

# PARTICIPANT SEASON HANDBOOK

Updated January, 2023



## *Our Mission:*

*Assisting individuals to develop their highest potential through therapeutically based equine activities.*



**Welcome to Lothlorien!**

**Thank you for joining our family of amazing participants, horses, volunteers and staff.**

15 Reiter Road, East Aurora, NY 14052  
Phone: 716-655-1335 • Fax: 716-655-2972  
[www.lothlorientrc.org](http://www.lothlorientrc.org)

**RIDER HOTLINE: 716-333-LTRC (5872)**

*Lothlorien Therapeutic Riding Center, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.*



Office Phone: 716-655-1335 • Fax: 716-655-2972  
15 Reiter Road, East Aurora, NY 14052  
lothlorientrc.org

## 2023 Session Calendar

**Session 1: April 17 - June 10 (8 wks)**

*No lessons June 11-18*

**Session 2: June 19 - August 12 (8 wks)**

*No lessons August 13 - 20*

**Session 3: August 21 - Oct. 14 (8 wks)**

*No lessons Oct. 15 - 22*

**Session 4: Oct. 23 - Nov. 18 (4 wks)**

*Schedule subject to change. Unless notified, lessons that fall on a holiday are held per usual. We do not follow school holiday or closure schedule.*

### 2023 REGISTRATION

Call 716-333-LTRC (5872) to register. Registration is first come, first serve and is **required for each session you want to attend**. Your spot is not rolled over session to session unless you have registered to continue. Registration for multiple sessions is available but same day/time is not guaranteed.

#### Lesson format:

Group lessons consist of a minimum of 3 riders of various ages and ability levels. Riders come for their lesson once a week on the same day and time over the course of session. Private lessons are provided based on need and as schedule allows.

#### Paperwork:

Registration paperwork, including an accurate, up to date medical history and doctor's acknowledgement is required to be on file before participation.

**Eligibility:** Open to the public. Minimum age is 3. Weight limit applies.

**CALL TO REGISTER:  
716-333-LTRC (5872)**

**Registration is  
First come, First serve**

### 2023 SESSION FEES:

#### Group Lesson Fee:

\$480 per rider each 8-week session  
\$240 per rider each 4-week session  
60 min. lesson, minimum 3 riders per group\*  
*\*if the minimum of 3 riders is not reached rider will be moved to another lesson day/time. Lesson time includes mounting & dismounting of all riders in group.*

#### Private Lesson Fee:

\$520 per rider each 8-week session  
\$260 per rider each 4-week session  
45 min. lesson, 1 rider only  
*Private lessons are available based on needs of the individual rider*

#### Deposit:

A \$50 non-refundable deposit is required to hold each session spot. Deposit payment is put towards final payment.

#### Payment:

You will be invoiced for each session attended. Payment by check, cash or money order is due on or before first lesson.

### GROUP LESSON DAYS/TIMES:

#### Mondays-Thursdays:

10-11am • 11:30-12:30pm  
5:30-6:30pm • 7-8pm

#### Saturdays:

9-10am • 10:30-11:30am • 12-1pm

### NO LESSONS FRIDAYS OR SUNDAYS.

*Subject to change. Private lesson days/times vary. Call for details.*

**Can't come to your lesson?  
Running late? Weather concerns?  
Questions?**

### RIDER HOTLINE

**Call:  
716-333-LTRC (5872)**

## LESSON DETAILS

- Lessons are conducted by a trained instructor.
- Lesson time includes time it takes to mount and dismount all riders in group.
- Lessons are held in the heated Angel Indoor Arena or in the outdoor arena
- Each rider has a trained volunteer to lead their horse & up to 2 sidewalkers.
- Sidewalker needs are discussed at registration. Caregivers are asked to be available to sidewalk if needed. A volunteer sidewalker is not guaranteed.
- All riders use a mounting ramp or mounting block to get on their horse.
- Lessons are walk/trot only, no jumping or cantering/galloping
- We use halters, reins & lead lines, no bridles with bits

## ELIGIBILITY

Participants are welcome at LTRC regardless of diagnosis. Open to the public

- Ages 3 & up
- Weight limit: 200 lbs. (subject to change)
- Doctor approval required for riders with a diagnosis
- Siblings & beginner recreational riders welcome

## ABSENT OR RUNNING LATE?

### RIDER ABSENCE

If you cannot attend your lesson contact Rider Hotline ASAP. **Makeups/credits NOT provided for lessons missed by rider.**

### LATE ARRIVAL

If you are running late, contact Rider Hotline. If you DO NOT notify us that you are running late, your horse will be put back in their stall after 15 minutes of waiting for you\*, lesson will not be held for you and no makeup provided.

\*Based on instructor's time device.

## RIDER HOTLINE: 716-333-LTRC

716-333-5872

## CANCELLATIONS

**Unless you hear directly from LTRC, lessons are being held.**

You will be notified of a cancellation with as much notice as possible.

If your lesson is cancelled by LTRC, a makeup, credit or refund is offered.

We do not follow school holiday or closure schedules.

## WEATHER

We have an indoor and outdoor riding arena. Lessons are held in most weather situations **EXCEPT** thunder/lightning, high winds, extreme cold/ heat, etc.

If it's ONLY raining (no thunder & lightning, high winds, etc.) lessons will be held in the indoor arena.

### ALTERNATIVE LESSONS

If mounted lessons have to be shortened due to weather or other concerns, an alternative non-riding option will be offered.

### PARKING

Park in front of Angel Indoor Arena on left as you come down driveway. Additional parking available in front of office ahead on right.

**SPEED LIMIT IS 5 MPH!**

## HOW TO DRESS

- Dress for the weather, in clothes that may get "horsey".  
*Horses, arenas and barn can be smelly, dusty, hairy, etc.*
- Wear close-toed shoes that don't slip off (i.e. sneakers, hiking or barn boots) with a hard sole and tread on the bottom. **Participation is not permitted if wearing sandals, Crocs, flats, slides, slippers etc.**
  - Wearing pants and dressing in layers is recommended
  - The indoor arena is heated for inclement weather
  - Apply bug spray or sunscreen if needed prior to lesson

Caregiver(s) must stay on site during lesson. Children must be supervised at all times. Observers and service dogs welcome.

**Lothlorien is open to the general public.**

Call 716-333-LTRC (5872) today to register, ask questions or schedule a tour.

## HELMETS

An ASTM-SEI approved helmet for equestrian riding is **REQUIRED**. Bring your own or use helmet provided by LTRC. Ask about helmet purchase options.

*LTRC helmets come in several sizes, sanitized as needed. Bike, skiing, skateboarding, etc. helmets are NOT permitted.*

**HOTLINE: 716-333-LTRC**  
716-333-5872

**Office: 716-655-1335**

**Fax: 716-655-2972**

**lothlorientrc.org**

**15 Reiter Road  
East Aurora, NY 14052**

# RIDER CHECKLIST



## Pre-arrival: SELF-CHECK AT HOME

If anyone attending doesn't feel well or has symptoms, PLEASE STAY HOME AND NOTIFY LTRC (716-333-5872)

I've submitted Participant Application and forms from my Welcome Packet

My rider is dressed for the weather, is wearing close-toed shoes, and has on bug spray or sunscreen (if needed)

Pants are best option (not dresses or skirts). Wear close-toed shoes that don't slip off (i.e. sneakers, hiking or barn boots) with a hard sole and tread on the bottom.

You cannot participate if wearing sandals, Crocs, flats, slides, slippers etc.



I'm prepared to sidewalk with my rider if needed & I'm wearing close-toed shoes.

You cannot participate if wearing sandals, Crocs, flats, slides, slippers etc.

My rider has their own helmet. An ASTM-SEI approved helmet for equestrian riding is required. Bike, skateboarding, skiing etc. helmets not permitted. Helmet provided if needed (community helmets, sanitized as needed). Contact Katie for helmet purchase suggestions.



My rider has their own water bottle.



