

# Volunteer Handbook

April 15, 2021

9629 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, NW  
Albuquerque, NM 87114  
[www.cloudancersthp.org](http://www.cloudancersthp.org)



9629 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, NW  
Albuquerque 87114-2110

Welcome to Cloud Dancers' Family of Volunteers,

We are delighted that you have decided to share your time, talents and treasures with Cloud Dancers and our wonderful riders. Through your commitment to Cloud Dancers you will engage in our motto of "Improving Lives with Every Ride". This could even apply to your own life.

One of the first steps in having a successful volunteer experience with us, is to familiarize yourself with our policies and procedures in the attached Volunteer Handbook. Please read it carefully. In your Orientation Session you will have an opportunity to ask questions and sign the Volunteer Agreement.

Your role as a volunteer is critical to the quality of our programs. Our commitment to you is to provide the training, hands-on instruction, communication and support you need to be successful. Through your work with our riders and horses you can expect to experience joy, fun and adventure; love, care and compassion; sadness, tears and concern. You will gain insight into yourself, your values and your community. And lastly you will feel good about yourself and the positive difference you will make for our riders and their families.

We are excited to have you as part of our Volunteer Team. Be safe, be a good team player and have fun!

Best wishes,

*Nancy*

Nancy Wilkins  
Board President

# Volunteer Handbook

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## **Volunteer Handbook**

### **Who is Cloud Dancers Therapeutic Horsemanship?**

#### **Cloud Dancers History**

Cloud Dancers was established in 1982 in Albuquerque, New Mexico as part of the New Mexico Health Coalition and was funded at that time by the Health and Human Resources division of State Government. Governed by a Board of Directors from its beginning, Cloud Dancers became an independently operated organization in 1984 and an IRS recognized 501C3 non-profit in 1986. Cloud Dancers has operated at a variety of locations throughout Albuquerque, and is now located in northwest Albuquerque.

#### **Our Mission**

Our mission is to provide equine-assisted activities to individuals with physical, cognitive, emotional, and/or social needs through innovative riding, vaulting, and ground programs.

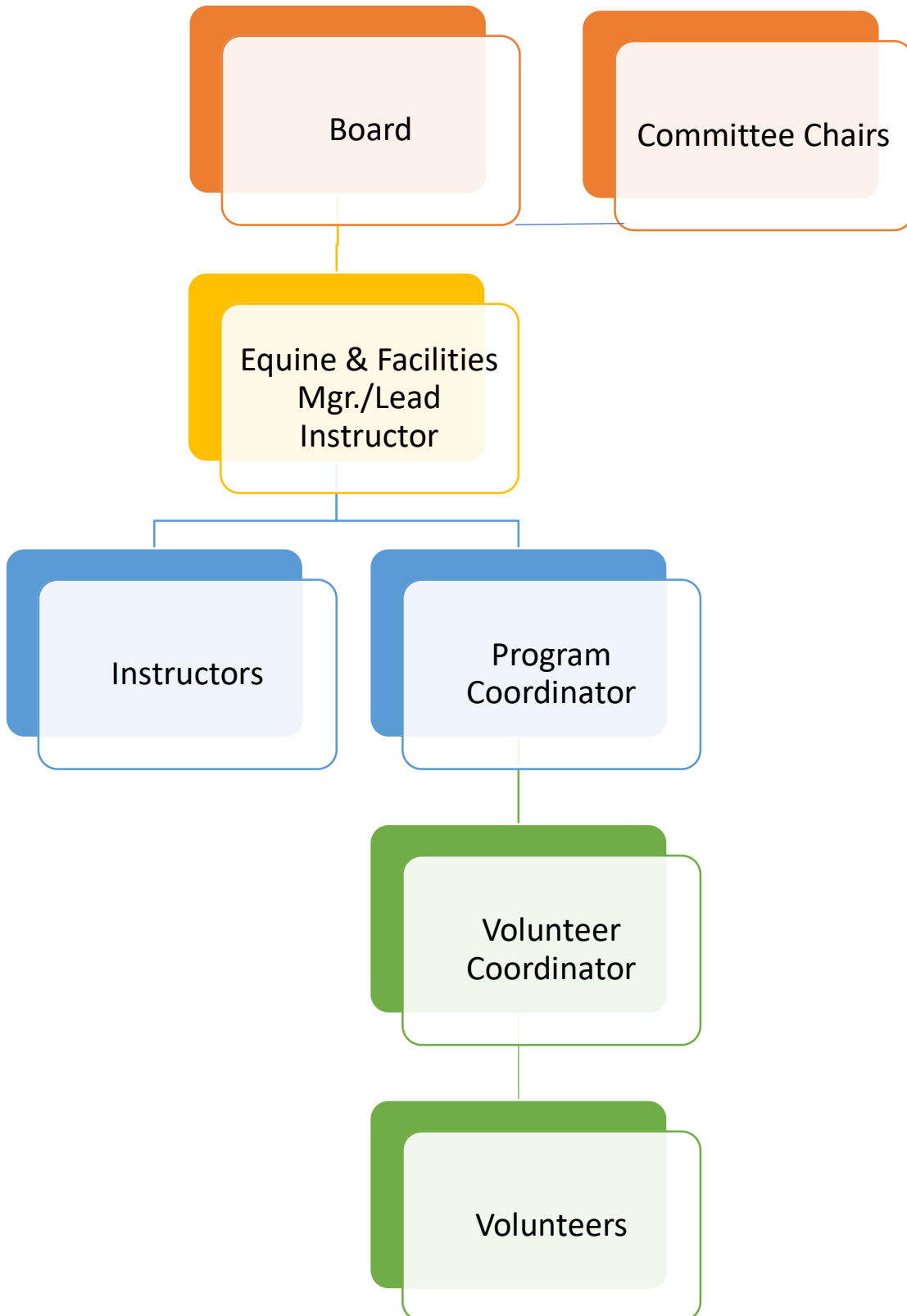
Our motto is Improving Lives with Every Ride!

