

High Hurdles



Therapeutic Riding
a division of sasi



Equine Assisted Services at sasi Participant Handbook

Welcome! This packet contains our policies and procedures, as well as some general information about the facilities and lessons. Please read through the entirety of the packet for answers to questions and reach out for any additional information. We look forward to having you in lessons and thank you for adhering to these guidelines!



Contact Information



Barn Cells: High Hurdles (716)548-0004 (text or call, all staff)

Lothlorien (716)387-1355 (text or call, all staff)



Office Phones: (716)436-3935 (call only-direct line to Shelby)

(716)655-1335 (call only- Lothlorien office)

Fax #: (716)496-4010

Websites: www.highhurdlestrc.org; www.lothlorientrc.com



Social Media:

Facebook: High Hurdles Therapeutic Riding Program

Lothlorien Therapeutic Riding Center, Inc.

Instagram: @highhurdlesprogram

@lothlorientrc

Addresses:



High Hurdles

13339 Rt 39

Sardinia, NY 14134

Lothlorien

15 Reiter Rd

East Aurora, NY 14052

Director of Equine Assisted Services:

Shelby Dytschkowskyj: shelby.dytschkowskyj@sasinc.org, (716) 436-3935

Manager of Equine Assisted Services:

Erin Hoelscher: erin.hoelscher@sasinc.org, (716)548-0004

Equine Programs Assistant:

Cierra Friedman: cierra.friedman@sasinc.org, (716)655-1335

Instructors:

*May be contacted at their respective barn cell phones and at their emails

first.lastname@sasinc.org



Samantha Parsell

Charlotte Nickerson

Madison Shanley



Sandra Whistler

Isabelle Gritsavage

Susan Drake

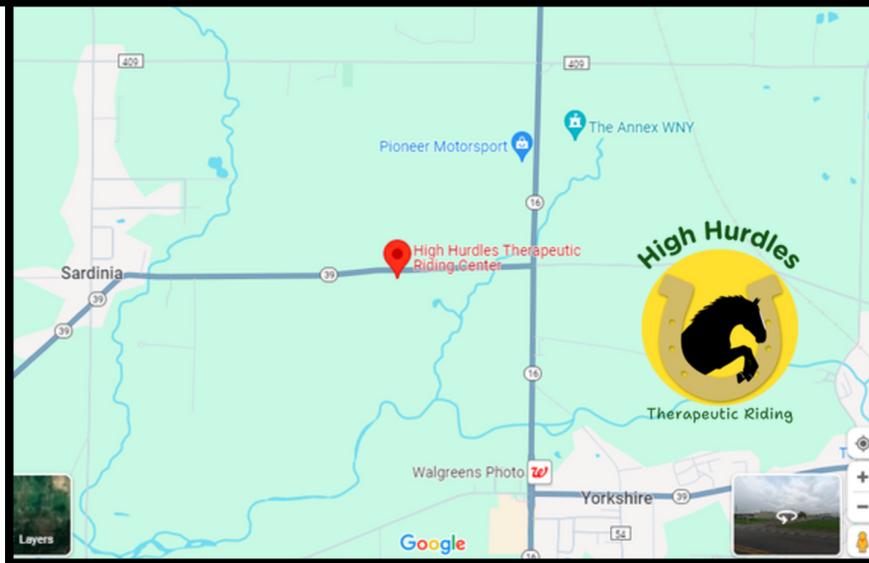
Billing/Invoices:

Amanda Kinmartin: akinmartin@sasinc.org, (716) 805-1555

VP of Business and Community Initiatives:

Shannon Nasca: shannon.nasca@sasinc.org, (716) 436-3934

Where to Find Us!





Registration Instructions



U Registration Requirements

- Registration paperwork must be completed annually, including the physician release.
- All forms must be current, complete, and signed, with accurate medical history, medications, height, and weight.
- Packets must be submitted at least 2 weeks before the start of the desired session.
- Fax, email or mail your packets to Shelby Dytschkowskyj (see contact information)
- **Registration packets are not a guarantee of services.** Riders will be screened to determine our ability to safely accommodate their needs. It can also be based on horse availability or PATH Int'l standards for when a rider might be contraindicated from riding. We do offer off-horse lessons for appropriate participants.

U Lesson Placement & Confirmation

- Lessons are scheduled on a first come, first served basis. Confirmations will be sent out prior to each individual session.
- Groupings are created based on safety, rider needs, and horse suitability.
- Lesson confirmations may be sent 2-4 weeks before the session.
- To ensure fairness, priority may be given to riders who can participate in only one session when scheduling conflicts arise with multi-session riders.