Arrive 10 minutes before lesson starts



Park in front of Angel Indoor Arena

on left as you come down driveway. Speed limit is 5MPH!  
Additional parking available in front of office ahead on right.



Go to indoor or outdoor arena.

Wait at arena gate for instructor.

**Reminder:** Lessons are held in most weather situations except thunder & lightning, high winds, extreme cold/heat. If it's only raining (no thunder & lightning), lessons will be held in the indoor arena. Unless you hear directly from LTRC, lessons are being held. If travel is not safe for your area, please call at 716-333-LTRC (5872) before departure.

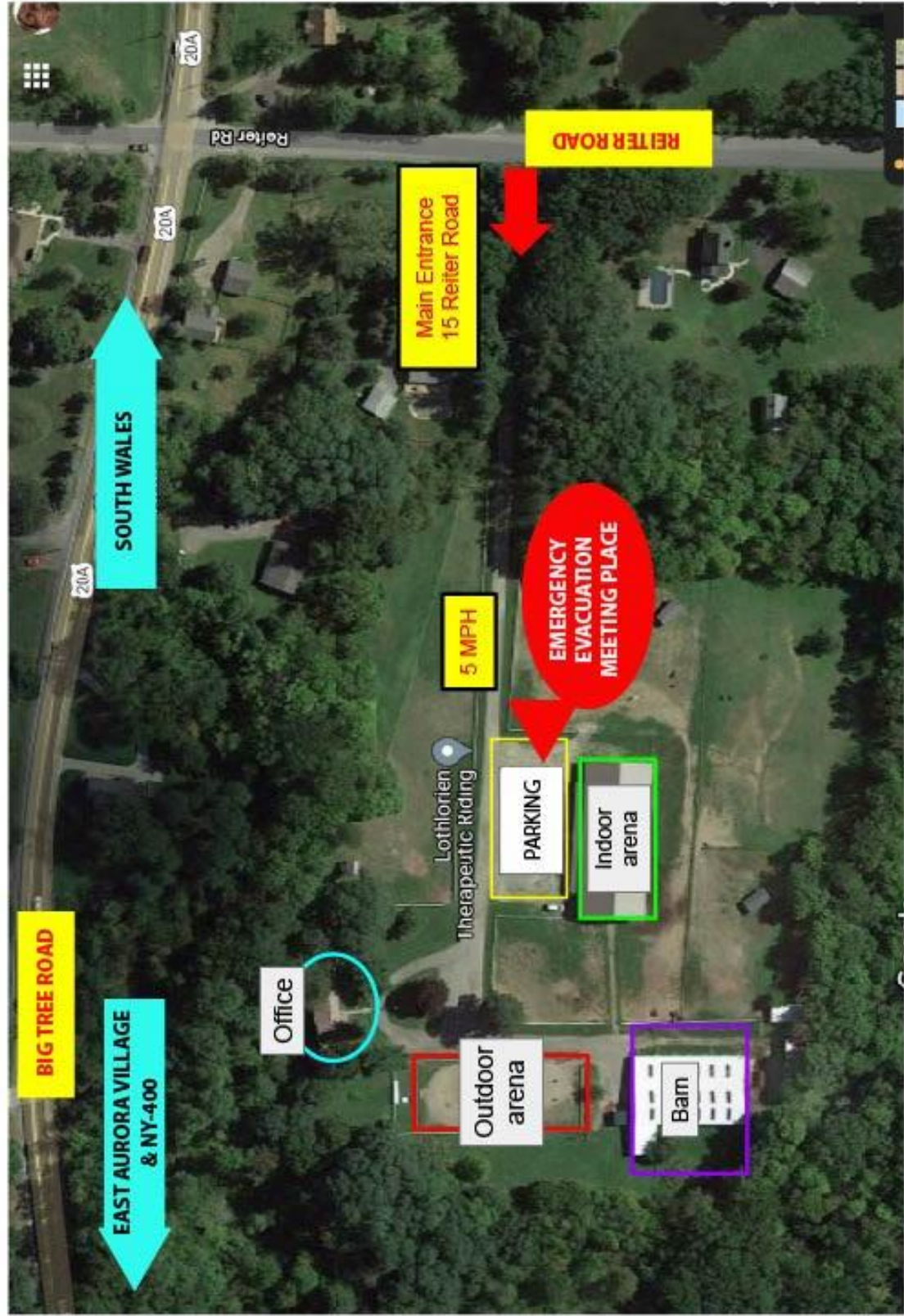


\*lesson location (indoor or outdoor arena) subject to change at LTRC discretion

CALL 716-333-LTRC (5872) if not coming, running late, have questions, etc.  
Give as much notice as possible for absence or lateness.

If we know you aren't coming or are running late, we can let staff/volunteers know and they can plan accordingly. If you are running late and **DO NOT** notify LTRC, your horse will be put back in their stall after 15 minutes\* of waiting for you, lesson will not be held for you and no makeup will be provided. Makeups/refunds not provided for lessons missed by rider. \*Based on instructor's time device

# FACILITY MAP



## RIDER HOTLINE: 716-333-LTRC (5872)

Call number above for any reason, but especially for the following circumstances:

- **If rider will be absent from their scheduled lesson.** This is in consideration for our instructors and especially our volunteers who give hours of their time to the program.  
If a rider cancels, we can let the volunteers know and they can make other plans.  
No makeup/credit provided for lessons missed by rider.
- **If you are running late.** Participants who arrive 15 minutes after the start of the lesson (without a notification attempt) WILL NOT be allowed to participate in their scheduled mounted lesson.  
Upon late arrival, the instructor may offer an alternative ground activity (no riding) at their discretion.  
No makeup/credit provided for late arrival.
- **If weather is a concern and it is not safe for you to travel to LTRC for your lesson.**
- **If you have comments, concerns or questions.**

## REGISTRATION PROCESS

1. Call 716-655-1335 (office) or call/text 716-333-LTRC (5872) to register.

**Registration is first come, first serve.**

2. You can sign up for multiple sessions
3. Once you are registered, you will receive further information.

## REGISTRATION REMINDERS

- **Lessons are reserved on a first come, first serve basis and fill up very quickly.** Spots in lessons are not guaranteed to be open when you call to register and cannot be saved or put aside until registration is confirmed.
- **Placement in a session does not carry over to the next session,** unless you have already registered to continue. Please note the beginning and end of the session you are participating in (lessons are held on some holidays).
- **Lesson days, times, instructors and horses are subject to change.**
- **Registration Paperwork** that is current, complete, accurate and signed must be on file at least 2 weeks prior to the first lesson you attend. This includes current medical history (accurate height and weight required), and a doctor's statement of release and signature. Registration paperwork is required to be updated each calendar year.

**Welcome to Lothlorien Therapeutic Riding Center (LTRC)! If you are a returning rider, welcome back and if you are new to our program, we are happy to have you join our family!**

**GENERAL INFORMATION:** LTRC was established in 1983 to provide therapeutic/adapted riding and horsemanship opportunities for individuals with cognitive, physical, emotional and learning challenges. Lothlorien is a 501(c)(3) with 100% of all donations and funds received going directly back into the program. Since 1986, LTRC has owned and operated the present facility which is located just outside of the Village of East Aurora, New York. Located on ten tranquil acres, the facility consists of seven pastures, a 13-stall barn, a large outdoor sand riding arena and Angel Arena, a beautiful full size indoor riding arena erected in 2015. Additionally, there is a tack room and activity room, on-site housing for the facility caretaker, an administrative office and handicapped accessible restrooms and facilities.

**PROGRAM GOALS:** The goal of our program is to provide a safe and enjoyable environment for individuals to experience the benefits of horseback riding and horsemanship skills. The facilities at LTRC are designed to accommodate riders of all ability levels. Through the use of special mounting ramps, a wide variety of adaptive equipment and the cooperation of our trusted, loyal and specially-trained horses, LTRC has been able to meet the needs of the population we serve while maintaining strict safety guidelines.

