

Volunteer Manual

MCKENNA FARMS



THERAPY SERVICES, INC.

3044 Due West Road

Dallas, Georgia 30157

(770) 443-9672

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Libby Medlin: (770) 686-6323

Volunteer Coordinator

About Us

McKenna Farms Therapy Services, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization based out of Dallas, Georgia and founded in 2001 by Jessica Moore, PTA (Founder and Executive Director). Following the guidelines from PATH International (Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship), McKenna Farms Therapy Services is dedicated to improving the quality of life of special needs individuals benefiting from physical, occupational, and speech therapies.

McKenna Farms began in 2001 with 10 children, 1 physical therapist, 5 volunteers, and 2 horses. Since then, McKenna Farms has expanded to serve families in surrounding counties. As the need for hippotherapy and therapeutic riding began to grow, additional therapists were hired. Presently, McKenna Farms has a growing team of therapists who serve approximately 500 children.

Our Mission

To provide innovative therapy programs and resources for individuals with special needs and their families while continuing to give back to our community.

Our Goal

To continue the expansion of our therapeutic center by creating additional programs, facilities, services, and scholarships.

Letter to Our Volunteers

Dear Volunteer,

We want to thank you for taking the time to help with our hippotherapy and therapeutic riding programs. Your dedication, support, and willingness to help allow our program not only to run smoothly, but it allows our special needs children to receive the therapy they need.

There are many jobs to do, from working with horses to photography, and all of them are important and greatly appreciated!

Your volunteering will be making a difference in the life of a child.

McKenna Farms is always in need of volunteers for our hippotherapy and therapeutic riding programs. It is a great opportunity for community service needs, home school students, church groups, high school students, and horse lovers to name a few!

If you have family members, friends, or know of any organizations that would be interested in volunteering or need more information, please contact our Volunteer Coordinators or office at (770) 443-9672.

Sincerely,

McKenna Farms Therapy Services Staff

Why Volunteer with Us?

McKenna Farms is unique in its volunteer opportunities as it not only allows work with children, but also equines! By volunteering at McKenna Farms, you allow children with special needs to obtain the hippotherapy and therapeutic riding they require. You will also be providing the equines that give this service a happy and healthy place to live!

Paid Staff and Volunteer Relations

There are two volunteer supervisors on staff to ensure a safe environment for all participants and volunteers. These supervisors are there to assist volunteers in daily duties and activities as well as supervise the goings on around the premises. Paid staff and volunteers at McKenna Farms work towards achieving secure surroundings to allow the highest quality therapy possible. Both contribute in various ways, and the volunteers compliment the work done by paid staff. We value the experiences and knowledge of volunteers. We encourage volunteers to express any ideas or concerns they may have. This feedback should be addressed to the Volunteer Coordinators via email.

Community Service

McKenna Farms will be happy to help you fulfill your Community Service obligations depending on the offense. We would like your experience with us to be a pleasant one, but our first obligation is to our clients and their families. A background check is required for all individuals wanting to obtain community service hours at our facility. It will be your responsibility to keep track of your hours. Once hours are verified, a Letter of Completion will be given upon request. Please allow up to 2 weeks.

Confidentiality Policy

McKenna Farms Therapy Services, Inc. shall reserve the right of confidentiality for all individuals in its program. Volunteers shall keep confidential all medical, social, referral, personal, financial, and all other information pertaining to a client and his/her family. Breaching of confidentiality will result in penalties, such as loss of privileges, job responsibilities, and termination. McKenna Farms Therapy Services, Inc. follows HIPAA Policies and Procedures.

Emergency Contact Numbers

In the event of an emergency, please call 911 first.

Main Office: (770) 443-9672

McKenna Therapy Farm

3044 Due West Road

Dallas, GA 30157

Jessie Moore (770) 656-0751

Yvette Adams (770) 634-9970

Libby Medlin (770) 686-6323

VET- Bill Walker (770) 206-0283

Background Check Information

Due to the nature of our programs and working with children, we ask that every volunteer age 18 and older to provide a background check to the Volunteer Coordinator at McKenna Farms Therapy Services. You must turn this in before being able to begin volunteer hours, although you may still complete the training without it. We will accept copies of recent background checks. You will be responsible for providing this to us. You can contact the Paulding County Sheriff's Department at (770) 443-3010. Their address is 247 Industrial Way North, Dallas, Georgia. You can obtain a background check for around \$10. All you need to provide is a copy of your driver's license.

