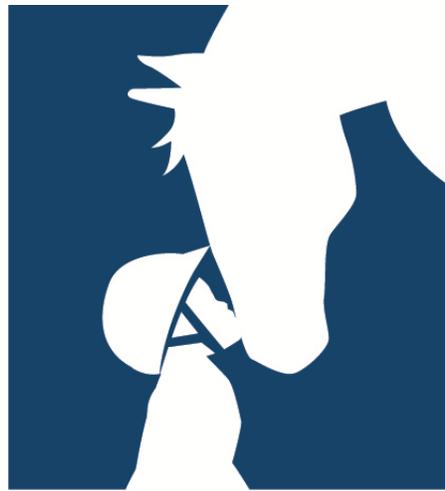


Volunteer Handbook



VTRA

**VICTORIA THERAPEUTIC
RIDING ASSOCIATION**

1. Table of Contents

- 1. TABLE OF CONTENTS 2
- 2. ROLE OF THE INSTRUCTOR AND SUPPORT TEAM 4
- 3. BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR A VOLUNTEER..... 5
- 4. RIGHTS OF A VOLUNTEER..... 6
- 6. BENEFITS OF THERAPEUTIC RIDING..... 8
- 7. VTRA PROGRAM INFORMATION 10
- 8. STABLE RULES 11
- 9. SAFETY PROCEDURES..... 12
 - 9.1. EARTHQUAKE DRILL 12
 - 9.2. FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURES..... 14
 - 9.3. PROCEDURE IN THE EVENT OF AN INCIDENT/ACCIDENT (FALLEN RIDER OR RIDER ATTEMPTING TO DISMOUNT)..... 15
- 10. JOB DESCRIPTIONS..... 16
 - 10.1. ASSISTANT INSTRUCTOR DUTIES..... 16
 - 10.2. HORSE HANDLER DUTIES..... 18
 - 10.3. SIDE WALKER DUTIES..... 21
 - 10.4. GROOM DUTIES..... 23
 - 10.5. BARN TEAM VOLUNTEER DUTIES..... 25
 - 10.6. ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM VOLUNTEER DUTIES..... 27
 - 10.7. FACILITY MANAGER DUTIES..... 28
 - 10.8. MAINTENANCE/GROUNDS TEAM DUTIES..... 28

10.9. CLUBHOUSE VOLUNTEER DUTIES 29

10.10. GROUP OPPORTUNITIES 29

11. MAP 30

12. MAP OF FACILITY 31

13. PATTERNS 32

2. Role Of The Instructor And Support Team

The team approach is very important to the success of our riders. The team creates a support system, which provides a safe ride. Each member of the rider's team is important.

The team will always include an Instructor, a horse, and a rider. An Assistant Instructor, Horse Handler, Side Walker, or Therapy Consultant may be added depending on the needs of the rider.

The Instructor is in charge of the class and does not lead or side walk except in an emergency. It is essential to have an experienced and qualified person instructing the riders and directing the volunteers and horses at all times.

The Assistant Instructor (AI) is under the supervision of the Instructor.

The Horse Handler is in charge of controlling the horse at all times in the arena and out on the trail and may help to prepare the horse for the lesson.

The Side Walker is responsible for looking after the rider, providing support (either physically or emotionally) and relaying instruction to the rider from the Instructor. There can be one or two Side Walkers depending on the needs of the rider. The more senior (or experienced) Side Walker will be the person that does most of the talking.

3. Basic Requirements For A Volunteer

1. Minimum 16 years old to work in the classes.
2. A desire to assist riders with disabilities to fulfill their goals and realize their potential.
3. Attend an orientation and training before starting. Commitment to regular attendance for the entire session is very important in providing continuity for the rider.
4. Attend brush-up training sessions during the session breaks if continuing for more than one riding session.
5. Volunteers who Side Walk should be comfortable around horses.
6. Volunteers who Horse Handle must have a reasonably-high level of horsemanship skills.
7. Volunteers should have a reasonable level of fitness. Able to walk briskly for 45 minutes to an hour and able to jog for short distances (length of the arena) with arm at shoulder height.
8. Volunteers must wear appropriate clothing and footwear. Shoes should have low heels and closed toes, be sturdy so that they protect the feet from horses' hooves, and provide good stability on rough surfaces. A pair of waterproof boots may be required for wet weather as we trail ride for much of the year. Volunteers should wear long pants whenever possible, though walking shorts are acceptable in hot weather (skirts and dresses are not suitable). Short jackets are required for cold weather (buttoned or zipped up while in the arena) as well as gloves (not mittens).
9. Jewelry such as earrings and bracelets should not be worn as they can get caught in tack or by a rider and create a dangerous and painful situation.
10. We are a scent-free facility. Perfume and aftershave should not be worn due to environmental sensitivities.
11. Long hair must be tied back.

4. Rights Of A Volunteer

1. The right to orientation and regular training sessions.
2. The right to supervision.
3. The right to be involved in planning some aspects of the program and evaluating the program.
4. The right to be involved in evaluating their own performance.
5. The right to be regarded as a person and accepted as an individual.
6. The right to have a written job description.
7. The right to be provided with the opportunity for varied experiences.
8. The right to recognition and appreciation.