#### **Path Certification**

As a PATH (Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship, International) member center, since 1999, Cloud Dancers adheres to the highest industry standards and instruction with emphasis on the safety of riders, horses, staff and volunteers and on the quality of equine assisted activities and therapies. Our instructors are all PATH certified with fun, goal setting and learning as significant parts of our programs.

The goal of PATH Intl. Centers is to provide safe and productive equine-assisted activities and therapies for all riders and to “do no harm”. Equine activities hold inherent risks, yet these risks can be quantified by completing a “risk/benefit” analysis for each potential rider and by posing the question, “Will the benefit of the equine-assisted activity outweigh the risk”? To answer that question each rider or vaulter is assessed for physical and psychosocial concerns. Input for making this decision is gathered from the rider, parents, physicians, mental health workers, educators, instructors or others involved in the rider’s life. If we cannot accommodate the riders’ needs, resulting in a positive outcome, equine activities may not be appropriate.

## Organization Chart





## Cloud Dancers' Contact Information

### March 2021

Web site	<a href="http://www.cloudancersthp.org">www.cloudancersthp.org</a>
Facebook	facebook.com/clouddancers.abq
Instagram	Instagram.com/clouddancers_thp
Program Information	<a href="mailto:programs@clouddancersthp.org">programs@clouddancersthp.org</a>
Financial Information	<a href="mailto:treasurer@clouddancersthp.org">treasurer@clouddancersthp.org</a>
Volunteer Information	<a href="mailto:volunteer@clouddancersthp.org">volunteer@clouddancersthp.org</a>
Message Phone	505-926-1426
Physical Location	9629 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street, NW, Albuquerque 87114-2110
Mailing Address	PO Box 10489, Albuquerque, NM 87184

#### Staff

Karen Molony	Equine & Facilities Manager/ Lead Instructor	505-235-8358
Louisa Roberts	Program Coordinator	505-926-1426
Sandy LaBarbera	Volunteer Coordinator	224-374-4144

#### Board

Nancy Wilkins	Board President
Jody Karp	Secretary
Emily Esterson	Marketing Chair
Tom Herrlinger	Director

# Nature of Programming

## Horsemanship Programs

### What is Therapeutic Riding?

Therapeutic riding uses activities with horses for the purpose of contributing positively to the cognitive, physical, emotional and social well-being of individuals with disabilities. There are four therapeutic riding classifications—therapy, education, sport, and recreation & leisure.

Currently Cloud Dancers practices in recreation and leisure with plans to incorporate therapy by licensed health professionals, such as Occupational and Physical therapists at a later date. Currently our PATH certified instructors design and implement activities with horses that address cognitive, behavioral, psychological and physical goals, as well as teach skills in riding, or ground work. Personal pride and improved self-esteem come from accomplishing new tasks and learning new skills. The pure enjoyment of the horse-human bond brings joy and pleasure along with new friendships and relationships.

