

# Gentle Spirit Horses Rescue & Sanctuary

## Policy & Procedure Manual



# Fostering Policy

Effective Date: 1/1/2011

Last Modified: 4/15/2014

## POLICY

Gentle Spirit Horses Rescue & Sanctuary, Inc.'s (GSH) policy is to place suitable equines in approved foster homes to increase our ability to help equines in need.

## PROCEDURE

In order to foster, the potential adopter must:

- 1) Complete and submit a signed Foster Application & Liability Waiver
- 2) Provide 3 references, which must include a vet plus one other horse professional (farrier, trainer)
- 3) Submit photos of the equine's potential foster home and other equines owned by the potential adopter, or allow for an in person inspection

Once the Foster Application is received, GSH will:

- 1) Review the Application to make sure the requirements are met
- 2) Contact the listed references
- 3) Conduct any background check required
- 4) Arrange a visit by the potential foster home at a GSH location. If an in person visit is not possible, arrange a telephone conversation
- 5) Assign a volunteer inspector to set up a time for a home visit if needed. During the home visit, the inspector will view and photograph the property where any fostered equine(s) will live, view and photograph other equines on the property, and answer questions about the adoption process

Our application is kept simple on purpose, as it is meant to start a conversation. GSH will get a good feel for the potential foster's knowledge, ability and personality through in person or telephonic conversations, and will therefore be able to make a better recommendation for a match with an equine.

Upon review of all of these items, the Foster Coordinator will decide if the application is approved or denied. The Foster Coordinator may deny an application for any reason.

If the application is denied, the Foster Coordinator will inform the potential foster and discuss any concerns and areas of improvement that could be made to have their application approved.

An applicant who has not been approved may file an appeal in writing to the Board of Directors within seven (7) days of receiving notice that they were not approved, and the Board of Directors will discuss the appeal. The Board of Directors has final discretion in upholding a refused foster application.

If the application is approved, the Foster Coordinator will inform the potential foster and add the foster to our Foster Mailing List. If the foster has requested to foster a specific equine, transport arrangements will be made.

Once an applicant is approved, he or she must sign and submit a Foster Contract to GSH before he or she may volunteer to foster any equines.

## FOSTERED EQUINES

When an equine needs a foster home (either because the equine is new to the organization, has been returned by an adopter, or must be moved from his/her current foster home), The Foster Home Coordinator may:

1. ask a specific foster home to foster the equine based on the foster home's proximity to the equine's current location, resources, or experience, or
2. post the equine as "Available for Fostering" on the GSH Foster Home Email List. The Foster Home Coordinator will then consider offers to foster on a first-come, first-served basis with special attention paid to the location, resources, and expertise of the foster homes.

Foster homes are responsible for all usual maintenance costs including:

- Hay and/or grain, medications, supplements
- Boarding fees
- Farrier work
- Dewormer
- Annual shots and veterinary care
- Other usual and customary costs.

A fostered equine will be included in the total count for fundraising efforts such as spring shots, dewormers, blankets, that GSH undertakes as a group effort. This does not apply to general fundraisers for hay funds for GSH locations.

The costs associated with fostering a GSH horse may be tax deductible once GSH has received a 501(c)(3) designation, which is pending as of 1/14/2014.

Upon arrival of a new equine, the foster home shall:

- Maintain the equine on a de-worming schedule
- Maintain the equine on a farrier schedule
- Ensure that the equine has had routine veterinary procedures performed in accordance with the Standard Veterinary Care Policy
- Evaluate the equine's level of training to the best of his/her ability
- Submit front, back, left, and right view photos to GSH within one week

The foster home will report by email, postal mail, or the telephone the condition, health, etc. of the fostered equine(s) as needed to the Foster Home Coordinator. The foster home will provide regular photos, training updates, stories, and other updates to be shared on Social Media to encourage interest in the equine for adoption. The foster home will review the equine's web profile page and provide updates to the web coordinator as needed.

The foster home may choose to adopt the equine at any time, unless there is a submitted application for adoption for the equine. If the equine has been in the foster home's care for more than 90 days, the foster home will receive a 50% discount on the adoption fee. If the equine has been in the foster home's care for more than one year, the equine will be placed with a waived adoption fee. If they decide to adopt, the date on the adoption contract will be the date the equine arrived at the foster home and any follow-up inspections completed or photos submitted while fostering will count towards the follow-ups required of adopters. If the foster home does not adopt, then the opportunity to adopt the equine will then be offered to the first approved adoption applicant who has expressed an interest in the equine and the foster home will make the fostered equine available for scheduled visits by approved adoption applicants.

In accordance with the Foster Contract, the foster home must give the Foster Home Coordinator at least thirty (30) days notice if they wish a fostered equine to be removed from their property.

If the foster home has a change in address, phone number, email, or any other contact information, they should notify the Foster Home Coordinator immediately.

## LENGTH OF FOSTERING

GSH cannot guarantee how long an equine will be in foster unless specific arrangements are made at the time of foster. A fostered horse will remain in foster until the horse is adopted or a spot opens up in one of the main GSH locations. A horse may remain in foster for a few weeks or several months to years.

At any time that a spot at one of the GSH locations opens up, any equine in foster will be offered entry into that spot. If a spot is offered and the foster wishes to keep the equine, the foster will need to complete an adoption application at that point.