

New England Equine Rescue North, Inc.

# VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

as of August 2024

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*This manual serves as a guide and binding agreement to volunteers signing up with NEER North, Inc. (NEER)*

*We welcome you but please understand that we are not a riding stable, lesson barn, or a learning barn. Working with or riding opportunities with the horses is by assignment based on seniority and riding/training experience with green or unpredictable horses.*

*Material in this handbook is subject to change.*

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Welcome to NEER North, Inc. (New England Equine Rescue North, Inc.)

We are excited to have you as a NEER North, Inc. (NEER) volunteer. Everything we do benefits the horses and donkeys under our care and enables us to provide a safe haven for equines in need. NEER would NOT be successful without its great group of hard working volunteers. We understand that people have different levels of commitment, experience, availability, and abilities and will try to match those with our needs.

Sincerely,

Mary Martin

Founder of NEER North, Inc.



## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

- 1. VOLUNTEER SHIFT HOURS**
- 2. DESCRIPTION OF SHIFT CHORES**
- 3. COMMUNICATIONS WITHIN NEER**
- 4. NEER VOLUNTEER RULES**
- 5. AGREEMENT FORM**

# 1. VOLUNTEER SHIFT HOURS

Below are the hours Volunteers are asked to be on property for their assigned shifts. Volunteers are not permitted on the property outside of these hours without written or verbal permission from the Volunteer Coordinator, Vanessa Wilde.

***Due to liability insurance no one should be on the property alone. Please leave the property when your shift is complete. For safety reasons in case of an accident we don't want people to be alone.***

## WINTER HOURS\*

Morning Shift 8:30am – 11:30am

Evening Shift 3:30pm – 5:00pm

## SUMMER HOURS

Morning shift 8:30am – 11:30pm

Evening Shift 4:00pm – 5:30pm

\*We strongly encourage you to consider purchasing the following items: Ice cleats for winter hours as the property gets icy and headlamps to see in the dark.



# VOLUNTEER SHIFT CHORES

## AM CHORES

- Check in with your crew upon arrival and before leaving your shift.
- Soak any grains that need to be soaked.
- Feed animals their hay nets in paddocks or their sheds (depending on weather). There are hay rings in most areas.
- Feed animals their AM grain in the plastic bin in the feed room. Do not hang grain buckets or hay nets on the gates.
- Let the horses in paddock #6 out to eat their hay on the hay rack when done with their grain.
- Weigh and fill PM hay nets according to the color coded chart hanging next to the scale.
- Muck sheds and provide shavings when needed. 1 -2 inches is sufficient. Sweep back the front of the shed 1 foot so the shavings are not wasted being dragged out on hooves.
- Pick paddocks including all perimeters and perform a safety inspection of fences and sheds as you do so.
- Water – refill and clean if needed in paddocks, sheds & stalls that have horses. Do not leave tubs by the gates. Do not dump water by the gates.
- DISCONNECT HOSES FROM HYDRANTS AFTER EACH USE, SUMMER OR WINTER. Keep hoses coiled and off the ground.
- Make sure lead ropes & halters are at each paddock when not in use. Keep out of the dirt.
- Check gates are all latched properly and fence lines up in the common area out back.
- Throw hay from the loft to the 1<sup>st</sup> floor as needed.
- Sweep barn aisle and grain room.
- Rake the path leading out of the back of the barn.
- Check that Tom Cat has food and water.
- Turn off all lights in the barn, office, barn basement and tack store.
- Close the back door and front door of the barn - leaving enough room for Tom Cat to get in and out.

# VOLUNTEER SHIFT CHORES

## PM SHIFT CHORES

- Check in with your crew upon arrival and before leaving the shift.
- Soak any PM grains that need to be soaked.
- Muck sheds and pick paddocks. Push shavings back from entry or door of shed.
- Water – refill and clean if needed in paddocks, sheds & stalls that have horses. Do not leave tubs by the gates. Do not dump water by the gates.
- DISCONNECT HOSES FROM HYDRANTS AFTER EACH USE, SUMMER OR WINTER. Keep hoses coiled and off the ground.
- Make sure lead ropes & halters are at each paddock when not in use. Keep out of the dirt off of the ground.
- Hang PM Hay nets.
- Put horses in their sheds in Paddock #6 for the night.
- Feed PM Grain.
- Double check gates are latched and waters filled.
- Weigh and fill AM hay nets according to the color coded chart hanging next to the scale.
- Sweep barn aisle and grain room.
- Rake path behind the barn.
- Check that Tom Cat has food and water.
- Turn off all lights in the barn, office, barn basement and tack store.
- Close the back door and front door of the barn - leaving enough room for Tom Cat to get in and out.

