



## Participant Handbook

Thank you for your interest in Ride for Joy! Please carefully read the policies and procedures in this handbook and reach out to program staff with questions.

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## **ABOUT RIDE FOR JOY**

Ride for Joy is an equine-assisted services program, serving children and adults with disabilities as well as military veterans in southwestern Idaho. We are a Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH Intl.) Premiere Accredited center. All instructors are either PATH Intl. Certified Therapeutic Riding Instructors (CTRI) or in the process of becoming certified while working under the supervision of a certified instructor.

## **LOCATION AND PARKING**

Ride for Joy is located at the Idaho Youth Ranch's Hands of Promise Campus, located at 28379 El Paso Rd. in Caldwell. Please park in the paved lot next to the Sage Equine Center, where the indoor arena is located, or down the hill in the dirt lot next to the Ride for Joy office building.

## **VISITORS**

All guests accompanying a participant must remain in the waiting area located near the arena. The Hands of Promise Campus is a residential treatment center, and the property is off limits to visitors. Only staff and volunteers are allowed beyond designated Ride for Joy visitor areas.

Additionally, participants and guests may not approach or touch horses anywhere on the premises without the permission of a Ride for Joy staff member.

## **MINORS**

All children must be supervised at all times and are not permitted to run, play loudly, or climb the fence rails as this can be distracting to riders and startle the horses.

If a participant is under 18, a parent or other designated adult caregiver must remain in the Ride for Joy activity area at all times while the participant is on Ride for Joy property.

## **SERVICE ANIMALS**

Service animals are permitted on the property, and current proof of rabies vaccination must be submitted to the Idaho Youth Ranch prior to arrival. Personal pets are not permitted, even if they remain in a vehicle.

## **DRUGS AND ALCOHOL**

Ride for Joy is a tobacco, drug, and alcohol free environment. Smoking is strictly prohibited in all areas on the premises. Anyone showing signs of intoxication or substance use will be asked to leave the premises immediately. Second offenses will result in being permanently banned from all Ride for Joy programs and events.

## **PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOS**

Parents and other visitors may take photos of their own children/participants. Taking photos and recording videos of other participants is prohibited without permission from the participant/their guardian and the instructor.

Please don't use flash photography or devices with sudden sounds as this can startle the horses and distract riders.

## **SAFETY RULES**

Ride for Joy strives to provide a safe, supportive, and compassionate environment. Hostile or threatening behavior of any kind will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to, physical or verbal abuse, gossip, insults, ridicule, harassment or discrimination of any kind.

If a Ride for Joy staff member deems that anyone on the premises who accompanied a participant is creating an unsafe environment for the students, horses, volunteers and/or staff, they will be asked to leave the property. The Ride for Joy participant they accompanied will forfeit the remainder of their lesson time that day.

All participants and visitors must walk at all times on the premises.

Please do not bring items that may be distracting to riders and startling to horses, such as balloons or noise-making toys.

## **EMERGENCIES**

In the event of an incident or emergency, each person in the activity area should stay calm and listen for instructions from Ride for Joy staff members. Given the unpredictable nature of horses, it is best for everyone to remain still and silent unless it is necessary to move out of harm's way.

## **RIDER ELIGIBILITY**

Ride for Joy applicants must meet the following criteria for riding:

- 4 years old or older
- Physically able to sit with torso vertical and legs astride the horse
- Physically able to maintain head and neck position without assistance
- 200 lbs. or less

Safety is a priority at Ride for Joy, and each application is carefully screened to determine whether there are any contraindications that would make equine-assisted activities inappropriate for the applicant.

## **CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR**

Participants must be dressed appropriately for horse related activities or they will not be permitted to ride. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Comfortable, closed-toe and closed-heel shoes and socks
- Long pants
- Weather appropriate attire (jacket, gloves, etc.)

Avoid loose clothing and dangling jewelry that could get caught on equipment or tack.

## **HELMETS**

All participants must wear an ASTM-SEI certified riding helmet to participate, which Ride for Joy provides. All riding helmets provided by the student must be approved by the instructor, fit the rider appropriately, and be less than five years old. Helmets with any broken or missing components are not permitted.

## **ILLNESS AND INJURY**

To keep everyone safe and healthy, please stay home if you/your rider are ill. Contact RFJ as soon as possible to cancel a lesson if any of the following symptoms have been present in the last 24 hours. Symptoms must be absent without the use of medication.

