



Participant Handbook

Welcome to Halleck Creek Ranch! We hope that your participation in our equine-assisted activities and therapeutic riding program will give you a great sense of achievement and fulfillment as well as provide you with a variety of physical and sensory benefits. Our horses and volunteers are specially chosen and trained by our staff to help you get the maximum therapeutic benefit out of each ride as well as offer you the gift of friendship and community.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at any time with any issues, questions or concerns that you may have. I am always available and eager to hear about your riding experience as you become a member of our community.

With a warm welcome,

Brenda Falco

Brenda Falco, Program Director
(415) 662-2488
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WHO WE ARE

MISSION

We believe that providing challenging experiences in a supportive environment will make a lasting, positive change in the attitudes and abilities of children and adults with disabilities and in the people who care for them. Through the beneficial activity of therapeutic horseback riding, our participants learn new skills and expand their self-perception, enjoying a sense of freedom. We believe their families and caregivers benefit from the relaxed atmosphere of the ranch and a valuable chance to network with other families and caregivers. We are committed to providing our program at a significantly subsidized cost to our participants, so that the therapeutic benefits available through connections with people, animals and nature are never denied a single individual in need.

ACTIVITIES

With the generous support of our donors, Halleck Creek Ranch (HCR) improves the lives of Bay Area children and adults with special needs by providing at reduced cost individual and group therapeutic horseback riding and equine-assisted activities and learning (EAAL). This activity provides our participants with a critical bridge to greater independence, improved physical and mental health and valuable friendships. Therapeutic riding builds the physical strength, coordination, self-confidence and social skills needed to reduce stress and improve each participant's quality of life, allowing them to reach their full potential both now and into adulthood. In addition to improving their lives, Halleck Creek Ranch is instrumental in supporting their families and caregivers. The ranch offers them peace of mind as our participants gain critical life skills, become more independent and form new friendships. Our riding program builds important connections between the disabled and non-disabled communities by giving volunteers the opportunity to interact with youth and adults with special needs. Through their experiences, volunteers gain valuable perspective on their own abilities, develop strong interpersonal and leadership skills and discover the joy of helping others.

Halleck Creek Ranch is a member of the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH Intl.), a federal nonprofit organization formed in 1969 to promote equine-assisted activities and therapies (EAAT) for individuals with special needs. With more than 4,800 certified instructors and equine specialists and 873-member centers, more than 7,600 PATH Intl. members around the globe help nearly 69,000 children and adults (including more than 6,700 veterans and active-duty military personnel) with physical, cognitive and emotional challenges find strength and independence through the power of the horse each year.

HISTORY

Halleck Creek Ranch was founded by Duane Irving and Joyce Goldfield with the vision of bringing children and adults with disabilities into the wilderness using the four strong legs of a horse. They created the program as a unique gift for these special riders so that they could experience the same joys as their non-disabled peers.

With the help and guidance of the Marin County 4H office, they began the therapeutic riding program in 1977, offering two sessions to 12 participants every Saturday at the Irving Ranch in Nicasio. In 1985, prior to the division and sale of Irving ranch, an easement on the property immediately adjoining what is now Halleck Creek Ranch was put in place to ensure the continuance of the program's trail rides. Shortly thereafter, the program grew to include additional trail rides each Saturday, as well as a weekday program offered four days a week. Halleck Creek Ranch incorporated in 1979, and is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, tax exempt corporation and a registered California charity.

Halleck Creek Ranch owns the 60-acre ranch located deep in the heart of the Nicasio Valley upon which it operates. The program has grown to operate five days a week, serving nearly 100 participants every week, providing more than 3,900 hours of programming a year.

PROGRAM POLICIES

HOURS OF OPERATION

Halleck Creek Ranch operates five days a week, during the following days and times:

Tuesdays	10:00am-5:00pm
Wednesdays	10:00am-5:00pm
Thursdays	10:00am-5:00pm
Fridays	10:00am-5:00pm
Saturdays	9:00am-3:00pm

Occasional breaks in the schedule for administration days as well as holidays occur, the dates for which can be found on our website www.halleckcreekranch.org.

PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY

Halleck Creek Ranch aims to provide the safest possible equine-assisted activities and therapeutic riding for our participants and will make every reasonable effort to meet the needs of applicants as described immediately below. It may be possible for HCR staff and volunteers to offer alternative activities or services for individuals when safety is a concern. In the event a

participant is unable to take part in mounted equine activities, activities such as ground work, grooming, or supervised barn chores may be considered.

Orientation and Evaluation

Each potential participant will receive an initial evaluation by a PATH Intl Certified instructor. The evaluation will take into account the individual's abilities, height and weight, and the staff, horse and equipment necessary to support the participant. The evaluation will also be based on the riding instructor's judgement and any relevant reports from the participant's licensed medical practitioners and therapists as well as the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship's (PATH) published guidelines. These guidelines, which include a list of precautions and contraindications, are available for review by request from the Program Director. Based on this evaluation, the participant will be advised if equine-assisted activities and/or therapeutic riding is appropriate.

Licensed Medical Practitioner's Statement

All participants must have a signed and dated statement from a licensed medical practitioner. Participants with Down Syndrome must have an annual medical clearance from a licensed medical practitioner that includes a neurological exam that specifically confirms the absence of any symptoms consistent with atlantoaxial instability (AAI)

Age

Participants must be at least 5 years of age. Children under the age of 5 are accepted only under special circumstances.

Physical Characteristics

Safety and maximizing the therapeutic benefits of equine activities are primary concerns of a successful program. In order to ensure the safety of participants as well as our horses and all riding program personnel, HCR Staff makes every effort to safely pair participants with appropriate horses and personnel that can handle their size, weight and riding style. There may however, be situations/circumstances that arise where the staff determines that we cannot accommodate the participant. Halleck Creek ranch has specific weight limits for each horse and for safety reasons, must adhere to these parameters.

Behavior

Participants who display inappropriate, unsafe or disruptive behavior that may result in harm to themselves and others may not be accepted into the program or may be removed from the ongoing program

Re-evaluation

Under certain situations where a participant's condition may change, a re-evaluation may become necessary. Based on this re-evaluation, the participant may have to cease riding or participating due to safety concerns. HCR reserves the right to request additional information from the

participant's licensed medical practitioner and/or therapist/mental health professional before permitting that individual's continued participation in the center's activities. Their licensed medical practitioner's written verification may be required for the participant to resume the program.

ENROLLMENT

Participants must complete the enrollment paperwork prior to their participation at Halleck Creek Ranch, including but not limited to a waiver of liability and medical release. Each year, all enrolled participants must go through a re-enrollment process, during which they update their forms. This is a requirement to participate, and failing to do so by announced due dates will be considered abandonment of their position as a participant at Halleck Creek Ranch.

Participants are also obligated to keep medical information up to date in the event that there is a significant change in one's medical condition, medications, etc. Medical information provided is deemed confidential information and will be treated as such by HCR.

SESSION SIGNUPS

Signups for a session begin 2 weeks prior to the first day of the session. Participants may attend a single session, skip a session, or attend multiple sessions throughout the year. Registration will remain open until all rides within a session are full.

TUITION

Halleck Creek Ranch is a community-based organization. Generous support from individual donors, Bay Area foundations, local groups, businesses and dedicated volunteers allows Halleck Creek Ranch to charge a fraction of the true programming cost. In addition to tuition for programming, we invite participants to assist with fundraising activities in order to keep our programs affordable for all.

Tuition is due in advance of each session. Invoices are emailed mid-session to all participants for payment of tuition for the following session. If you prefer to have a paper copy of your invoice mailed to you, please notify the Program Director. It is important that you keep your contact information current with us so that we are sure to send the invoice to the appropriate person for payment.

Full payment is required to complete a reservation for any session, unless an agreement has been worked out with the Halleck Creek Ranch Executive Director in advance. If full payment has not been received one week prior to the start of the session, the reservation will be cancelled. Payment can be made online by credit card, PayPal or by cash or check at the Ranch. Those who pay after the due date will be charged a \$50 late fee.

Session tuition is as follows:

Saturdays: \$400 per 8-week session
Weekdays: 45 minute lessons: \$400 per 8-week session

Halleck Creek Ranch strives to make its programs affordable to all participants. If a participant is in need of financial assistance, scholarships are available. Please discuss any scholarship or payment plan needs with the Program Director or Executive Director.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Halleck Creek Ranch is dedicated to serving children and adults with disabilities. Halleck Creek Ranch offers needs-based scholarships for those unable to afford the total cost.