5. Responsibilities Of A Volunteer

We ask each volunteer to:

1. Regard their volunteer time as a job. We ask that you be on time and email/phone in with as much lead time as possible if it is necessary to be away (it takes time to find replacements).
2. Put the program and clients first.
3. Be sincere in the offer of service and believe in the value of the assignment and to give more to the program than you expect to take away.
4. Understand the requirements of the job and ask questions if unsure.
5. Be willing to learn and to participate in orientation, training sessions, and meetings and to be cheerful, enthusiastic, and willing to share ideas.
6. Respect confidentiality when assisting a person with special needs.
7. Work alongside our participants. Volunteers are not expected to supervise or counsel participants, but rather to be their extra set of eyes and ears.
8. Have read and understood the Volunteer Handbook including Emergency Procedures and to know the emergency exits and location of telephones and fire extinguishers.

We value your time, dedication, and enthusiasm and hope that you derive satisfaction from your time with us. If you have **any concerns** regarding your volunteer assignment, please let us know. In the clubhouse, you will find a copy of the **volunteer questionnaire**. We would appreciate if you could try and fill out one per riding year. Should you want or need to end your time as a volunteer with VTRA, we have prepared an Exit Questionnaire that we would need you to fill and return. Both of these documents have been created so that we can provide the best service possible and make sure that our volunteers feel that their needs and concerns are addressed.

6. Benefits Of Therapeutic Riding

1. Educational:

- Remedial reading: Before one can read, it is necessary to recognize the difference in shapes, sizes, and colors. These can be taught more easily on horseback, as part of games and activities.
- Sequencing, patterning, and motor planning: Knowing which comes first in a sequence of events is an important part of the activities riders do in their lessons.
- Improved hand-eye coordination: This is necessary for tasks such as writing and can be worked on through various activities on horseback.
- Visual spatial perception: This involves our awareness of form and space, including directionality (knowing right from left), spatial perception (ability to differentiate between items close in shape but spatially different (“h” versus “b”)), and figure ground (picking out an object from the background), all of which are worked on during therapeutic riding activities.

2. Social:

- Friendship: Although riding can be a solitary activity, it is normally performed in groups of people who share a common love of horses.
- Increased experiences: From tacking and grooming to trail riding, from going to horse shows to learning the parts of a horse, the rider is constantly experiencing new things and growing.
- Enjoyment: There is no doubt about it, riding a horse is fun. Riders experience excitement and pleasure every time they come for a lesson.

3. Psychological:

- General sense of well-being: Exercising in the fresh air of a ranch, away from hospitals, doctors’ offices, therapy rooms, or home help to promote a sense of well-being.
- Improved self-confidence: Confidence is gained by mastering a skill normally performed by able-bodied people.
- Increased interest in the “outside world”: For those confined by a disability, the world tends to shrink in size. Riding increases interest in what is happening around the rider, as the rider explores the world from the back of a horse.

4. Physical:

- **Improved balance:** As the horse moves, the rider is constantly thrown off-balance, requiring the rider's muscles to contract and relax in an attempt to re-balance. The three-dimensional rhythmical movement of the horse is similar to the motion of walking, teaching rhythmical patterns to the muscles of the legs and trunk. Stopping and starting the horse, as well as changing speed and changing direction, similarly benefit various muscles.
- **Strengthened muscles:** Muscles are strengthened by the increased use involved in riding. Even though riding is exercise, it is perceived as enjoyment, and therefore the rider has increased tolerance and motivation to lengthen the period of exercise.
- **Stretching of tight or spastic muscles:** Sitting on a horse requires stretching of the adductor muscles of the thighs. Gravity helps to stretch the calf muscles as the rider sits on the horse without stirrups, while riding with stirrups helps to stretch the heel cords. Stomach and back muscles are stretched as the rider is encouraged to maintain an upright posture as the horse moves. Arm and hand muscles are stretched as part of routine exercises on the horse and by the act of holding and using the reins.
- **Decreased spasticity:** Spasticity is reduced by the rhythmic motion of the horse. The warmth of the horse also helps to break up extensor spasms of the lower limbs.
- **Increased range of motion of the joints:** As spasticity is reduced, range of motion increases.
- **Sensory integration:** Riding stimulates the tactile senses through touch and environmental stimuli. The vestibular system is also stimulated by the movement of the horse, changes in direction, and speed. The olfactory system responds to the many smells involved in a stable and ranch environment. Vision is used in control of the horse. All of these senses work together and are integrated in the act of riding. In addition, proprioceptors (receptors that give information from our muscles, tendons, ligaments, and joints) are activated, resulting in improved proprioception.

7. VTRA Program Information

VTRA holds four riding terms which run from the **beginning of September to early June**.

Orientation/training sessions are held prior to the first week of fall classes and in the breaks between riding terms.

We strongly recommend that **returning volunteers attend a “brush up” training session**. If you have horse experience and are interested in the position of horse handler, please note that you must attend a horse handling evaluation and training session. Evaluations are pass or fail.

Class times are:

- Mondays: 9:30, 10:45, 12:00, 3:30, and 4:45
- Tuesdays: 9:30, 10:45, 12:00, 2:30, 3:30, and 4:45
- Wednesdays: 9:30, 10:45, 12:00, 2:30, 3:30, and 4:45
- Thursdays: 9:30, 10:45, 3:30, and 4:45
- Fridays: 3:30 and 4:45

Ideally, we would like a 3-hour, once-a-week commitment from our volunteers to ensure that we have enough people to support the riders and create continuity and a relationship between the volunteer and the rider. If you cannot commit to a regular shift, you will be one of our fill-in volunteers.

