



P.O. BOX 782622  
WICHITA, KS 67278

Dear Parents, Participants, and Caregivers,

Welcome to Freedom Hooves Therapeutic Riding Center. We look forward to having you participate in our riding program. FHTRC was founded in 1999 with the goal to provide safe, high quality equestrian services to individuals with disabilities and in at-risk communities. Please read through all the information in this packet thoroughly. It contains very important information regarding registration of your rider and participation in the program at FHTRC.

Freedom Hooves is unique to the Wichita community in that each of our instructors are certified through PATH Intl., or are currently working toward their certification. We utilize volunteers that have each gone through extensive training to assist in our sessions. We are very proud of our organization and the accomplishments throughout the years! We would not be where we are without the support of our riders, families, board members, donors, and sponsors.

Just like other therapies and recreational activities are not a good fit for all individuals, the following policies will help you determine if Freedom Hooves is a good fit for you or your rider. It also contains information about our billing and scholarship program. We do our best to keep our program affordable to all our participants and families through several fundraising events and grants throughout the year.

Thank you for your interest in our program and we look forward to having you as part of the Freedom Hooves family!

Thank You,

*Paige Farrar*

Paige Farrar  
Program Director  
PATH Intl. CTRI  
paige@fhtrc.org



## Participant Handbook

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### Getting Started

Please complete all paperwork in this packet. Then either mail (FHTRC, PO BOX 782622, Wichita, KS 67278) or scan and email ([paige@fhtrc.org](mailto:paige@fhtrc.org)) your completed paperwork to FHTRC. Once you have completed your paperwork and sent it in, you will be contacted to schedule a New Rider Evaluation. **There will be a \$25 evaluation fee for therapeutic riding participants.**

### Communication/ Questions

Email is an inexpensive and convenient way for us to contact you about class cancellations, session information and program events. It is important that you provide us with an email address that you check frequently.

Please direct questions to your participant's instructor. If you do not get a satisfactory answer to your question, feel free to contact Paige at (316)-733-8943.

### Programs

We offer Therapeutic Riding sessions and group sessions. Each participant's session will last 30 minutes. This includes mounting and dismounting times for the participant. At times mounting and dismounting may take up to 5 minutes of this time. It is up to the instructor's discretion to decrease the time of a session for any reason including the following: rider fatiguing, rider medical problems or discomfort, rider behavior problems, horse fatiguing or other horse related problems. If a horse problem occurs, we will attempt to complete the session on another horse if one is available.

**We highly recommend that all parents attend a volunteer training. Because our program relies heavily on volunteers, there is always a chance that we may have volunteer no-shows or cancellations.** This will enable your rider to continue mounted sessions if a volunteer is unable to make it. Volunteer training dates are posted on our website. If there are NOT enough volunteers to safely conduct a lesson a ground/grooming lesson may be offered in place of a riding session.

### Billing

Therapeutic riding lessons are billed on a sliding scale fee per 30-minute ride and will be billed in 8-week sessions prior to the start of each session. Your payment is due at the beginning of each session. If you need to pay by the week, please contact our office to have this set up.

Payments can be made with cash, check, debit/credit card payments, and online payments through our website.

**Any participants with outstanding balance from the previous session will not be allowed to ride until the balance on the account has been paid or payment arrangements have been made.**

### Scholarships

FHTRC offers Full and Partial scholarships as funding is available. Scholarship levels will be approved according to each family's or participant's financial needs. We require that all those requesting a scholarship complete the Scholarship Application and write a detailed letter to FHTRC stating their financial situation with proof of their financial need. We also **require** that all parents/families that participate in the scholarship program assist during the year with TWO fundraising activities that help keep the program affordable for each of our participants. We will provide a scholarship form at your request along with a list of volunteer activities for your review.

There is a separate waiting list for scholarship riders.

## Scheduling Weekly Riding Time for New Participants

Once the initial evaluation is completed, we will then see if we have a current opening in our schedule that is suitable for the participant. If there is not an opening available, your participant will be placed on a waiting list. You will be notified as soon as an opening is available. Riding sessions are typically offered throughout the day and evening on Monday through Thursday. We do not have weekend sessions, to leave the arena open to other boarders at the facility. Available riding times will be discussed at your evaluations.

When a spot opens on our schedule it will be given to the first rider on the list that fits the time, horses and volunteers available, and instructor schedule.

## Cancellations

- **Rider Cancellations** – We require at least 24 hours' notice, to allow for us to notify volunteers and to prevent your horse from being prepped for class. Day-of notice is permitted in the case of you/your rider being sick, or an emergency. Because of our large waiting list, any participant that misses more than 3 times in one session **without** notice will be re-evaluated for continued service, and this may result in dismissal from the program. All **no-call, no-show absences will be charged the full lesson fee.**
- **Session Cancellations**- We understand that at times a rider may need to take a session off due to weather or health concerns. However, if a rider is absent for more than one session in a year, they will be placed back on our current waiting list. To be considered exempt due to extreme circumstances, a written letter must be presented to the Director for review.
- **Weather/ Emergency Related Cancellations** – We will occasionally have a situation where weather and/ or an emergency will not allow us to run one, or all, of our classes. FHTRC's top priority is the safety of our riders, staff, volunteers and horses, and we reserve the right to cancel any classes deemed unsafe to occur.
  - **Classes may be canceled in the event of** – High wind, Severe weather, extreme temperatures, quarantine or city mandate, or unforeseen circumstances.
  - You will have notice of a **minimum** of 1 hour before your scheduled ride time, however, in some circumstances a last-minute call may be made if it is unsafe to run a class.
- **Make up Classes** – FHTRC does not offer 'Make up classes' due to the complexity of scheduling. When a rider cancels with notice, or FHTRC cancels, credit toward the next Session will be given in lieu of a make-up class.
- **Please note that we will contact you ONLY when a class is canceled. We will not call to confirm that a class is still running.** If you don't hear from us, please assume that your class will be taking place.

