



VOLUNTEER MANUAL

Welcome to Stable-Spirit Stable-Wranglers Volunteer Program

We are so glad you've chosen to be a part of Stable-Spirit as a volunteer. As a member of our **Stable-Wranglers Volunteer Program**, you play an essential role in supporting our horses, our clients, and our mission. The time and care you give truly make a difference.

Our volunteer program is designed to provide meaningful opportunities for individuals of all experience levels, while maintaining a strong focus on safety, consistency, and support. Whether you are helping behind the scenes or working directly with horses and riders, every role contributes to the success of our program.

All volunteers begin on our **Support Team**, which provides a strong foundation and allows you to become comfortable in the environment while assisting with daily operations. Volunteers who wish to take on more hands-on roles with horses and clients may choose to advance to our **Session Team** by completing our **Hearts & Hooves Training Class**.

This manual serves as a guide to our policies, procedures, and expectations. It is designed to help you understand how our program operates and what is required to volunteer safely and successfully. Hands-on skills and role-specific training are provided separately through orientation and training classes.

The Volunteer Coordinator is your primary point of contact for all volunteer-related questions, scheduling, training, and support. Additional information can also be found on our website at www.stable-spirit.org.

Thank you for your willingness to give your time, energy, and heart to Stable-Spirit. We are grateful to have you as part of our team.

Due to the nature of working with both horses and people, situations may arise that require adjustments to the guidelines outlined in this manual at the discretion of the Executive Director.

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Stable-Spirit
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Stable-Spirit Mission

Stable-Spirit is a 501c(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide the community with opportunities that inspire positive mental, physical, and emotional health through professionally guided interaction with horses. Many of our clients are not able to pay for services without assistance or reduced rates. Funds generated from fundraisers, grants, and donations provide mental and physical health services to those needing assistance and to the care of the horses. Your support is appreciated.

The Impact of Volunteers

Every role within the Stable-Wranglers program plays a vital part in supporting our mission. Whether you are working behind the scenes or in sessions, your time and effort directly contribute to the success, safety, and growth of our clients and horses.

How the Stable-Wranglers Volunteer Program Works

The Stable-Wranglers Volunteer Program is designed to provide a safe, supportive, and rewarding experience for our volunteers, clients, and horses. Our program is structured with clear pathways so you can get involved at a level that fits your comfort, interests, and availability.

Two Volunteer Pathways

Our program includes two primary pathways:

Support Team – The foundation of our volunteer program

Session Team – Hands-on roles working directly with horses and clients

All volunteers begin on the Support Team before advancing to Session Team roles, if desired.

Step 1: Get Started

All new volunteers must complete the application process through Timecounts and review this Volunteer Manual before attending orientation.

Step 2: Scoop Squad Orientation

Your first step on-site is attending a **Scoop Squad Orientation**.

This introductory session is designed to:

- Help you become familiar with our facility and expectations
- Introduce you to basic safety guidelines
- Provide hands-on experience with simple, supervised tasks

Following orientation, volunteers begin as part of the **Scoop Squad**, which focuses on maintaining a clean and safe environment for our horses and clients.

Step 3: Support Team Opportunities

Volunteers may continue serving on the Support Team in a variety of roles, including:

- Scoop Squad (mucking and general barn care)
- Hay Day Crew* (feeding support)
- Facility Maintenance Team (yardwork & minor repairs)
- Paperwork Posse (office support)
- Dust Buster Brigade (cleaning & organization)

These roles are essential to the daily operation of Stable-Spirit and provide valuable time to become comfortable around the horses and facility.

Most role-specific training takes approximately 15 minutes. However, *Hay Day Crew training is more extensive due to the feeding routines and safety considerations.

Step 4: Advancing to the Session Team

Volunteers who are interested in working directly with horses and clients may choose to advance to the Session Team.

To do so, volunteers must complete the **Hearts & Hooves Training Class**, which provides the hands-on training required for these roles.

Step 5: Hearts & Hooves Training

The Hearts & Hooves Training Class is a more in-depth training designed to prepare volunteers for safe and meaningful participation in sessions.

This training:

- Is offered quarterly
- Open to volunteers 16 years or older
- Lasts approximately 5 hours
- Provides hands-on instruction and skill development
- Prepares volunteers for specific Session Team roles

Space is limited, and early sign-up is encouraged. Volunteers may continue serving on the Support Team while waiting for training.

Step 6: Session Team Roles

After completing Hearts & Hooves Training, volunteers may serve in roles such as:

- Handy Horse Helpers (grooming and basic hoof care)
- Horse Care Assistant (Supportive Care)
- Horse Handlers (leading horses during sessions)
- Sidewalkers (supporting riders during sessions)
- Arena Angels (assisting with session flow and safety)

These roles require a higher level of responsibility, awareness, and commitment to scheduled sessions.

Our Goal

Our goal is to create a volunteer experience that is:

- Safe and well-supported
- Flexible and welcoming
- Meaningful and impactful

Every role, whether behind the scenes or in the arena, plays an important part in helping our clients grow, gain confidence, and succeed.

Volunteer Roles

Stable-Wranglers play an essential role in the daily operations of Stable-Spirit. Each role contributes to the safety, care, and success of our horses and clients.