The 3-dimensional gait of the horse closely simulates the movement of the human pelvis and is a valuable tool both in recreational and therapy settings. The movement and warmth of the horse promote many physical benefits such as increased circulation, relaxation of tight muscles, strengthening of weak muscles, increase in pelvic and trunk mobility, development of balance and coordination and improvement in posture. Group lessons promote socialization, increase in vocalization and attention span.

Individuals with disabilities that may respond positively to therapeutic riding include people with Down Syndrome, Autism, MS, paralysis, amputations, ADD, ADHD, developmental delays, Cerebral Palsy, brain injuries, strokes, drug or alcohol abuse, depression, hearing and seeing impairments and other disabilities. Our riders range in age from 5 years old to seniors.

Cloud Dancers adapts safe and fun riding techniques to individuals with a variety of disabilities. PATH certified Instructors develop goals, with input of riders and/or parents/guardians that meet needs for developing core and muscle strength, increasing physical flexibility and balance, improving fine motor skills, enhancing communication and listening skills and more. Teens and adults will experience riding in trail courses and in dressage patterns. For our younger riders needing to improve their fine motor skills, they may retrieve stuffed zoo animals from corral fences and barrels and take them back to the zoo in the center of arena, while on horseback. Games with colors and shapes may enhance communication and listening skills. Playing red light, green light on horseback focuses on following directions. Flexibility, balance and core strength may show improvement from the rhythmic gait of a horse being similar to the human gait. Guiding a horse requires good posture (core strength) with heads up and eyes in the direction you want to go. During lessons riders also learn about horse care and anatomy, grooming and tacking.

### Unmounted Activities

Therapeutic Riding often includes unmounted activities. During these activities students will learn about horse characteristics, anatomy and behavior, hands on instruction on horse equipment and accessories; care and grooming, feeding of horses, and more.



## Etiquette Around Horses

Working around horses, inside or outside the arena, or in the Barn or stall area involves risk. Even the well-trained horse is subject to its instinctive fight or flight responses. Horses are large, move quickly and can be dangerous to you or our riders if we don't respond appropriately. For safety reasons we ask that you follow these Guidelines.

- Be alert and practice safety at all times.
- Be kind and gentle. Rough treatment of a horse or any other animal on Cloud Dancer property will not be tolerated and will be grounds for dismissal.
- Speak to a horse to alert him to your presence before walking near; this avoids startling her.
- Approach from the side, to avoid a horse's "blind" spots (directly in front of and behind him). Touch him first on the neck or shoulder, with a firm but gentle stroking motion.
- Alert a horse to going behind him, by keeping your hand on his hindquarters while walking behind the horse.
- Do not hand feed horses as this may cause them to become nippy. Our horses are on specialized diets, so please do not bring any treats.
- Do not feed or handle other horses on Cloud Dancers' property.
- Close all gates after entering or exiting stalls or arena.
- Please use soft voices and avoid loud noises.
- Do not use your cell phone to call or text around horses or during a lesson. If you have an emergency and must make a call or text, please notify the instructor so she can find a replacement for you.
- Personal dogs are not allowed on Cloud Dancers' property.

## Cloud Dancers' Commitments to our Volunteers

Cloud Dancers employs two part-time employees, along with a volunteer, Volunteer Coordinator, who work directly with our clients, volunteers and our horses. The remainder of our operational work is done by a volunteer Board of Directors, with expertise in the areas of non-profit and project management, finances, human resources and training, fund development, the law and special needs. In addition, our Board does strategic planning, goal setting, policy development, financial oversight and resource development.

It goes without saying that we could not do the daily work of "Improving Lives with Every Ride" without the loyalty, compassion, care and expertise of our volunteers. In other words, you are vital to Cloud Dancers' existence and the success of our programs. All of us have to consider the needs and goals of our riders with disabilities in order to:

- Ensure the safety of our riders, staff, volunteers and horses.
- Share your care & compassion with riders and families.
- Provide fun, therapeutic activities with horses that instill confidence and self-esteem, develop or enhance life and cognitive skills, and improve balance, core strength and flexibility of our riders and
- Make a positive difference in someone's life and in your own.

