

VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT

New Start Standardbreds operates entirely through the dedication of its volunteers and the generosity of donors. This Volunteer Code of Conduct outlines the expectations and responsibilities of all individuals involved in the program to ensure a respectful, safe, and productive environment that prioritizes the welfare of the horses and the success of the program.

1. GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

All volunteers, including board members, are expected to:

1. Act in the Best Interests of the Program:
 - Always represent the program positively and with integrity.
 - Prioritize the health, safety, and well-being of the horses above personal interests.
2. Maintain Professional Conduct:
 - Treat all individuals, including other volunteers, adopters, donors, and community members, with respect, kindness, and fairness.
 - Avoid behavior that could harm the program's reputation or relationships with stakeholders.
3. Commit to Teamwork:
 - Work collaboratively with other volunteers and respect differing opinions.
 - Communicate openly and constructively to resolve conflicts or misunderstandings.
4. Uphold Confidentiality:
 - Respect the privacy of adopters, donors, and volunteers.
 - Maintain confidentiality of sensitive information regarding the program's operations.

2. VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES

Reliability and Accountability:

- Fulfill assigned responsibilities and adhere to agreed schedules.
- Notify the appropriate person promptly if unable to perform a task or attend a commitment.

Adherence to Policies:

- Follow all program policies and procedures, including safety guidelines and horse care standards.

Commitment to Mission:

- Actively support the program's mission to intake, rehabilitate, and rehome Standardbred horses.

3. SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES OF BOARD MEMBERS

In addition to the general expectations above, board members must:

1. Act as Ambassadors:
 - Represent the program professionally in public and advocate for its mission.
 - Build and maintain relationships with donors, sponsors, and community partners.
2. Provide Leadership:
 - Offer guidance, support, and direction to other volunteers.
 - Ensure the program operates ethically and efficiently.
3. Fulfill Fiduciary Duties:
 - Ensure donations are used responsibly and transparently for the program's benefit.
 - Oversee the program's compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.
4. Avoid Conflicts of Interest:
 - Disclose any potential conflicts of interest and recuse themselves from decisions where a conflict may exist.

5. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR INTERACTIONS

With Horses:

- Handle all horses with patience, kindness, and respect.
- Follow safety protocols to prevent harm to the horses or individuals.

With Other Volunteers:

- Promote a supportive and inclusive environment.
- Avoid gossip, discrimination, harassment, or any form of bullying.

With the Public:

- Provide accurate and courteous information about the program.
- Address concerns or complaints professionally and escalate them to leadership when necessary.

6. PROHIBITED BEHAVIOR

The following actions are grounds for immediate dismissal from the program:

1. Abuse or neglect of any horse in the program's care.
2. Harassment or discrimination based on race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, or other protected statuses.
3. Theft or misuse of program funds, resources, or donations.
4. Substance abuse while performing volunteer duties.
5. Inappropriate behaviour that jeopardizes the safety or reputation of the program.

6. REPORTING CONCERNS

Volunteers are encouraged to report any concerns or violations of this policy to the board members. Reports will be taken seriously and handled confidentially to ensure fairness and accountability.

7. VOLUNTEER DISMISSAL

Volunteers who fail to adhere to this Code of Conduct may be subject to:

- Verbal or written warnings.
- Reassignment of duties.
- Dismissal from the volunteer program.

8. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

All volunteers, including board members, must sign a Volunteer Agreement acknowledging their understanding and acceptance of this Code of Conduct.