



## **PARENT AND RIDER INFORMATION GUIDE**

**Revised March 2021**

For riders of Baraboo River Equine-Assisted Therapies, Inc. and their families. Please READ and keep this information for future reference. Many of the rules set forth are standards established by the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship, Int'l (PATH) which, as a member center, we are required to enforce.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Baraboo River Equine-Assisted Therapies' mission is to provide equine-assisted activities and therapies to children and adults with disabilities and special needs, while supporting the physical, mental, and emotional health of each individual in their interactions with horses and staff. The participants (riders) can gain tremendously by the interaction with our equines. In addition they will have fun. For our instructors, equine specialists and volunteers to deliver superior service, we need to have all visitors, parents, siblings and friends follow the guidelines set forth herein. These guidelines are meant to provide every opportunity to maximize the benefit of enrolling in one of our sessions.

### **DIRECTIONS TO THE RANCH**

In 2021 BREATHE will begin operating at its' new location, at E11230 Moon Road, in the Township of Delton.

**WHERE TO PARK:** As you enter the gravel driveway, drive forward toward the barn. Follow the signs to BREATHE parking.

### **CHECKING IN**

Please arrive on time but not significantly earlier than the lesson is scheduled for (5-10 minutes early is great!). Check in at the Reception Center. If the building is closed or no staff is on hand to greet you, please wait there until your scheduled time. While waiting, the rider may select and put on their riding helmet if the building is unlocked. The instructor or a volunteer bring the rider into the mounting ramp area.

Do not allow children to play on or near the mounting ramp, arena fencing, or barn doors while waiting for lessons to begin.

Parents and siblings utilizing the viewing room by the indoor arena must remain there for the duration of the lesson and not wander or play in the back barn aisle. Noise and commotion in the barn aisle will disturb the horses and disrupt the lesson.

In the event that lessons are held inside the barn, you will either be notified ahead of time, or a team member will come to the Reception Center to escort the rider to the barn area. Parents and guests not involved in the lesson are asked to remain either in their vehicles, or in the BREATHE Reception building, or in the viewing room. When we hold indoor lessons, only the rider is permitted in the barn area. This is for safety reasons.

## **OBSERVER'S WAITING AREA**

Unless arranged with the instructor in advance, we find it best for the riders if family members, parents and friends do not become part of the lesson and cause undue distractions. You are welcome to observe the rider from a comfortable distance. Accompanying children, who cannot sit still to observe, should stay near the Reception Center so as not to be a distraction to the rider. Please keep in mind that BREATHE operates on property owned by others; be respectful of the property and the family's privacy.

## **POLICIES RELATED TO LESSONS**

No rider will be allowed to participate until all fees are paid and all forms are completed and on file with BREATHE. Riders receiving aid must submit confirmation that lessons and fees have been approved by the provider agency. A BREATHE instructor will confirm class times with clients in advance of each riding session.

Riders are expected to report for every lesson as scheduled. Occasionally, even with an indoor arena, conditions may be unsafe for mounted lessons. In these cases, BREATHE staff may utilize alternative methods including ground lessons, or mechanical horse (Equicizer) instruction. Please be aware that the lesson schedule does not provide for make-up slots. In cases where a rider must miss a lesson, it will not be possible for BREATHE to reschedule. Missed lessons are non-refundable. The need to miss a lesson should be reported to BREATHE as far in advance as possible.

## **ATTIRE**

All riders must wear an ASTM-approved riding helmet when mounted, and securely fastened close-toed shoes or boots (NO CLOGS, JELLIES, SANDALS, OR FLIP FLOPS!). Although it is tempting for riders to wear shorts in warmer weather, most often they will be more comfortable riding in a pair of light jeans, slacks or leggings. All riders and anyone else who expects to be around the horses, should wear substantial footwear (paddock boots or work boots are preferred.) Never come to the barn in open-toed shoes, sandals, clogs or flip-flops.

## **TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM THE BARN**

Due to insurance concerns, BREATHE cannot provide transportation to or from the barn. Please do not request rides from any staff member or volunteer while they are fulfilling service hours at BREATHE.

## **RIDER PARTICIPATION**

Recognizing that equine related activities hold inherent risks, all new and returning riders will be evaluated by a PATH (Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International) Certified Instructor to ensure a safe and beneficial experience. Returning riders will be re-evaluated each year or as necessary for changes in medical, physical, cognitive, and behavioral status. Additionally it is the responsibility of the adult rider, or of the rider's parent or guardian to keep BREATHE apprised of any changes in the rider's medical, physical, mental, or behavioral status during the course of the lesson season.