- Temperature of 101 or higher
- Any communicable disease
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Two or more cold symptoms
- Undiagnosed rash
- Colored mucus discharge
- Cloudy discharge from the eye(s)
- Coughing
- Runny Nose

Some injuries make horseback riding unsafe for the participant. Depending on the injury, RFJ may require a doctor's note clearing the participant to ride.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Planned Absences: Please notify Ride for Joy of planned absences 24 hours or more before the scheduled lesson time. If you call the office and don't speak with a staff member, please email us.

Unplanned Absences: Please call the Ride for Joy office. If you don't speak with a staff member, please email us.

*If more than two absences with less than 24 hour notice occur in a session, the participant's lesson time may be forfeited to a rider on the waitlist, and Ride for Joy reserves the right to move the participant to third priority scheduling in subsequent sessions.*

Late Arrival: Students arriving more than 10 minutes late will not be able to ride. Other activities such as grooming may be possible, based on instructor and volunteer availability.

## **APPLICATION AND ADMISSION**

All admission and scheduling decisions are made at the sole discretion of Ride for Joy staff. All required application paperwork must be completed and reviewed by Ride for Joy before admission to the program. *All Ride for Joy participant applications must be renewed annually for returning students and must be completed prior to participation each calendar year.*

Applications are screened to determine whether contraindications are present that would make equine-assisted activities unsafe or inappropriate for the applicant. If not, and if there is space available in the program, an in-person evaluation will be scheduled. An evaluation is also required for returning individuals who have not participated in Ride for Joy programs for more than 12 months and may be required for other returning individuals, at the discretion of Ride for Joy staff. If space is not available in the program, new applicants are placed on the waitlist and will be notified when space is available.

Factors considered in Ride for Joy's admission decisions include, but are not limited to:

- Whether RFJ is able to provide a safe experience for the participant, staff, volunteers and horses given the participant's needs and abilities;
- Whether the participant is eligible for equine-assisted activities given the participant's needs and abilities; and
- Whether appropriate staff, horses, equipment, volunteers, and facilities are available to Ride for Joy to meet the needs of the participant during equine-assisted activities.

## **SCHEDULING AND WAITLIST**

Prior to each session, current riders will receive a sign-up form where they can indicate which days and times they are available for lessons. Ride for Joy encourages participants to select as many days and times as possible on the form, as this will give them the best chance of securing a lesson time. If a participant does not accept an offered lesson time, it will be offered to the next available individual who is an appropriate match for that lesson, as determined by Ride for Joy staff. Staff will make every effort to find an alternative time on the schedule for the original participant who declined the lesson time; however, there may or may not be space available. Scheduling will follow the priority levels listed below.

<b>First Priority</b>	<p>Students participating in the <u>current or most recent</u> session receive first priority in scheduling for the subsequent session, provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• there is an appropriate lesson time open and available on the schedule for that student; <u>and</u></li> <li>• all current (within last 12 months) application forms (including the physician form) have been completed and received by Ride for Joy before the current session's schedule is finalized</li> </ul>
<b>Second Priority</b>	<p>Students who participated in a session within the last 12 months but not in the most recent session receive second priority in scheduling, provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• there is an appropriate lesson open and available on the schedule for that student; <u>and</u></li> <li>• all current (within last 12 months) application forms (including the physician form) have been completed and received by Ride for Joy before the current session's schedule is finalized</li> </ul>
<b>Third Priority Wait List</b>	<p>New applicants for whom application forms (including physician's form) have been completed and received by Ride for Joy will be placed on a waitlist. Once on the waitlist:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• riders will be contacted to schedule an evaluation <u>if</u> there are openings on the schedule not filled by first and second level priority students</li> <li>• the student will be scheduled for the next session in which there is an <u>open and appropriate lesson available</u> if, upon evaluation, the Ride for Joy staff deem that the student will be accepted to the program</li> <li>• applicants who are moved from the waitlist onto the schedule will be required to update all paperwork if it was submitted more than one year prior to the evaluation date</li> </ul>

*Participants who have not participated in Ride for Joy programs in over 12 months will be considered new applicants and should apply using the New Student Application form.*

### **LESSON FORMAT**

Lessons are typically 40 minutes; however, the instructor may shorten the lesson as is appropriate for the participant. Mounted lessons may be conducted in the indoor arena or outside and may be changed to ground lessons due to weather (rain, high winds, excessive heat, etc.) or equine health issues.