In exchange for making that difference, Cloud Dancers, makes the following commitments to our volunteers:

- ✓ Provide time, training, guidance and support to enable you to fulfill your volunteer role effectively and efficiently.
- ✓ We will be attentive to your needs.
- ✓ You are part of the Cloud Dancers' family and we will apply the Golden Rule in all that we do.
- ✓ We will strive to communicate in clear and timely terms, verbally, electronically and in person regarding all aspects of your volunteer role.
- ✓ We will keep you up-to-date on current Cloud Dancer issues, activities and events through our web site, Facebook and Instagram pages, volunteer e-mails, newsletters and meetings.
- ✓ We will provide ongoing appreciation for your time and talent, including an annual appreciation event.
- ✓ We will provide a positive, caring learning environment in which you benefit as much as our riders.
- ✓ Upon completion of your first eight-week session, you will receive a Cloud Dancers' t-shirt. Other Cloud Dancers' apparel may be available at reduced cost.

## Volunteers' Commitments to Cloud Dancers

All volunteers will receive a job description and training to support you in the execution of those duties. In addition, the expectation is that you will make the following commitments while volunteering.

1. Support and follow Cloud Dancers' mission, goals, policies and procedures.
2. Be an advocate for the ongoing enhancement of the therapeutic horsemanship profession.
3. Be a positive, informed spokesperson for Cloud Dancers.
4. Continuity is extremely important when working with individuals with disabilities. Commitments to 8-week horsemanship sessions are strongly encouraged and will be given priority.
5. Use Sign-Up Genius to sign up for lesson volunteer schedules in a timely manner and adhere to that schedule.
6. If you know more than a day in advance of your scheduled lesson that you cannot make it, remove your name from Sign-Up Genius. That alerts our Volunteer Coordinator to your absence and the need for a replacement volunteer.
7. In case of last minute (24 hours or less) unavailability for your scheduled shift, please call or text the Volunteer Coordinator (or your supervisor if you volunteer in a non-lesson area).
8. Be receptive to requests for substitute coverage for regularly scheduled lesson volunteers
9. Record your lesson volunteer hours on the clipboard in the office.
10. Feeders must record their hours on the Sign-In sheet in the barn.
11. Other volunteers must report weekly hours to your supervisor.
12. Be prompt and dependable, polite and respectful and helpful and friendly with riders, families, guests, staff, and other volunteers.
13. Be kind, gentle and respectful of all horses and other animals on Cloud Dancers' property.
14. Safety is our #1 commitment to riders, staff, volunteers and horses. Follow all safety guidelines and report any concerns immediately.
15. Attend all required training for your position.
16. Maintain a clean, neat, professional appearance relative to your volunteer position. Lesson volunteers must wear long pants or capris (long shorts for men), close-toed shoes and no dangling jewelry or short shorts, midriffs or strong perfumes. Long hair should be tied back.
17. Sunscreen and/or hats are recommended. Bring water to drink and stay hydrated.
18. Communicate ideas, suggestions or concerns to the Volunteer Coordinator, an instructor, the Equine & Facilities Manager or your supervisor.
19. Maintain confidentiality policy as outlined in Volunteer Handbook.
20. Refrain from giving out medical or legal advice. Refer such questions to an Instructor or Volunteer Coordinator or supervisor.
21. Hold Cloud Dancers harmless in case of accident, injury, illness or theft/damage to personal property on Cloud Dancers' premises.
22. Unless you opt out of having your photo taken on your volunteer paperwork, you understand you may be photographed while volunteering and your image may be used in promotion of Cloud Dancers.

### Working with Horses and/or Riders

#### Horse Leaders

*Skills Needed:*

- ✓ Experience with horse handling.
- ✓ Ability to “read” horses with knowledge and confidence to calmly prevent unexpected movements.
- ✓ Good listening skills.
- ✓ Good physical condition.

*Responsibilities may include the following:*

- Meet & greet riders and families.
- Prepare the horse for class.
- Assist riders in grooming and saddling horse.
- Lead horse, walking or occasionally jogging, during lesson, maintaining safety spacing and appropriate speed.
- Focus on horse to ensure safety.
- Help the horse follow directions of the rider.
- Untack and turn out the horse after class.
- Assist with barn chores as needed.
- All other duties as assigned.