If for some reason you are **unable to attend your shift**, please give as much notice as possible (either by phone: [\(778\) 426-0506](tel:7784260506) or preferably by email: volunteer@vtra) so that another volunteer can be found to replace you. **If we do not have enough volunteers, the rider cannot ride**. If you send in an email while the volunteer coordinator is out of office, you will receive an automatic reply requesting you to call in (*please wait a few minutes and check if you receive this message*). If you are feeling unwell, but hope to be better, it would probably be wise to stay home. Please try to give at least one day's notice if possible.

The gift of your time and support is very important and greatly appreciated by the Board and Staff at VTRA and most importantly by the riders. **On behalf of all of us, thank you**. This is truly an amazing program and we hope that you find it as rewarding as we do.

8. Stable Rules

The VTRA kindly request that you observe the following polices while participating in activities at the facility.

Please:

1. Only staff and authorized volunteers may enter the barn.
2. Dogs should remain in your vehicle whilst at the facility (no dogs ever allowed in the barn or the ring!).
3. All riders **must** wear approved safety riding helmets.
4. Children and clients are to be supervised at all times while on the property.
5. For your safety, do not feed or touch the horses.
6. Please do not smoke on the property.
7. Drive slowly in and out of the driveway (sudden or loud sounds can spook the horses).
8. As much as possible, please recycle (bins are located in the clubhouse and containers for recycling are located in the grey bins at the front of the clubhouse).
9. Please respect the property owner's privacy. The house area is private property.

These rules are in place for the safety and enjoyment of all involved parties. They will ensure a harmonious relationship between our organization and the property owner.

9. Safety Procedures

9.1. Earthquake Drill

During a major earthquake, you may experience a shaking that starts out to be gentle and within a second or two grows violent and knocks you off your feet.

OR

You may be jarred first by a violent jolt – as though a truck hit your house. A second or two later, you will feel the shaking and you will find it very difficult to move from one area to another.

If Indoors

1. **Side Walkers:** Dismount rider from horse in the safest way possible and remain with the rider.
2. Move to the center of the riding ring or toward the walls; kneel with back to wall; place head close to knees; cover sides of head with elbows and clasp hands firmly behind the neck.
3. Protect the rider, place them in the crouch position, and stay with the rider at all times.
4. Avoid windows, mirrors, overhead lights, coffeepots, etc.
5. If the rider is in a wheelchair, leave him or her in their chair, duck forward, and cover the rider's head with your body while protecting yourself.
6. **Horse Handlers:** Try to calm the horses, and keep them away from the people on the ground.
7. **Assistant Instructor** will open the gate to the back field so **horse handlers** can let the horses out. ONLY remove tack if safe to do so.

If Outdoors

8. **Side Walkers:** Dismount rider from horse in the safest way possible and remain with rider.
9. Move to open space away from buildings and overhead power lines.
10. Lie down or crouch to the ground. Keep looking around and be aware of any dangers that may demand relocation to another area.
11. **Horse Handlers:** In all cases, try to calm the horse and hold on if at all possible.

After The Shaking Stops

12. Wait!
13. If inside, move outside and gather at the side of the parking lot on the grass.
14. If outside, move to the side of the parking lot on the grass.

15. Administer any First Aid that may be required. Stay with the riders and calm/comfort them as best you can.
16. **Staff** will turn off electricity and water and coordinate the turnout of all the horses in the barn.
17. Be prepared for After Shocks. Follow all directions of the Instructor.

9.2. Fire Evacuation Procedures.

1. Do not panic!
2. Whoever first notices the fire will immediately notify the Instructor
3. Do not attempt to tackle the fire yourself.
4. The Instructor is in charge at all times.
5. The Instructor will designate someone to call 911. This person will make the call and then report back to the Instructor.
6. First: **Side Walkers** (under the supervision of the Instructor) will dismount riders in the safest way possible and will then escort their respective riders to the exit furthest from the fire. Stay with your rider and meet at the side of the parking lot on the grass.
7. Second: **Horse Handlers** will then take the horses at a walk to the safest exit furthest from the fire and proceed to the back pasture. If safe to do so, un-tack and turn the horses loose in the paddock. Horse Handlers return to the meeting area at the side of the parking lot on the grass.
8. **Staff** will evacuate the clubhouse and barn and join the AI in evacuating the horses as much as possible.
9. **Grooms** will close the back door of the barn and get to the meeting place.
10. No one may re-enter the building without the permission of the fire department.
11. The Instructor will remain in charge at all times. If incapacitated to do so, the Assistant Instructor will take over.
12. **Staff** will do a head count.

9.3. Procedure In The Event Of An Incident/Accident (Fallen Rider or Rider Attempting to Dismount).

1. Instructor will call entire ride to a halt.
2. Each **Horse Handler** and all **Side Walkers** are to stay with their own horse and rider.
3. **Instructor** will go quickly to the fallen or dismounting rider.
4. **Assistant Instructor** will manage the rest of the class.
5. Instructor will determine which Side Walkers should assist. Parents or spectators may be used to help at the request of the Instructor.

For a fallen rider:

6. Instructor will send someone for a blanket and First Aid kit (located in corner by the gate) and also to notify the office.
7. Depending on the severity of the incident, an ambulance may have to be called. The Instructor will direct one individual to make the call and report back – this volunteer will then go to the road and wait for the ambulance.
8. The Instructor will stay with the injured rider and, if this is more than a minor injury, the remaining riders will be dismounted (Assistant Instructor will supervise dismounting).
9. For falls that do not require medical attention, the rider may sit out for a while while the lesson continues. The rider may be mounted again before the end of the lesson if they wish to do so, at the discretion of the Instructor (and physio-therapist if in attendance).
10. If a rider has fallen, it is important to recommend that they be checked either by their family doctor or at a hospital.
11. Always complete an incident report. If parents or rider refuse a visit to a hospital, please record this on the incident form.
12. The most important points to remember when an incident of any kind occurs is,
 - Stay with YOUR rider and horse at all times.
 - Follow the Instructor's directions.
 - A calm, controlled atmosphere is essential.
13. Reporting Party (a staff member) will follow up by phone that evening or the next day to check the condition of the rider.