U Payment

- *DO NOT* send payment with registration.
- Lesson fees vary by location and will be outlined in the session confirmation materials.
- Payment is due by the end of the session. If payment is not received this may impact the rider's ability to register for future sessions.
- Invoices will be sent by the sasi business office following the lesson confirmation.
- *PAYMENT METHODS*
 - Check or money order mailed to 960 West Maple Ct Elma, NY 14059
 - Cash dropped off at either location
 - Credit card over the phone to the sasi Business Office



Schedule Information



- U Our lessons are structured in 4-8 week sessions throughout the year (1-hour weekly).
- U Please select at least 3 schedule options and put a ★ next to your most preferred time in the registration packet. If you do not have at least 3 options, we may not be able to accommodate your availability.
- U Riders new to us will be scheduled for a brief orientation the week prior to the first week of classes.
- U Please consider the typical weather/season when making your session selection.
- U Note that we do not follow all holiday closures.
- U We will make every effort to place riders in their preferred lesson time but will also select classes based on variables such as horse availability, level of independence and group dynamics.

Lesson Fees/Payment Options

- U Our fees are able to stay well below the actual cost of a lesson with the help of generous donors, grants and fundraising. We do understand however that these costs may be out of reach for some and we have options for those that qualify.
 - **Family Support Service Program** - for those eligible with OPWDD who live at home with family. See more information on our website. Costs differ from the out-of-pocket costs and eligibility requirements apply. Your care coordinator and team may be able to assist you. Riders are eligible for **ONE** session through FSS.
 - **Scholarships** - based on financial need, and when funds are available (this is donor funded). Please contact Shelby for information.
 - **Third Party Payments/Self Directed Services**
 - o HH/LTRC is not responsible for any third-party payments but can provide documentation as requested. Client will need to supply the third-party payer with the invoice they need paid/reimbursed
 - o Client is responsible for requesting and sending receipts to third-party reimbursing agencies



Lesson Format: Mounted Lessons



U ARRIVAL:

Arrive 5-10 minutes early, meet in the indoor arenas at both locations where your instructor will meet you.

U ON THE GROUND:

- First 15-20 minutes: Riders begin with a ground activity with their horse and volunteer in the barn, indoor, or outdoor arena.
- Grooming and prepping their horse is the main activity, helping riders learn horsemanship skills, care for their horse, and build confidence.
- Other activities may include tacking, leading, stretching, or warm-up games.
- Activities are adapted to each rider's needs and preferences.

U IN THE SADDLE:

The remaining 40-45 minutes is for riding time.

- Riders mount their horse and participate in riding activities, including warm-ups, skill-based exercises, games, and a cool-down.
- Time in the saddle depends on the rider's endurance, tolerance, and attention span.
- Mounting and dismounting may take additional time due to group size, rider needs, or tack adjustments.
- This process is carefully managed to maintain safety for riders, volunteers, staff, and horses.

U DISMISSAL:

- Riders are encouraged to bring their horse back to the barn, care for the equipment they used, and give their horse a treat to reinforce responsibility, horsemanship skills and positive interaction with their horse.
- This activity may be adapted to the rider's abilities and needs and can be done in the arena if necessary.



Facility Rules and Safety Information



Safety Safety Safety Safety Safety Safety Respect Respect

	<p>THE EMERGENCY WORD IS HALT, see “In case of emergency” section.</p>
	<p>KEEP PHONES ON SILENT OR VIBRATE. THE BARN CELL PHONE IS AVAILABLE FOR USE IN EMERGENCIES.</p>
	<p>PARENT/GUARDIAN/STAFF MUST REMAIN ON SITE for the entirety of the lesson, except in rare circumstances where the rider is their own legal guardian or is also a volunteer. All minor visitors (siblings, guests etc.) must be supervised at all times.</p>
	<p>NO ONE SHOULD BE IN THE LESSON AREA EXCEPT FOR THOSE DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN HELPING WITH THE LESSON. Spectators should stay in the designated viewing areas in the classroom and the bench in front of the bathroom. They should remain quiet to keep riders focused and lessons safe. Thank you for your cooperation!</p>
	<p>Avoid pasture fences, they are electric. Always assume the fence is ON</p>
	<p>BE KIND AND GENTLE TO HORSES, PEOPLE, CATS, ETC. TREAT OTHERS THE WAY YOU WANT TO BE TREATED.</p>
	<p>HELP EACH OTHER</p>
	<p>PUT EQUIPMENT AWAY AND BE GENTLE WITH IT.</p>



