

Hoofbeats Therapeutic Riding Center, Inc.

At the Virginia Horse Center

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HORSE DONATION/LOAN INFORMATION

Thank you for considering Hoofbeats as a possible home for your horse! You obviously care a great deal or you would not be going to such lengths to insure your horse's well-being. We understand and appreciate that, and are honored that you would entrust your horse to us.

Unfortunately Hoofbeats can only accommodate a limited number of horses in the program, which forces us to be very selective. Our horses must go through a very thorough screening process, because the work that therapy horses do can be very intense, and the population they serve is a fragile one. A therapy horse must possess very specific qualities sometimes rare in the equine world. In addition, depending on the needs of our client population at any given time, Hoofbeats may require a horse that can fill a certain niche, a certain size horse perhaps, or one with a particular training background. **Please understand that if we do not accept your horse into our program, it is no reflection on the horse.** We have had to turn down many wonderful horses, because we did not have the right work for them.

An owner wishing to donate or loan a horse to Hoofbeats initiates the process by submitting the enclosed application form. If the application passes review, the owner will then be asked to transport the horse to the Hoofbeats barn to undergo a 90-day Trial Period (see detailed explanation of the Trial Period below.)

Before the start of the Trial Period the owner, whether perspective lender or donor, must sign the Horse Loan Agreement. This document is a written agreement between Hoofbeats and the owner that establishes the terms, obligations, and provisions in effect during the Trial Period. It specifies that while an owner's horse resides at the Hoofbeats barn, Hoofbeats has exclusive use of the horse. Hoofbeats agrees to care for the horse, and assumes routine maintenance expenses (feed, hay, shoeing every 6 weeks, vaccinations, quarterly worming, and normal vet care.) Hoofbeats is **not** responsible for major medical expenses, or the replacement cost due to loss, theft, illness, injury, or any other reason while the horse is in our care. Hoofbeats carries liability insurance for all of its activities, and assumes all liability that could result from the use of the horse during the Trial Period. The owner can opt to be named as an "additional insured" on our insurance policy by paying the annual \$35 fee, should such extra protection be desired.

IMPORTANT: owners must understand that Hoofbeats reserves the right to refuse acceptance of a horse into the Hoofbeats program at any point in the Application and Trial Period process. An owner who has brought a horse to Hoofbeats for a Trial Period must therefore be prepared to pick up the horse from the Hoofbeats barn within 7 days of notification that the horse is not being accepted into the program. Please note: Hoofbeats reserves the right to assess fees for maintenance and care of horses left at Hoofbeats beyond that 7 day period.

HORSE LOAN

There are two options for the loan of a horse to Hoofbeats, depending on your preferences, and on the needs of the program:

1. **Seasonal Loan of the Horse to Hoofbeats:** During our season (generally March through November), Hoofbeats has exclusive use of the horse, and takes responsibility for its board and care. At the end of the season, on the date agreed upon with Hoofbeats, complete responsibility for the horse and its care reverts back to the owner, who is then expected to transport the horse back to its home barn.
2. **Two-Year Loan Arrangement:** This option is basically the same as the Seasonal Loan, except that Hoofbeats agrees to winter the horse through one winter in exchange for the use of the horse for two full riding seasons. As the owner of the horse, you will be required to offset the horse's winter expenses. Hoofbeats will discuss with the owner the program's financial needs to cover the horse for the December through February time frame. Please note: this option is only offered if space is available for the winter at the Hoofbeats barn, or at another Hoofbeats-approved site.

For lenders under either option whose horses have been accepted for use in the program, the Horse Loan Agreement, signed at the start of the Trial Period, will remain in effect for the duration of the loan period. As stated above, Hoofbeats will care for the horse and assume its routine maintenance expenses until the agreed upon closing date of the loan period (Donations from the owner to offset these expenses are certainly welcome, but are not required.) The owner will be welcome to visit the horse at any time during Hoofbeats normal hours of operation, or by special arrangement with the staff. Owners under the Two-Year Loan option, who wish to visit or ride during the winter (December through February), will need to schedule specific times with the Hoofbeats staff as the barn is officially closed during that period.

At any time during the loan period, Hoofbeats reserves the right to terminate the Loan Agreement with the owner, should Hoofbeats determine that the horse has for any reason become unsuitable for further use in its program. The owner must accordingly be prepared to remove the horse from the Hoofbeats barn at any time during the loan period, within 7 days of notification. Please note: Hoofbeats reserves the right to assess fees for maintenance and care of horses left at Hoofbeats beyond that 7 day period.

PERMANENT HORSE DONATION

If a horse successfully completes the application and Trial Process, and Hoofbeats agrees to accept the horse into the program as a permanent donation, Hoofbeats will cancel the Horse Loan Agreement, and arrange to transfer ownership of the horse to Hoofbeats T.R.C., Inc. Hoofbeats will then provide the donor with a signed donation form. Please note: Hoofbeats is not authorized to appraise the horse, and it will be the donor's responsibility to enter the appropriate value on the donation form. Values over a certain amount (check with your accountant) may require an appraisal from a certified equine professional. Hoofbeats is a 501(c)(3) organization, and your donation should be tax-deductible.

If, at a future date, your horse must be retired or can no longer serve at Hoofbeats, we will make every effort to inform you and will allow you to be involved in the placement of this horse.

THE TRIAL PERIOD FOR PROSPECTIVE PROGRAM HORSES

What happens during the 90 day Trial Period at Hoofbeats? In the first week our instructors will ride the horse lightly in the arena, and on trails, and introduce the horse to games and to the mounting ramp. If initial rides go well, the horse will be admitted into the working student (able-bodied) program, where we will evaluate the horse's response to being ridden by different riders. During the next two to three weeks the horse will be ridden regularly, both alone and in groups, will do some intensive ground work, and will be introduced to our adaptive equipment and all of the "unusual" things the horse might encounter during a therapeutic riding session. If the horse has responded well to this point, the staff may then decide to try the horse in the disabled rider program. In this we must proceed cautiously, as the horse will begin to encounter situations, stressors, and challenges possibly outside anything in his or her previous experience. If the horse appears to have "the right stuff," the remainder of the 90 days will be used to see how well the horse likes this new job. The best therapy horses are active "partners" in the therapeutic process, so it is critical that the horse enjoy these new circumstances. Throughout the trial period, the owner will be kept apprised of the horse's progress, and will be notified promptly when the final decision is made.

If you have any questions regarding the application form or the process of donating/loaning your horse to Hoofbeats, do not hesitate to contact us. Be sure to return the completed Horse Loan/Donation Application to:

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