An Incident drill will be carried out with each class so that the volunteers know and can practice the procedures.

10. Job Descriptions

10.1. Assistant Instructor/ Ring Spotter Duties.

Training Requirement: 1 Assistant Instructor Training + 1 Emergency Procedures Training to be taken at least once a year.

Recommended Training: Because of the central position of Assistant Instructors, it is strongly recommended they attend the Groom Training, the Horse Handler Training, and the Side Walker Training sessions once a year.

Morning Shift: arrive **45** minutes before the classes begin

Afternoon Shift: arrive **45** minutes before the classes begin

1. Before Class Begins:
 - Introduce yourselves to the Horse Handlers and Side Walkers.
 - Help bring in all the horses for the morning classes.
 - Put out or supervise the putting out of tack.
 - Put tack changes in the arena.
 - Begin to groom, tack up, and handle if Horse Handler or Groom is late or absent.
 - Help set up arena, put out games, etc.
 - Make sure the horses are in the arena and being warmed up 15 minutes before the first class and 10 minutes before the next two classes.
 - Give Horse Handlers the stirrup lengths.
2. During the Class:
 - Supervise the ring and spot during mounting, keeping your eyes on riders the Instructor is not watching.
 - Keep riders all going in the same direction.
 - Change incorrect stirrup lengths.
 - In an emergency, Instructor takes the emergency while AI takes the class if necessary.
 - Be prepared to take over class if required.
 - Be prepared to take over for Side Walkers or Horse Handlers if required.
 - On trail rides, walk with front horse, checking the ride is staying together and checking for wildlife or anything that could startle the horses.
 - Supervise class during dismount.
 - Pick up manure as required.
3. Between classes:
 - Assist with tack change in the arena.
 - Hold horse for Handler taking a break.
 - Warm up fresh horse if Handler needs a break.
 - Make sure Horse Handler is getting into the arena with fresh horse on time

4. End of shift:
 - Supervise and assist with untacking and putting horses away.
 - Put tack in the arena away.
 - Have horses put out if not used in the next shift.
 - Make sure horse have been fed hay.

5. End of day:
 - Supervise tack cleaning and putting away.
 - Make sure all equipment in the arena is put away.
 - Make sure the manure in the arena is dumped.

10.2. Horse Handler Duties.

11. Training Requirements: Horse Handlers must have a reasonably-high level of horsemanship skills prior to volunteering at VTRA. All Horse Handlers must have attended at least one training session before being allowed to lead a horse in a lesson.

Training Recommendations: We strongly advise all of our Horse Handlers to attend Horse Handler Training refreshers and Emergency Procedures Training at least once a year. Our practices and policies will change over time and attending these sessions is the only sure way to ensure proper communication of these changes.

THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY OF THE HORSE HANDLER IS THE CONTROL & CARE OF THE HORSE!

1. Before Class Begins:
 - Arrive ½ hour early to tack up; horses must be in the ring 15 minutes prior to the start of class.
 - Check in with volunteer coordinator/sign-in in the Clubhouse and put your name tag on.
 - Check horse assignment board in barn (help bring out tack if necessary).

2. Grooming:
 - Bring in assigned horse from paddock/field if necessary.
 - Ensure that aisle and outside doors are pulled shut while grooming and tacking.
 - Remove blanket if necessary and hang it up across the aisle.
 - During grooming and tacking, horse should be wearing their halter and should be tied to the strap attached to the stall.
 - If you must leave the stall, make sure the stall door is closed and latched.
 - Grooming horse: To minimize the impact of many people handling the horses each day, please groom **only the area where the saddle will sit and where the girth will be touching**. Use the rubber curry comb for body (plastic curry comb is used only for cleaning other brushes), and the dandy brush for body. Please DO NOT brush the horses' faces, manes, or tails (even if you're used to doing that!)
 - Clean the horse's hooves thoroughly (and carefully) with the hoof pick.
 - Make note of any damage or unusual conditions (e.g., swelling, heat, cuts, or strong smell that could indicate thrush) and notify the Instructor or Assistant Instructor.

3. Tacking up
 - The horses are handled frequently throughout the day, by many different handlers. **It is imperative that all tacking up is completed very gently and considerately**. The instructor will check all tack and tighten girths before the classes begin.