You can also complete your background check online at:

<https://portal.castlebranch.com/my66>.

The cost is \$10, and the results will be emailed directly to the Volunteer Coordinator.

General Volunteer Rules

1. No smoking on the property.
2. Never feed horses without staff permission. Remember, they bite!
3. Children must be under adult supervision at all times.
4. No dogs allowed on the property.
5. Approach horses with caution in pasture, stall, and barn. Never walk behind a horse. Remember, they can kick!
6. No running or screaming in or around the barn or arenas.
7. Do not climb on any gates, fences, or stalls at any time.
8. Only lead one horse a time going to and from pastures.
9. One other person must accompany you to a pasture each time to get a horse unless you are over 18 years of age.
10. You must be 14 years of age to lead a horse at any time.
11. Wear appropriate attire. Closed toe shoes required.
12. Close all gates and stall doors at all times.
13. Alcohol and illegal drugs are prohibited on the property.

Safety Rules and Regulations

- I. Barn Hours are Monday – Friday from 8am to 7pm
- II. All riders, participants, and volunteers must have a signed release before handling a horse.
- III. In the event of an emergency, first dial 911, then contact Yvette Adams at (770) 634-9970.
- IV. ASTM-SEI Certified Helmets must be worn while mounted and in the ring.
- V. NO smoking or use of tobacco products on the property.
- VI. NO alcohol on the property.
- VII. Closed toe shoes must be worn while around horses.
- VIII. Boots with heels must be worn while mounted or a safety stirrup must be utilized.
- IX. No one under the age of 14 allowed in pastures without supervision.
- X. All volunteers must undergo training specific to their duties.
- XI. Close all gates and doors after use.
- XII. Clean up after yourself.
- XIII. No equine activities while thundering or lightening.
- XIV. Do not give horses treats by hand without permission from trainers.
- XV. Feed Room is off limits unless you are scheduled to feed that day.
- XVI. Mounting must be done by a trained individual from a block or a ramp.
- XVII. Dismounting must be done by a trained individual to the ground.
- XVIII. Practice general horse safety.
- XIX. Turn out schedules designated by the Barn Manager must be followed.
- XX. Gate to property must be closed and latched when the last person leaves.
- XXI. Turn off lights in clinic and barn at the end of each day.
- XXII. Only ride the horse you have been assigned to.
- XXIII. No dogs on the property.
- XXIV. Practice general ring etiquette.
- XXV. Park in designated parking areas.
- XXVI. No climbing on fencing or gates.
- XXVII. No running in the barn or around arenas.
- XXVIII. Clear the ring of all equipment after lessons.
- XXIX. Do not ride in pastures.
- XXX. Anyone under the age of 18 must be supervised at all times.
- XXXI. Clean up arena after each lesson.

Standard of Appearance

Volunteers are encouraged to wear attire that is appropriate to work in, yet professional. Volunteers are a significant part of the image the programs presents to the public. Pants are recommended, however, with the hot weather, shorts are okay with proper leg protection (i.e., bug spray, sunscreen). Sturdy shoes, such as boots, are preferable. **No open toe shoes of any kind are permitted in the barn or around the equines.**

Parking

The designated parking lot for volunteers is located in front of the main office (house) in the gravel parking lot. Access to the parking lot is through the main entrance and into the first parking lot on the left.

Rest Breaks/Related Activities

McKenna Farms is a drug, alcohol, and tobacco free facility. If a smoke break is required, you will be asked to leave McKenna Farms property. There is a designated volunteer room above the barn where there is a quiet place to relax between duties and to eat lunch. There is a restroom downstairs located next to the Feed Room. If the door to the office is closed, please knock and wait for an answer before entering.

Volunteer Benefits

Volunteers are able to climb a ladder of success after trainings and a set number of volunteer hours. A Master Ring Team Volunteer gets riding privileges. After 6 months of consistent volunteering, volunteers will be allowed discounted riding lessons. Special Olympics volunteers will be taken to the state horse show where all of their overnight and SOGA expenses will be covered as long as funding is available.

Grievance Policy

Because our volunteers are such an important part of our programs, we want all to be comfortable and happy with the people around them. Should problems arise that need to be confronted, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator, Libby Medlin. All complaints will be treated seriously, kept as confidential as possible, and investigated fully.