Participants and their families are asked to contribute as much as possible so that as many people as possible can be served. Final determination of a scholarship is based on applicant need, determination of criteria met by the Scholarship Committee, and the funds available. Participants and/or their families are also asked to volunteer their skills to Halleck Creek Ranch to help defray costs if they are approved for scholarship funding.

A completed scholarship application must be submitted annually for review. All information submitted will be kept confidential by Halleck Creek Ranch. Anyone receiving a Halleck Creek Ranch scholarship must agree not to disclose the amount of their scholarship to any other person(s).

Scholarships are granted on a sliding-fee schedule, on an annual basis. Funding may not be provided to those in need for more than three consecutive years, so as to allow funding to become available to other participants in need.

CANCELLATION AND CREDIT POLICY

Participants are required to notify the staff of any cancellation, whether in advance or last-minute. Our staff devotes hours each week to ensuring that there is enough volunteer help for each participant, and failure to notify us or cancelling at the last minute for previously planned breaks costs us valuable program and volunteer time. Our cancellation policy is as follows:

- HCR does not schedule make-ups for missed or cancelled rides
- A credit will be issued for rides cancelled at least 24 hours in advance
- No credits will be issued for rides cancelled less than 24 hours in advance unless there is a real medical or family emergency
- Participants who fail to notify staff of cancellations in a timely manner are at risk of losing both their programming slots as well as their scholarships

CANCELLATION POLICY FOR WEATHER AND OTHER CONDITIONS

Halleck Creek Ranch reserves the right to cancel a ride at any time for safety reasons. Reasons may include but are not limited to excessive wind, rain, power outages, red flag warnings or heat above 95 degrees.

If rides are cancelled for the day, a message will be left on our voicemail stating so, and it is the responsibility of the participant to call in to determine ride status. A credit will be issued if lessons are cancelled by HCR.

If the recording does not mention cancelled programming for the day, then programs are being held that day and staff, volunteers and horses will be expecting you. If programming is not cancelled, lesson activities on hot or wet weather days may focus on work on the ground or in the arena, and may not include a trail ride.

If you are scheduled to participate but do not plan to attend, at any time, you must notify staff. Again, participants who fail to notify staff of cancellations in a timely manner are at risk of losing both their programming slots as well as their scholarships.

If lessons are cancelled on:

Weekdays: A message will be left on our voicemail by 10:00am.

Saturday: A message will be left on our voicemail by 7:00am.

BREAKS BETWEEN SESSIONS

Participants are more than welcome to take breaks between sessions, but we cannot hold or reserve a particular time slot unless it is paid for in advance. For example, if a participant takes part in Session 1, but wants to take a break and return in Session 3, their Session 1 time slot will not be held for their return in Session 3 unless it is paid for, in full, before their break in Session 2 begins.

DROP-IN RIDES

Drop-in rides are available as the riding schedule allows, at the posted rate. Drop-in rides could be in addition to, or in lieu of, a regularly scheduled ride. Please ask to be on our drop-in call list if you are interested in filling ride times on an as available basis.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Halleck Creek Ranch offers several special events throughout the year, including but not limited to our Spring Open House and Horse Show. Events such as these may require signing up separately from your session sign up, and may also require payment of a drop-in fee. To sign up for a special event, contact the Program Director for more details.

PREPARING FOR A RIDE

Please arrive at least 15 minutes prior to your scheduled ride time so that you have enough time to find a helmet, put on boots, or use the restroom. Those arriving late may be not permitted to participate.

Helmets are required at all times during mounted activities. Halleck Creek Ranch has helmets available for lessons, but encourages participants to purchase their own helmet for comfort. Helmets must be certified by the American Society for Testing and Materials - Safety Equipment Institute (ASTM-SEI) or an international equivalent helmet for equestrian use.

Each participant must wear appropriate riding apparel. Please wear long pants, and shoes that completely cover the foot and enclose the toe. A boot with a 1" heel is ideal.

Loose clothing and jewelry may be unsafe and should not be worn. Perfumes should not be worn as they can attract stinging insects and may affect people with allergies.