#### Side walkers

*Skills needed:*

- ✓ *Good physical condition*
- ✓ *Ability to hold arm slightly raised and out to the side for up to 30 minutes to provide support to rider.*
- ✓ *Flexibility, patience, adaptability to change quickly.*
- ✓ *Comfortable working with individuals with disabilities and having physical contact with individual and horse.*

*Responsibilities may include the following:*

- Meet and greet rider and families
- Assist Leaders and riders in grooming and saddling horse.
- Assist rider in mounting and dismounting horse as directed by Instructor.
- Assist rider in following Instructor’s directions. Repeat directions, re-direct attention, cheer, encourage, praise, smile.
- Walk alongside rider during lesson using prescribed hold method. Provide support to rider as needed.
- Assist with barn chores as needed.
- All other duties as assigned.

## Feeders

### *Skills Needed:*

- ✓ Good physical condition.
- ✓ Experience with horse handling (training available)
- ✓ Attention to detail.

### *Responsibilities:*

- Prepare grain and supplements for horses.
- Clean and refill water troughs and buckets.
- Feed hay and grain.
- Lead horses from stalls to turnout and vice versa.
- Report any welfare concern to the Equine Manager (injury, not eating, diarrhea, lame, unsafe situation, etc.).
- All other duties as assigned.

## Interpreters

- ✓ Spanish
- ✓ Sign Language

## Other Volunteer Positions

**Special Events** (Planning, coordinating, providing activities for children with disabilities)

**Marketing** (Photography, Videography, Stories/Newsletters; social media; graphic design; outreach, committee work)

**Administrative support** (Excel, data entry, Power Point, Bookkeeping, web management)

**Resource Development** (Grant writing, donate; solicit donations, committee work)

**Facility Improvements** (Building and maintenance; landscape & garden; grounds clean-up)

# Cloud Dancers' Policies and Procedures

## Alcohol and Drug Use

Use of alcohol or drugs poses extreme risk to you, other volunteers and staff, our horses and our riders. Volunteers reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or drugs or using either on Cloud Dancers' property will be sent home immediately. Subsequent discussion with management will determine appropriate discipline, up to and including dismissal.

## Attendance

Lessons cannot be given without an adequate number of volunteers, so your scheduled attendance is critical to the success of our programs. Times reflected in Sign-up Genius include prep and lesson time. Please plan to arrive promptly in order to meet with your instructor and prepare for the lesson relative to the horse and lesson equipment and props.

If you know more than a day in advance of your scheduled lesson that you cannot make it, remove your name from Sign-Up Genius. That alerts our Volunteer Coordinator to your absence and the need for a replacement volunteer.

In case of last minute (24 hours or less) unavailability for your scheduled shift, please call or text the Volunteer Coordinator at 224-374-4144 (or your supervisor if you volunteer in a non-lesson area).

## Background Checks

For everyone's safety and peace of mind, all staff and volunteers, including board members, are required to successfully pass a Background Check prior to starting work or volunteering. False or incomplete information found after the Background Check could result in discontinuance of your service.

## Cell Phones

Due to the sensitive nature of horses and some riders to sudden sounds and the need for attention to our riders, cell phones must be silenced during lessons. Cell phone usage is not appropriate while volunteering. If there is an emergency consult with your instructor. Taking photos with your cell phone is not permitted during lessons.

## Change of Personal Data

Any change in your name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, emergency contact, or medical conditions relevant to your volunteer work, must be reported to the Volunteer Coordinator.

## Client Relations

Individuals with disabilities should not be called disabled people, handicapped or crippled. The appropriate term is a child or adult with a disability or a person with a visual impairment. Good listening skills and clear, simple communication, both verbally and through demonstration will go a long way in teaching new skills. Remember actions that may be simple to you or me, may be extremely difficult for someone with a mental or physical disability. Your compassion, empathy, calmness and patience are critical for developing positive relationships and achieving life changing goals.

All staff and volunteers are expected to treat riders and their families with respect and understanding. If you are unsure as to how to approach or communicate with someone please seek guidance from the Lead Instructor or the Volunteer Coordinator or Instructor. Families are very grateful for the time and energy you devote to their family member. Be kind, empathetic, caring and confidential.

### **Communication/Concerns**

Open, honest and respectful communication is key to a successful organization. Rude or disrespectful communications or action will not be tolerated. Please refer to our organizational chart for our usual chain of command, but remember we have an "Open Door policy". Volunteers who have concerns about their work environment, staff or other volunteers should seek guidance from the Volunteer Coordinator. Whenever possible, differences should be resolved between the parties involved. If needed, the Volunteer or Program Coordinator will facilitate a discussion with all concerned. If the situation is not resolved, you may discuss with Equine & Facilities Manager or the Chair of the Program Committee.

