



Loudoun Therapeutic Riding Inc. Center Information Policies & Procedures 2021



Welcome! LTR has developed the following policies for the 2021 season. As a Premier Accredited Center (PAC) through the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship, Intl., LTR abides by all Standards, Guidelines, Policies (including Precautions and Contraindications) and the Code of Ethics as set forth in the PATH Intl. Standards for Certification & Accreditation Manual.

Our Mission: LTR was formed in 1974 to empower and improve the lives of people with cognitive, psychological and physical disabilities through the benefits of equine-assisted services and therapies (EAS/T), while serving our industry through training and education.

Our Core Values: Love, Trust, Respect

Our Guiding Principles: Courage, Acceptance, Respect, Encouragement

Our Policy Regarding Participation in/Discharge from Equine Assisted Services: Recognizing that equine related activities hold inherent risks, all prospective participants will be evaluated by PATH Intl. Certified Therapeutic Riding Instructors to ensure a safe and beneficial experience. In compliance with PATH Intl. guidelines/Accreditation Standards and LTR policy, the following criteria must be met:

- Participants for therapeutic riding, carriage driving or ground lessons must be at least 4 years of age, and at least 2 years of age for Hippotherapy (HPOT). HPOT is conducted by a licensed therapist only. See separate policy on page 2.
- Participant/parent/guardian/volunteer/staff/ must complete, sign (e-signatures accepted), and date all center paperwork including releases, prior to participation. Forms can be found online at ltrf.org. These forms must be updated annually. Note: Complete paperwork, containing all required signatures must be received and approved by LTR **before** the first day of an activity or lesson. Participants who turn in paperwork on the first day of lessons may not be allowed to participate that week. Lessons will be forfeited if paperwork is late or incomplete.
- **Non-Discrimination Policy:** LTR considers/accepts participants or volunteers regardless of income, race, color, nationality, ethnic origin, gender identity or sexual orientation.

Eligibility: EAST (Equine Assisted Services/Therapies) may not be suitable for all individuals with disabilities. Upon reviewing completed paperwork and evaluating prospective participants, the LTR Program Director/LTR Staff will make a determination regarding participation. Returning participants will be re-evaluated annually or as necessary for changes in medical, physical, cognitive and behavioral status, and LTR must be notified of any changes. Our professional staff will assess participant involvement with a risk/benefit analysis (benefit to participant exceeds any potential risk associated with EAS/T) during an intake evaluation taking into consideration PATH Intl. Precautions and Contraindications provided in the PATH Intl. Standards and Accreditation Manual. Requirements for EAS include, but are not limited to:

- Physically able to independently sit symmetrically with torso upright and legs astride the horse during dynamic movement; this includes adequate head and neck control to maintain proper alignment.
- Tolerate a safety helmet approved for equestrian use.
- Behave in a manner that is safe for self, horses and others.
- Ability to accommodate the movement of the horse without pain or risk of harm.



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LTR instructors/staff will make final determination for participation based on the intake evaluation and on available resources such as: class availability, volunteer availability, and instructor expertise or horse suitability.

If an individual is discharged from participation, LTR will provide a reason for discharge. Reasons for discharge might include, but are not limited to the following:

- 1) Participant progresses to a level of skill such that they may be better served by a riding school for individuals without disabilities or special needs.
- 2) Residents of North Spring Behavioral Healthcare are discharged from the facility.
- 3) Loudoun County Public School class participants move schools or the class is discontinued.
- 4) Participant's mobility or weight prevents center personnel from serving client safely.
- 5) Participant's status or behavior becomes a threat to the safety of self, horses or others.
- 6) Center does not have suitable horse or pony for participant.
- 7) Center personnel cannot safely manage the participant in any situation including an emergency dismount or transfer from wheelchair or ramp/block.