**(FOR SAFETY REASONS - Please remember to keep the barn aisle clear at all times. Keep hay wagons out of the aisle. DO NOT BLOCK the aisleway, stall doors, brush boxes or medicine cabinets.)**



## COMMUNICATIONS WITHIN NEER

**EMERGENCY** – If a horse is hurt, injured or in distress, immediately call or text MARY MARTIN **508-284-4022** or ANDREA **978-476-9448**.

### Andrea - Horse Issues

[Andrea@neernorth.org](mailto:Andrea@neernorth.org)

978-476-9448

### Vanessa - Volunteer Issues

[Vanessa@neernorth.org](mailto:Vanessa@neernorth.org)

813-838-3082

### Laura - Horse Trainer

[Lciarletta.99@gmail.com](mailto:Lciarletta.99@gmail.com)

603-666-6677

### Eddie - Maintenance Issues

508 - 450- 8056 TEXT

If feed items or supplies are running low, please let Vanessa know.

Volunteers should look at other contact platforms used to communicate about changes at the property. That will be through the **white board**, **Facebook** and **email**. Please check often because you will find updates on location of horses, changes in feed, extra care for horses or special treatment.

If the Vet or Farrier are at the barn attending to our horses, please be respectful of their time and ours. Their visits are not an educational workshop for our volunteers so we ask that if you must observe, please do not ask questions or offer advice. These professionals are often “donating” their services to our organization, so we try to limit the time they spend on property.

Workshops at the barn may be in NEER’s future.



## NEER VOLUNTEER RULES

Our highest priorities are the safety and well-being of our volunteers and the security of our animals. The following rules are to protect you and them.

### Liability

Volunteers must sign a liability waiver before working at NEER or handling the NEER animals. The waiver will be renewed annually.

### Injury and Emergency

If a person is seriously injured or loses consciousness make sure the person is kept in a safe location. If the injury is to the back/neck/head, the person is not to be moved until medical personnel arrive. Call Emergency Medical Service (911) requesting service to 52 Ash Street, West Newbury, MA. Notify Mary Martin at 508-284-4022. Clear the barn and driveway for access by medical personnel.

### Conduct and Behavior

Do not run, make sudden movements, shout or scream around the animals; such actions may frighten the animals and cause them to react dangerously. Do not engage in (verbally, on paper, on line, or by gesture) harassment, inappropriate language, or behavior which threatens other volunteers, staff, or visitors. Report to Mary Martin any such improper conduct which you are witness or are subjected to. If you observe visitors behaving inappropriately around the animals or harassing the animals please ask them to stop.

### Dress

Do not wear open-toed shoes, sandals, or flip-flops. We suggest shoes or boots that offer protection against animals stepping on you or the many perils your feet may encounter in the barn or paddocks. Dress for the weather as well. In the winter warm waterproof outerwear and in the summer sun hats to protect from the sun.





# NEER VOLUNTEER RULES

(continued)

## Fire Safety

Because a barn full of hay poses a severe fire danger, you may not operate or possess anything on or around the barns and paddocks which could start a fire. Therefore, there will be no smoking on or around the barns and paddocks and no possession of matches, lighters, vape devices, or anything else which can start a fire.

## Volunteers

Volunteers 14-18 years of age may only come unaccompanied if (1) they have intermediate level equine experience, (2) have attended a volunteer orientation session and (3) have parental approval to do so. They will have to be approved by staff. Release form for under aged volunteers must be completed and signed by both parents.

Volunteers 12-13 years of age must work side by side, with a parent or guardian and be supervised at all times in and out of the paddocks. Each guardian supervising must have a separate release form signed by both parents.

Children under the age of 12 are not permitted in the NEER paddocks or around the horses and donkeys.

Adult volunteers are welcome to visit with their minor children during their nonworking hours in accordance with barn policy. However, they are not allowed to bring children along during assigned shifts. Release forms must be completed upon arrival.

## Removal of Waste

All garbage must be disposed of properly in garbage cans.



# NEER VOLUNTEER RULES

(continued)

## Equipment

Any items used while volunteering must be returned to their proper place.

## Volunteer Chores

Volunteers are assigned to specific chores based on their abilities and experience. Volunteers may not perform chores to which they are not assigned. Please be cautious of horse and donkey behavior while working in their paddocks. Horses are flight animals and can spook and run easily. Horses and donkeys are capable of kicking and biting. Respect their space and they will respect yours. Only the designated NEER trainers are permitted to train and work with the horses and donkeys.

## Animal Emergency

If an animal is visibly in distress, injured, bleeding, or escaped from its enclosure, call or text Mary Martin at 508-284-4022 or Andrea Moore-Dickison at 978-476-9448.