CONDUCT

Staff, participants, volunteers, vendors and guests are expected to maintain certain standards of conduct to ensure that Halleck Creek Ranch's mission and activities are carried out safely and successfully. Conduct which is unsafe, unethical, illegal, or disrupts the safe and orderly operation of our organization is considered inappropriate and will not be tolerated.

Conduct which could constitute grounds for immediate dismissal include: physical violence; illegal acts such as theft, use or possession of illegal drugs or weapons; being under the influence of alcohol; sexual activity; and inhumane treatment of a person or an animal.

Misconduct that will lead to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal may include but is not limited to:

- Excessive absences or tardiness
- Failure to adhere to safety policies and procedures
- Bullying
- Harassment or retaliation in any form
- Breach of the confidentiality agreement
- Falsification of records or other documents
- Animal abuse
- Involvement in or the encouragement of illegal activities

Failure to adhere to other policies contained in this handbook, agreements, or other policies and procedures of Halleck Creek Ranch

SEXUAL AND OTHER UNLAWFUL HARASSMENT

HCR policy prohibits harassment, and we are committed to providing a safe environment free of sexual harassment or other unlawful harassment based on the following characteristics, or the perception of these characteristics: pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, race, religious creed, color, gender, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital or registered domestic partner status, age, sexual orientation. This anti-harassment policy applies to all persons involved in the operation of HCR, including volunteers, guests, students, supervisors, and persons doing business with or for us. Prohibited unlawful harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following behaviors:

Verbal conduct such as bullying, epithets, derogatory jokes or comments, slurs or unwanted sexual advances, invitations or comments;

Visual displays such as derogatory and/or sexually oriented posters, photography, cartoons, drawings or gestures;

Physical conduct including unwanted touching, assault, intentionally blocking normal movement or interfering with work because of gender, race, or any other protected basis; threats and demands to submit to sexual requests as a condition of continued employment, or to avoid some other loss, and offers of employment benefits in return for sexual favors;

Retaliation for reporting or threatening to report harassment.

If you believe that you have been unlawfully harassed, please submit a verbal or written complaint to a staff member. Participants are strongly encouraged to report any incidents of harassment immediately so that complaints can be quickly and fairly resolved. All complaints will be promptly investigated and appropriate action will be taken. Individuals who unlawfully harass others will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from the program.

DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Halleck Creek Ranch's Policy prohibits unlawful discrimination based on race, creed, color, religion, gender, national origin or ancestry, age, medical condition, including genetic characteristics, physical or mental disability, veteran status, marital status, registered domestic partner status, sexual orientation, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state, or local laws. Discrimination based on a perception that anyone has any of those characteristics, or is associated with a person who has or is perceived as having any of those characteristics, is also prohibited. All such discrimination is unlawful.

SAFETY AND EMERGENCIES

Safety is our first priority and is everyone's responsibility! If you notice an unsafe condition or act, please notify a staff member immediately.

In the event of an emergency, please note the following:

Dial 911:

In the event of an emergency, dial 911, and stay on the line with the operator until directed otherwise. There are two cordless land-line phones (phone number 415-662-2488) located in the main office. Posted above each phone is the ranch location, contact information, and directions.

Evacuation:

In the event of an emergency requiring evacuation, such as fire or earthquake, all participants will be directed to "shelter in place" and await further instructions from HCR staff and/or emergency personnel. All participants will gather in the "courtyard" area between the office and the arena. Officials will determine the areas to be evacuated and escape routes to use depending upon potential hazards.

If directed to evacuate the area, participants will be asked to load into the least number of vehicles as possible (carpool), and drive at a safe speed with their headlights on. All vehicles are asked to meet at the pre-designated rendezvous point, the Nicasio Square.

Earthquake:

In the event of an earthquake, all riders will be dismounted from their horses with the help of their volunteer and instructor. Staff, volunteers, participants and guests are asked to gather in the field near the arena for further instructions from HCR staff.

Fire:

Fire extinguishers are located in the following areas: The main office (one), the volunteer club house (one), the Executive Director's office trailer (one), in the outdoor alcove between the bathrooms (one), and in the hay barn (two). To operate a fire extinguisher, remember: "Pull, aim, squeeze, and sweep." Pull the pin, aim the nozzle at the base of the fire, squeeze the handle, and sweep back and forth across the width of the fire.