Alternatives to mounted lessons may be offered to individuals who may not be best served by therapeutic riding. These might include participating in ground lessons, barn activities or therapeutic driving. LTR reserves the right to discontinue an individual's participation in any program should it be deemed to be in the best interest of either the participant or LTR.

Our Center Programs: Partnering with our horses, programs are developed to foster a community environment that promotes learning, inclusion, respect & independence.

- **Therapeutic Riding TR** (taught or supervised by PATH Intl. Certified Instructors) Student goals include grooming, horsemanship, tacking skills (barn lesson), and horseback riding skills.
- **Therapeutic Carriage Driving TD** (all driving lessons taught by a PATH Intl. Certified Therapeutic Driving Instructor) Student goals include grooming, horsemanship, harnessing and carriage driving skills.
- **Equine Assisted Learning EAL** – ground lessons in grooming, horse care and behavior, stable management, horsemanship, etc. (taught or supervised by PATH Intl. Certified Instructors) These classes typically take place in the barn and sometimes the arena.
- **Hippotherapy HPOT** - is conducted by a physical therapist, occupational therapist or speech language pathologist with a PATH Intl. Certified Instructor present. HPOT is a medical treatment strategy using the movement of the horse. Participants must be at least 2 years old. Goals determined by therapist's treatment plan. **Eligibility, fees, goals, policies, records for HPOT are determined/managed directly by the therapist.**
- **PATH Intl. Equine Services for Heroes** – Program serving wounded military/veterans and may include riding, carriage driving or ground lessons. (Conducted by PATH Intl. Certified Instructors.)
- **Special group tours or higher education practicums/modules** – these are un-mounted sessions supervised by a PATH certified LTR staff member for the purpose of providing educational opportunities to students or individuals requiring training in horse handling, first aid, horsemanship or EAS/T in general. LTR gratefully accepts monetary donations for this service.



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NEW Fee Schedule - Therapeutic Riding, Driving and EAS: \$840 (flat fee/12-weeks); \$560 (flat fee/8 weeks); \$420 (flat fee/6 weeks) or \$70 per group lesson or half hour private/\$80 per one-hour private lesson and is due prior to start of each session with registration unless otherwise specified or the individual participates through a collaborative program. \$115/per two-hour group/North Spring Behavioral Healthcare. Fees are subject to change, invoices are sent by email upon registration, and participants may not carry a fee balance forward to the next session. **Actual cost** per student is approximately **\$1500** per session, however participants are asked to pay only a portion of this amount. See **Fee Assistance** for more information in cases of financial hardship. Fees for multiple family members will be decided on a case-by-case basis. Hippotherapy services are billed by the therapist.

Lesson Description: All equine-assisted services are planned for safety and therapeutic benefit with the individual's educational, physical, social, emotional and/or recreational goals in mind. Participants with similar goals may be grouped together. Lessons may include warm-up exercises, skill development, activities or games to reinforce goals, and trail rides. Some lessons/activities may take place in the barn or on the ground, thus are unmounted. **Classes may be individual (up to 30-40 minutes) or group (up to 60 minutes) depending on participant needs and schedule availability.** Spring, summer and fall sessions are typically 8-12 weeks in length. Evening sessions during the fall will be scheduled according to enrollment, daylight and may vary in length, and fees will be adjusted accordingly. Current session schedule: winter (6 weeks), spring (12 weeks), summer (8 weeks), and fall (12weeks). **HPOT (Hippotherapy)** is scheduled by therapists only.

Weight Considerations: Weight is generally limited to 185 pounds, but decisions regarding participation will be based on current resources including the availability of a suitable horse relative to the height, cognition, balance and/or behavior of the participant. The results of a risk/benefit analysis will also be considered. Due to the nature of therapeutic riding, therapeutic driving and associated activities it may be deemed inappropriate for some individuals.

