



RIVER VALLEY RIDERS
EQUINE-ASSISTED SERVICES

Discharge of Participant Policy

Occasionally, it is necessary for an existing (current) participant to be discharged from the therapeutic riding or driving program. These discharges will be the decision of the Executive Director and a Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH Intl.) certified instructor in accordance with the following procedures.

A participant may be discharged if it is determined that:

- RVR does not have a horse suitable for the participant.
- RVR does not have the staff to serve the participant within established safety guidelines (staff consists of instructors and volunteers).
- The participant's weight exceeds the maximum weight limit to be determined for each individual horse.
- The participant does not demonstrate safety awareness.
- The participant demonstrates behavior that creates an unsafe environment for themselves, other participants, volunteers, instructors, or horses.
- The participant displays threatening behavior to people or horses while at RVR facility.
- The participant physically or verbally abuses people or horses while at RVR facility. Any abusive behavior shown to volunteers is unacceptable.
- The participant has any history (at any location) of prohibited behaviors including: playing with or starting fire; inappropriately throwing objects; causing property damage; abuse to self or others. This history must be disclosed to the RVR Executive Director and discussed to ensure that the behavior is not repeated. Parents/guardians will be responsible for any property damage caused by their child.

- The development of a contraindicated condition or the deterioration of a condition to the point horseback riding or driving is no longer beneficial or could be harmful to the participant. To ensure the safety for the Participant or others, the instructor will assess the participant for the following:
 - Is the participant able to accommodate to the movement of the horse or carriage, including head control and symmetry?
 - Does the participant have adequate range of motion in the hips to sit astride a horse with the proper barrel width to offer a secure base of support?
 - Does the participant have the potential to achieve biomechanical alignment?
 - Does the participant appear to have the ability to express pain or discomfort?
- Driving only: It is necessary for the participant to always use a motorized wheelchair.
- Driving only: The participant does not have the ability to stay in the seat or wheelchair (i.e. will suddenly exit the vehicle).

River Valley Riders (RVR) 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, facility, or for other reasons in accordance with PATH Intl. operating center guidelines.

No Participant will be dismissed without an opportunity to discuss the reasons with supervisory staff. The Participant may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to discontinue the Participant's relationship with RVR. Notice of such a decision should be communicated as soon as possible.

If it is determined that the participant cannot participate in therapeutic riding/driving safely, given the aforementioned criteria, then the person will not be allowed to participate until or unless the deciding factors have changed, and the person can be re-assessed. If lesson fees have been paid, there may be a refund of those fees depending on the situation causing the dismissal. If the reason for dismissal is that RVR cannot supply a safe horse and/or staff, a refund may be issued; however, a refund may not be granted if dismissal is caused by the participant behavior putting others at risk.