### **Confidentiality Policy - Riders**

Although most volunteers are not health care providers and therefore, do not normally come under HIPPA regulations, we all have a duty of confidentiality. Instructors will not discuss the medical conditions of our riders with volunteers, unless they need certain information to do their job or safeguard a rider. Characteristics of certain disabilities may be discussed that could apply to any individual diagnosed with a certain condition. Gossip about individuals and their conditions is strongly discouraged. Under no circumstances will information be divulged that could result in significant risk to an individual. Disclosure of protected information could be grounds for dismissal.

### **COVID Precautions**

While working or volunteering for Cloud Dancers Therapeutic Horsemanship there is a risk of contracting and passing on COVID-19 due to the at-risk populations we serve. Face-to-face services increase your risk of contracting and passing on COVID 19. Cloud Dancers cannot guarantee social distancing where support or assistance is needed to mount/dismount, balance or sit upright on a horse, address bodily fluid from the facial area, or in cases of emergencies or other unforeseen circumstances. To ensure your understanding of this risk you will be asked to sign an Acknowledgement of Risk which holds Cloud Dancers harmless for any situations involving COVID.

Cloud Dancers has taken every precaution to safeguard our riders and families and you and our staff. When you sign-in each time you volunteer, you will be asked five questions about COVID. If you answer "yes" to any of those questions, you must immediately leave and call our Program Coordinator to report your circumstances.

Cleaning/disinfecting protocols are posted in the Barn and in the office, along with Procedures for handling various COVID situations. All protocol and procedures are posted on our web site.

### **Disciplinary Action**

Volunteers who fail to comply with Cloud Dancers' policies and procedures, who are dishonest, or engage in criminal activity while volunteering, or whose performance is not satisfactory, will be subject to disciplinary action. Discipline could include counseling, additional training or mentoring, re-assignment to a different position, suspension or termination.

## **Dress Code**

Although we work in an outdoor environment around dust and dirt, we should maintain a clean and professional appearance appropriate to our environment. After completion of your first eight-week session you will receive a Cloud Dancer t-shirt. Whenever possible, please wear your Cloud Dancer's t-shirt or other Cloud Dancer apparel. Volunteers working around the horses must wear closed shoes and long or capri pants. Men may wear long pants or long shorts. Pants with multiple holes or rips, short shorts or midriff tops are not acceptable. Jewelry, especially any dangling earrings or necklaces, are not appropriate, as they can be a safety risk. Please do not wear strong smelling perfume as it can attract bees and other insects, as well as, provoke allergic reactions on the part of riders or other volunteers and staff. Long hair should be tied back for safety reasons.

Depending on the weather, there may be a need for jackets, gloves and hats in winter, or in summer for cooling neck scarfs or head bands or hats. Always bring water and stay hydrated. During COVID masks are required at all times, except for eating or drinking.

## **Equal Opportunity Employer**

Cloud Dancers will not discriminate and will take measures to ensure against discrimination in employment, recruitment, advertisements for employment, compensation, termination, promotions, transfers and other conditions of employment against any employee or job applicant or volunteer on the bases of race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

## **Firearms and Concealed Weapons**

Firearms and Concealed Weapons are not allowed on Cloud Dancers' property or at our events.

## **Food & Beverage**

Hydration while working outside is extremely important. Volunteers should bring their own water bottles, however, they must not be taken into the arena. Snacks may be stored in the refrigerator in the office and may be eaten between lessons. Please do not eat near our horses or in the presence of riders. Seating is available in the office or just outside the office.

## **Inclement Weather**

Extreme weather conditions, either too hot, too cold, too wet or too windy could impact the safety of riders, horses, staff and volunteers. As an alternative to being outside, we may offer unmounted activities in the barn or office.

## **Media**

On occasion, media folks, radio or TV, may stop by to cover a story or make an inquiry. Your role, as a volunteer, is to refer them to our Equine & Facilities Manager or to a board member who may be on site to meet that individual. Under no circumstances should you make any comments to the media on behalf of Cloud Dancers.



## **Non-Discrimination Policy**

Cloud Dancers does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations. These activities include, but are not limited to staff, volunteers, vendors, or provision of services. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all of our staff, volunteers, contractors, clients, donors and vendors.

