

SuMMit Centre for Therapeutic Riding Volunteer Manual



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 SuMMitcentre@outlook.com

 www.SuMMitcentre4TR.com

 SuMMit centre for Therapeutic Riding

 coming soon

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Welcome to the SuMMit Community!

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We are happy that you are interested in volunteering at our facility. First a bit about us.

SuMMit Therapeutic Riding Center was granted its 501(c) in 2017. We operate from our facility on Choptank Road in Middletown DE. We have 2 barns, several outdoor rings and an indoor ring.

1. SuMMit's mission.....

General Volunteer Guidelines

We LOVE our volunteers and without volunteers we would not be able to provide our much needed services to those who are in need the most! As a volunteer, we are excited to introduce you to the world of therapeutic riding for children and adults with disabilities and know that you will receive as much pleasure from volunteering as the participants get from riding! To coordinate the schedule to ensure that all riders have assigned walkers, we have compiled a list of guidelines and rules that will have facilitate an organized workflow.

1. Complete and submit the volunteer forms prior to volunteering. Email to: summitcentre@outlook.com
2. If volunteering as a horse handler for lessons, please sign up online.
3. Please let someone know (via email or phone) you will be coming so we can have the necessary equipment available when you arrive.
4. When you arrive, sign in and pick a project task off of the appropriate volunteer task page (always located on the Activities Table in the Tack room) and follow the task instructions. If you have ANY questions at all about the task, ASK before you start. If you are volunteering as a Horse Handler, please review the specific section in this manual for specific instructions.
5. When you are ready to leave, please update the project list and Sign out. Signing in/out allows us to track volunteer hours for grants and non-profit reporting.
6. No running or yelling in the barn or arenas.
7. No smoking in or around the barn areas.
8. Please refrain from bringing your pet unless it is a service animal.
9. We ask that you do not pick up the barn cats, as they do not like that!

10. No handling horses unless you are a Barn Assistant or Walker.
11. No going into the horse pastures or stalls without consent.
12. No feeding or giving the horse treats without consent. Some of our horses are on special diets and can be harmed if they receive certain types of foods.
13. Volunteers must wear closed toed shoes when working around the farm.
14. There are additional guidelines required if you are going to be a Walker and they are listed in the Volunteer Walker section.

Types of Volunteers @ SuMMit

Type	Description
Facilities & Maintenance	<p>We are always in need of maintenance volunteers to help with mowing, weed wacking, cleaning, jump and barrel painting and all of those activities that make our facility beautiful. Volunteers will need to be adults to work any type of equipment. Non-adults can participate in cleaning and painting jobs with adult supervision.</p> <p>Some facilities work can be bartered for lessons.</p>
Barn Assistant	<p>Volunteers must be adults with horse experience to be a Barn Assistant. We can always use help bathing, clipping, and taking great care of our horses and injuries. Some riding, lunging or hand walking may be required. Appropriate attire and shoes are required when working around the horses.</p>
Stable Management	<p>Volunteers can be adults or children 8 and above can help an adult. Tack, laundry, cleaning. These tasks will not include horse handling and will be supervised by the Barn Assistant or Instructor.</p>
Administrative	<p>If you are not a horse person, don't worry, we still have lots of volunteering opportunities like; help with office organization and paperwork, committee activities, fundraising, social media</p>

	(pictures, articles, newsletter) and events coordination.
Lesson Horse Handlers	Adults only (16 and older) and <u>lesson parents</u> . These positions are the lifeline of our work and allows us to work with our riders to keep them safe. If we do not have Handlers, we have to cancel the lesson.

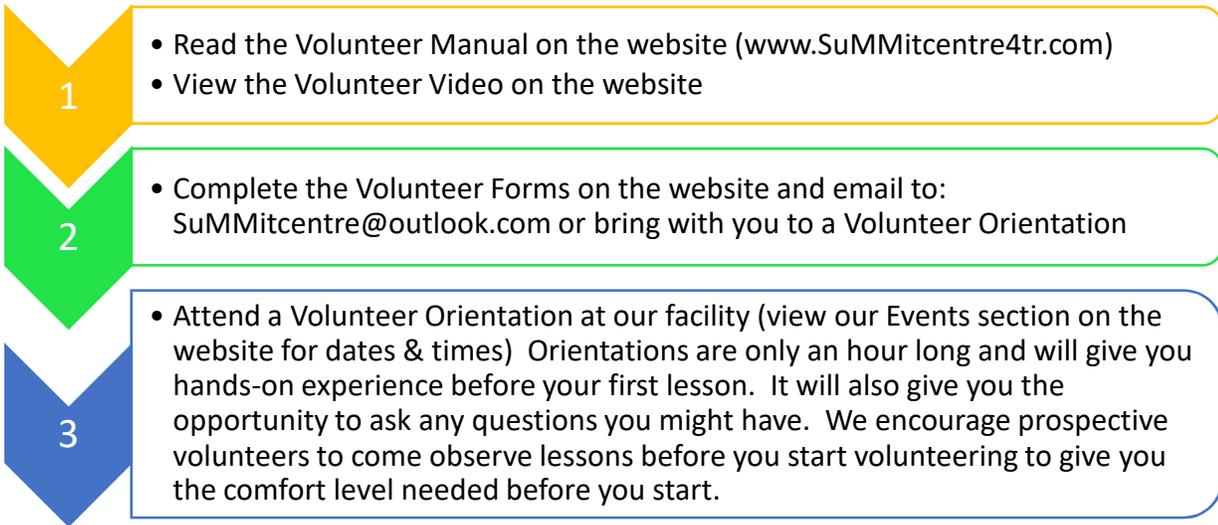
Volunteer Process
(Except Horse Handlers & Barn Assistants)