Miscellaneous Information



	<p>FAMILIES/STAFF SHOULD COME PREPARED TO SIDEWALK AS NECESSARY (WEARING CLOSE TOED SHOES).</p>
	<p>VOLUNTEERS: Our volunteers generously donate their time to our riders and program. How volunteers work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers are trained to offer the level of support that each rider needs, and on how to handle our horses. They are responsible for supporting the rider and answer to the supervising instructor. • We try to place the same volunteer with each rider week to week, but this may change for various reasons. • We schedule lessons and volunteers as needed with each rider. Please let us know with a minimum 24hr notice if you will be absent so that we can inform them.
	<p>SIGN IN WHEN YOU ARRIVE, AND OUT WHEN YOU LEAVE.</p>
	<p>LANTERNS ARE AVAILABLE IF THE POWER GOES OUT.</p>
	<p>FIRE EXTINGUISHERS ARE LOCATED NEAR BUILDING EXITS THROUGHOUT THE FACILITIES</p>
	<p>BREAKER BOXES ARE IN THE HAY STORAGE AREA IN THE BARN AND IN THE STORAGE/VIEWING AREA OF THE ARENAS.</p>
	<p>LTRC FIRST AID KITS: BARN, ARENA ENTRANCE AND BATHROOM AN AED IS LOCATED IN THE OFFICE HH FIRST AID KITS: BATHROOM AND TACK ROOM AN AED IS LOCATED AT SARDINIA 2</p>
	<p>WIFI IS AVAILABLE- PASSWORD CHANGES FREQUENTLY</p>
	<p>LTRC PARKING: IN FRONT OF ANGEL ARENA, KEEP BARN DRIVEWAY CLEAR FOR WHEELCHAIR DROP OFF HH PARKING: IN FRONT OF BARN, KEEP CIRCLE CLEAR FOR WHEELCHAIR DROPOFF</p>



Program Policies

Weight Limit Policy



Each horse has a set weight limit based on their size, age, physical condition and health. Our upper weight limit is 200lbs, however be aware that we have limited horses that can accommodate this weight and their availability may be limited. Our weight limit also takes into consideration our volunteers and staff to ensure their safety and ability to aid a rider as needed. Riders over 175lb should need minimal assistance from a side walker. Those that are outside of these limits are welcome to join in off-horse lessons. We reserve the right to weigh a participant to ensure the safety of our equine staff.

Contraindications

As a facility we follow PATH Int'l guidelines for therapeutic riding, which includes guidelines on who is a candidate to participate on horseback or in the barn. Though not common, we may have to decline providing services to an applicant for their own safety. Horseback riding is an inherently dangerous activity that can exacerbate preexisting conditions even in a normal lesson. We may also have to decline an applicant due to our own ability to accommodate their needs.



Attendance Policy

Lessons are structured such that there are several people (and horses) that are involved in each lesson. Please let us know as soon as possible if you are unable to attend a lesson (24hrs is best) so that we can prepare the team as many of our volunteers travel significant distances to help with lessons. If a rider misses 2 lessons without contact, they will have no make up credit issued and may forfeit their spot to allow another rider into the program. If a rider misses 3 lessons with contact, they may also forfeit their spot for the session. If a rider is more than 15 minutes late to a lesson, they will be unable to be on-horse during that lesson and will be counted as present. See make-up policy.





Program Policies



Code of Conduct

Everyone in our programs plays a role in keeping High Hurdles/Lothlorien a safe and welcoming place. We ask all participants to act with respect and kindness toward others, follow instructions from staff, and treat our horses and equipment with care. Safety is our top priority, and behaviors that put anyone at risk or are consistently disrespectful will not be tolerated. Our goal is to create an environment where everyone can learn, grow, and enjoy horsemanship in a positive way.



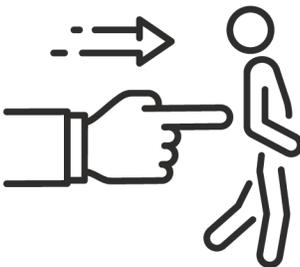
Confidentiality

High Hurdles/Lothlorien practice strict confidentiality in regard to a participant's personal information. Medical histories and diagnoses are used by the staff to develop lesson plans/goals for each rider and are never shared without explicit permission from the parent/guardian. General information, as it relates to the success of the riding experience, is shared with the volunteers on a need-to-know basis.



Grounds for Dismissal

High Hurdles/Lothlorien reserve the right to dismiss any participant whose behavior violates program rules or safety boundaries, threatens the well-being of people or animals, or prevents staff from providing a safe, supportive environment. Serious violations such as possession of weapons, alcohol, or illegal substances, harassment, or abusive behavior may result in immediate dismissal. Other reasons include repeated rule violations, unexcused absences, safety or medical concerns, or failure to meet program requirements.





Program Policies



Cancellation Policy

Our program aims to give riders a broad education in horsemanship and riding, and as such may include off horse lessons as needed for weather or unforeseen circumstances.

Lessons WILL BE occurring unless you are contacted directly by staff.

Due to the nature of the program, working with volunteers and live animals, we are unable to make up for missed lessons except in the circumstances as listed below.