4. Saddle:
 - The saddle should have the rider's handle attached in front of the pommel and 'quick release' stirrups (release facing forward).
 - The elastic end of the girth should be on the horse's left (near) side. For initial tightening, the girth should only be tightened to "snug" – the Instructor will finish tightening the girth once the horse has had a chance to walk around in the ring.
 - PULL GIRTH STRAPS GENTLY AND SLOWLY. The horses are tacked up frequently during the day and will get both sore and grouchy if treated roughly.
 - DO NOT wrench on the stirrup straps when adjusting the stirrups – support the saddle with your other hand when you are pulling down the stirrups. This will avoid unnecessary strain on the horse's back.
 - Horses can be left tacked up in their stall UNCLIPPED with the BACK DOOR CLOSED.
5. Bridle:
 - Bridles are not usually used in classes. In the occasional cases where one will be necessary, bridling and unbridling will be done by the Instructor or Assistant Instructor in the ring.
 - The reins should be knotted over the handle on the pommel of the saddle.
6. Leaving the Stall and Entering the Arena:
 - Always ensure that the aisle is safe and clear of people before bringing horses out.
 - Bring horses into ring to warm up no less than 10 minutes before the beginning of the class; horses should be walked and/or trotted around the ring to warm up.
 - The lead rope should be held 6 to 8 inches from the horse's head, your elbow to the horse's nostril, unless otherwise specified by the Instructor.
 - Maintain a distance of 1 to 2 horse lengths between horses at all times.
 - Adjust stirrup lengths if not already done; the Instructor will check all tack and tighten girth as necessary.
 - Line up and listen for mounting order of horse and rider.
7. Mounting:
 - ***It is crucial that the Horse Handler is extremely focused on the horse during both mounting and dismounting. This is a potentially dangerous time as the riders and horses are sometimes very tense and/or nervous.***
 - The Horse Handler should give the horse enough room to come through the ramp in a straight line. The horse must be standing straight and square in preparation for the rider to mount. The horse handler must ensure that the horse walks out of the ramp in a slow and straight line.

8. Leading:
 - ***The Horse Handler's primary responsibility is for the horse and not the rider.***
 - All transitions and turns must be executed slowly and carefully.
 - The Side Walkers must be given enough room to walk comfortably beside the rider.
 - The Horse Handler must give the rider adequate time to receive, process, and perform all instructions.
 - Allow riders to make "safe" mistakes (e.g., if they are working on stopping and they don't say "whoa" or pull the reins, carry on walking until rider makes attempt to stop, if it is safe to do so).
 - During stretches and exercises at the halt, stand to the side, facing the horse in the "parked position".
 - Listen to the lead Side Walker who will relay information (such as "walk on" when with non-verbal riders).

9. Trail Rides:
 - Pay extra close attention to the horse's reactions (e.g., head up, ears forward, nose flared, etc.) Again, be considerate of the Side Walker's space on the far side of the horse.

10. Dismounting:
 - ***During dismounting, stand to the side of the horse in "parked position", as in exercises. Ensure that the horse stands quietly while rider is on the ground moving around the horse. Riders and Side Walkers are only to pet the horse on the shoulder.***
 - Wait for instruction at the end of the class; if the horse is being used in the next class, stay in the ring and be ready for any necessary stirrup and/or tack changes.
 - If the horse is not being used in the next class, **wait until all riders have left the ring** and, once the reins have been removed, return the horse to its stall.

11. After the Class:
 - Take the horse into the stall, ensure the back door is shut, and **leave the horse for the groom to untack.**
 - At the end of a morning or afternoon shift, untack and groom the horse. Pick hooves, brush saddle area, and turn loose; during the winter, blankets may also need to be put on.
 - Return tack to the appropriate tack room. If the horse's own saddle has been substituted with another saddle, please put the substitute saddle back in the correct position in the tack room. Return the saddle pads and girth to the horse's own saddle to prevent mix-ups in tack.

10.3. Side Walker Duties.

Training Requirements: All Side Walkers must have attended at least one training session before being allowed to assist riders.

Training Recommendations: We strongly advise all our Side Walkers to attend Side Walker Training refresher and Emergency Procedures Training at least once a year. Our practices and policies will change over time and attending these sessions is the only sure way to ensure proper communication of these changes.

The primary responsibility of the Side Walker is to ensure the safety of the rider at all times.

The Side Walker can help the Instructor in many ways (e.g., keeping the rider's attention on the lesson, helping to communicate or explain directions).

1. On Arrival:
 - Arrive **15 – 20 minutes early** to assist rider in getting ready for their lesson
 - Check in with the Volunteer Coordinator, sign-in, and put on your name tag.
 - Check volunteer computer for assignment of rider.
 - Determine whether you are the 1st or 2nd Side Walker. The first Side Walker will be the person who will be doing the communicating with the rider. Please defer to that person to ensure that the rider is not hearing too much talking from too many sources. Occasionally, the Instructor may designate a Side Walker to relay information to the rider – this will be for specific rider requirements.
2. When Your Rider Arrives:
 - Introduce yourself to the rider and ensure that their jacket is done up properly, they are wearing proper boots or shoes and clothing, they have no loose accessories, and that they have no gum, candy, food, or drink.
 - Help rider put on belt and correct helmet (ensure that helmet is done up properly).
 - Stay with rider until it is time to mount, then escort rider to ramp (one Side Walker will stay with the rider on the ramp while the other goes to the other side of the mounting block).
3. Mounting:
 - When waiting to be called for mounting, spend some time getting the rider focused on their lesson. For example, you can review the horse words for “go” and “stop” or ask the rider to identify their horse.
 - If there are two Side Walkers, decide which person will be going to the far side of the mounting ramp – That person will go through the gate first and hold the gate open for the rider.
 - Please ensure you are focused on the Instructor once you get to the mounting gate so that you can hear immediately when your rider is called.
 - **Please refrain from speaking, either to the rider or each other, during the mounting procedure.** The rider must be focused only on the horse and Instructor at this time.

