



**Position Title: Rider Assistant, Horse Leader, Sidewalker A or Sidewalker B**  
**Reports To: Director of Volunteers**

**Eligibility:**

- Have the ability to walk 45+ minutes in a sand arena and jog for short distances.
- You may be asked to assist riders weighing up to 200 pounds.
- Have the willingness to be outdoors in many weather extremes.
- Have the ability to follow direction from a direct supervisor in a fast paced environment
- Commit to a full riding session or make suitable and timely arrangements otherwise.
- Attend volunteer training and read volunteer manual.
- Be 14 years or older
- Fully complete application with all required forms and provide references

**Responsibilities and Duties:**

- Work under the direct supervision of a NARHA certified instructor.
- *Arrive at least 15 minutes prior to class start time*
- Preparing, grooming and tacking horses for scheduled lesson
- Dress safely and appropriately
- Inform TEC in a timely fashion of absences
- Follow all agency policies and procedures
- Communicate questions, feedback, or concerns to the Instructor or Director of Volunteers
- Follow safety rules and regulations

**Program Volunteer (general)**

- Bring horse to the stall, groom and tack horse for lesson
- Promote rider independence and success
- Alert the instructor of any safety concerns
- Assist instructor in maintaining a safe environment and assist in emergency

**Sidewalker A**

- Assist instructor during mounting and dismounting as requested
- Communicate with rider when appropriate, including verbal and non-verbal prompts
- Provide physical assistance and stabilization to the rider when directed or necessary
- Remain focused on assisting the rider

**Sidewalker B**

- Provide physical assistance and stabilization to the rider when directed or necessary
- Remain focused on assisting the rider
- Give quiet support to the rider and Sidewalker A

**Horse Leader**

- Lead horse, walk alongside without a lead, or may be stationed in the arena for spotting
- Focus remains on working with the horse; sidewalkers give support to rider
- Communicate with instructor regarding any horse related questions or concerns

## Specific Areas of Concern:

**No Show Volunteers.** Occasionally, we have volunteers who don't realize the seriousness and responsibility of this commitment, and who don't appear at the pre-arranged time. If you must miss a lesson, contact TEC or the Director of Volunteers before the fact. We know that life happens and with appropriate notice, we can arrange for a sub for you. Your absence doesn't simply mean that we're shorthanded; it could mean that a rider doesn't get to ride.

**Punctuality:** Leaders and sidewalkers are required to be here 15 minutes before class time in order to help prepare for lessons. Our group lessons are 1 hour and 15 minutes. Private lessons are 30-45 minutes. If, for instance, you arrive 15 minutes after lesson time, in essence, you are actually a half an hour late. Your job involves preparation time as well as arena time. A late arrival affects the amount of time a rider may actually ride.

With both of these issues, TEC can arrange for a substitute or make adjustments if the volunteer makes prior arrangements.

**Substitute Instructors:** Occasionally, we need to use substitute instructors. Please work with each sub as you would your usual instructor. Each one is trained using NARHA guidelines, but each may have their own individual approach. So, be prepared – watch and listen for any changes or differences as carefully as you did during your first experience in the arena.

Volunteer commitment plays an integral role in all operations of Therapeutic Equestrian Center and must be taken very seriously and given careful consideration. All new volunteers will be considered probationary for six months. During this time, they will be monitored by an instructor or training team member to ensure safety and will not be alone with riders for any period of time. If the candidate exhibits any physical limitations or behavior traits which may be of concern, or any disregard for TEC's code of ethics, program, horses, staff, or riders, the candidate will not participate as a lesson volunteer. The candidate will be given warning and notified immediately of this decision.

Carefully consider these very important issues before you commit to any program sessions. While we deeply appreciate our volunteers, if you are not sure that you are able to honor your commitment, it would be preferable to us that you wait to volunteer until you can. With your continued cooperation our riders, volunteers and TEC will continue to flourish.

### ***Volunteer Acknowledgement***

*This document describes the general requirements to successfully volunteer at TEC. It is not intended to be an exhaustive list of responsibilities, duties and skills. TEC retains the right to add, modify or remove responsibilities of this position at any time. By signing below, I acknowledge that I understand the responsibilities of the position and am able to meet the position's requirements. I will notify TEC immediately if at any time I become unable to perform the duties described here.*

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_