Equine assisted services are contraindicated:

- 1) If staff/volunteers are unable to safely manage the participant in any situation, including an emergency dismount or transfer from a wheelchair or mounting ramp.
- 2) If staff/volunteers cannot manage participant behaviors (including any mal-adaptive or extreme behaviors) with verbal prompts and/or light touch.
- 3) If safety, comfort or well-being of staff, volunteers or the horse is compromised in any way for any reason.
- 4) If medically inappropriate based on PATH Intl. guidelines, precautions, contraindications.

NEW FOR 2021 - Fee Assistance: Our policy at Loudoun Therapeutic Riding is never to turn anyone away because they cannot pay the session fees. To help ensure this, our fees are reduced by 77% from their actual cost for every participant; military veterans and their families are not charged at all. This is thanks to gifts and grants from Loudoun County, individuals, businesses and corporations, and foundations.

Thanks to the generosity of these donors, we can provide additional fee assistance beyond the 77% to a limited number of participants.

In 2021, we have made several changes to our application for those seeking the additional fee assistance. These changes will help us comply with the requirements of some of these grants and gifts.



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Beginning this year, you will fill out the application below **once** per year **at the start of your first session of the year**. Once your fee reduction is determined, it will be applied for the entire year. This is a change from prior years when you would apply with each new session cycle.

Fee assistance applications must be submitted before you are invoiced. This is a change from previous years when you could apply for assistance after you received your invoice. If your circumstances change, please fill out a new application for consideration at the time you sign up for a new session. If you no longer need fee assistance, please notify us.

Those awarding the fee assistance are knowledgeable about the costs and demands of living with disabilities. That knowledge will be taken into consideration.

Dress code: ASTM/SEI approved helmets must be worn while mounted and will be provided if necessary. LTR helmets are periodically sanitized. If purchasing your own helmet, make sure that it is ASTM/SEI certified for horseback riding. Participants should wear long pants (**no shorts!**) and sturdy shoes with a ¼” heel or riding boots. NO sandals, and sneakers are not recommended but permitted if using safety stirrups. All LTR participants will use safety stirrups or Devonshire boots for mounted activities unless using a western saddle then rider must wear appropriate paddock shoe/boot with ¼” heel. LTR uses only safety stirrups on English/dressage saddles.

Instructor Training/Mentorship: LTR is committed to providing education and training to individuals interested in our programs and in Equine Assisted Services. LTR may offer a limited number of mentorship opportunities each year to qualified individuals seeking PATH Intl. Instructor Certification. There are classes during each session that may be taught by one of these candidates. **All** lessons are directly supervised by a PATH Intl. certified therapeutic riding/driving instructor. There are separate policies regarding this program and are available upon request.

Board of Directors: LTR is governed by a voluntary board of directors. The Board meets regularly at Morven Park or other specified location. Please contact us if you would like serve on the board or are interested in center development: **info@ltrf.org**.

Cancellations: LTR may cancel riding in the event of extreme weather in consideration of all center personnel, participants, parents and equines (e.g., thunderstorms, heat > 95°/weather advisories, extreme cold < 30°, etc.). We generally follow Loudoun County Public Schools cancellation policy. LTR will make an attempt to reach participants by phone/email in the event of a cancellation. If a participant must cancel, please send an email to **kblaine@ltrf.org** or call as soon as possible, so that our volunteers/horses will not be waiting. Two “no shows” in a session may result in removal from that session with no refund of fees. LTR reserves the right to cancel lessons in the event the safety of all personnel, participants and horses is compromised. We will make an attempt to notify participants of a cancellation at least 2 hours prior to cancellation. Lessons canceled by LTR may or may not be made up depending on available resources, i.e.

barn, classroom or arena space, instructor and/or volunteer staff. Morven Park events may impact LTR activities resulting in cancellations or schedule changes. Note* LTR is a guest on the Morven Park property and does not pay for use of spaces.



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Participant cancellation: Please contact us ASAP if you are unable to attend your lesson. Call us at **703-771-2689** to leave a message or email kblaine@ltrf.org. You may check the **LTR FACEBOOK** page for cancellation information.