- ALL riders leave the ramp with a thigh hold.
 - Instructor will inform Side Walkers of the hold required for each rider once they have cleared the mounting area (ankle, thigh/knee, or lower back/thigh hold) and give any necessary information regarding the rider's disability.
4. During the Lesson:
- Once the rider has mounted the horse, the Side Walker must stay with the rider at all times and maintain physical contact.
 - Maintain a position beside the rider's knee and be aware of the rider's position and moods at all times.
 - Do not hold onto the rider's belt (this could pull the rider off balance or put extra pressure on the rider) or lean on the horse (this is uncomfortable for the horse).
 - Avoid unnecessary talking with either the rider or the other volunteers.
 - Keep directions short and to the point.
 - *Allow the rider sufficient time to receive, process, and complete the instructor's direction. Help the rider perform the applicable task (but do not do it for them). If the rider cannot perform the task, you may encourage them verbally or hand-over-hand. Take small steps in assisting – try a little at a time.*
 - *When practicing STEERING, start by using verbal cues. If this does not work, take the next step and tap the hand that needs to steer. If that still does not produce a response, then go to full hand-over-hand. NEVER PULL THE REINS YOURSELF. The hands should always go back to the middle after steering.*
 - If you need to change sides, advise the Instructor (or Assistant Instructor) and wait until you are replaced before you leave the rider's side. If you are returning to the rider/switching riders, move into the position from BEHIND the person already there. Always walk in front of the horse.
 - During trail rides, the Side Walker should be supporting the rider at all times.
5. Dismount and After the Lesson:
- During dismounting, one or more Side Walkers may be required to assist the Instructor as necessary depending on the type of dismount required (e.g., Crest or wheelchair dismount). The Instructor will explain the applicable procedures at that time. When wheelchairs or canes, etc. are being used during mounting and dismounting, it is important not to move them quickly or too closely to the horses.
 - After dismounting, the Side Walker on the LEFT side must stay with the rider and assist in running up the stirrups on both sides; the Side Walker must ensure that the rider does not run around or behind the horse.
 - Side Walkers escort riders safely from the ring. Please ensure that they do not remove their helmet or belt until they are outside of the ring; once outside, help the riders remove their helmets and belts.
 - Any feedback you can provide is always helpful – things that went well (or not), differences in the rider from one week to another, etc.

10.4. Groom Duties.

Training Requirements: All Grooms must attend a training session. Additionally, Grooms are required to have previous experience with horses before volunteering as Groom with VTRA.

Training Recommendations: It is recommended that all Grooms attend Groom Training refresher, Horse Handler Training, and Emergency Procedures Training at least once a year. Our practices and policies will change over time and attending these sessions is the only sure way to ensure proper communication of these changes.

1. On Arrival:
 - Arrive 10 minutes before the start of classes.
 - Check-in with Coordinator of Volunteers, sign-in, and put on your name tag.
 - Check horse assignment board and help bring the tack out.

2. Grooming, Tacking and Un-Tacking:
 - Groom and tack the horses in preparation for the next class. The horses must be ready 15 minutes before the start of the class.
 - Please refer to the **Grooming, Tacking Up, Saddle, and Bridle** sections of the **Horse Handler Job Description** for correct procedure.
 - At the end of each class the horse will be brought back into their stalls by the Horse Handlers.
 - If a horse is not used again, the Groom will untack him/her, brush in the saddle and girth areas, pick his/her feet, and put his/her blanket back on if and when needed. The halter is then removed and hooked back outside the horse's stall and the back door to the paddock is opened. Put away all tack and grooming kits in appropriate locations.
 - If a horse is used again, the Groom will check the clipboard for equipment changes and change tack as required. If no tack change is required, **the girth needs to be loosened a couple of holes.**
 - Horses may be left tacked up and untied in their stall if both the front and back door of the stall are latched shut and all grooming tools are removed from the stall.

3. Groom Extras:
 - On the chalk board at the entrance to the barn, please note:
 - Any abnormalities in the horses such as **swelling, scrapes, or strange behaviors**. If it seems urgent, do not hesitate to tell the Instructor or Barn Coordinator.
 - Anything needing maintenance or attention, such as broken fences or tack needing repair, etc.
 - Extra help with other barn chores is always greatly appreciated:
 - Manure can be picked from stall and paddocks. It is then dumped into the manure bin located on the north side of the arena. Tools are kept in the far stall and the manure bin is around the side of the arena. **Please be cautious when traveling past the arena door during lessons, go slowly.**

- Horse Handlers will untack their horses from the last class.

10.5. Stable Management Volunteer Duties

Training Recommendations: There is no required training, but it is recommended that stable management volunteers have horse experience or experience volunteering in another role in the VTRA program.

Stable Management Volunteers help the Instructor to deliver classes on various barn/horsemanship skills. Lessons include but are not limited to: Grooming, Tacking Up, First Aid, Horse Colours and Markings, and Parts of the Horse.

1. On Arrival:
 - Arrive 15 to 20 minutes before the start of classes.
 - Check-in with Coordinator of Volunteers, sign-in, and put on your name tag.
 - Meet Stable Management instructor in classroom and set-up any necessary materials
2. During/After Lesson:
 - Catch and put away demo horses (if necessary)
 - Help students individually if struggling
 - Assist in keeping the group together and focused on the barn
 - Put away materials

10.6. Barn Team Volunteer Duties.

The Barn Team Volunteer works in collaboration with the Barn Coordinator and /or the Instructor. He or she assists with horse and barn-related chores. Barn Team Volunteers are asked to commit to at least one 4-hour shift per week from Monday to Friday.

Training Requirements: Previous horse experience preferred, groom training.