### **MAKE-UP LESSONS**

Because the lesson schedule is very full and considerable resources are required to make services available (facility, horses, staff, volunteers, etc.), Ride for Joy charges by the session (not by the lesson) and does not offer make-up lessons or refunds for lessons that a rider is unable to

attend. Ride for Joy may offer make-up classes or credits for lessons that are canceled by Ride for Joy due to inclement weather, staff illness, facility maintenance and repair, etc.

## **PAYMENT AND REFUNDS**

Session payments are due at the beginning of each session, and participants or their parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring invoices are paid. Unpaid balances must be paid before participants will be able to sign up for future sessions. Payments for Meet and Greet Evaluations and One-Time Rides are due at the time of service.

If a participant cancels for the entire session before classes have begun, the full tuition less a \$25 administrative fee will be refunded. If a participant cancels during the first week of a session, the full tuition less a \$50 administrative fee will be refunded. No refunds will be given after the first full week of a session.

Ride for Joy offers scholarships and payment plans that must be authorized by the Executive Director or designee prior to the first week of a session. Please reach out to apply for a scholarship or payment plan.

## **DISCHARGE OF PARTICIPANTS**

Ride for Joy reserves the right to discharge participants for a number of reasons, including, but not limited to:

1. Development of a contraindicated condition or the deterioration of an existing condition to the point that therapeutic riding is no longer beneficial and/or could be harmful to the participant.
2. Development of any behavior or condition that causes safety concerns for the participant, horse, staff and/or volunteers.
3. Weight gain resulting in weight that is above the limit of 200 pounds.
4. Consistent and frequent missed lessons without notifying Ride for Joy in advance.
5. Severe behavioral incidents (physical or verbal abuse, fire-starting behavior, alcohol or drug use on the premises) may result in automatic dismissal.

A Ride for Joy staff member will discuss the grounds for dismissal with the participant, parent or guardian. A written reason for the dismissal will be placed in the participant's Ride for Joy file. Participants, parents or guardians who wish to appeal the dismissal may contact the Executive Director, who will review the dismissal in collaboration with the Board of Directors. The decision issued by the Executive Director and Board of Directors is final.

# **IDAHO EQUINE ACTIVITIES IMMUNITY ACT**

## **TITLE 6**

### **CHAPTER 18**

#### **EQUINE ACTIVITIES IMMUNITY ACT**

##### **6-1802. LIMITATION OF LIABILITY ON EQUINE ACTIVITIES.**

(1) Except as provided in subsections (2) and (3) of this section, an equine activity sponsor or an equine professional shall not be liable for any injury to or the death of a participant or equine engaged in an equine activity and, except as provided in subsections (2) and (3) of this section, no participant nor participant's representative may maintain an action against or recover from an equine activity sponsor or an equine professional for an injury to or the death of a participant or equine engaged in an equine activity.

(2) The provisions of this chapter do not apply to the horse or mule racing industry as regulated in chapter 25, title 54, Idaho Code.

(3) Nothing in subsection (1) of this section shall prevent or limit the liability of an equine activity sponsor or an equine professional:

(a) If the equine activity sponsor or the equine professional:

(i) Provided the equipment or tack and the equipment or tack caused the injury; or

(ii) Provided the equine and failed to make reasonable and prudent efforts to determine the ability of the participant to engage safely in the equine activity, determine the ability of the equine to behave safely with the participant, and to determine the ability of the participant to safely manage the particular equine;

(iii) Owns, leases, rents or otherwise is in lawful possession and control of the land or facilities upon which the participant or equine sustained injuries because of a dangerous latent condition which was known to or should have been known to the equine activity sponsor or the equine professional and for which warning signs have not been conspicuously posted;

(iv) Commits an act or omission that constitutes willful or wanton disregard for the safety of the participant or equine and that act or omission caused the injury;

(v) Intentionally injures the participant or equine;

(b) Under liability provisions as set forth in the products liability laws; or

(c) Under the liability provisions set forth in chapter 9, title 6, Idaho Code.