**WHAT WE DO:** LTRC provides a safe, enjoyable and accepting environment where participants experience the benefits of horseback riding, horsemanship and interaction with horses, while working constructively on their goals. The accepting nature and tolerant personality of the horse encourages riders to test the limits of their abilities and learn to make good choices. We strive to offer our participants the opportunity to do an athletic activity which, like any sport, requires them to develop good balance, muscle strength, coordination and socialization.

**EQUINE ASSISTED ACTIVITIES:** LTRC offers equine assisted activities in the saddle and on the ground, using specially trained horses. Programs are conducted by trained LTRC instructors, with the help of over 200 dedicated and trained volunteers each season.

- ★ **Therapeutic Riding (TR)**, also called adaptive riding, consists of activities while horseback riding, using adaptive equipment when needed. Riders work on skills such as balance, steering, crossing the plane, flexibility and fine/gross motor skills.
- ★ **Therapeutic Horsemanship** typically involves working with horses on the ground. The horse is used as a motivational tool to help participants improve listening skills, focus on sequencing and coordination, and develop greater self-confidence, patience, and control. Ground activities with your horse may include grooming, putting on equipment, petting, leading or learning about horse care and anatomy. The intent is for students to make a connection and learn more about their horse. Horsemanship activities can also occur in the saddle.

**BENEFITS OF THERAPEUTIC RIDING & HORSEMANSHIP:** Therapeutic riding and horsemanship means much more than sitting on a horse or spending time with them! Participants are “working” towards their goals, but they are busy having fun at the same time! By offering individualized instruction for each participant, we help our riders improve their physical, cognitive, social and emotional skills. The goals for each participant vary and the benefits in health, education, sport, recreation and leisure are endless. Some concrete take-home benefits include:

## **PHYSICAL BENEFITS**

- The horse’s movement pattern is soothing, rhythmic, symmetrical, and organized. Each step the horse takes mimics human movement, providing strong physical input in many dimensions - up and down, side to side, and back and forth.
  - ◆ The three-dimensional motion of the horse provides the rider with hip and back action that simulates natural walking.
  - ◆ Variations in the movement of the horse get results that cannot be achieved by a machine or duplicated in a clinical setting.
- Riding relaxes and strengthens muscles and improves tone, posture, balance, joint mobility, and coordination.
- While riding, the movement of the horse causes the rider to involuntarily use many more core muscles than they typically would when walking or sitting on their own, improving their core strength, balance and coordination.
- Riding and doing activities with horses helps refine fine/gross motor skills and tone
  - ◆ Adjusting how the reins are held can increase fine motor skills
  - ◆ Getting on and off the horse can improve gross motor skills
  - ◆ Grooming a horse can help with flexibility and mobility

## **EMOTIONAL/SOCIAL BENEFITS**

- Contact with horses and horsemanship training provides a noncompetitive setting for learning. New abilities, self-discipline and improved concentration build self-confidence.
- Horseback riding and horses help nurture a positive self-image. Participants may experience independence and a sense of being part of a team for the first time.
- The unconditional love of the horse is proven to reduce anxiety, encourage socialization, and communication and offer a haven where riders can conquer fears and feel a sense of empowerment.
- The discipline associated with working with horses and the social interactions between peers during lessons benefit the mind and spirit
  - ◆ We have had students speak for the first time on their horse, interact more at home and school after riding, and progress from riding with complete support to riding independently.
  - ◆ We have watched a rider struggle to complete a task, only to succeed with the help of their 4-legged friend whom they can’t help but smile, laugh and fall in love with.



## SENSORY BENEFITS

- Tactile and olfactory sensory experiences
- Sight, smell, touch, sound... you'll use all these senses at LTRC!
- The warmth, touch, sight, and sound of the horse, in combination with the peaceful setting, allows our clients to safely reach their goals, have fun, learn and relax.
- Ground activities (grooming, getting the horse ready, leading, petting, learning about horses) promotes sensory integration

**WHY HORSES?** As prey animals, horses are connected to their sixth sense. They trust what they feel and live in the moment. The horse offers us a form of biofeedback in the moment, which can help us focus on body awareness, defining personal space, mutual respect and the power of intent.

- ❖ Interacting with horses is proven to reduce heart and breath rate and have a calming influence and promote self-awareness
- ❖ Horses improve the physical, mental, social and emotional well-being of everyone they meet.
- ❖ Spending time around horses can set the foundation for a lifelong bond with the horse as a teacher and friend, raising self-esteem, increasing self-sufficiency through accomplishment, teaching how to use coping skills, a sense of responsibility and empathy for animals and others
- ❖ LTRC horses are tolerant of sights, sounds, games, toys and adaptive equipment and, at the same time, they must take great care with their human friends who may be unbalanced, vocal, tactile, in a wheelchair or are a first-time rider.
- ❖ LTRC horses are riding companions, confidants (that always keep your secrets), reading buddies, play pals, teachers, confidence builders and partners in the rider's success.
- ❖ Our "good citizen" horses are selected for their movement quality, patience and even temperament and enter our program after extensive training

**ELIGIBILITY:** LTRC is open to the public. LTRC can accommodate participants that meet our eligibility requirements including, but not limited to:

- **Diagnosis:** All are welcome at LTRC, which is an all-inclusive program. Siblings of special needs riders and beginner to intermediate recreational riders are welcome as well.
- **Medical Clearance:** Participants must have medical clearance from their physician with no contraindications to riding in order to participate. Participants must have current, accurate registration paperwork, including medical forms signed by physician, complete and on file, prior to participation. Prescription is not required.
- **Age Policy:** Lessons at LTRC are available to riders starting at age 4. There is no age maximum.
- **Weight Policy:** A weight limit policy is imperative to ensure the safety of humans and horses while mounting, dismounting or in the event of an emergency dismount.
  - **LTRC maintains a strict weight limit of 200 pounds (subject to change).** Not all LTRC horses can carry this weight.
  - Accommodation of a rider at the top of the weight limit is at the discretion of LTRC staff and dependent on the availability of an appropriate horse, staff members and volunteers.

- Riders at the top of the weight limit must be able to help with dismounting themselves in an emergency situation and not be completely reliant on anyone to get them safely off the horse.
- For participants over the weight limit, groundwork opportunities (no riding) are available.
- **Registration Paperwork:** Current, complete and accurate registration information including medical history and physician's statement of release must be on file at least 2 weeks prior to first lesson. LTRC must be informed of any changes or issues in health status. Registration paperwork is required to be updated each calendar year.

## **PRECAUTIONS, CONTRAINDICATIONS & CONSIDERATIONS:**

**LTRC retains the right, at any time, to refuse any participant that cannot be safely accommodated.**

**Considerations include, but are not limited to:**

- change in client's weight or health status that cannot be safely managed by staff, volunteers and/or therapy horses, on the ground, in the saddle and in an emergency dismount situation
- change in client's medical, physical, cognitive or emotional condition that is a contraindication to therapeutic riding or threatens the health or well-being of participants, horses, volunteers or staff
- experience and expertise of the available instructor to address the needs of the participant
- a suitable equine for the participant, proper equipment, and availability of the appropriate number of volunteers for the participant

**SEIZURE POLICY:** Unless otherwise discussed with caregiver(s), riders with a seizure disorder are required to have 2 caregivers as sidewalkers. Two volunteer sidewalkers will be assigned to such riders, however two caregiver sidewalkers need to be ready to help and/or sidewalk if LTRC volunteers are not available. LTRC must be immediately and consistently informed of all seizure occurrences so that we can best plan for the safety of our riders, staff and volunteers.

Seizure activity while mounted can result in a horse spooking, bolting or bucking, causing injury to the rider, their volunteers and other mounted riders in the arena. It is a very serious situation and must be managed carefully. LTRC has the right to remove a rider from mounted lessons until seizures can be determined to be either absent or under control. Ground activities (no riding) are available.