Tasks Include:

- Ensure Tack Rooms are neat, clean, and organized and that doors are closed and locked when not in use.
- Ensure feed room is swept and tidy.
- Ensure area in front of all stalls is kept clean.
- Ensure lead lines and halters are properly hung outside of stalls when not in use.
- Ensure feed bins and automatic waterers are clean.
- Ensure laundry is done (saddle pads, girths, coolers and blankets are done as needed; towels are done regularly).
- Ensure horses' paddocks are free of droppings and bedding is swept neatly.
- Ensure arena (indoor and outdoor) and trail are free of droppings
- Ensure tack is put away and clean and record of when it was cleaned is up-to-date.
- Take full garbage to bin.
- Ensure washroom is clean and tidy and that toilet paper, paper towel, and soap are stocked.
- Ensure hallway is swept and all wheel barrows are empty at the end of shift.
- Make sure horses are fed lunch or dinner.
- Pay attention to details of barn, stall, and pen maintenance and report concerns to Coordinator of Volunteers.

10.7. Administrative Team Volunteer Duties.

The Administrative Team Volunteer supports VTRA's mission by assisting in administrative functions. This position may be project-based and therefore vary in number of hours involved over time. Business hours of the VTRA are Monday to Friday, from 9am until 5pm. The Administrative Team Volunteer reports to VTRA staff.

Tasks May Include:

- Providing general administrative assistance to VTRA staff.
- Attending outreach events to provide information related to volunteering/program with VTRA.
- Assisting with volunteer recruitment as needed. Help put up flyers in barns or tack shops, ads on line.
- General data entry
- Assisting with determination of value for significant gifts for receipting purposes (online and/or other sale of gifts in kind/donated items including "in house" silent auctions).
- Newsletter content development.
- Running VTRA errands; e.g. mail pickup, office supplies, etc.
- Opening mail and prepare cash receipts summary.
- Website updates.

10.8. Facility Manager Duties.

The Facility Manager works in collaboration with the Executive Director.

Tasks May Include:

- Securing quotes for capital projects
- Ensuring that capital improvements are completed as needed, including obtaining suppliers, supervising work (whether conducted by volunteers or paid contractors). Position involves coordination of improvement needs by both VTRA and property owner.
- Ensuring that minor repairs and maintenance needs for facility are met. This may also involve coordination of repair needs with property owner.
- Supervising facility volunteers in completion of minor repairs and maintenance as needed.
- Working collaboratively with Coordinator of Volunteers to identify and obtain facility volunteers.
- In collaboration with ED, participating in outreach to service clubs and businesses in communication of VTRA facility needs.

10.9. Maintenance/Grounds Team Duties.

The Maintenance/Grounds Team works in collaboration with Staff and Facility Manager. He/she ensures that the VTRA facility is safe, clean, and running smoothly, and that grounds are beautiful and inviting.

Tasks May Include:

- Completing tasks from list to be determined by staff and Facility Manager.
- Procuring supplies as needed for minor improvements and repairs.
- Completing landscaping/grounds improvements as needed.

10.10. Clubhouse Volunteer Duties.

The Clubhouse Volunteer ensures our clubhouse and family waiting area are clean and welcoming to volunteers and riders' families. The position can involve activities that can be done off-site, such as baking cookies to share or buying supplies.

Tasks May Include:

- Greeting and assisting visitors, volunteers, students, and caregivers.
- Making sure cookies and coffee are available.
- Ensuring clubhouse and washrooms are clean and supplied.
- Attending events to provide information related to volunteering with VTRA.
- Giving new or potential volunteers or clients tours of the facility and some information about the program/different volunteer positions.
- Checking all helmets and rider boots (for wear & tear, padding, and overall condition) and reporting concerns to staff.
- Periodically checking and restocking contents of first aid kits

10.11. Group Opportunities.

Group volunteer activities are an exciting way to support VTRA. Group opportunities are open to schools, companies, scout troops, alumni, or any group that would like to spend some time helping VTRA.

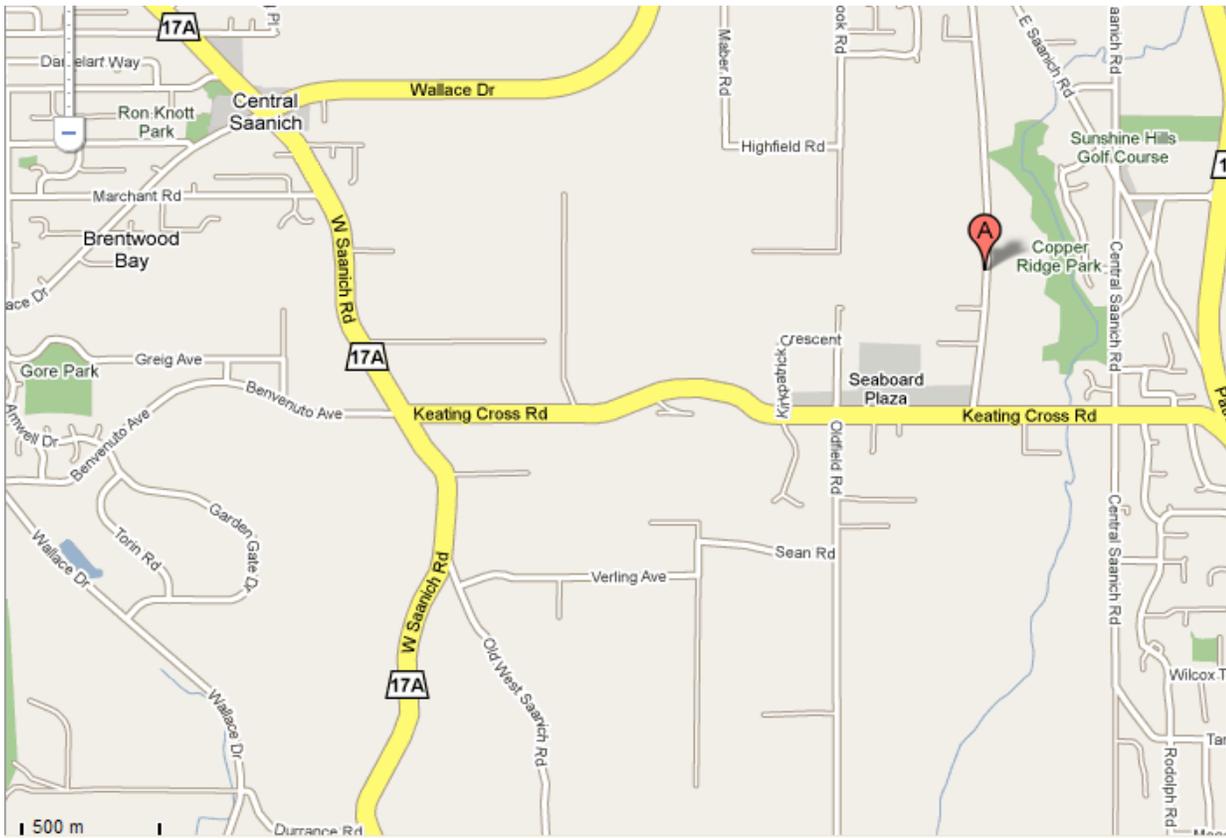
There are a variety of ways groups can volunteer with us, such as:

