise for any loss, damage, injury or expense that I, my minor child or ward, next of kin of myself, my minor child or ward, may suffer or incur as a result of use of the facilities or participation in off site activities sponsored by CHAPS due to any cause whatsoever
- _____4) The undersigned agrees to hold harmless and indemnify CHAPS, and any employees, volunteers, board of director members, spectators, clients and or property owners from any and all liability for personal injury, property damage or death suffered by myself, my minor child or ward or by a third party as a result of use of and/or presence at the facility or off site activities sponsored by CHAPS
- _____5) That, in the event of my, my minor child or ward's injury or death, this release and indemnity agreement shall be effective and binding upon mine and my minor child or ward's heirs, next of kin, executors, administrators and assigns in relation to CHAPS, it's property owners and any and all people involved.

Adult:

I acknowledge that I have read and understood this release and indemnity. I am at least 18 years of age and am aware that by signing this document, I am affecting legal rights and liabilities of myself, my heirs, next of kin, executors, administrators, and assigns in relation to CHAPS, it's property owners and any and all people involved.

Date: _____ Name: _____ (print legibly)

Signature: _____

Witness: _____

Minor or ward:

I acknowledge that I have read and understood this release and indemnity. I am 18 years of age or older. I have the authority as the parent or legal guardian of _____
(Please print legibly) to sign and release on behalf of the minor/ward so that the minor/ward my participate and use the facilities offered by CHAPS. I am aware that by signing this document, I am affecting legal rights and liabilities of the minor/ward, his/her heirs, next of kin, executors, administrators, and assigns in relation to CHAPS, it's property owners and any and all people involved.

Date: _____ Name: _____ (print legibly)

Signature: _____

Witness: _____

Authorization for Emergency Medical Treatment

CHAPS Equine Assisted Therapy
PMB 201 1842 Sugarland Dr Ste 108
Sheridan, WY 82801
307.673.6161

Name: _____

Allergies: _____

Medications: _____

Primary Care Physician: _____ Phone: _____

Medical Insurance Provider: _____ Policy # _____

- **Consent Plan:** In the event emergency medical aid and or treatment is required due to illness, injury or accident during the process of participating in activities at CHAPS or at off site activities sponsored by CHAPS, I authorize CHAPS personnel to secure and retain medical treatment and transportation if needed for myself or for my minor child or ward, _____ (print legibly). Authorization includes x-rays, hospitalization, medication and any treatment procedure deemed necessary by the physician or emergency medical personnel. I understand that the paid staff at CHAPS is CPR and First Aid Certified, but will defer to emergency medical professionals in any circumstance other than minor illness, injury or accident.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

If for minor or ward, that person's name: _____

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- **I do not consent to emergency medical aid.** Please contact \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ In the event of an emergency.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

If for minor or ward, that person's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

### Photo Release

I consent to and authorize the use and reproduction by CHAPS Equine Assisted Therapy of any and all photographs and any other audio-visual materials bearing my image for promotional material, educational activities, exhibitions or for any other use for the benefit of the program.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_(print legibly)

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

For minor or ward: \_\_\_\_\_(print legibly)

### Agreement of Confidentiality

As a participant in activities at CHAPS Equine Assisted Therapy, I agree to hold in strict confidence those names, all medical, social, referral, personnel, and financial information regarding clients, staff, volunteers or any and all participants at CHAPS at any time and in any capacity. I agree to the above stipulations regarding confidentiality, and further understand that violating this agreement in any way may result in the termination of my association with CHAPS, and possible criminal charges.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_(print legibly)

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

For Minor or ward: \_\_\_\_\_(print legibly)

### Volunteer Pledge

As a volunteer at CHAPS, I agree to follow the rules and guidelines in this or any following editions of the CHAPS Volunteer Handbook. I have read or have had the Volunteer Handbook explained to me, and I will keep the current edition for reference. I will attend continuing education training/volunteer classes once a year (or more often if required by CHAPS) throughout my volunteer service to CHAPS. I understand that violating the rules and guidelines at CHAPS may result in my dismissal from the program. If my contact information changes, I will notify the CHAPS staff as soon as possible.

I understand that the staff at CHAPS, including therapy instructors and administration, are in control of the activities that I participate in at CHAPS and I will follow their direction. I understand that from time to time the guidelines or rules may change and that it is the responsibility of the staff at CHAPS to inform me of those changes and provide me with those changes in a timely manner.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_(print legibly)

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

For Minor or Ward: \_\_\_\_\_(print legibly)

## Staffing Information

Client Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

May we add you to the CHAPS Volunteer information email list?    Yes    No

Can you:

Lift 50 – 75 Lbs.? \_\_\_\_\_ If not how much comfortably? \_\_\_\_\_

Walk briskly for 50 minutes? \_\_\_\_\_ Jog for 10 minutes? \_\_\_\_\_

Bend over for 2-3 minutes while picking feet? \_\_\_\_\_

Ride a horse for 50 minutes \_\_\_\_\_ English style \_\_\_\_\_ Western style \_\_\_\_\_

What hours are you available? Darken in squares that you can volunteer:

|        | Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wed | Thurs | Friday | Sat |
|--------|--------|--------|---------|-----|-------|--------|-----|
| 7 AM   |        |        |         |     |       |        |     |
| 8 AM   |        |        |         |     |       |        |     |
| 9 AM   |        |        |         |     |       |        |     |
| 10 AM  |        |        |         |     |       |        |     |
| 11 AM  |        |        |         |     |       |        |     |
| 12 PM  |        |        |         |     |       |        |     |
| 1 PM   |        |        |         |     |       |        |     |
| 2 PM   |        |        |         |     |       |        |     |
| 3 PM   |        |        |         |     |       |        |     |
| 4 PM   |        |        |         |     |       |        |     |
| 5 PM   |        |        |         |     |       |        |     |
| 6 PM   |        |        |         |     |       |        |     |
| Other? |        |        |         |     |       |        |     |

CHAPS is closed for sessions on Sunday and open Monday – Fri 9 – 6 and Saturdays 9 – Noon (by appointment). Feeders are needed every day regardless of session schedule or weather.

Check which activities you are interested in:

- |                                               |                                                  |                                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leader               | <input type="checkbox"/> Exercising Horses       | <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer Coordination |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sidewalker           | <input type="checkbox"/> Cleaning tack           | <input type="checkbox"/> Board of Directors     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stable help          | <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising/event staff | <input type="checkbox"/> Therapy Instructor**   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Facility Maintenance | <input type="checkbox"/> Publicity/Marketing     | <input type="checkbox"/> Can Recycle program    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feeding              | <input type="checkbox"/> Collecting donations*   | <input type="checkbox"/> Horses For Heroes      |

\*From donation jars and candy sale locations in Sheridan and Johnson County

\*\* For more information, see the Director about requirement