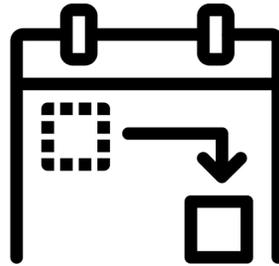
Weather Related Cancellations:

Lessons may be cancelled or adjusted at the discretion of High Hurdles/Lothlorien instructors. Instructors may offer classroom activities, groundwork, grooming, or horsemanship education as appropriate for each rider. If an unmounted lesson is not suitable, or if the rider has already had two unmounted lessons in the session, a weather make-up lesson will be scheduled at a mutually agreeable time, at the discretion of the instructor in consultation with the rider or caregiver.

- Ⓢ Lessons will be cancelled if travel bans or advisories in a participant's area prevent them from arriving safely. Cancellation for a weather event will otherwise be based on High Hurdles/Lothlorien's location.
- Ⓢ Lessons will be cancelled when Pioneer or East Aurora Schools are closed for weather.
- Ⓢ A decision will be made, and riders/volunteers notified about cancelling at least 2 hours prior to the start of a lesson.
- Ⓢ Off horse lessons will be conducted in the following weather circumstances:
 - Temperature below 20 degrees or above 85 degrees, subject to change due to wind chill and humidity.
 - Unsafe weather events as determined by staff. Thunder and lightning in ear/eye shot.



Program Policies



Make-Up Policy

Weather Make-Ups:

- Lessons cancelled due to weather will be rescheduled.
- If a rider chooses to cancel based on weather and High Hurdles or Lothlorien remains open, no make-up will be issued.

Program Make-Ups:

- A make-up credit will be issued when High Hurdles/Lothlorien cancels a lesson for any reason. (e.g. staffing or volunteer availability, horse emergencies, etc.)
 - We ask that families and staff come prepared to sidewalk as necessary to limit volunteer shortages from affecting lessons.
- Make-ups must be used within the same session. If the family cannot attend the scheduled make-up, no refund or additional credit will be provided.

Medical/Emergency Make-Ups:

- A make-up will be offered in the event of a major medical illness or emergency including hospitalization or surgeries.
- We are unable to make up lessons for common illnesses due to limitations in the scheduling of staff, volunteers and horses. We do ask, however that if you are sick you stay home to protect those involved in lessons, including other riders.

Pre-Approved Absence Make-Ups:

- Up to one lesson may be made up for a scheduled absence, so long as the absence is advised prior to the start of the session.

Make up credits are not reimbursable and must be used within one session after the cancellation.



Emergency Procedures



Emergency During a Mounted Lesson: Our emergency word is **HALT**. Anyone can call halt. If halt is called, everyone stops and waits for direction from the instructor.

HALT WE NEED TO EVACUATE: When this is called, all riders will be dismounted as quickly as possible. Leaders will take the horses back to the barn or pasture and take off tack. Everyone meets in front of the indoor arena at each location. The sign in book will be taken by an instructor for attendance.



INSTRUCTIONS IN THE EVENT THAT 911 NEEDS TO BE CALLED:

HH: Back of the office door and next to the tack room door for the operator.

LTRC: Next to the main entrance in the arena and barn for the operator.

1. Sidewalkers and leaders will stay with their rider and horse.
2. All horses will be moved away from the incident. Leaders/Sidewalkers will keep their riders/horses that are not involved calm.
3. Sidewalkers are responsible to their rider, leaders are responsible to the horse.
4. Instructor will direct each person involved in the lesson to help emergency dismount, as necessary. Volunteers are trained to dismount riders in an emergency.
5. Family/staff should wait for direction BEFORE entering the arena to avoid any safety concerns with the horses.
6. Riders will be directed to their families/caregivers.
7. If the emergency involved a rider, they will be dismounted, horses will be removed and rider attended to.
8. If needed, the instructor will direct someone to call 911 and get the first aid kit.
9. Leaders will take horses back to the barn and untack them, or to the pasture if the emergency is in the barn.
10. An incident report will be completed with all witnesses included.



Acknowledgement of Policies and Procedures



By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received and thoroughly read through the Participant Handbook and understand the policies and procedures within it. I agree to abide by the rules outlined in the handbook and if I have questions or concerns, I will bring them up to the Manager or Director of Equine Assisted Services as they arise. I have read and understand the weather, cancellation and attendance policies and agree to abide by them for the duration of my involvement in High Hurdles/Lothlorien programming. I agree to come prepared to sidewalk as needed for my rider, assuming I am physically able.

By acknowledging this, I recognize the importance of ensuring a safe and enjoyable experience for all participants, staff and volunteers and horses involved in the program.

Participant

Family/Caregiver Name

Relationship to Participant

Family/Caregiver Signature

Date

Thank
you