



Volunteer Guidelines

Welcome, and thank you for choosing to volunteer at Carousel Ranch. We are confident you will find your time with us personally rewarding in ways you never imagined. As a volunteer you will play an integral role in our students' riding sessions, as well as assist us with our many, daily ranch chores. Due to the nature of our work, it is imperative that you understand and follow the guidelines we have outlined for you.

These standards are strictly enforced for the safety of our students, horses and staff, and are equally important for you. We do not have a scheduled volunteer training session, so we ask that you review and understand what is being asked of you before you start your volunteer time with us.

- 1) **Scheduling**: You must call our office and sign up to volunteer for a specific date & time. We typically are unable to use "walk-in" volunteers. If you are unable to work on the day you signed-up for please contact the office during regular business hours to reschedule. We greatly appreciate advanced notice.

Volunteer Hours

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday: 1:00 - 5:30pm

- 2) **Parking**... Please **drive slowly** and be cautiously aware of the children, horses and cross traffic when coming onto the ranch property. The posted "staff and volunteer parking" area is located to the **right** of the covered arena, **NOT** directly in front of the arena, which is reserved for our students.
- 3) **Dress Code**... Please refer to the attached "Volunteer Dress Code and Appearance" sheet.
- 4) **Sign in & out**... Upon your arrival, please report to the office trailer to sign the Volunteer Check-in Sheet and get a Volunteer name tag. You must also sign-out upon the completion of your shift. This is our only way of documenting your volunteer hours. Hours not logged into the Volunteer Binder **cannot** be counted towards your Community Service hours.

- 5) **Cell phones:** *Cell phones cannot be out while you are working, whether in lessons, in the lesson area or in back by the horses, etc. Please make sure it is off and that it does not ring or vibrate. Personal calls should be made from the parking lot or from your car.*

- 6) **BRING WATER** and be sure to have eaten before your shift. You will be working on your feet the entire time and often in very warm conditions. We do have filtered water available to **refill** your own bottle or cup, but do not have individual water bottles. **Stay hydrated, take breaks in the shade as you need, and tell a staff member immediately if you are feeling unwell in any way.**

- 7) ****If you are spotting in a lesson, please refrain from small talk with the instructor, the leader and especially with the student, as it is very disruptive to the student's lesson plan.** Each of our Instructors has a specific lesson plan for their students, and it is imperative they are able to conduct the lesson without interruptions. If you should have a question regarding a student please refer it to the instructor after the lesson, ***away from students and parents.*** Suitable encouragement and praise for the child's efforts are usually acceptable.

- 8) **Practice safe habits around the ranch:** Be observant and aware. It is always best to "play it safe" around the horses at the ranch. Ask before doing anything, even if you have been around horses your entire life. **Do Not** walk directly behind a horse or put your hands up to their face. **Do Not** open stall gates or go into any stall without a staff member giving you direct instructions. Remember to chain all stall gates closed when entering or exiting.

- 9) **SAFETY is always our number one priority.** This applies to our students, staff and volunteers equally; however, you are ultimately responsible for your own safety and well-being. Everyone is expected to set an example by following common sense rules and guidelines. **If you have questions or concerns of any kind, please ask a staff member for assistance.**

Job Responsibilities

Please let us know prior to beginning work if there is a job you cannot physically manage, or simply prefer not to be involved with. Some volunteers would prefer not to work in a lesson, but rather concentrate on the horses' needs.

- **Spotting/Sidewalking** - Walking along side the horse, assisting the instructor and child during the lesson.
- **Grooming/tacking** - Assisting in grooming and tacking horses for lessons under the supervision of a staff member.
- **Ranch chores, including but not limited to:**
 - Cleaning stalls and/or filling water tubs, basic cleaning inside and around tack rooms, bleachers, Western town buildings and other property maintenance.
 - Grooming buckets can be cleaned out (wiped clean or hosed out) and brushes cleaned of loose hair.
 - Weeding is always a must...both in and around the property.
 - Hoses around the ranch can be rolled up if not in use.
 - Trash cans emptied into the dumpster.
- **Occasional Office Work** - Assisting with mailings, filing, storage, etc.
- **Special Events** - Assist in organizing or preparations prior to or during the actual day of a special event.

Please keep in mind that throughout the day most of the staff will be busy working with horses and in lessons. Observe, ask questions, listen, and learn. Be proactive and check with a staff member before beginning a new project. There are many ways you can help if you look around. Check the to-do list on the white board. Sweeping off horse mats in the stalls always needs to be done, as well as raking and rock removal in the arena.

**We will attempt to include you in as many lessons as possible. There will be times when a staff member is used as a spotter due to a child's specific needs, otherwise you will be asked to step into the lesson. If you don't have a job to do, ask a staff member who is not involved in a lesson. The grooming and tacking area can become quite congested with staff and horses. For safety reasons we ask that if you are not actively involved with a job that you do not loiter in this area. If for some reason you find yourself with nothing to do, please take a seat in the bleachers and we will get you busy as soon as we can!*

"Rules of Conduct"

When people work together there are certain rules of conduct which must be followed in order to protect the rights and safety of all concerned. We require our volunteers to reflect a professional appearance at all times. This not only applies to your dress attire, but to your work ethic as well. Please be aware of, and refrain from the following actions when you are volunteering at Carousel Ranch:

- 1) Disorderly or immoral conduct, horseplay or practical joking.
- 2) Reporting to work under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- 3) Loitering around the tackroom or prep. area.
- 4) Insubordination and/or refusing to carry out a job assignment or instruction.
- 5) Using insulting or inappropriate language towards or around children, parents or fellow workers.
- 6) Using uncivil or insulting language in contempt of authority.
- 7) Taking on tasks that you have not been trained for at Carousel Ranch, even if you feel you have the expertise to do so.
- 8) Using a cell phone in any area other than the ranch parking lot.

Carousel Ranch is a non-smoking environment. You are not allowed to smoke on or near the premises at any time.

Volunteer Dress Code & Appearance

The following is a guideline for Carousel Ranch volunteers. While it is important to us that you are comfortable in your work, we ask that you keep a modest attire. Clearly in working outside with horses you will be getting dirty, but despite that we all need to present a professional appearance.

-Pants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-jeans, khaki, casual work pants-pants must be worn at the waist-no sweats/gym pants-no holey or torn pants
-Shirts/tops	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-work shirts before lessons for "dirty work" are OK-no "spaghetti" straps (no bra straps showing)-tee-shirts with inappropriate logos or advertising are not allowed-tops should not show cleavage or midriff-button down shirts or tee-shirts <u>are recommended</u>
-Shorts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-casual shorts (i.e. khaki, jean, etc.)-shorts can not be tight fitting-shorts must be mid-thigh length or longer-shorts must be worn at the waist
-Shoes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Closed toed shoes only-boots or tennis shoes preferred-think comfortable not style
-Miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-appropriate hats are acceptable-sunglasses are recommended-make-up should be modest-SUNSCREEN & more SUNSCREEN