Automated External Defibrillator (AED):

An automated external defibrillator (AED) is mounted on the wall inside the office. All program activities are overseen by at least one PATH certified instructor who is CPR, First Aid and AED trained and certified.

First Aid:

There are two human first aid kits located at the ranch, one of which is located in the tall white cabinet in the right-hand bathroom, and the other is a gray fanny pack which can be found either inside the same cabinet, or with staff while out on the trail. All program activities are overseen by at least one PATH certified instructor who is CPR, First Aid and AED trained and certified.

Feel free to use items in the kits as needed (band aids, anti-histamines, etc.), however, please let staff know when you do so we're sure to replenish the supplies.

PET POLICY

For the health and safety of our volunteers, participants and their families, Halleck Creek Ranch has a No-Pets policy.

This No-Pets policy applies to:

- Pets or companion animals of any kind
- Emotional support animals
- Comfort animals
- Therapy animals

HCR complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) allowing access for all individuals to public places; therefore, we do allow working service dogs to accompany our participants to the ranch, but for the safety of the participants, the horses and the dog, we cannot allow them around the horses at any time. Service animals are individually trained to perform work or tasks for people with disabilities and are required to be leashed or harnessed except when performing work or tasks where such tethering would interfere with the dog's ability to perform the work or tasks.

Pets whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under the ADA. Under ADA regulations that became effective on March 15, 2011, there are no protections for emotional support animals in terms of access to public accommodations and public entities. The Department of Justice has stated that emotional support animals are not protected as service animals under these regulations.

Should you arrive at the ranch with a pet that is not a service animal, you will be asked to remove the animal from our facility. To avoid any disruption or inconvenience, we ask that you please leave your pet at home.

VISITORS

Visitors, guests, and program participants, such as volunteers, are welcome during times when

programs and training sessions are in progress. At all other times access is restricted to authorized persons. All other persons must obtain permission before entering the ranch.

Unless specifically invited and authorized by the Executive Director or other authorized personnel, all areas in which horses are housed, tied, resting or being ridden are off-limits to visitors and guests. Depending on the circumstances for the visit, waivers may be required.

OFF-LIMITS AREAS

For safety and privacy reasons, participants, volunteers and guests are to remain out of the following areas, unless given explicit permission to enter for a specific task:

- Ranch offices when staff are not present
- Hay barn and haystack
- Ranch Caretaker's house and yard areas
- Horse paddocks, unless directed by ranch staff for a specific task
- HCR easement areas on neighboring land, the use of which is limited to the therapeutic riding program. No other uses are allowed, and failure to comply will be considered trespassing.

HCR's easement on neighboring lands starts immediately after passing through the neighbor's gate at the end of the road leading east towards the riding trail. The easement allows HCR staff, volunteers and participants to have access to and use the easement lands for our therapeutic riding program only. When we are on the easement lands, we need to work cooperatively with the land owner to respect his ownership and right to use of the land for his purposes. The owner may have third party contractors, employees, and/or guests on the easement lands and it is important to be alert for potential overlapping uses that might require mutual accommodation.

Owners of the adjacent lands where HCR has a trail-riding easement have a road access agreement across HCR to access their properties. Participants are asked to be courteous and aware of other vehicles that may be passing through HCR lands.

Participants, volunteers and guests are also asked to help maintain safety and neighbor relations by staying on HCR property while at the ranch. Our property lines are not clearly marked, but fall within the general areas of the neighbor's gate on the trail (marked No Trespassing), the centerline of the creek, and the gate at the entrance to the ranch.

COMMUNICATING WITH RANCH STAFF

Halleck Creek Ranch strives to create a positive environment of mutual respect among staff and participants by requiring honest and respectful communication to be used at all times. Participants are welcome to call the office anytime (415-662-2488) to leave a message for ranch

staff, or to send them an email. Email addresses can be found on our website: www.halleckcreekbranch.org.

For matters involving the riding program, please contact the Program Director. For all matters involving the volunteer program, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator. For all matters involving organizational policy, planning, development or other topics, please contact the Executive Director.