For anyone wanting to volunteer for any volunteer type, with the exception of Lesson Horse Handler & Barn Assistant, please follow these steps:

1. Read the Volunteer Manual and watch the video, available on the website: www.SuMMitcentre4TR.com
2. Complete & email the General Volunteer form on the website to: SuMMitcentre@outlook.com to set up a quick tour and sign up to get you started!

Volunteer Process for Lesson Horse Handlers Only

The volunteer process for Lesson Horse Handlers happens in 3 stages:



Types of Lesson Horse Handlers

Volunteer Type - Headwalker

A headwalker's **first responsibility is to the horse**, but you must also be constantly aware of the rider, instructor and any potential hazards in or around the riding ring.

- The Headwalker takes the lead and will lead the horse and follow the instructor's direction at all times.
- Walk alongside the horse on its left, about even with his eye/shoulder.
- The lead shank is held in the right hand 6-12 inches from the snap, allowing free motion of the horse's head. The tail end of the shank should be looped in a figure eight in the left hand.
- Avoid the temptation to have conversations with the rider and/or sidewalkers during the lesson.
- Always pay attention to the rider and their safety and if necessary, let the instructor know if there are any issues.
- If the horse is getting lazy, use short tugs rather than a steady pull to keep the horse moving.
- A tap at the girth by the sidewalker or headwalker is used to encourage a change in gait.
- When you halt for more than a few seconds, stand in front of the horse with your hands on the halter's or bridle's cheek pieces or loosely hold the reins.
- Please allow the rider time to process an instruction, allowing the rider to execute the instruction on his own. If necessary, after enough time has passed, you may have to initiate the move. An example: When the instructor gives the command to walk-on or whoa, wait for the rider to give the command to the horse.
- Avoid showing affection to your horse during the lesson. Once the rider is safely dismounted there will be plenty of time to show affection.
- If an accident occurs, stay with the horse.

Volunteer Type - Sidewalker

A Sidewalker's **first responsibility is to the rider**. There are two ways to assist the rider without interfering.

Types of SideWalker Holds

1. **Arm Lock**-The most commonly used hold is the arm lock (arm over the thigh). The sidewalker grips the saddle with the hand closest to the rider. Then the volunteer's forearm rests gently on the rider's thigh.
2. **Ankle Lock** -The other method is the ankle hold. Hold the back side of the ankle.

SideWalker Job Duties

- Always pay attention to the rider and their safety and if necessary, let the instructor know if there are any issues.
- It is important to maintain a position by the rider's knee.
- Avoid the temptation to have conversations with the rider and/or headwalker/sidewalkers during the lesson.
- The sidewalker should help the student focus his/her attention on the instructor.
- When the instructor gives a direction, allow your rider plenty of time to process it.
- Avoid wrapping an arm around the rider's waist.
- Avoid resting your elbow on the side of the horse.
- Encourage your students to use their own trunk muscles to the best of their abilities to support themselves.
- When you are ready for relief for your arm, ask the headwalker to move into the center of the ring to stop
- Ask the instructor for assistance before trading sides with the other sidewalkers.

Guidelines & Rules for Lesson Horse Handlers

1. Notify us 302-690-7235 if you cannot assist in your scheduled lesson as soon as you know! If an emergency arises at the last minute, please call before 8 a.m. This gives us time to attempt to find someone to fill your vacancy.
2. Sign up for lesson slots online or call.
3. Only take a job you have been trained for and feel comfortable doing.
4. Wear suitable clothing:
 - a. outdoor clothes suitable for the season Because of temperature variations, layering of clothing is a reasonably sure way of being comfortable.
 - b. wear comfortable close toed waterproof footwear, such as boots, **no sandals!**
5. Use gloves, if necessary, for headwalking or sidewalking, gloves not mittens should be worn.

6. Hats assist in sun protection but please make sure you will be able to hear the instructor during the lesson.
7. Each volunteer will operate in a coordinated and professional manner with the instructor.
8. Please keep jewelry to a minimum. Necklaces, dangling earrings and facial piercings can accidentally be ripped out by riders or horses and need to be removed before the lesson.
9. Bring bug repellent/spray when needed.
10. We take HIPPA laws seriously, what you see and hear here, remain here.

Lesson Horse Handler-Prior to Lesson

1. Please be prompt. Plan to arrive about 15 minutes before lessons begin. Sign in on the volunteer sheet located on the Activities Table in the Tack room.
2. Turn your phone OFF.
3. While students are mounting, help the instructor perform a quick safety check before the student starts warming up. Inform the instructor if there are any issues.
4. While riders are **warming up**, volunteers may hold conversations, but are urged to:
 - Remain aware of the rider's safety at all times.
 - Include the rider in conversations.
 - Choose appropriate topics, keeping the rider's interest in mind.