Sexual Harassment Policy

Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or unwanted sexual attention by anyone associated with the facility, whether male or female. Harassment may include references to employment status or conditions, or may serve to create a hostile, intimidating, or uncomfortable volunteer and work environment. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, obscene jokes, lewd comments, sexual depictions, repeated requests for dates, touching, staring, or other sexual conduct committed either on or off of McKenna Farms property.

There will be ZERO tolerance for sexual harassment.

Absences and Cancellation Policy

Along with the horses, volunteers are the most important part of our therapy program. Without dedicated individuals to help groom, tack, lead horses, encourage, walk beside our riders, and help with various farm tasks, McKenna Farms hippotherapy and therapeutic riding programs would not exist. Our clients and horses depend on you. When you do not show up or notify the Volunteer Coordinator that you will not be available on your scheduled day and time, the therapy session has to be cancelled. As for Barn Duties, our horses' needs will not be met (i.e. food, water, turnout, stall cleaning) if we are not made aware of your cancellation. Please be considerate when cancelling because someone has to take over your duties if you do not show up. Our horses must be fed and watered daily! **If you cannot make a scheduled therapy session or barn duty, notify the Volunteer Coordinator in advance so that other arrangements can be made.**

When the therapist or instructor is made aware of a patient cancellation in advance, the Volunteer Coordinator will contact the volunteer assigned to that session via phone call or text as soon as possible. There are instances when the therapist or instructor is not made aware of cancellations in advance. The Volunteer Coordinator works hard to notify all volunteers of any cancellations as soon as possible.

Leaving the Program on Own Accord

Although we cherish all of our volunteers, we are aware that you may not be able to continue to volunteer forever. The Volunteer Coordinator must be notified of a volunteer's intent to leave the program. Inactive volunteers are welcome to return as their schedule allows, but must meet with the Volunteer Coordinator prior to reactivation.

Being Asked to Leave the Volunteer Program by Staff

Mckenna Farms Therapy Services' staff reserves the right to ask that volunteers no longer return. Volunteers will be asked to leave the program if the volunteer jeopardizes the safety of the patients, horses, staff members, etc. or does not follow the rules and regulations laid out in this manual or in training sessions.

Barn Volunteer Position Descriptions

Feed Team Volunteers

These volunteers ensure that our horses are getting fed appropriately and in a timely manner.

Responsibilities:

1st Priority: Feed all horses according to the information listed on the Feed Schedule. Make sure to read all notes associated with each horse because they do change. **Read all whiteboards for any additional information.**

2nd: Turnout horses to correct pasture. Make sure to check all of the water troughs in each pasture! If it is $\frac{3}{4}$ full, please top it off!

3rd: Priority: Make sure hay and water are available for the horses in all of the pastures. Make sure to put hay in the hay cradles, clean and rinse water buckets, and refill with clean water in each stall even if no horses are scheduled to be in during that time.

4th Priority: Get all feed buckets out of stalls, rinse them, and stack them to dry outside of the wash rack.

5th Priority: Sweep out feed room.

Qualifications:

- Minimum age 16 years
 - **You must be 14 years or older to lead/turn out horses.**
- Children age 16 years with an adult staff member or volunteer supervising
- Confident in horse leading/catching skills
- Ability to administer medication to horses though feed
- Able to do physical work

Training:

- Volunteer Orientation
- Horse Handler/Leader Training
- Feed training with staff member

Stall Cleaning Team Volunteers

These volunteers ensure that our horses and riders have a clean, happy, and healthy place to work together.

If you sign up for this team, you should complete all of the below responsibilities before departing from the barn.

Responsibilities:

1st Priority: Fill water buckets and hay racks in stalls.

2nd Priority: Cleaning stalls—Remove everything wet and solid. Conserve shaving by sifting. Pull shavings away from stall walls and spread out before adding new shavings. Add new shavings sparingly.

3rd Priority: Sweep out the barn aisle and the cement pathway leading to the indoor arena. Put swept up debris in the poop dumpster.

Qualifications:

- Minimum age of 8 (with parent or guardian)
- Minimum age of 14 to work independently (with adult staff/volunteer supervision)
- Able to do physical work

Training:

- Meeting with the Volunteer Coordinator
- Minimum 1 Hour Barn Orientation
- Watch Training Video

Farm Team Volunteers

These volunteers ensure a clean and welcoming living space for the horses. These volunteers may come in at miscellaneous times throughout the day/week, and these are some of the duties they may be asked to help with.