## Pets

Pets on the property may disturb the resident animals therefore no pets are allowed on the property unless authorized by staff and on leash if approved.



# NEER VOLUNTEER RULES

## (continued)

### Visitors

Visitors are not allowed in the paddocks or stalls. If a visitor stops by unscheduled, please direct them to Mary or Andrea. Regarding visitors who want to visit the tack shop when it is not open, please let them know the tack shop hours are Saturday and Sunday 12:00 - 3:00.

### Leaving Property

When you are the last one leaving the property, do a final check to be sure all doors and gates are securely closed, including stall doors, turnout gates, barn doors, grain room, and tack room. Keep the barn aisle clear at all times. Make sure **all lights** are turned off.

### Speeding Limit & Parking

Driveway speed limit is 5 mph. Volunteer and visitor parking is to the right side of the driveway along the white fence. **NO parking near the house, tack shop or field behind the house and tack shop.** Do not block residents, gates, or pathways. Extra parking is along the road, nose to fence along the donkey paddock on Ash Street.

I have read and understand the NEER North Volunteer Handbook and agree to the policies and procedures as stated. Please **sign the following release form** and return to NEER ASAP.

*NEER North, Inc. is a publicly supported 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. All information is kept private and confidential.*

*NEER North, Inc. has a database to contact volunteers, sponsors, and supporters about events, policies, and happenings either by email or regular mail. NEER North, Inc. respects the privacy of our volunteers, sponsors, and supporters and will not sell or share our database with anyone. We do not use our database for the promotion of any other organization's events, products or services. Emailing and mailings are only used to give volunteers, sponsors and supporters information about NEER North or events that are happening that NEER North is directly involved with.*



## NEER North Volunteer/Visitor Release

In consideration for my being permitted to visit, or participate in events or volunteer activities (including but not limited to NEER organized/hosted events, office work, tack shop assistance, barn chores and/or maintenance) organized or sponsored by NEER North, I agree to the following Waiver and Release. I also acknowledge that riding, handling or being near animals and outdoor environments where training or other activities occur have inherent risks, hazards, and dangers for anyone that cannot be eliminated.

I UNDERSTAND THAT THESE RISKS, HAZARDS, AND DANGERS INCLUDE WITHOUT LIMITATION:

1. The propensity of the animal to behave in ways that may result in injury, harm or death to persons on or around them;
2. The unpredictable nature of the animal's reaction to such things as sounds, sudden movement and unfamiliar objects, persons or other animals;
3. Certain hazards such as surface and sub-surface conditions;
4. Collision with other animals or objects;
5. The potential of the participant to act in a negligent manner that may contribute to injury to the participant or others, such as failing to maintain control over the animals or not acting within his or her ability.

I understand the risks, hazards, and dangers described above. I understand that these activities may require good physical condition and a degree of skill and knowledge. By my participation, I have represented that I possess the physical conditioning and the degree of skill and knowledge necessary for me to engage in these activities safely.

I AM VOLUNTARILY VISITING AND/OR PARTICIPATING IN THE ACTIVITY OR EVENT ASSOCIATED WITH, SPONSORED BY, OR ORGANIZED BY NEER NORTH WITH FULL UNDERSTANDING OF INHERENT RISKS, HAZARDS AND DANGERS INVOLVED AND HEREBY ASSUME AND ACCEPT ANY AND ALL RISK OF INJURY, PARALYSIS, ILLNESS, DISEASE OR DEATH.

Lastly, I, for myself, my heirs, successors, executors, and subrogees, hereby KNOWINGLY AND INTENTIONALLY WAIVE AND RELEASE, INDEMNIFY AND HOLD HARMLESS NEER NORTH, its directors, officers, agents, instructors, employees, members, and volunteers from and against any and all claims, actions, causes of action, liabilities, suits, expenses (including reasonable attorneys' fees) which are related to, arise out of, or are in any way connected with my participation in this activity, including but not limited to, NEGLIGENCE of any kind or nature, whether foreseen or unforeseen, arising directly or indirectly out of any damage, loss, injury, paralysis, illness, disease or death to me or my property as a result of my engaging in these activities or the use of animals or equipment, whether such damage, loss, injury, paralysis, illness, disease or death results from negligence of NEER North or from some other cause.

I am in good physical health and have the ability to safely engage in any activities organized or sponsored by NEER North. I HAVE CAREFULLY READ, CLEARLY UNDERSTAND, AND VOLUNTARILY SIGN THIS WAIVER AND RELEASE AGREEMENT.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Y ☐ N I give NEER North permission to add me to the NEER North mailing list.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

If a minor, Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: Street: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State : \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_ Email: **(please print legibly)**

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☐ Y ☐ N I give NEER North permission to use photos/videos of me/my child.  
as of 6.19.24

