



# MORNING DOVE

THERAPEUTIC RIDING INC

## **Volunteer Handbook**

## WELCOME MORNING DOVE VOLUNTEERS!

We are so glad you have chosen to give your precious time and talent to our program. No matter what you choose to help us with, please know that without you, none of this would be possible. Thank you!

There are many ways to volunteer here at Morning Dove. Please let us know which areas interest you most:

- *Sidewalker*
- *Horse leader*
- *Assisting with fundraisers*
- *Service projects*
- *Barn work*
- *Office work*
- *SOS list – be on call when we are short on volunteers (primarily sidewalkers)*

We welcome referrals of riders and volunteers. Please let us know if you know of a family or individual that would benefit from our services, or know of someone who would like to join our volunteer team! Thank you!!

### Morning Dove Contact Information

Telephone: **317-733-9393**  
Website: [www.morningdovetrc.org](http://www.morningdovetrc.org)

Center Address: 7444 W. 96<sup>th</sup> Street  
Zionsville, IN 46077

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 721  
Zionsville, IN 46077

#### Staff Directory:

Executive Director: Liz Coit – [liz@mdtrc.org](mailto:liz@mdtrc.org)  
Office Manager: Patti Henry – [officemanager@mdtrc.org](mailto:officemanager@mdtrc.org)  
Volunteer Coordinator: Emily Keenan - [volunteercoordinator@mdtrc.org](mailto:volunteercoordinator@mdtrc.org)  
Barn Manager: Sarah Holden– [sarahh@mdtrc.org](mailto:sarahh@mdtrc.org)  
Instructors: Liz Coit - [liz@mdtrc.org](mailto:liz@mdtrc.org)  
Emily Keenan - [emilyk@mdtrc.org](mailto:emilyk@mdtrc.org)  
Sarah Holden – [sarahh@mdtrc.org](mailto:sarahh@mdtrc.org)  
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## **About Morning Dove**

Founded in 1998, Morning Dove Therapeutic Riding, Inc. offers equine-assisted therapy services to a children and adults in the greater Indianapolis community with physical, cognitive and/or emotional disabilities. New participants are referred by physicians or therapists, their schools, through neighbors and friends or find Morning Dove by word of mouth. After a thorough assessment by one of our PATH certified instructors, riders attend weekly sessions which include learning about horses, grooming, and riding both in the arena and on our trails.

Morning Dove offers therapeutic riding programs, as well as our hippotherapy program in partnership with St. Vincent Pediatric Rehabilitation Services. In addition to our regular programs, each summer we offer summer camps for children on the autism spectrum in affiliations with EasterSeals Crossroads Indiana and St. Vincent.

Morning Dove is a Premier Accredited member of the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH). We employ ONLY PATH certified instructors in our programs. Each instructor has been trained and certified by PATH as a therapeutic riding instructor. They are First Aid and CPR certified for both adults and children.

Students at Morning Dove may have one or several “disabilities” including physical, emotional, behavioral and/or cognitive disabilities. These disabilities may or may not be obvious to you. Their medical and personal information is HIGHLY confidential. Instructors will tailor each lesson to the rider’s unique needs and give the volunteers the information they need to be effective.



# GENERAL GUIDELINES

**Please turn off cell phones during lesson and please do not take photos of the riders!**

**No smoking anywhere on the Morning Dove property.**

## **Forms & Orientation**

Morning Dove requires every volunteer to complete the volunteer registration forms prior to any volunteer work. Forms must be **updated annually**. Morning Dove reserves the right to do background checks, and/or require drug screening at any time. All volunteers are required to attend an orientation and specific trainings. Approval to participate in these roles is at the discretion of the volunteer coordinator.

## **Attendance**

Your attendance is critical to each rider. It allows us to provide a safe and positive experience for our riders. We ask that you make a commitment for an entire session, and that you come reliably. If you cannot make a lesson, please let us know as soon as possible so that we have time to find another volunteer. *Without you, our students may not get to ride!*

## **Parking**

Please park on the right-hand side of the drive before you pass through the fenced area. Avoid parking on the grass and stay on the paved drive. The speed limit is 10 MPH for everyone's safety. If there are horses on the drive, STOP a safe distance away and wait for them to clear the driveway. Following horses up the drive is extremely dangerous for our riders, volunteers, and horses.

## **Attire**

Clothing should be comfortable. Please wear clothing that you won't mind getting dirty. *It is important to wear closed toed shoes with hard soles to protect your feet.* Crocs and open toed shoes or sandals are not permitted. In cold weather, you will need warm clothes, gloves and hats. Shorts should be at least fingertip length. Shirts are required; do not wear tube or tank tops. Jewelry, scarves or anything that dangles are invitations for students and horses to tug.

Please avoid perfumes and colognes as they can attract flies and stinging insects and can be a distraction for our students. Some of our riders can have sensitivities to strong smells.

## **Horses**

Our horses are important, and are treated with care and respect at all times. Without these carefully selected horses, we have no program. If you feel the horse isn't acting as it normally does please notify the instructor. The instructor is trained to manage horse and rider so that all are safe!

## **Riders**

We treat our riders with respect. Talk to them appropriately. Positive feedback, helpful suggestions, and general kindness work great! **Please give students a few seconds to process what the instructor asked before repeating the question!!** Always ask the instructor for help if you feel like you or your rider is struggling with the lesson. Be sure your rider is attentive to the

instructor – your role is to ASSIST, not instruct. And please remember that side conversations can be very distracting.

**Keep what happens at Morning Dove confidential.** We know you are excited about what you do here and want to share with others; please do so in a way that does not identify the riders.

### **Volunteer Reminders**

Remember to ALWAYS wear your name tag; yellow for sidewalkers and blue for horse leaders.

Make sure you sign in and out of the volunteer book each time you volunteers. For safety, we need to have a record of everyone on property at all times. We also keep track of volunteer hours for reporting, grants, and planning.

Check the volunteer schedule to see your assignment for the day. If you have any questions for concerns, please ask the volunteer coordinator or volunteer leader.

### **Safety Precautions – The instructor is in charge at all times**

Do **NOT** enter any stall unless you are the horse leader in charge of tacking that horse for a lesson or have permission from the barn manger or instructor.

**Sidewalkers/riders/families are not permitted in the barn past the first stall.** Horses will be coming and going in preparation for lessons and to keep everyone safe and on-time, please keep traffic in the barn to a minimum.

Off limit areas: pastures, the main barn, the loft

### **Emergency Information**

There are 3 first aid kits: one in the office next to the restroom, one in the barn, and one in the indoor arena. Fire extinguishers are located in the office, barn, and indoor arena. Please see the “Emergency Map” located on the volunteer bulletin board for more information on location of all of these items.

In the event of an emergency, follow all directions of the instructor. An emergency contact list is posted above the telephone on the office manager’s desk.

All instructors are certified in CPR and First Aid for both children and adults.

### **Dismissal**

Morning Dove reserves the right to ask any volunteer and/or guest to leave the property at any time for any reason.