Seizure disorder is a contraindication for riding if:

- Recent seizure activity accompanied by strong, uncontrollable motor activity or atonic or drop attack seizures due to their sudden and complete loss of postural muscle tone
- A change of frequency or type of seizure until the condition is evaluated
- Inability to manage a participant during an emergency dismount should a seizure occur If any of these contraindications apply
- Occurrence of seizure while riding

If rider is removed from program because seizure disorder is contraindicated, rider must provide medical clearance to return to riding. Ground activities available if riding is not appropriate.

## **ATLANTOAXIAL INSTABILITY IN DOWN SYNDROME AS RELATED TO EQUESTRIAN ACTIVITIES:**

Potential participants and caregivers should be aware of the inherent risks involved with equestrian activities for individuals diagnosed with Down syndrome and/or atlantoaxial instability. LTRC is guided by the recommendations of Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH Int'l) and Special Olympics, both recognized experts in the area of sports activities for people with disabilities.

There is evidence that 10-20% of individuals with Down syndrome have atlantoaxial instability, defined as instability, subluxation or dislocation of the joint between the first and second cervical vertebrae (atlantoaxial joint). Instability of the joint is generally due to poor muscle tone and ligament laxity that is common with Down syndrome. A lax joint may begin to put pressure on the spinal cord resulting in neurologic symptoms.

Atlantoaxial instability exposes individuals with Down syndrome to the possibility of injury if they participate in any activity that hyper-extends, radically flexes or creates direct pressure on the neck or upper spine. This condition can occur spontaneously or be induced by injury that results from excessive anterior movement of the upper spine.

Although every precaution is taken at LTRC to make lessons as safe and as risk free as possible, there is always risk involved when working around or riding on a horse. A fall from a horse, a sudden movement of the horse or even the horse's normal stride/movement can create hyper-extension or hyper-flexion of the neck and upper spine.

LTRC requires that all potential participants with Down syndrome have a medical examination by a licensed physician including a complete neurological exam that shows no evidence of AAI or neurologic symptoms and shows a negative Xray result. This information must be noted on the annual medical history and Physician's Statement of Release in the Participant Application. Thereafter an annual examination from a physician or qualified medical professional stating that the participant's physical exam reveals no signs of AAI or decrease in neurologic function is required for continued participation in any equine assisted activity at LTRC. Ground activities available if riding is not appropriate

**Precaution:** Monitor for neurologic symptoms. Report changes to family/physician and discontinue

until cleared by physician.

### **Contraindications:**

- Children under the age of four
  - Neurologic symptoms of atlantoaxial instability
  - Positive neurologic clinical signs as noted by the physician
  - Significant AAI measurement as determined by the physician
  - Excessive head/neck instability with or without a helmet
-

## LESSON CALENDAR

- Lessons are held in 8 and 4-week blocks, April-November
- Unless otherwise noted, lessons are held on holidays. We do not follow school closing/holiday schedule
- Closure information will be communicated via phone, text message and social media
- Depending on the program, lessons are held Mondays - Thursdays and Saturdays.
- No lessons on Fridays or Sundays
- Lesson times (subject to change):
  - Group Lesson Times
    - Monday-Thursday: 10-11a, 11:30-12:30p, 5:30-6:30p & 7-8p
    - Saturday: 9-10a, 10:30-11:30a, 12-1p
  - Private Lesson Times
    - scheduled based on rider needs and availability. Call 716-655-1335 for info

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

★ **EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY, PAYMENTS ARE ONCE AGAIN ACCEPTED ON-SITE AT LTRC.** All payments must be mailed or dropped off at address indicated below. Please do not mail or drop off payments at People Inc.

★ A non-refundable \$50 deposit is required for each session you register for. Balance session payment is due upon receipt of invoice that you will receive prior to each session in order to continue session participation.

### MAIL PAYMENT:

Lothlorien TRC  
15 Reiter Road  
East Aurora, NY 14052

### DROP OFF PAYMENT:

Payments in envelope, labeled with rider's name, are accepted at Lothlorien. Leave in white mailbox labeled 'Paperwork & Payments' in office foyer, outside restroom

**CASH SHOULD NOT BE MAILED! LTRC is not responsible for mailed cash payments.** If client drops off payment, client is solely responsible for dropping off payment and requesting a receipt at time of drop off. Call 716-655-1335 to arrange cash payment drop off.

★ You are responsible for submitting invoices for payment from a 3rd party. Invoice/payment receipt provided.

**Invoice and billing questions: Lothlorien TRC**

**Phone: 716-655-1335**

**Email: [program.ltrc@gmail.com](mailto:program.ltrc@gmail.com)**

**FEES SUPPORT OUR PROGRAM:** LTRC is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit and relies on lesson fees, fundraising and volunteers to carry out our programs. The actual unsubsidized cost of a lesson is more than double the fee we charge, but through the generosity of our donors, LTRC is able to provide a standard subsidized rate to make our program as accessible as possible. Some riders receive additional tuition assistance to further subsidize the rate by completing a Tuition Assistance form. Fees are necessary to help defray the expenses of our program. LTRC program fees represent less than the true cost of services.

**LESSON FEES:**

Program	Lesson Length	Session Fee	Session Length	# ppl
Group Lessons	1 hour	\$480	8 weeks	3
	1 hour	\$240	4 weeks	3
Private Lessons	45 mins	\$520	8 weeks	1
	45 mins	\$260	4 weeks	1

- If a group lesson does not have a minimum of 3 riders attending for the session, the riders will be scheduled for a different lesson day/time.
- Private lessons are needs based and scheduled based on availability.
- Lesson time includes mounting & dismounting of all riders in lesson

**INVOICES & PAYMENTS**

- ❖ You will be invoiced prior to each session of participation. Please send in payment upon receipt of invoice.
- In order to maintain participation in the session, full payment prior to the first lesson of the session is required. One time payment for multiple sessions is possible. Call 716-655-1335 to ask how to pay in full.
- ❖ Instructions where to mail or drop off payments are included on page 1 and on the invoice
- ❖ If you have questions about your invoice, please contact 716-655-1335

**NON-PAYMENT:**

- ❖ Payment of session fee is due upon invoice receipt
- ❖ Non-payment results in not being able to continue in any future session(s) until paid. Lessons may be paused if the balance on account is not paid..

**THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS:**

- ❖ LTRC is not responsible for any third party payments. Client will need to supply the third party payer with the invoice they need paid/reimbursed
- ❖ Client is responsible for requesting and sending receipts to third party reimbursing agencies

## RECEIPTS

- ❖ Receipt available upon request
- ❖ Client is responsible for requesting and sending receipts to third party reimbursing agencies

**LESSON BALANCE/CREDITS:** If you have a balance or credit on account from a past season, that amount will be reflected on the invoice. Credits can be allocated towards a future session(s) and do not expire.

**SELF-DIRECTED SERVICES:** Services at LTRC are reimbursable through Self-Directed Services. If you are receiving OPWDD self-directed services, please contact your fiscal intermediary to budget accordingly. We provide necessary documentation for reimbursement of tuition paid by client when requested.

## HEALTH INSURANCE

Most insurances do not cover LTRC services, however check with your provider as some insurance companies accept our program as a reimbursable recreational expense. Your care coordinator may have other other funding options for you.

**TUITION ASSISTANCE:** LTRC offers a financial needs-based tuition assistance program and we strive to assist any rider who cannot self-pay due to their financial situation. Requests must be completed prior to the start of a session and cannot be awarded once a session starts. Because these funds are raised from outside resources to maintain the assistance program, we ask that individuals pay as much of their fee as possible. Assistance is available on a limited basis and awarded annually based on needs and available funds. For more information call 716-655-1335 or visit lothlorientrc.org.

