

EQUAL

Risk Mitigation Plan and Notice to Volunteers

1. Safety Notice and Briefing sessions (Pre and during)

There is always an inherent danger regardless of all safety precautionary measures in place when working with / around horses - due to the horse's nature/behavior and based on the situation of the environment.

The Volunteer Manager will ensure that volunteers are properly briefed before being allowed in the equine-assisted programmes. Volunteers should be accompanied by authorized EQUAL personnel at all times unless authorized by Stables Supervisor to carry out assign husbandry work .

It is mandatory that all Volunteers must acknowledge their understanding, agreement and adherence to the following safety guidelines at all times - while working with/around the equine partners.

DO

(S&S) Spatial and Situational awareness:

- Always be attentive to the horses' action and movement, keeping an eye on what it is doing. Horses are very sensitive animal and will know through your body language and projected energy what your intentions are. They can take advantage of your lack of attention or negligence.
- If a horse shows sign of stress, uneasiness, and aggression – ears pinned or flattened backwards, pawing the ground, retracted lips, squealing and snorting, repeated head bowing, give them space to move and walk away. Remember that the horse is a prey animal and they have only two choices in a dire situation – Flight or Fight.
- Be on constant alert for things in the environment that may spook a horse. Examples of these are: a. Dogs, especially those that are running or barking b. Unusual vehicles, such as a lorry with a crane c. Nearby horses spooking d. Spooked horses in the walker e. Strong wind. Horses have a strong sense of hearing and strong wind unsettles them. - Stop the programme immediately if the horse displays signs of being spooked.
- When in confined spaces (outside or under shelter) with the horse, make sure to avoid being sandwiched between the horse and wall/fence.
- Volunteer should always stand 1 arm's length away from the horse (sides & front) and 3.5 meters away from the back of the horse.
- Always position yourself to be 1 arm's length or closer to the beneficiaries, so you can react in time if needed to ensure safety for all.

Horse Handling:

- Only touch the horse if allowed by the EQUAL staff. Relax, greet the horse in a mild soft tone, and keep a kind eye contact.
- **ONLY GO NEAR HORSES WHEN YOU HAVE CONSENT AND/OR APPROVAL FROM THE STABLE MANAGEMENT. YOU MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN AUTHORIZED STABLE PERSONNEL AT ALL TIMES.**
- Approach horse at an angle, preferably on the left-hand side and towards the neck, moving in a constant pace, not too fast and not too slow.
- When touching, always show your hands where they can see it, again, move not too fast nor slow.

Always Communicate:

- Should there be concern about safety and risk to the volunteers, beneficiaries and/or horses, please alert the Program Team Leader or Program Manager (PM) and the Equine Trainer (ET) assigned so they may re-evaluate the situation to decide whether to completely cancel or continue the session.
- Briefing should be held before the start of any program to discuss safety and session activities. A de-briefing should be conducted after the program to share experience and summarize the events of the session.
- In case of any incident, everybody must stop what they are doing and follow the instructions of the Program Instructor (PI) and the Equine Trainer (ET).

DO NOT

- Carry out any horse-related activity when ET or PI are not present for programmes.
- Carry out any husbandry work without clearance from Stables Management.
- Touch the face of the horse, especially the mouth area.
- Run and shout during the programme. Move calmly away from the incident in an orderly manner.
- Directly approach the horse in the front, and definitely not directly behind.
- If a horse shows sign of stress, uneasiness, and aggression – ears pinned or flattened backwards, pawing the ground, retracted lips, squealing and snorting, repeated head bowing, are some examples: (a) do not go near the horse and don't give them a feeling of being cornered, (b) do not surround or form an "enclosure" around them

	- Hand feed horses. Handfeeding is to be carried out by EQUAL's staff only. <u>DO NOT</u> - Use your phone or have earphones plugged in when handling or working with horses, unless in case of emergency. - Take photos of the horses and beneficiary-clients without permission by an EQUAL staff.
2. Presence and Monitoring by Authorized Personnel	1. There will be <u>at least 1 Programme Instructor or Equine Handler</u> present in the program at any one time. 2. Programme Instructors and Equine Handlers have been certified with the necessary credentials to initiate, conduct and manage equine-assisted services. 3. All Programme Instructors and Equine Handlers are certified with the following: - CPR (Hands Only) + AED Provider - Standard First Aid Provider 4. On EQUAL's premises: - In the event of a <u>mild to moderate</u> injury: ✓ All Programme Instructors and Equine Handlers are first-aid trained and will assess/attend to the volunteer immediately upon knowledge of the injured party. - In the event of a <u>moderate to severe</u> injury: ✓ EQUAL will call for an emergency ambulance and the paramedics will determine which hospital to convey the injured person. The two nearest hospitals are Mount Alvernia (2km away) and Tan Tock Seng Hospital (4.2km away). ✓ Injuries can be claimed from 3rd party liability insurance. 5. Off-site (external premises): - In the event of a <u>mild to moderate</u> injury: ✓ All Programme Instructors and Equine Handlers are first-aid trained and will attend to the volunteer immediately upon knowledge of the injured party. - In the event of a <u>moderate to severe</u> injury: ✓ EQUAL will call for an emergency ambulance and the

	paramedics will determine which hospital to convey the injured person ✓ Injuries can be claimed from 3rd party liability insurance.
3. Dress Code	<u>Volunteer Conduct and Dress Code</u> I agree to the following Guidelines and Dress Code: • For your safety, please do NOT interact or touch the horses, at all times. Pls request for permission from an EQUAL Equine Handler to do so. • No children below 18 years of age will be present during the volunteering session. • Comfortable T-shirt, round neck if possible. T-shirts with short sleeves preferred. NO sleeveless tops. • Long pants, loose for comfort (not tight fitting). Preferably denim or thick material for added protection. • Shoes (closed toe) preferably leather/ rubber hard material. Sports / hiking shoes are also acceptable. • Bring your own Face Mask, Goggles, Rubber Hand Gloves for extra protection especially for those who have allergies. Please ask an EQUAL staff if you need one. • Handkerchiefs, face towels, tissues, extra shirts (to change after stable work), for personal hygiene and convenience. • Water bottles (we have water dispensers) or beverages to hydrate and quench thirst. • Volunteers with long hair, please use hair tie to hold your hair back please. • Please store valuable jewellery away, do not wear them while volunteering. • Please avoid wearing heavy perfumes.

4. Photo Taking Policy	Photo Taking by Volunteers on <u>Volunteer's</u> Phone: No Photo Taking Allowed. Please notify an EQUAL staff BEFORE taking any photos. Photo Taking by Volunteers on <u>Beneficiary's</u> Phone: Volunteers may assist with photo-taking, on behalf of the beneficiary, on the beneficiary's phone. Photo Taking by <u>EQUAL Staff</u>: Photos will be taken for the purposes of EQUAL's publicity. Photos that include employee volunteers will be sent to the Corporate PIC for vetting before use.
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