## **Parking**

Parking is not allowed on the ditch road in front of the Center. Parking areas closest to the arena are reserved for riders with limited mobility. Volunteers should park inside the center gates along the residences and/or in areas closest to the office.

## **Personal Belongings**

Volunteers should only bring personal items that can fit into your pockets. For the protection of your belongings, we recommend you lock them in your car in a non-visible location.

## **Recording your Volunteer Hours**

On occasion, Cloud Dancers may have the opportunity to apply for grants or other funding. Capturing volunteer hours is beneficial in meeting the requirements of these funding sources. Therefore, it is critical that you sign-in and out each time you volunteer. Lesson volunteers sign-in in the office; feeders in the Barn; other volunteers report hours to their supervisor.

## **Safety/Injuries/First Aid**

Cloud Dancers is committed to the safety, health and protection of all staff and volunteers.

Fire extinguishers and first aid kits are located in the Barn and in the office.

Safety hazards around the Center should be immediately reported to the Volunteer Coordinator or Equine & Facilities Manager.

Accidents or injuries sustained while volunteering must be reported immediately to your instructor or Volunteer Coordinator. The two of you will complete an Accident Report. For minor situations, first aid supplies are available in the barn and the office. If medical care is necessary your emergency contact will be contacted to transport you to an urgent care location. In more severe cases, 911 will be called. If appropriate, volunteers could file a claim for expenses with their health insurance carrier. Cloud Dancers does have some accident insurance coverage which is secondary to your personal insurance. Contact the board Program Committee Chair for more information.

Horse injuries or health concerns must be immediately brought to the attention of your instructor, the Volunteer Coordinator or the Equine & Facilities Manager.

Should you come across any suspicious strangers on Cloud Dancers' property please report immediately to your instructor or Volunteer Coordinator or Equine & Facilities Manager.

## **Scheduling Volunteer Hours**

The Volunteer Coordinator will send volunteers a notice through the Sign-Up Genius prior to the beginning of each Session, indicating the dates, times and positions for needed volunteers. To provide the best possible experience for our riders, preference will be given to volunteers who commit to the same shift for the entire eight-week Session. Substitutes may be considered for a one-time absence known in advance of the Session.

## **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment by any employee, volunteer or individual who interacts with Cloud Dancers, is illegal and will not be tolerated. Harassment includes making unwelcome sexual advances, seeking favors or engaging in any other unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Any behavior having sexual overtones, whether or not considered sexual harassment is not appropriate. Individuals engaging in such activities will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Reports of harassment should be made to the Board's Program Committee Chair for appropriate action.

## **Smoking**

Smoking is not allowed in any area of Cloud Dancers' Center nor at Cloud Dancers' events, on or off our property.

## **Social Media**

Some of you may choose to express yourself by posting information on the Internet through personal websites, blogs, social networking sites, chat rooms, Facebook, Twitter, etc. Posting on social media involves certain risks and requires personal responsibility. Please understand that you may not use these postings to harass or threaten other volunteers or staff or reveal Cloud Dancers' trade secrets or confidential information. Embarrassing, negative or unkind comments about other volunteers, staff, clients, programs or competitors are also inappropriate. Be honest and accurate when posting and if you make a mistake, correct it quickly. If, in the process of uploading something to the internet, you identify yourself as affiliated with Cloud Dancers, whether by explicit statement or by implication, you must clearly state the views expressed are yours alone, and do not reflect the views of Cloud Dancers. You may not use our logos or other images, nor make false or misleading statements about Cloud Dancers' philosophy, programs, opinions or affiliations with other organizations. Do not share information about Cloud Dancers or our clients that we have not shared publicly.

## **Training**

All prospective volunteers are required to attend a one-hour Getting Acquainted Session that will include observation of a riding lesson and some basic information about being a volunteer with Cloud Dancers. If you like what you see you will complete paperwork and complete a background check and subsequently attend an Orientation Session during which time paperwork will be collected (if not already submitted) and this Handbook will be reviewed. Lesson volunteers will then be scheduled for Basic Lesson Training 101 with our Equine & Facilities Manager/Lead Instructor.

All lesson volunteers are required to attend a variety of training sessions each year that will enhance your skills to work with individuals with disabilities and with horses. These training sessions may be at the Center or virtually on line.