## PAYMENT METHODS

- Cash, check or money order preferred
- Make checks payable to **Lothlorien TRC with rider name on check.**
- Ask about credit card payments (processing fees apply)
- Service fee of \$50 if check is returned for insufficient funds

## LESSON DETAILS (subject to change):

- Offering group & private lessons. Private lessons are based on need only and scheduled based on availability
- Riders attend the same day and time each week for the session(s) they register for
- Lessons are taught by a trained LTRC instructor
- Trained volunteer leaders and sidewalkers are provided for each horse and rider
- Caregivers are asked to be prepared to walk with their rider if a volunteer is unavailable.
- Lessons are held in the outdoor or indoor arena, as chosen by the instructor & weather dependent

**GROUP LESSON FORMAT:** Group lessons are one hour long with 3 riders in a group, ages 3 and up, of all ability levels.

- all activities are supervised by the lesson instructor and volunteers
  - Each instructor creates their own lesson plan and has their own style of teaching
- active, fun riding and on the ground experiences for riders to learn, have fun, make new friends and get to know their horse!
- riders may groom, tack, interact with their horse, allowing them to be more involved with horse care and horsemanship
- lesson time includes mounting and dismounting of all riders in group. There are many factors that contribute to how long it can take to mount participants including, but not limited to, the number of participants being mounted, behaviors of participants/horses, special mounting needs (i.e. wheelchair, walker) and tack adjustments. The mounting/ dismounting procedure is an activity that can carry risks to participants, staff, volunteers and horses if not done with patience and strict safety practices. We ask that everyone be patient with this procedure, as LTRC takes pride in maintaining high safety standards.

**IN THE SADDLE:** Typically 45-50 minutes is spent riding.

- rider will mount the horse, complete lesson activities such as a warm up, skill-based games and activities, and a cool down, before dismounting
- amount of time in the saddle depends on the riders' endurance level, tolerance and attention span

**PRIVATE LESSON FORMAT:**

- ❖ Private lessons: 45 minute lesson with 1 rider, for need-based riders
- ❖ Scheduled based on availability

**RIDER PROGRESSION:** LTRC staff provides beginner riding skills in a group, semi-private or private setting with a leader assisting the rider to control the horse. For riders that progress to a point where they would like to become a more independent rider, we suggest taking a private or semi-private at LTRC or moving on to a more traditional riding stable, where they can further their riding skills. Achieving a proficiency in riding where the participant would be better served in a traditional riding program is a great achievement and would be best served at a facility where the rider can progress even further.

## **CAREGIVERS & OBSERVERS: A caregiver is required to remain on-site for the duration of their rider's lesson and is asked to sidewalk if needed.**

**CAREGIVERS AS SIDEWALKERS:** Sidewalking needs will be discussed at registration. If your rider needs a sidewalker, we will schedule an LTRC volunteer sidewalker based on availability. We ask that a caregiver be prepared to walk with their rider if an LTRC volunteer is not available. If rider needs two sidewalkers, 2 caregivers sidewalkers are required if LTRC volunteer sidewalkers are not available. Information about caregiver sidewalking will be provided.

**Caregivers who are sidewalking MUST wear close-toed shoes or they cannot participate.** A family member or friend (14 or over) can sidewalk. All caregiver sidewalkers and observers must sign the Caregiver Observer Liability form and return prior to participating. If you are unable to sidewalk, please let us know.

**OBSERVERS:** Parents, siblings, caregivers and other guests are welcome to observe lessons. Children must be supervised at all times.

**SERVICE DOGS:** Service dogs welcome.

### **ARRIVAL AT LESSONS:**

1. Arrive 10 minutes before lesson begins
2. Park in front of the Angel Indoor Arena on your left as you come down driveway or in the designated spots in front of the office, farther ahead on your right.
3. **Speed limit is 5MPH!**
4. Go to arena.
  - **MOST NICE DAYS** = Lessons will be held in the OUTDOOR ARENA
  - **MOST YUCKY DAYS** = Lessons will be held in the INDOOR ARENA
5. Wait outside arena gate for instructor to meet you. Let instructor know if you need a helmet

### **HELMET POLICY: Refusal to wear a helmet = No participation**

- Participants are required to wear an ASTM-SEI approved equestrian riding helmet (certified for equestrian use) when riding or on the ground around horses.
- Bike, skiing, skating, snowboarding etc. helmets are NOT PERMITTED. Strictly enforced. NO EXCEPTIONS. These helmets are not rated for accidental falls from the height of a horse.
- If possible, please bring your own helmet. Having your own personal helmet will help minimize exposure and will ensure an individualized fit. Look for a helmet with a "dial fit". They fit great and last several years. The helmet should fit snugly and not move if the head shakes back and forth. Most websites are very helpful with sizing/fitting and are reasonably priced. Search online for



“equestrian helmets.” Brands such as Troxel and Ovation are affordable, quality helmets that can be ordered on-line or found at most equestrian supply stores.

- If you do not bring your own helmet, we will supply a helmet (community helmets).
- If you have a riding helmet that has been involved in any kind of impact or fall or is 5 years old or older, please do not use in lessons. The integrity of the helmet can break down over time or after an impact so replacement is best.

## **ATTENDANCE/CANCELLATION POLICY**

- **Makeups are not provided for lesson(s) missed by rider**
- **Unless you hear directly from LTRC, lessons are being held**
- **We do not follow school holiday or closure schedules**
- **If it's ONLY raining, lessons will be held in the indoor arena**

## **IF LTRC HAS TO CANCEL A LESSON, YOU WILL BE CONTACTED**

As much notice as possible will be given. A makeup, refund or credit will be provided.

- ★ Lessons are held in most weather situations EXCEPT thunder & lightning, high winds, extreme cold/heat. If it's only raining (no thunder & lightning), lessons will be held in the indoor arena.

## **CANCELLATION POLICY: CALL 716-333-LTRC (5872) IF YOU ARE GOING TO BE ABSENT**

Attendance and timeliness is extremely important as it takes a team of horses, volunteers and instructors to execute each lesson. Please be respectful of everyone's time by reporting absences as soon as possible. No makeups provided for lesson(s) missed by rider.

- **BE CONSIDERATE TO OUR VOLUNTEERS: It is because of our volunteers that LTRC is able to provide a safe, enjoyable program.** As a 100% volunteer based non-profit, we schedule hundreds of volunteers to help in lessons each season. They give hours of their valuable time to the program and we ask for your courtesy in notifying us if you cannot attend your lesson. **PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU CAN'T COME TO YOUR LESSON SO WE CAN LET VOLUNTEERS KNOW AND THEY CAN CHANGE THEIR SCHEDULE AS NEEDED.**

## LESSON MAKEUPS/CREDITS:

### → ARE OFFERED FOR LESSON(S) CANCELED BY LTRC

- ◆ at the discretion of LTRC for concerns due to weather, instructor or horse availability, facility issues

### → ARE NOT OFFERED

- ◆ for rider absence for any reason including illness, vacation, schedule conflict, other activities, traffic, coming at the wrong day/time, forgetting about your lesson, etc.
- ◆ if a rider comes to lesson, but refuses to ride or participate or to put on a helmet
- ◆ if a rider arrives late (see below)
- ◆ sessions are not pro-rated

**LATE ARRIVAL:** If you **DO NOT** notify us that you are running late, your horse will be put back in their stall after 15 minutes of waiting for you, lesson will not be held for you and no makeup will be provided. If notified of late arrival and horse has already been put away, the instructor, at their discretion, may approve grooming in the remaining time of the lesson (depending on rider arrival), which will count as the lesson for that day. No make up or refund will be provided. Late arrival disrupts the entire group, horses get impatient if they have to wait, and volunteers can move on to other duties if needed. The 15 minutes is based on the instructor's time device and is at their discretion. Please call as soon as lateness is anticipated: 716-333-LTRC (5827).