Late Arrivals: In order to conduct a beneficial and productive lesson, students arriving late (after the gate is closed and all riders are mounted) will not be mounted. If mounting is still in progress as in a group class, you will be permitted to participate in the lesson. Final decisions will be left to the discretion of the instructor in the case of a private lesson. Lessons will be forfeited if volunteers have returned the horse to the barn.

Refund/Make-up policy: Regular attendance is expected of participants. In the event LTR must cancel a lesson we will attempt to schedule a make-up class at the end of the session during the designated make-up week. The session charge is a flat fee, is non-refundable and will not carry over to the next session. LTR cannot offer refunds or make up classes for lessons missed due to incomplete paperwork, vacations, illness, or scheduling conflicts on the part of participants or for lessons that we are unable to re-schedule within the specified makeup periods. Lesson fees cover only a small part of operating expenses. No account balance may be carried into the next session.

Confidentiality: Any information pertaining to the participants of LTR must be held in strict confidentiality. It is critical that we respect the privacy of each participant and their families. This is considered one of the most important responsibilities of our staff and volunteers. Complete written policy is described in the PATH Intl. Standards for Certification & Accreditation Manual per the Center Information Manual. All records are securely stored indefinitely in the LTR office both physically and electronically via secure web-based platform. Failure to comply with this policy may result in dismissal from center activities. All information regarding participants is confidential and will not be shared with outside sources unless the participant/participant's guardian requests this information in writing. A Release of Information form is available in the event participants request that personal information be shared.

Communication: LTR periodically sends an electronic newsletter via email. The program website will also contain important information including a calendar of events. The address is www.ltrf.org. If you prefer a personal consultation, please contact the office at info@ltrf.org.

Miscellaneous: **Our host - The Morven Park Equestrian Center requests that you abide by the SPEED LIMIT of 14 ½ MPH** on the property! **Accessible Parking** is available outside the indoor arenas. **Accessible toilets** are located outside indoor arenas, or in Hofmann Bldg. Other parking lots adjacent to barn 3. Parking is not allowed in front of office in Hofmann building unless you are transferring from a vehicle. **Siblings, parents, guests** should wait in areas designated by the instructors so that lessons are not disrupted. Children may not climb in the bleachers near the arenas, and parents/caregivers are responsible for monitoring siblings, friends and other family members during sessions. Any staff, participant, parent, sibling, or volunteer who demonstrates behavior deemed inappropriate, disruptive or unsafe by any LTR Instructor may be asked to leave the premises and dismissed permanently from center activities. No one is allowed in the barn/paddock areas unless accompanied by LTR staff or designated trained volunteer.

Telephone: A landline **telephone (and posted emergency instructions)** is located in our main office upstairs in the brown **A-frame Hofmann building**. All instructors will carry a cellular phone for emergencies and emergency instructions are located inside the phone case.



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Volunteer Opportunities: Volunteers are the backbone of this center! If you or someone you know would like to assist with lessons, fund-raising, center development, office work, or even doing barn chores please contact our volunteer coordinator at **703-771-2689** or by email at **volunteer@ltrf.org**. Parents/caregivers of participants often volunteer during their child's lesson time. However, for the most beneficial experience we may ask that parents assist students other than their own children. There are 3-4 volunteer orientations held each year: one at the beginning of each session (spring, summer, fall) or as needed. Contact us for more information regarding

each training session date or consult the annual calendar on our website. Orientation and training are required and are ongoing during each session. Schooling of center horses by experienced and screened riders/carriage drivers is scheduled by the Assistant Program Director as needed. See our Center Information Manual for detailed information outlining opportunities to support LTR.