## **CONTRAINDICATIONS**

Horseback riding is contraindicated for some conditions/individuals. BREATHE follows the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International's (PATH) guidelines for precautions/contraindications for physical restrictions of riding. You can see the PATH guidelines on the

PATH website ([www.pathintl.org](http://www.pathintl.org)). ***Riders at BREATHE must have some trunk control and must be able to sit up with little or no assistance.***

## **WEIGHT CONSIDERATIONS**

Our horses are our most critical asset! The health, age and carrying ability are factors we consider when matching horses and riders. The maximum weights are listed below, but decisions regarding participation will be based on the availability of a suitable horse relative to the height, weight, cognition, and balance of the participant. The results of a risk/benefit analysis will also be considered. Final decisions regarding participation will be made by the BREATHE Executive Director.

Rider weight is also a safety concern for several reasons. Our staff volunteers are responsible for assisting riders with mounting, dismounting, and emergency dismounts. BREATHE does not provide a mechanized life for mounting and dismounting, therefore riders must be able to stand briefly with assistance for mounting and dismounting.

Maximum upper weight limits for riders in the BREATHE program are:

- 160 lbs. For an independent rider, or a rider who needs a leader only, or a leader and spotter only
- 140 lbs. For a rider who needs a leader and 1-2 side walkers

Age restrictions for riders:

- Children must be at least 4 years of age
- Children under the age of 5 will require a leader and at least one side walker.
- Children will not ride independently until they are at least 7 years.

## **BREATHE BARN RULES**

**ATTENTION!** The following rules apply to all program participants, staff members, volunteers, and anyone who visits BREATHE. Riders, siblings, friends and parents are expected to follow barn safety rules. These rules are designed to insure safety, a primary concern here at BREATHE. Please help us to enforce these rules!

- No abusive, threatening, or violent behavior towards people or animals will be tolerated on BREATHE premises.
- Alcohol and illegal drug use is prohibited on the BREATHE grounds during.
- Absolutely NO smoking or use of open flames is permitted in the barn, or anywhere on the BREATHE working areas.
- There will be no running, jumping, screaming, or yelling in the barn or around the horses.
- No one is permitted in the barn, or in the adjacent paddocks and pastures, unless a BREATHE staff member or approved volunteer is present on the premises.
- No one may enter a pasture containing horses unless accompanied by a staff member or approved volunteer.
- No one is allowed to handle program horses, feed, or pet horses, unless supervised by a staff member or approved volunteer.
- No one may ride a program horse unless supervised by a staff member or approved volunteer.
- No person will be permitted to ride a program horse until s/he has submitted to BREATHE a completely processed set of the required forms.
- All riders must wear an ASTM-approved helmet while mounted and when working with horses in the barn area, use safety stirrups while mounted, and wear securely fastened, close-toed, hard-soled shoes, preferably with a short block-style heel.
- No one may bring a non-program horse onto the BREATHE premises without prior permission from the BREATHE Executive Director.

- Children on the BREATHE premises must be supervised at all times.
- Dogs are not permitted on the BREATHE premises.
- Barn aisles must be kept clean and free of obstructions.
- All riders are to wait at the Reception Center with a parent/ guardian until a volunteer or instructor comes to escort them to the barn or rider mounting area. No rider will be left unattended before or after their lesson. Parents/Guardians must accompany the rider or other young guests to the bathroom area.
- The only people who are to be in the mounting area are the instructors, volunteers and riders that are getting ready to ride in current lesson.
- If you need to talk to the Riding Instructor about medical or physical problems which may have a safety implication for the current lesson, please do so before the mounting phase of the lesson gets started.
- We encourage parents/guardians to stay on the premises while the rider is riding. If you have to leave the premises during the lesson time you are required to leave a number where BREATHE can contact you in case of an emergency. Put your name, date and number on the dry erase board in the Reception Center and inform a staff person.

### **ADDITIONAL SAFETY-RELATED REQUIREMENTS**

Report all accidents, injuries, or hazardous conditions to a staff member immediately or as soon as possible.

### **DISCIPLINARY POLICY**

BREATHE's 3-step disciplinary policy has been developed to ensure a safe and conducive environment for all involved in our therapeutic riding program. However, when any offense is to such a degree that the health and/or safety of the rider, volunteer, instructor, or equine is endangered, immediate dismissal from the program may be warranted.

BREATHE's Riding Instructors have the right to discipline a rider, parent/guardian, and/or volunteer.