**LTRC CANCELLATION CONSIDERATIONS:** LTRC reserves the right to cancel lessons when necessary. Whenever possible, we will notify you in advance of cancellations. Reasons for cancellations include, but are not limited to:

- ❖ **Weather** is a factor beyond our control. Lessons will be cancelled due to inclement/extreme weather, including thunder and lightning, extreme heat/cold, high winds, etc.
- ❖ **Unforeseen circumstances** such as horse availability, as it relates to health and welfare, staff and volunteer shortage, or facility issues such as a power outage
- ❖ **Cancellation upon arrival or after lesson begins:** There are occasions when you will arrive and your riding lesson will be cancelled by LTRC or your lesson will be cancelled by LTRC after you have gotten on your horse due to circumstances out of our control.
  - If this occurs, everyone will be sent home for the day and a makeup or credit will be discussed to try to accommodate everyone.
  - Please note: If riders are mounted and a decision is made to dismount and cancel the remainder of the lesson due to adverse conditions, 20 minutes or more of mounted time is considered a full lesson. No makeup/credit will be offered in this circumstance.
  - We know some riders thrive on structured activity and staying on a schedule. Coming to LTRC and finding out they are not riding may be difficult for them. If you are concerned about this possibility, please call 716-333-LTRC (5827) to come up with a plan.

## WEATHER POLICY

- ❖ We ride in most weather scenarios, except thunder and lightning, extreme heat/cold, high winds, or heavy rains. **Unless you hear directly from LTRC staff, lessons are being conducted.**
- ❖ If it is **ONLY** raining, lessons are being held!
  - We ride outside in the outdoor arena whenever possible, but if it's raining and there is NO thunder and lightning or high winds, we ride in the indoor arena.
  - Extreme winds/heavy downpours are the exception and monitored on a case-by-case basis.

**WEATHER CONCERNS:** If it is not safe for you to travel to LTRC due to the weather or if you are not sure if lessons are being held, please call 716-333-LTRC (5872).

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:** We ask that participants and caregivers make a commitment to the therapeutic lesson program, as progress cannot be made with frequent cancellations. Additionally, we typically have a wait list of students who very much want a time slot. Frequent, unreported absences may result in your spot being given to someone on the wait list. We will be as flexible as possible while trying to run a consistent and sustainable program for everyone.

**MULTIPLE MISSED LESSONS:** If a participant misses 2 classes in a session and does not notify, or make an attempt to notify, LTRC of their absence, the participant will forfeit the remaining lessons of the session and no refund will be given.

**WHAT TO WEAR:** Dress for the weather in temperature-appropriate clothing that you don't mind getting dirty, dusty and hairy! Not dressing appropriately can make for an uncomfortable lesson!

- ★ **FOOTWEAR:** Wear appropriate, close-toed, hard sole shoes! Barn/riding boots, hiking boots or sneakers are acceptable.
  - Open-toed or soft soled shoes are not permitted while riding or working with the horses!

**NO ONE will be allowed to participate if wearing sandals, Crocs, slippers, etc.**

- ★ **CLOTHING:** Lightweight, long pants are recommended - khakis or jeans are best. Even in hot weather riders will be more comfortable in long pants as their skin will be protected from being rubbed or pinched by the saddle. Shorts, skirts, dresses and are **NOT** recommended
  - We recommend dressing in layers. The indoor arena can be hotter or colder than the outside temperatures
  - Long socks, multiple layers, gloves, thin hats under helmets, neck warmers, and hand/toe warmers are great suggestions to help maintain comfort in the colder months.
- ★ Use sun protection, bug spray etc as needed. Apply prior to mounting.
- ★ Zip up jackets and secure any loose items. Remove your cell phone from pant pockets.
- ★ Avoid dangly earrings, necklaces, bracelets, lanyards etc. that can hamper your movements, get caught on the saddle, or distract/spook the horse.
- ★ Avoid perfumes, colognes, after shave as it may attract bees

## **PARTICIPANT/CAREGIVER ILLNESS: PLEASE STAY HOME** if you have:

- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea within the past 24 hours
- Oral temperature of 100 degrees or higher. Temperature should be normal for 24 hours before attending lessons
- Cold, flu symptoms and/or severe, persistent cough
- A contagious or exposed skin rash
- Red, watery, burning eyes with white or yellow discharge
- A communicable disease such as head lice, strep throat, chickenpox, etc.

## **RESTROOM**

- Handicapped accessible restroom (located in the white house with the green door) is open to the public.

**SAFETY: Safety is our #1 priority! We expect everyone on site to follow these safety rules:**

## **GENERAL SAFETY RULES**

1. Smoking, alcohol, illegal substances or firearms are **STRICTLY PROHIBITED** on the premises and are grounds for immediate dismissal.
2. Abusive, threatening or violent behavior will not be tolerated from ANYONE for ANY REASON!
3. Caregiver(s) must remain on LTRC property while the participant(s) they are responsible for are participating on LTRC grounds. If caregiver leaves the premises, the participant will be dismissed and will forfeit the lesson.
4. Minors (siblings, family members, guests, etc.) **MUST** be supervised at all times.
5. No running, yelling, or throwing objects which can spook the horses or cause injury to our participants/staff/volunteers.
6. Pasture entry is prohibited. Pastures have an electric fence system. Always assume electric fence is ON.
7. With the exception of service animals, dogs that do not live on-site are not allowed on the property or to be left in vehicles parked on the property during lesson hours.
8. Keep your cell phone or silent or vibrate
9. No photos of others (except your participant) without permission
10. The speed limit on LTRC grounds is **5 MPH**.

**SAFETY AROUND HORSES:** Think of the horse as having a 6-foot personal space bubble surrounding them. When you enter into their personal space, do so with respect.

1. Always WALK around horses. No running.
2. Always walk around the front of a horse.
3. Never approach a horse directly in front or from behind. Approach a horse from the side - they have extensive peripheral vision, but cannot see what is directly in front or behind them.
4. Do not feed horses, barn cats or other animals. They are on supervised diets and outside food items could cause them to become ill. If you bring treats for the horses or cats, please leave with the instructor who will give it to them at feeding time, if approved for their diet.
5. Don't yell or make sudden movements near a horse. Be slow, gentle and deliberate around them.
6. Speak softly as you approach a horse to let them know that you are coming. Like people, horses do not like being surprised by loud noises or unexpected encounters.
7. Never walk under a horse's neck or under their belly.
8. Pet a horse on shoulder or neck, not on face, nose, or mouth. Use stroking motion, not patting.
9. Be quiet and calm around horses. They may become frightened by loud noises or sudden movements.
10. Always be kind and never mistreat horses. They will respond best when you are kind and gentle.
11. Wear appropriate clothing when working with a horse. Close-toed shoes are required.
12. Keep your feet clear of the horse's feet. Do not kneel or squat around horse's feet. They outweigh you.

**CODE OF CONDUCT:** Thoughtful conduct and self-control factor into the safety and enjoyment of all participants. All persons at LTRC will be expected to adhere to the following code of conduct:

- Respect all humans and animals - no abusive language or actions
- Respect all property
- Refrain from loud, abrupt, disruptive, unsafe or inappropriate noises, actions or behaviors

**GROUNDS FOR DISMISSAL:** LTRC reserves the right to dismiss anyone from the program who does not adhere to the rules, policies and procedures set forth in this handbook or fails to meet the guidelines for eligibility. Due to the capacities of staff, volunteer leaders and sidewalkers, program horses, insurance requirements and industry standards, acceptance and/or continuation of a participant depends on the availability of appropriate instructors, volunteers, and suitable horses.

**Immediate dismissal**

- Possession of a firearm, weapon, alcohol or illegal substances
- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Sexual comments, conduct or harassment of any kind
- Disruptive, threatening, inappropriate or abusive behavior/language towards people or animals (horses, cats or any other animals on site)

**Other grounds for dismissal include, but are not limited to:**

- Smoking on sight

- Endangering the safety of people, horses or other animals on site
- Repeated disregard or failure to follow the organization's rules, policies and procedures
- Inaccurate, inappropriate or falsified registration information
- Weight gain above the maximum capacity of the program horses available at the time.
- Repeated absences without notification
- A change in medical condition which makes it no longer safe or beneficial for a participant to continue
- Failure to pay in accordance with LTRC's Payment Policy stated in this handbook.
- Experience level has progressed to a level where transitioning to a traditional riding stable would be appropriate

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** LTRC practices strict confidentiality in regards to participant personal information. Medical histories, diagnoses and related information are used by the staff to develop lesson benchmarks and goals for each rider. General information, as it relates to the success of the riding experience, is shared with the volunteers on a need-to-know basis.

**EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:** Instructors are expected to respond to any emergency that occurs on site and to provide first aid assistance until a more qualified individual arrives. The lesson emergency word is "HALT". When used, everyone stops and waits for instructions from the instructor. Anyone involved in the lesson - instructor, volunteer, rider or observer - can say 'HALT' to stop the class if they see something that they feel is an impending danger. The instructor cannot see the entire ring at all times and is counting on the eyes and ears of all observers.

### **EMERGENCY REMINDERS**

- The lesson instructor is the primary emergency administrator on site and is in charge during all emergencies.
- LTRC staff or someone appointed by the instructor may be asked to supervise the rest of the class while the instructor is attending to the emergency.
- Emergency evacuation maps are posted in the barn and the indoor arena.
- We practice universal precautions for all wounds, treating all bodily fluids as if infectious. Latex gloves are available in all first aid kits.
- Fire extinguishers are located throughout all facility buildings.

### **FIRST AID KITS, AED UNIT & BARN PHONE**

- First aid kits are located:
  - at main entrance to barn
  - near water hose (in between 3rd and 4th stalls on left hand side)
  - inside indoor arena
  - office restroom
- AED unit is located in the main office foyer

- The landline phone is located in the white box inside the main entrance to the barn with address posted. There is also a landline phone in the office. Please use the barn phone, office phone or your cell phone in an emergency, whichever is faster.

**EMERGENCY DURING MOUNTED LESSON:** When any emergency occurs during a class with mounted riders, the following procedure will be implemented, as directed by instructor:

1. All sidewalkers and leaders stay with their rider and horse!!
2. All horses will be moved away from the incident
3. Halt horses and turn them so they can see what is going on
4. Do not move the involved participant until instructed
5. Leaders will position themselves in front of their horse without obstructing the horse's view.
6. Sidewalkers are responsible for their rider and will be aware of their emotional state and stability in the saddle
7. If needed, the instructor will appoint someone to:
  - a. Dial 911 from their cell phone or the barn phone and give directions to the center
  - b. Get the First Aid Kit
  - c. Direct the emergency vehicle to the accident site, asking that all lights and sirens be turned off to avoid frightening the horses
8. The instructor will supervise (if needed) the dismounting and evacuation of riders first, then horses from the riding area. Caregiver sidewalkers will escort the riders out of the arena. Leaders will return horses to their stalls or other assigned area.
9. Initial response First Aid will be administered to the injured / ill rider by the instructor or other qualified personnel until more advanced medical care arrives.

After appropriate action has been taken, an Incident Report will be completed by the instructor or staff member who was involved. Details of the incident, actions taken and interviews with 3 witnesses will be included.

**EMERGENCY EVACUATIONS:** Emergency evacuation maps are located in the barn and indoor arena. In the event of a fire or an emergency that necessitates the evacuation of the barn or indoor arena, go to the outdoor arena or the driveway in front of the indoor arena. Listen for directions from LTRC staff.

**FIRE PROCEDURES:** Fire extinguishers are located in the barn, indoor arena and office. **If a fire occurs:**

1. Everyone leave area and assemble in the emergency meeting place for a head count. The primary emergency meeting place is the parking area in front of the indoor arena.
2. Call 911 from a safe location
3. If horses are in the barn, staff will remove them only if able to do so without risking injury to self or others. If possible, place a halter and lead on horse, cover their eyes and lead out of stall. Bring horses to pastures, or indoor/outdoor arena, whichever is closest.

## LIGHTNING/SUDDEN STORM

- If weather is a concern and/or a storm is predicted, lessons will be cancelled and you will be notified before you arrive.
- If bad weather arises unexpectedly after you arrive and prior to the start of lessons, seek safe shelter and wait for directions from instructor (wait for storm to pass or go home for the day).
- If a storm occurs suddenly while students are riding or are in the ring, the instructor will dismount all riders. Leaders will be asked to be attentive to their horse, hold them steady and speak reassuringly to them while the students are dismounted by the instructor. Everyone will seek appropriate shelter or get to their vehicle, if safe, to leave for the day.

**SITUATIONS THAT FRIGHTEN HORSES:** Our horses are specially trained but as prey animals, they can be unpredictable by nature. In case of a frightened horse, the instructor will have the leaders hold their horse and speak reassuringly to them. Riders will be dismounted if needed. Everyone should be prepared to dismount students as directed if necessary. Some examples of things that might frighten a horse while students are mounted are:

- ❖ loud cars coming down the driveway, cars driving too fast
- ❖ doors slamming, umbrellas, strollers, plastic bags
- ❖ shouting, screaming, running
- ❖ noise from the surrounding neighborhood and road traffic.
- ❖ natural hazards: insect bites or stings, snakes, animals such as deer or foxes in the woods.

**UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS:** We practice universal precautions by wearing disposable latex gloves and other protective barriers when administering basic first aid, while treating bodily fluids as if infectious. Latex gloves are available in all first aid kits, at check in stations located in the barn and indoor arena and office bathroom. Body fluids include, but are not limited to:

- ❖ blood, drainage from scrapes and cuts, semen and vaginal secretions, feces, nasal secretions, sputum, sweat, tears, urine, and vomit
- ❖ fluids: cerebrospinal (brain/spine), synovial (joint), peritoneal (body cavity), pericardial (heart), amniotic, body tissue, pleural (lung), saliva from a bite, respiratory secretions (i.e. runny nose) and saliva

Encourage the person to self-manage their own injury whenever possible through the use of compresses and/or pressure to bleeding wounds or bloody noses. Place soiled towels or towelettes in a lined waste container. Urge the participant to do as much of this as possible. Always wash your hands when you are finished.

**LTRC HORSES:** Our “good citizen” horses are selected for soundness, temperament, willingness and a patient attitude. We use a calm, respectful approach when working with them, and our horses are trained to accommodate youth and adults of all ability levels to both ride and work with on the ground. When possible, horses and students are matched based on personality and ability and kept together as a team throughout their session.



**EQUINE LIABILITY:** LTRC does not assume any liability for accidents, injury, or death suffered during an equine activity on the LTRC premises. A horse is a large animal and may be unpredictable and dangerous at times. Extreme caution should be taken in their presence. Although every precaution is taken at LTRC to make lessons as safe and as risk free as possible, there is always risk involved when working around or riding a horse. A fall from a horse, a sudden movement of the horse or even the horse's normal stride/movement can cause an accident. Equestrian sports are considered a high-risk activity. Horses are prey animals whose instinct is to flee when they sense they may be in danger. Even the quietest of horses is by nature unpredictable, thereby increasing the possibility of an injury while horseback riding or being around horses. Participants/caregivers/guests assume the inherent risk of equine activities. Please review the Liability & Hold Harmless Agreement at the end of this packet.

**BARN ETIQUETTE & STOPPING THE SPREAD OF EQUINE DISEASE:** Equine health at LTRC is a top priority. There are equine diseases that can spread to LTRC horses via contact with humans who have been exposed at other barns/stables. These are diseases that do not affect humans, but can be deadly to horses. These guidelines are especially important for those of you who are active in more than one horse barn and have contact with other horses outside of LTRC. LTRC takes every precaution to decrease and/or eliminate the spread of diseases among horses in our barn and the community. If you visit another horse barn, or have your own horses, you can help us prevent the spread of equine disease at LTRC before you arrive by:

- dedicating footwear and clothing for use only at LTRC. If this is not possible, please sanitize footwear before your visit
- change your clothes that you wore at the other barn before coming to LTRC.
- do not touch other horses that you are not working with
- use grooming tools in assigned grooming bags

**HORSE TREATS:** Although it is very tempting to give your favorite horse a treat, please do not hand feed our horses. Our horses are on a monitored diet and some can become ill if given treats (i.e. sugar cubes, apples, carrots, etc.). It is essential that this policy is followed to ensure that our horses are not put in a life threatening situation. If you bring treats for a horse, please leave with the instructor who will give it to them at feeding time, if approved for their diet.