## Visitors and Guests

Any one working with our horses or riders must be approved volunteers. Invited guests, friends or relatives, may observe you in your volunteer role from our Visitors Viewing Area, but cannot participate with you in volunteering. Personal dogs are not allowed at Cloud Dancer's Center. Animals who live on the property may be seen periodically.

## Other Ways to Support Cloud Dancers

It is important for us to be able to share with our supporters the impact of their donations and how lives are changed through the work you do and the many benefits of the horse-human bond. Send us (your instructor, our Volunteer Coordinator or Program Coordinator) an e-mail about a particularly touching moment with a rider or their family member; share the excitement of a brand new accomplishment; take a photo of a fun time, a learning or emotional moment; provide us with stories that touch your heart and mind and bring our impact on folks with disabilities to life for others to experience. We want to share those accomplishments that may be simple to us, but are so monumental and so special and significant to the rider and their families.

Cloud Dancers is a non-profit organization that relies primarily on fees for service, donations from individuals and businesses and fundraising events. We do not receive any city, state or federal funding. Your donation of time and expertise is very much appreciated, but with time, we hope you see the tremendous difference we make in the lives of individuals with disabilities, and that you will become one of our **loyal donors**. You can make one-time donations at any time, including those in memory or honor of a loved one or friend. Monthly donations of even \$5/month can make a big difference in our ability to meet ongoing expenses. Peer to peer fundraising is another way of sharing the importance of what you and Cloud Dancers do for our riders and their families.

Cloud Dancers normally does one key **event** a year. All volunteers, regardless of their position are encouraged to participate in putting on these events. These events could from time to time, involve peer to peer fundraising and we hope you will involve your families and friends in these activities.

**In-kind donations** of supplies for our horses, our riders, or our office are always appreciated. You can find our Wish List on our web site and posted in our office and barn.

We all need to eat—Shop at Smiths and designate Cloud Dancers as the recipient of a percentage of your purchases. Who doesn't love shopping on Amazon—go to **Amazon Smile** and select Cloud Dancers as the beneficiary of a percentage of your purchases. Or go to **Cloud Dancers' Amazon Wish List** and purchase something for Cloud Dancers at the same time you shop for yourself.

# Volunteer Agreement

To be successful as a Cloud Dancers' Volunteer I agree to the following:

- I have read the Volunteer Handbook and agree to support and follow Cloud Dancers' mission, goals, policies and procedures as outlined in the Handbook and as shared with you by staff or authorized personnel.
- Be an advocate for the ongoing enhancement of the therapeutic horsemanship profession.
- Be a positive, informed spokesperson for Cloud Dancers.
- Continuity is extremely important when working with individuals with disabilities. Commitments to 8-week horsemanship sessions are strongly encouraged and will be given priority.
- Sign up for horsemanship volunteer schedules in a timely manner and adhere to that schedule.
- Call or text the Volunteer Coordinator (or your supervisor if you volunteer in a non-horse area) if you are unable to work a scheduled shift and are giving less than 24-hours' notice. Changes to schedules with more than 24-hours' notice should be done through Sign-Up Genius.
- Be receptive to requests for substitute coverage for regularly scheduled volunteers working with horses and clients (Non-horsemanship volunteers excluded).
- Record your volunteer hours on the clipboard in the barn or office or report weekly hours to your supervisor if volunteering in a non-lesson or feeding capacity.
- Be prompt and dependable, respectful and friendly with clients, staff, other volunteers and horses. Be polite, efficient and helpful.
- Follow guidelines for working with clients and horses with Safety being a #1 commitment.
- Attend all required training for your position.
- Maintain a clean, neat, professional appearance relative to your volunteer position. Details are found in the Volunteer Handbook.
- Communicate ideas, suggestions or concerns to the Volunteer Coordinator, an instructor or your supervisor.
- Maintain confidentiality of client information and all other private Cloud Dancer information.
- Refrain from giving out medical or legal advice. Refer such questions to an Instructor or Volunteer Coordinator or supervisor.
- Refrain from discussions with the media or press and refer all questions to the Equine/Facilities Manager or on-site board member.
- Hold Cloud Dancers harmless in case of accident, injury, illness or theft/damage to personal property on Cloud Dancers' premises.
- I understand I may be photographed while volunteering and my image may be used in promotion of Cloud Dancers, unless I have signed a Waiver to not having my photo taken.
- Cloud Dancers may change, delete, suspend or discontinue parts or the policy in its entirety, at any time without prior notice.

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Volunteer Signature

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Date

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Print Name

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E-mail address