1. First offense a documented verbal warning. If this is a rider, he or she will be removed from the horse and will sit in holding area until lessons end.
2. Second offense a written warning. If a rider, he or she will be dismissed from the riding lesson for that day.
3. Third offense is final action. The rider will be removed from horse and dropped from the BREATHE program.

Likewise, if the offender is a parent, guardian or volunteer, they will follow the same disciplinary policy and will be dropped from the program on the third offense. In the case of a parent or guardian this dismissal will include the rider.

Examples of reasons for disciplinary actions: disruption to class, behavior problems that are unacceptable or unsafe (ie; kicking, biting, spitting, pulling hair, hitting), disrespect to instructor and/or volunteers, failure to follow program stated policies, rules, instructions, etc.

### **DENIAL OF SERVICES**

BREATHE reserves the right to deny services to any individual based upon concerns for the applicant's safety and/or the safety of the horses, volunteers, staff, property owners, or for other reasons in

accordance with PATH operating center guidelines. Clients of BREATHE shall have no history of inappropriate behavior with fire, or any tendencies or history of abuse or violence directed toward other people or animals.

### **BREATHE POLICY FOR THE DISCHARGE OF PARTICIPANTS**

Riders at BREATHE may be asked to leave the program for a number of reasons, including, but not limited to:

1. The development of a contraindicated condition or the deterioration of a condition to the point that therapeutic riding is no longer beneficial, or could be harmful to the rider, or where safety for the rider or others has become a concern.
2. Weight gain above the maximums stated previously. BREATHE reserves the right to weigh riders, onsite, in a discreet, private manner on a digital scale.
3. Failure to complete and sign all required forms for the current riding season.
4. A display of fire-starting, threatening behavior, animal abuse, the abuse of children or adults, verbal abuse of volunteers or others, alcohol or drug use on the BREATHE grounds, or behavior that is disruptive for the normal functioning of the program.
5. Frequent missed lessons without advance notification.
6. Mainstreaming of an advanced independent rider whose riding has progressed beyond the ability of our program horses.

## **OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP SUPPORT BREATHE**

**FUND RAISING:** Interested individuals are welcome to form and/or chair a committee to help meet the financial needs of BREATHE. Our riders pay approximately \$30.00 a lesson but it costs BREATHE approximately \$69.00 in manpower and assets for each rider's lesson. We have to fundraise or find donors for the rest of these funds.

**SPONSOR A HORSE:** A monthly sponsorship of one BREATHE horse costs \$175/month and covers most of the cost of feed, supplements, and farrier services.

**CORPORATE CHALLENGE:** Identify and enlist corporations, businesses, and interested groups willing to participate in/support our benefit horse show or other equine-related event.

**CORPORATE CAMPAIGN:** Identify and solicit corporations and small businesses for general contributions and assist in follow up and recognition of corporate donors.

**CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS:** Identify and cultivate clubs and organizations in the community willing to offer financial assistance and/or volunteers.

**HORSE CLUBS:** Contact horse clubs for funding, tack donations, etc. Establish relationships with large horse clubs for club-sponsored special events benefiting BREATHE.

**FOUNDATIONS & GRANTS:** Help identify foundations or grants with a potential for donating to BREATHE.

**GIFTS IN KIND:** Contact vendors to donate needed items, thereby reducing BREATHE budgeted expenses.

**ORGANIZE SPECIAL SOCIALS:** Help raise money, coordinate food, organize volunteers, obtain equipment, make posters, and arrange publicity or entertainment for various occasions.

**LONG RANGE PLANNING:** Provide your insight and expertise to promote a financially successful program for the next decade. Help identify possible successful special events and ways of balancing activity levels more evenly. Identify new rider groups and evaluate marketing and communications.

**PUBLIC RELATIONS / MARKETNG:** Submit periodic press releases as needed. Obtain media coverage, striving for higher community visibility. Assist in writing proposals and other written materials. Assist in developing and doing program presentations to various clubs and civic organizations.

**RIDER RECRUITMENT:** Solicit new clients, both individuals and organizations, to maximize the utilization of the program and to help create community awareness. Provide support to riders and parents to assist in the communication of our growing organization.

**RECRUIT AND MANAGE VOLUNTEERS:** Arrange and oversee volunteer support for the riding program, special events, and office needs. Coordinate ongoing training for current volunteers. Establish contacts with various groups interested in BREATHE.

**OFFICE HELP:** Join a group of volunteers at the BREATHE Reception Center to greet riders and their families, oversee volunteer sign-in and sign-out, and send out Birthday cards to volunteers and riders.

**PHOTOGRAPHER:** take pictures at lessons, all special events and social events.