

*“There is nothing so good for the inside of a man as the outside of a horse.” – Winston Churchill*

## THERAPEUTIC RIDING

The three-dimensional gait of the horse, closely simulates the natural movement of the human body and is a valuable therapeutic tool. The movement and warmth of the horse promotes physical benefits such as increased circulation, relaxation of tight muscles, strengthening of weak muscles, increase in pelvic and core mobility, development of balance and coordination, improvement in posture, increase in mental focus and emotional well-being. Horses mirror our state of mind and are completely honest. If you have enjoyed being around horses or riding in the past, you already know that their beauty, grace, intelligence and responsiveness provides a sense of peace, relaxation and empowerment—freedom—while doing something fun outdoors. You’ll hardly know you’ve been exercising!

## HOW TO ENROLL

You may enroll in the Freedom Rider therapeutic riding class for veterans at any time for the next session with openings. Here’s how:

- 1. Complete the Rider Application Forms.** These are available by mail, e-mail, or downloadable from the Horses Help website. Be sure to use the [Wounded Warrior Rider Application link](#) to obtain the packet for Freedom Rider classes.
- 2. Have Your Doctor Complete and Sign the Physician’s Release.** This form is in the Wounded Warrior Rider Application packet. We need it to know it is safe for you to ride. If your doctor has questions, he/she can call us.
- 3. Mail Your Application** to Horses Help. Send an e-mail to [info@horseshelp.org](mailto:info@horseshelp.org) with your telephone number to let us know to expect your enrollment packet. You may also scan and email it to us.
- 4. Transportation** arrangements for participants in the Freedom Rider Program are coordinated with local volunteer agen-

cies when you indicate a need on your enrollment form. Enroll early so that we can refer you. Also, if you need help signing up for Valley Metro Dial-a-Ride, or assistance scheduling standing appointments for a Dial-A-Ride vehicle, please let us know.

**5. Fees** for veterans participating in Freedom Riders are covered by scholarships. **There is no charge to you.**

**6. FR Personal Aide** Veterans may request one of the unique free services of the Freedom Rider program. A rider can receive confirmation telephone calls on his/her class day each week from us. Veterans experiencing TBI or PTSD are encouraged to take advantage of this free service.

## NO SPECIAL CLOTHES NEEDED

To enjoy horses at Horses Help you do not need to buy special equipment or clothing. Horses Help provides the horseback riding safety helmet. Please let us know when you enroll if you need pants or boots, and your size.

You must wear:

- long pants that are not too tight or too loose made of a non-slippery material such as denim, cotton, khaki, wool, or fleece – avoid corduroy, velvet, satin, nylon. Too tight pants make movement difficult, too loose bunch up and ride up your leg.
- sturdy boots with a heel and minimal tread for safety around horses, and socks so that if your pants creep up your legs, they are still protected. Never wear loafers that can fall off your feet, or sandals or similar flimsy footwear around animals on a farm or ranch.
- a shirt comfortable for the weather that can be tucked in. (No tank tops or spaghetti straps please ladies.) T-shirts or golf/polos are fine; bring a jacket or sweater if wind or rain are possible.



Tie long hair back in a low (nape of the neck) pony tail to fit under a helmet. Dangling or flashy jewelry is unsafe, and strong cologne is discouraged – horses are very sensitive.

Think natural, think fam/ranch practical, think nothing that can catch on equipment or startle gentle animals. If you are an experienced rider and have riding gloves you may bring them, however, please save your spurs at home – they are not needed in this class with these caretaker teachers, our therapy horses.

We suggest sunscreen and bug repellent unless your doctor advises otherwise during mosquito season, even though flies or mosquitoes are not a problem at Horses Help. Drink plenty of water on riding day.

Exceptions to the safety and comfort dress code can be made, for example if long pants would chafe a recently healed wound, or a foot needs the flexibility of a tennis shoe due to a recent surgery.

## CLASS TIMES AND ACTIVITIES

Classes last about one and a half hours. Riders arrive fifteen (15) minutes before class starts to check in, get their horseback riding safety helmet, and ensure class starts promptly. Summer classes are on Monday or Friday evenings, depending on enrollment. Typical class times are 5:45 to 8:00 pm, but vary to meet the transportation logistics of current students. If a monsoon sends us into the barn or equine classroom there is still plenty to learn and do. Do not guess that a class is canceled due to a weather forecast – Horses Help would call you in that event. October through June classes are earlier in the day – please call us for schedules.

Your instructor assesses your current abilities and plans class and rider activities accordingly. You will learn about horses and how to safely handle them, grooming and tacking your assigned horse (fitting the riding equipment). You will learn to guide the horse (starting, slowing down, turning, stop-

ping) both from the ground and while mounted. You will also take care of the horse and equipment after riding. Some work in the small group of 2 to 4 classmates is done



in teams, some in turns, assisted by instructors or volunteers, as needed. You progress at your own pace and receive individual attention. Relax—you do not have to clean stalls! You do get to try something new, or something you haven't done for many years, and have fun.

### STAFF

The professional full-time staff of Horses Help includes an executive director, instructors nationally certified to teach therapeutic riding, an equine manager and a volunteer coordinator. The North American Riding for the Handicapped Association (NARHA) certifies all instructors who receive specialized training, complete internships, and pass examinations. Horses Help is also a NARHA operating center holding Premier Accreditation status and is ADA accessible.



The staff are assisted by trained volunteers. During classes the volunteers focus on the rider's safety, while promoting a positive learning environment for that rider.

Volunteers also feed, groom and exercise the specially trained therapy horses, maintain the facilities, and provide support for day-to-day operations and special

fundraising events. Veterans who wish to volunteer are encouraged to contact us [info@horseshelp.org](mailto:info@horseshelp.org)

Most Freedom Rider Therapeutic Riding Class volunteers are veterans. You will feel comfortable with us.

### RIDER'S FAMILY OR FRIEND

Your family or a friend are welcome to accompany you to your sessions. Family are free to leave during an adult's riding lesson to run errands, or welcome to relax and enjoy the ambiance of the ranch.

The visitors' area is a comfortable spot to quietly occupy child visitors without disrupting classes or entering horse areas where only staff or riders are permitted. If we know your kids are coming, a Horses Help Freedom Rider volunteer will have some quiet age-appropriate game ready for them. For safety reasons,



we request that you do not bring toys that make strange noises, and that children remain under adult supervision in approved areas at all times. This is a peaceful setting where riders and

their horses are concentrating on lessons. So to help you enjoy your lesson, our advice to visitors is: be mel- low, speak in a normal conversational tone, and walk (don't run) in a relaxed, purposeful manner, while at Horses Help.

### FACILITY

Founded in 1987, Horses Help is a 5-acre ranch at 2601 East Rose Garden Lane in North Phoenix, convenient to the State Route 101 Cave Creek Road Exit. This stable meets the needs of our special riders, therapy horses and therapeutic programs. Parking, restrooms, office access and a shower are ADA accessible. Adaptive equipment, such as wheelchair accessible mounting ramps, to which the therapy horses are accustomed, enable riders who use mobility aids to mount and dismount safely with or without the assistance of trained helpers, as appropriate.



**Freedom Riders**

**Horses Help Therapeutic Riding Program**

Exclusively for Those Who Have Served

Therapeutic Recreation

Specially Trained Horses

Easy Freeway Access to Convenient  
Phoenix Location

Veterans Helping Veterans

Come Ride with Us



2601 East Rose Garden Lane Phoenix, AZ 85050

Call (602) 569-6056

Email [info@horseshelp.org](mailto:info@horseshelp.org)

Web [www.horseshelp.org](http://www.horseshelp.org)