Safety and First Aid: The safety of all center participants, staff, & volunteers is paramount. All LTR Certified Instructors are trained in **CPR/First Aid/AED** (Automated External Defibrillator) and at least one certified instructor, who is in charge during an emergency, is onsite during all center activities. LTR has an **AED** that is accessible in barn 2. The **First Aid Kit** is located along with the AED cabinet in Barn #2 Lounge room near bathrooms. ****In an emergency an LTR instructor will give directions based on the LTR Risk Management Plan and Emergency Procedures – call 911 as necessary.** Emergency numbers are posted in the barn and on cards located in the instructor's cell phone case. Complete written policies are located in the PATH Intl. Standards for Certification & Accreditation Manual and are reviewed during all volunteer orientation sessions. If you are directed to gather in an indoor area, the Hofmann Center (brown A-frame office) Classroom is the designated location. **OTHER: SUICIDE PREVENTION HOTLINE: 800-273-8255**

Waiting List: Due to the numbers of individuals seeking services LTR may carry waiting list. Wait times vary depending on resources such as: instructor expertise/availability, horse suitability, participant availability and/or need for private instruction. Please contact us for more information or to request a visit.

Competitions: There are limited numbers of competition (horse show) opportunities during each year. Please contact us for more information and a copy of our written competition policies.

LTR Equines: The well-being of our horses and ponies is of utmost importance to our center. Written policies regarding their care are available in our PATH Intl. Standards for Accreditation Manual.

Virginia Equine Liability Act: per Release of Liability Waiver: *It is expressly agreed by Rider and any parent or guardian whose signature appears on this document that this Agreement shall be governed and construed as being sufficient to satisfy the assumption of risk and waiver requirements necessary to relieve equine activity sponsors and equine professionals from liability under the Virginia Equine Liability Act (Virginia Code Section 3.2-6200 et seq.), and that LTRF, and all of its agents, directors, officers, shareholders, employees, volunteers, consultants, partners, successor and assigns are covered by the provisions of the Virginia Equine Liability Act (Virginia Code Section 3.2-6200 et seq.). This Agreement shall be governed and construed by the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia, regardless of where any accident, damage, loss, injury, illness or death shall occur. In the event that any portion of this Agreement shall be declared unenforceable, such declaration shall not affect the remaining terms of this Agreement, which shall survive intact.*



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Directions: LTR is located at the Morven Park Equestrian Center in Leesburg.

From the east: Take Rt. 7 W to the Rt. 15 N (Frederick) exit. Proceed through three stop lights (approx. 1.5 miles) and turn left on Tutt Lane. Go 1 mile to a left Sunday Morning Lane. Go past the indoor arenas on the left and turn left into the parking area next to Barn #3.

From the west: Follow Rt. 7 E to Rt. 15 N Bypass (Frederick) then follow directions above after passing under Business RT. 7 in Leesburg.

LTR is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization and a **PATH Intl. Premier Accredited Center**. You can learn more about equine assisted services and therapies (EAS/T) at www.pathintl.org. LTR is also a member center of the **Therapeutic Riding Association of Virginia (TRAV)** www.travinc.org, **American Hippotherapy Association**, & **Loudoun County Equine Alliance**.

STAFF

- Susan Koehler, Executive Director skoehler@ltrf.org
- Kathy Blaine, Program Director kblaine@ltrf.org
- Debbie Gerbich, Assistant Program Director/Horse Mgr. teachyou@ltrf.org
- Heather Payne, Instructor & Volunteer Coordinator volunteer@ltrf.org
- Hilary Sorrenti, Office & Fundraising Coordinator hsorrenti@ltrf.org
- Bookkeeper/Administration bookkeeper@ltrf.org
- **PATH Intl. Certified Instructors:** Kathy Blaine, Debbie Gerbich, Mary Jo Beckman, Heather Payne, Pam McAfee, Caitlin Taft, Claudia Yates
- **Therapists:** Catherine Wycoff, DPT, HPCS (PATH Intl. Certified Instructor)
- **Horse Care:** Tracy Randolph, Caitlin Taft

The following policies apply to all staff, participants, volunteers, and visitors.