Lesson Horse Handler-Participation During Lesson

Therapeutic lessons require several types of horse handlers. The use of handlers are determined by the rider's disability and skill level.

1. All Phones must be turned off and do not use your phone or read during a lesson, all attention must be on the rider.
2. Listen to the instructor at ALL times and perform only those tasks asked by the instructor.
3. Inform the instructor immediately of any issues.
4. Be mindful of other horse & riders in the arena.

Lesson Horse Handler-After Lesson

1. Walk the horse & rider back to the barn and assist in untacking.
2. NEVER leave a rider unsupervised around the horses E V E R!
3. We value the observations of volunteers participating in lessons. Feel free to talk to the instructor after the lesson about the rider's progress. Through these observations, we can learn more about the rider.

Volunteer Process for Barn Assistants Only

Knowledgeable horseman may volunteer to assist in the barn, directly with the horses. Once the volunteer forms have been submitted, we will interview candidates on their horsemanship skills. The first volunteer session will shadow a mentor.

- Plan to arrive about 15 minutes before the riding time begins, if asked to assist in the barn.
- Barn assistants help groom and tack the horses.
- Barn assistants may also be asked to assist riders in grooming and tacking up their own mounts.
- If you are not sure if equipment is required, or correctly applied, ask an instructor.
- When the horse is ready, walk him outside until lesson time or put him back in his stall.
- It is important to keep the barn and tack room areas clean and tidy.
- After lessons, it may be necessary to cool down the horses by sponging down and/or walking them for several minutes before returning them to their stalls.
- Return all tack to the correct location. If any equipment needs care, let the instructor know!
- We also need help in cleaning tack. If you have extra time, your assistance would be greatly appreciated.

Our Riders

Riders come for lessons every week. Riders with similar abilities may be grouped together or taught individually. Some of the disabilities that you may encounter include:

- Mentally challenged
- Physically challenged
- Emotionally challenged
- Socially challenged
- Learning disabled
- Multiple disabilities

Emergency Procedures

All Emergency numbers are posted on the white board and in the Feed room. First, contact Karen, or the instructor in charge, when there is an

emergency: 302-690-7235. Next contact any medical personnel needed for horse or person.

Falls: In the event a rider falls from the horse, the instructor is in charge of the situation. All horses should come to a halt. Headwalker of that horse or a designated volunteer will catch, contain and restrain the horse. Headwalker of other horses must stay with their designated horse. Sidewalkers must stay with their riders. Riders may be asked to leave the ring at the discretion of the instructor. Instructor will follow Red Cross First Aid procedures and call 911 if appropriate. Following safety and welfare of injured, the instructor will complete an incident report to be kept on file. Instructor will notify the office as soon as possible regarding the incident.

Loose Horse: If at any time a horse should get loose, the instructor should halt lessons, and have volunteers hold all horses while the loose horse is caught. The instructor will be in charge of the situation. Once the horse is caught and contained, the lessons may resume. If the horse leaves the property, other farms should be contacted while volunteers follow horse at a walk. Running will encourage the horse to move quickly. If necessary, the police should be notified. If the horse is missing upon your arrival to the barn, call those on the list located near the phone. If necessary, call the police.

Horse Injuries: Instructor should assess the situation. If necessary, follow First Aid procedures for horses and contact the vet. Restrict the horse's motion while waiting for the vet. If necessary, after evaluation by the vet, call the insurance company of horse, if the horse is insured.

Conduct of Personnel and Participants

Inappropriate behavior of rider: The instructor is in charge of the situation. If necessary, the rider will be removed from the horse or area of disruption. The volunteer will remove the horse from situation of abuse. Instructor will assist rider to appropriate area and discuss situation or return rider to parent or guardian. An incident report must be filed by instructor and office notified. If the instructor and Executive Director feel the rider poses a safety threat to themselves, volunteers or the horse, the rider may be asked to leave the program.

Inappropriate behavior of volunteer: Inappropriate behavior will be reported to the office. The office will contact the volunteer to discuss the situation and a solution to the problem. If an immediate response is needed, the instructor will take the volunteer aside and quietly discuss and rectify the situation. The instructor will contact the office and an incident report will be filed.

Inappropriate behavior of an instructor: If a volunteer or parent/guardian reports inappropriate behavior of an instructor, the office will contact the instructor for a conference to discuss the problem and a solution. The person making the complaint will be notified of follow-up.

Safety Regulations

All lessons will be conducted in a safe environment.

- Only equipment used for lessons should be in the ring.
- Volunteers should be aware of their jobs.
- Riders should have suitable horses and equipment.
- Riders must have ASTM/SEI helmets.
- Riders wear appropriate footwear when possible.
- Check equipment before riders mount.
- Gear lessons to riders' abilities.
- **Keep everyone as safe as possible.**

Confidentiality Policy

Volunteers must respect the confidentiality of each client attending the program. What you see here, what you hear here, let it stay here when you leave.