## EQUIPMENT

**Tack (noun):** The term used for the equipment put on the horse for lessons, such as saddle, saddle pad, bareback pad and surcingle.

**Tack up (verb):** put on the horse's equipment. **Untack:** take off horse's equipment



**English Saddle with pads:** Most clients ride in the English saddle. English saddles are lightweight, flatter and less bulky, so the rider can do exercises in the saddle that involve a lot of movement. English saddles use 2 saddle pads. An English saddle with a high back is also available and used as needed, per the Tack Guide.



**Western Saddle with pad:** The Western saddle helps riders with balance and trunk strength issues feel more secure, with a higher back, deeper seat and a horn in the front to hold on to. This saddle uses one thick rectangular Western pad.



**Vaulting Surcingle with Western pad:** For some riders, we use a vaulting surcingle instead of a saddle. Using a Western pad with a handled surcingle can be very beneficial. The client sits on a soft seat and their legs rest on either side of the horse - NO STIRRUPS. Clients concerned about chafing from a saddle, such as a paraplegic rider, may be more comfortable in the surcingle.

Riders with tight muscles benefit from the horse's warmth, and it allows movement without the bulk of a regular saddle. Riders feel much more of the horse's movement and it can help those that need a lot of sensory input. The surcingle is less distracting and it requires the rider to engage core muscles and correct his/her balance and posture.



**Girth:** Usually made of leather, nylon, or cotton, the girth is a wide strap that goes around the horse and buckles to the saddle to hold it in position.



**Halter:** Headgear that is used to lead a horse. It fits behind the ears and around the muzzle. LTRC horses do not use bridles.

**Lead line:** A rope that attaches to the halter, used to lead the horse.



**Peacock stirrups:** All saddles are equipped with quick-release rubber band peacock stirrups that allow the rider's foot to come out quickly in case of a fall or emergency. The rubber band should always face away from the horse when the rider's foot is in the stirrup.

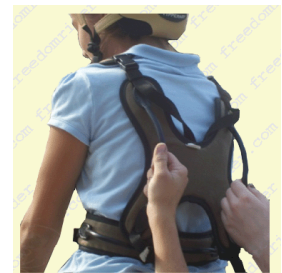
**Rainbow Reins:** Rainbow reins are typically used during lessons and are located by the tack room door. The colors on the reins help riders grip them at the same location on both sides and enable them to learn how to steer their horse.



**Bobby Pillow:** Used to help the rider stay balanced on the horse, bobby pillows help riders with instability or a weak core.



**Gait belt/Gait vest:** Worn around rider's waist or as a vest, handles allow sidewalkers to support the rider without pulling on clothing as they walk next to them.



## **LIABILITY RELEASE AND HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENT**

### **SERIOUS INJURY MAY RESULT FROM YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS ACTIVITY**

A. **DEFINITIONS:** The term "THIS STABLE" shall herein refer to Lothlorien Therapeutic Riding Center, Inc. (LTRC), its Board of Directors, instructors, volunteers and employees. The term "HORSEBACK RIDING" or "RIDING" shall herein refer to riding or otherwise handling of horses whether from the ground or mounted. The term "HORSE" shall herein refer to all equine species. The terms "PARTICIPANT" and/or "RIDER" shall herein refer to a person who rides a horse mounted or otherwise handles or comes near a horse from the ground. The terms "I", "Me", "My", "Participant", and "Rider" shall herein refer to the registered rider and the parents or legal guardians thereof if a minor.

B. **REGISTRATION OF PARTICIPANT AND AGREEMENT PURPOSE AND CONSIDERATION:** In consideration of my enrollment in the riding program at THIS STABLE and the signing of the Liability Release in the Participant Registration Packet, I, herein referred to as PARTICIPANT, the listed individual or the parents/legal guardians thereof, if a minor, do hereby voluntarily request and agree to participate in activities and events at THIS STABLE. PARTICIPANT shall ride a school horse provided by THIS STABLE for lesson purposes for today and on all future dates. This agreement shall be legally binding upon the PARTICIPANT and the parents or legal guardians thereof if a minor, my heirs, estate, assigns, including minor children and personal representatives. It shall be interpreted according to the laws of the state and county of THIS STABLE'S physical location. Any disputes by the participant shall be litigated in the county in which THIS STABLE is located.

C. **ACTIVITY RISK CLASSIFICATION, INHERENT RISKS AND NATURE OF THE HORSE WARNING:** Horseback riding is classified as a RUGGED ADVENTURE RECREATIONAL SPORT ACTIVITY. There are numerous obvious and non-obvious inherent risks always present in such activity despite all safety precautions. According to NEISS (National Electronic Injury Surveillance Systems of United States Consumer Products) horse activities rank approximately 64th among the activities of people relative to injuries that result in a stay at U.S. hospitals. Related injuries can be severe requiring more days in the hospital and resulting in more lasting residual effects than injuries in other activities. NO HORSE IS A COMPLETELY SAFE HORSE. Horses are 5 to 15 times larger, 20 to 40 times more powerful and 3 to 4 times faster than a human. If a rider falls from a horse to the ground it will generally be at a distance of from 3 1/2 to 5 1/2 feet and the impact may result in injury or death to the rider. Horseback riding is the only sport where one much smaller, weaker predator animal, the human, tries to control and become one unit of movement with another much larger, stronger prey animal, the horse, with each having a limited understanding of the other. If a horse is frightened or provoked it may divert from its training and act according to its natural survival instincts which may include but are not limited to: stopping short; changing directions or speed at will; shifting its weight from side to side, bucking, rearing, biting, kicking or running from perceived danger.

D. **PARTICIPANT ACCEPTANCE OF RESPONSIBILITY:** PARTICIPANT agrees that the condition of the premises and the facilities will provide an adequate and reasonable level of safety for PARTICIPANT. THIS STABLE is not responsible for any property damage, injury or loss of life incurred by or as a result of any horse(s) on this premises to PARTICIPANT. PARTICIPANT IS AWARE OF THE RISKS AND DANGERS OF THIS ACTIVITY AND AGREES TO ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR ANY AND ALL INCIDENTS OCCURRING DURING THIS ACTIVITY.

E. **CONDITIONS OF NATURE:** THIS STABLE is not responsible for total or partial acts, occurrences, or elements of nature that can scare a horse, cause it to fall or react in some other unsafe way. Examples include thunder, lightning, rain, wind; wild/domestic animals/insects/reptiles which may walk, run, fly near, bite or sting a horse or person; irregular footing on indoor and outdoor groomed or wild land which is subject to constant change in condition according to weather, temperature and natural or man-made changes in landscape.

F. **RIDING HELMET WARNING:** PARTICIPANT is hereby warned and informed by THIS STABLE that all participants should wear a properly fitted and secured protective EQUESTRIAN riding helmet that meets ASTM standards. Such helmets are available at THIS STABLE; however, THIS STABLE recommends the PARTICIPANT purchase their own helmet to receive the benefit of a custom fit. Wearing such headgear while mounting, riding, dismounting, and being around horses may prevent death or may reduce the severity of head injuries resulting from a fall or other incident involving a horse. THIS STABLE abides by the NYS Helmet Statute and requires children under the age of 14 to wear an ASTM approved EQUESTRIAN helmet when mounted at all times. Alternative helmets, approved by Stable, may be worn.

G. **BREACH OF CONTRACT-** Should either party breach this contract, the breaching party shall pay for the other's court costs and attorney fees related to such breach.