- All staff, participants, and volunteers must have completed, signed, dated, current paperwork on file that is updated annually.
- All staff, volunteers, participants and guests will treat one another with kindness and respect. No abusive, threatening or violent behavior will be tolerated on the premises.
- Behavior deemed inappropriate by LTR staff may result in removal from the premises and dismissal from center activities permanently.
- Horses must be treated with kindness and respect by using gentle hands and feet.
- All volunteers must use the “Buddy System” (2 people approved by instructor) to turn out/bring in horses to/from fields or paddocks. No volunteer should enter a field or paddock alone.
- Never tie horses/ponies to fence boards or other movable objects, and never tie by using the lead rope attached to the bridle. Please tie using safety halters only with a break-away feature. Consult a staff member about appropriate methods for tying horses. Never wrap lead rope around hand, body.



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- **Follow tacking procedures carefully: staff only bridle horses, do not leave saddle on horse without securing girth, keep reins from touching ground, bring concerns regarding tack (including worn equipment to staff's attention), do not kneel, or sit on ground near horse while grooming/tacking. Use cross-ties when directed by staff.**
- **All participants/personnel must wear ASTM/SEI approved helmets while mounted or driving. This may be provided if needed.**
- **All participants will use safety stirrups and/or have appropriate hard-soled shoe with ¼" heel. No sandals in the barn. Shorts or sneakers are not recommended.**
- **No participant (or participant's family member/caregiver) or guest is permitted in stalls, or barn area, including paddocks, unless a staff member or trained volunteer is present.**
- **No one may feed horses from their hands. All feeding, petting, and horse handling must be supervised by a staff member. Use a "goodie bowl" or bucket to feed treats.**
- **A staff member/credentialed instructor must be present for any program activity.**
- **Alcohol and/or illegal drug use is strictly prohibited on the premises. No weapons, firearms permitted. Failure to comply may result in removal from all center activities.**
- **Absolutely NO smoking in or around the barn areas.**
- **No running in barn areas or around horses.**
- **No pets in barn, arenas or LTR activity areas please. Service dogs permitted on a leash or under the control of owner/handler.**
- **Barn areas and aisle ways must be kept clear and free of obstructions.**
- **Siblings, guests, family members must be supervised at all times. No climbing on bleachers.**
- **All incidents, accidents, injuries, occurrences or hazardous conditions should be reported immediately to an LTR staff member. An occurrence/incident report must be filed and reviewed by the Program Director.**
- **No photography or videography without permission of LTR staff member.**
- **Only LTR staff may operate center equipment: e.g. truck, Gator**
- **LTR or Morven Park staff only in hay lofts – lofts are off limits to volunteers, participants, guests.**
- **Please adhere to Morven Park's posted speed limit of 14 ½ MPH**



Center Policies 2021, cont.

Public Health Emergency Procedures and Policies:

- Loudoun Therapeutic Riding will follow all procedures and policies as required by Morven Park, the Commonwealth of Virginia, Loudoun County and recommendations by the CDC, however final decisions regarding the safety of participants, volunteers, staff and guests rest with LTR.
- Volunteers, participants and staff will follow all rules for personal hygiene, personal safety and public safety as required by Loudoun Therapeutic Riding for the safety of Participants, Volunteers, Guests and Staff.
- Volunteers, Staff and Participants will complete any additional paperwork as requested by Loudoun Therapeutic Riding.
- LTR will keep Volunteers and Participants informed regarding changes or updates to procedures and policies. Separate policies/procedures may be necessary and will be shared with the LTR community.

Thank you for reviewing these policies which have been developed to provide a positive, safe and enjoyable environment for all members of the LTR community. If you have concerns, questions or comments please call 703-771-2689, or email the office - info@ltrf.org

**Loudoun Therapeutic Riding, Inc.
at Morven Park
41580 Sunday Morning Lane
Leesburg, VA 20176**

Phone: 703-771-2689 Website: LTRF.org Email: info@ltrf.org