- Holiday Decorating.
- Major Landscape/Gardening Project.
- Painting.
- Event Support (Assisting in our identified events such as Ride-a-thon and Horse Show. Tasks may include set-up, registration, and tear-down. Scheduling is done on an as-needed basis).

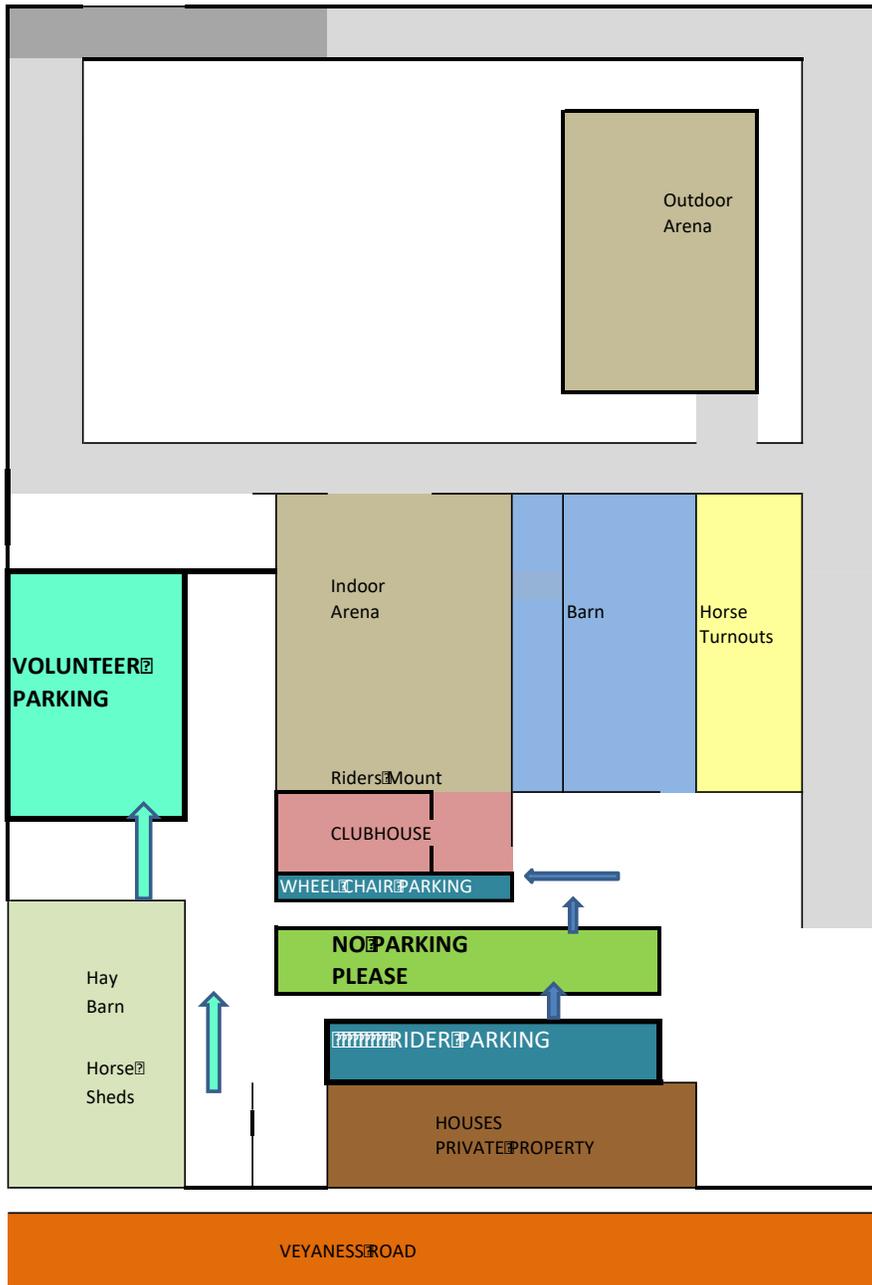
11. Map

Address: 6917 Veyaness Road

Phone: (778) 426-0506



12. Map of Facility



13. Patterns