Our roles are divided into two categories: **Support Team** and **Session Team**.

Support Team Roles

(The foundation of our volunteer program)

Support Team volunteers help maintain the facility and care for the horses behind the scenes. These roles are a great way to get started, learn the environment, and build confidence.



Scoop Squad

Responsible for mucking stalls, paddocks, and arenas, as well as general barn upkeep. This role is essential to maintaining a clean and safe environment.



Hay Day Crew

Assists with feeding routines and ensuring horses receive proper hay and care. This role requires additional training due to feeding procedures and safety considerations.



Facility Maintenance Team

Helps with general upkeep of the property, including yardwork, minor repairs, and maintaining safe conditions around the facility.



Paperwork Posse

Provides administrative and office support, such as organizing documents, assisting with forms, and helping with behind-the-scenes operations.



Dust Buster Brigade

Focuses on cleaning and organizing shared spaces, including tack areas, grooming spaces, and other facility areas.

Session Team Roles

(Hearts & Hooves Training Required)

Session Team volunteers work directly with horses and clients during sessions. These roles require completion of the **Hearts & Hooves Training Class** and a higher level of responsibility and commitment.



Handy Horse Helpers

Assist with grooming and basic hoof care. This role helps ensure horses are clean, comfortable, and ready to work.



Horse Care Assistant

Assists with approved horse care tasks beyond routine grooming, supporting the health and well-being of our horses through individualized, one-on-one training.



Horse Handlers

Lead horses during sessions while maintaining awareness of both the horse and the rider. This role focuses on controlling and guiding the horse safely.



Sidewalkers

Walk alongside the rider to provide physical and emotional support as directed by the instructor or therapist. This is a hands-on role focused on rider safety and encouragement.



Arena Angels

Support overall session flow by assisting instructors, maintaining safety awareness, and helping as needed during sessions.

A Note on Roles & Advancement

All volunteers begin on the Support Team before moving into Session Team roles, if they choose to do so.

Advancement is based on:

- Completion of required training
- Demonstrated reliability and consistency
- Comfort level and ability
- Program needs

Our goal is to place each volunteer in a role where they feel confident, supported, and successful.

Working Around Horses & Participants (Overview)

Volunteers may be around horses and participants during their time at Stable-Spirit. While hands-on skills are taught during training, it is important to understand a few key principles:

- Horses can be unpredictable and should always be approached with awareness and respect
- Sudden movements, loud noises, or distractions can startle a horse
- Always follow staff instructions when near horses or participants
- Treat all participants with respect, patience, and kindness

Detailed instruction on horse handling, grooming, and working directly with participants is provided during the **Hearts & Hooves Training Class**.

Facility Rules & Safety Guidelines

Safety is our top priority at Stable-Spirit. These guidelines are in place to protect our volunteers, clients, and horses. All volunteers are expected to follow these rules at all times.

General Safety

- Always be aware of your surroundings when working around horses and people
 - Horses can be unpredictable; move calmly and avoid sudden movements or loud noises
 - No running, yelling, or horseplay anywhere on the property
 - Never stand directly in front of or directly behind a horse
 - Follow all instructions given by staff or trained personnel
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Supervision & Training

- Volunteers may not work directly with horses unless they have completed the appropriate training
- Scoop Squad volunteers should remain within their assigned areas and tasks
- Session Team roles require completion of the **Hearts & Hooves Training Class**

- If you are ever unsure about a task, ask before proceeding
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Dress Code

- Closed-toe shoes are required at all times
- Wear comfortable, but modest and weather-appropriate clothing
- Avoid loose or dangling jewelry

Behavior Expectations

- Treat all people, animals, and property with respect
 - Abusive, inappropriate, or unsafe behavior will not be tolerated
 - Use calm, respectful language at all times
 - Be mindful of creating a positive and supportive environment
 - No photos of clients are allowed
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Attendance & Communication

- If you are scheduled to volunteer and cannot attend, please notify us as soon as possible
 - Consistent attendance is important, especially for Session Team roles
 - Repeated no-shows may affect your ability to participate in certain roles
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Facility Guidelines

- Do not feed the horses, dogs, or cats
 - Never leave a horse tied and unattended
 - Return all equipment to its proper place after use
 - No bikes, skateboards, or similar items on the property
 - Only service animals are permitted on-site
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Personal Safety & Awareness

- Headphones/earbuds should not prevent you from hearing your surroundings
 - Stay alert and engaged while volunteering
 - Report any safety concerns, injuries, or unusual situations to staff immediately
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Youth Volunteers

- Volunteers under 18 must follow all program guidelines
- Minors under 16 years old must be accompanied by an approved adult volunteer
- Certain tasks and equipment are restricted for safety reasons

Volunteer Agreement & Acknowledgment

As part of the onboarding process, all volunteers are required to complete the Stable-Wranglers Volunteer Agreement & Acknowledgment electronically prior to attending Scoop Squad Orientation.

Please complete the agreement using the link below:

<https://forms.gle/6LnxVfxbrfET12ym6>

The electronic agreement confirms that you have reviewed this manual and agree to follow the policies, procedures, and expectations outlined by Stable-Spirit.

Your electronic signature has the same validity and effect as a handwritten signature.