Responsibilities:

- Cleaning and refilling water troughs
- Moving hay cradles
- Removing spoiled hay from pastures
- Shoveling manure from various areas of the farm
- Clean tack and brushes
- Wash fencing
- Organize & clean tack rooms
- Pasture safety checks
- And more!

Qualifications:

- Minimum age of 8 (with parent or guardian)
- Minimum age of 14 to work independently
- Able to do physical work

Training:

- Volunteer Orientation

Hippotherapy and Therapeutic Riding Volunteers

These volunteers are responsible for sidewalking during hippotherapy and therapeutic riding sessions.

Ring Team Sidewalker

Responsibilities:

- Sidewalk during sessions
- Follow directions of therapist or instructor
- Help riders maintain balance
- Give thigh, ankle, or appropriate holds
- Keep all focus on the rider!
- Understand emergency procedures
- Cleaning poop out of arenas after sessions
- Put away ring equipment after each session

Qualifications:

- Minimum age of 14
- Understanding of how to safely be around a horse
- Able to perform physical labor
- Able to support the weight of a child /rider

Training:

- Volunteer Orientation

Ring Team Horse Leader

These volunteers are responsible for leading horses during hippotherapy and therapeutic riding sessions.

Responsibilities:

- Lead during sessions
- Keep all focus on the horse!
- Understand emergency procedures
- Catch and turn out horses
- Groom horses
- Tack up horses for sessions
- Cleaning poop out of arenas after sessions
- Put away ring equipment after each session

Qualifications:

- Minimum age of 14
- Able to do physical labor
- Understanding of how to safely handle a horse
- Able to properly and safely lead a horse while a child is riding

Training:

- Volunteer Orientation
- Horse Handler/Leader Training

Ring Team Exerciser

These volunteers ensure that our horses are well exercised, healthy, and in good condition to continue working in the program.

Responsibilities:

- Exercise horses
- Follow direction of Horse Exerciser Staff

Qualifications:

- Minimum age of 16
- Minimum of 6 months as consistent volunteer
- Passed the McKenna Farms Therapy Services Riding Test
- Advanced equine knowledge and riding skill

Training:

- Volunteer Orientation
- Horse Handler/Leader Training
- 6 months as a consistent volunteer

Maintenance Team Volunteers

These volunteers ensure that our facility is safe, clean, and running smoothly.

Responsibilities:

- Fence and gate repair
- Replace hay bales in paddocks
- Repair and maintain farm equipment
- Small construction, maintenance, and repair on property
- Pest control
- General farm care and maintenance

Qualifications:

- Minimum age of 18
- Possession of a valid driver's license
- Able to drive a tractor
- Knowledge of safe construction and maintenance practices
- Able to safely handle hand and power tools
- Able to perform physical labor

Training:

- Meeting with the Volunteer Coordinator
- Minimum 1 Hour Facility Orientation

Facility and Landscaping Team Volunteers

These volunteers ensure our facility and grounds are beautiful and welcoming.

Responsibilities:

- Planting
- Weeding
- Trim bushes
- Rake, mulch, and prune grounds
- Water and fertilize plants
- Painting
- General Landscaping

Qualifications:

- Minimum age of 8 (with parent or guardian)
- Minimum age of 13 to work independently
- Able to do light physical work
- Knowledge of common outdoor finds such as plants, weeds, and other shrubs

Event Team Volunteers

These volunteers assist in fundraising events and grant writing.

Responsibilities:

- Assist in planning fundraisers
- Set-up events
- Registration
- On-site help and support
- Event take down
- Fall Festival planning
- Writing grants
- Plan meeting
- Photography

Qualifications:

- Minimum age of 18
- Able to organize
- Able to budget
- Great communication skills
- Experience in grant writing

Training:

- Meeting with Volunteer Coordinator
- Minimum 1 Hour Facility Orientation

Administration Team Volunteers

These volunteers assist in general office work.

Responsibilities:

- Filing
- Date entry
- Making phone calls
- E-mailing
- Recruiting volunteers

Qualifications:

- Computer experience
- Great communication skills
- Organized
- Understanding of Hippotherapy and Therapeutic Riding

Training:

- Meeting with Volunteer Coordinator