## Late Arrivals

We will wait **10 minutes** past the start of your scheduled class time before your horse will be put away. They will no longer be available after this time. Participants arriving after this 10-minute period or missing a class with no notice will be charged their full **lesson fee** for the missed class.

## Weight Limitations for All Participants

Maximum weights are listed below, but decisions regarding participation will be based on the availability of a suitable horse related to the height, weight, cognition, and balance of the participant. Decisions will also be based on the availability of tall and/or strong volunteers. Weights include the weight of the rider, plus their saddle/tack.

- 210 Pounds for a well-balanced centered rider not requiring sidewalkers
- 140 Pounds for an unbalanced rider needing sidewalker assistance
- Each horse has an individual weight limitation based upon the horse's height, weight, age, and physical and medical condition

## Dress Code

Appropriate attire is essential for both the comfort and safety of riders. If a rider is not dressed appropriately, they will not be able to ride.

- Long pants are required. Avoid slick exercise pants as they can be slippery while riding. Avoid shorts as they can cause rubbing and discomfort.
- Close-toed shoes such as tennis shoes or boots are **REQUIRED**.
- Please keep in mind that you/your rider will be riding outside for at least 30 minutes. Provide a jacket, sweater, gloves, etc. as needed for cooler evening and morning lessons.
- All riders must wear riding helmets that meet or exceed ASTM regulations. Helmets are provided by FHTRC for class use, or you may purchase your own individual helmet that meet these regulations.

## Pets

We are committed to the safety of our participants and our horses and work hard to minimize distractions wherever possible. **NO pets are allowed** on the property. Exceptions are made for service dogs or working therapy support animals.

## Interaction with Horses

Please **DO NOT PET HORSES** without approval from FHTRC staff. Our horses are working animals, and we want to respect their space. **Absolutely NO feeding the horses, climbing on the arena, stalls, or outdoor pens, and/or reaching through enclosures to pet horses.** Barn aisles and the penned horses are **Off Limit** areas unless directly escorted by a staff member or volunteer. Many horses on the property are owned by others and may be prone to biting.

## Speed Limit

The speed limit at the ranch is 15 mph. This is **always enforced** even if you are running late to a session. If you continue to not obey the speed limit, you will no longer be allowed on the property. This is vital for the safety of all participants, staff, volunteers and horses that may be riding down the road at times.

## Observing a Class

We welcome family and friends of participants to observe classes if they remain in **Designated Observation Areas (Porch, from own vehicle, sitting area in the indoor arena)**. No one observing a class may enter the riding arena without permission. If any observer is disruptive to any participant in a class or is not acting in a safe manner, they may be asked to leave the property. Any FHTRC staff or volunteer reserves the right to ask an observer to leave an area. We also ask that activities in the Observation Area such as running, throwing/ swinging/ rolling objects does not occur as it may scare a horse and become a safety hazard. If you/your child is disturbing the lesson, you may be asked to sit in your car.

Absolutely no one is allowed on the mounting ramps without being accompanied by a staff member.

## Photo Policy

You are welcome to take photos and videos of your participant as long as it does not disrupt a class. Please do not leave the observation area for a photo without permission from a staff member. Some of our participants do not have a photo release, so please avoid taking photos/ videos of others.

## Sick Policy

To keep everyone happy and healthy at FHTRC we ask that you are considerate of our staff, volunteers, and other participants by staying at home if you are not feeling well. Many of those that we serve can become very sick, very easily due to weak immune systems so it is very important that everyone adheres to our Sick Policy for the well-being of all. Participants and volunteers must be free from the following symptoms for 24 hours before riding at FHTRC:

- Fever, Vomiting, Two or more cold symptoms, Any communicable disease
- These symptoms must remain absent without the use of any medication

### **Dismissal Policy**

FHTRC reserves the right to dismiss participants from our program for any reason. These reasons may include, but are not limited to, safety concerns, and/ or the inability to provide appropriate and safe services. Participant dismissals may occur for a variety of reasons such as: participants exceeding height/weight maximums for volunteer support and/or available horses and tack, progression of a diagnosis outside of the realm of instructor experience and/or developing into a contraindication for riding, chronic late arrivals and/or cancellations, available classes not aligning with participant's availability, etc.

If there is a concern about a possible future dismissal, FHTRC will immediately discuss concerns and a plan of action with a participant and/or their family.

Please note that FHTRC follows the guidelines suggested by PATH Intl., and depending on current staff, horses, volunteers, etc., available in our program we may not be able to safely provide services to every disability.

Thank You,

*Paige Farrar*

Paige Farrar

Program Director