

Maryland Department of Health
Center for Recreation and Community Environmental Health Services
Youth Camps

Horseback Riding Safety Plan Guidance

Purpose

The purpose of a written safety plan is to inform camp staff and volunteers what actions to follow to ensure each camper's safety while running horseback riding programs. The Specialized Activity must be conducted according to the safety plan.

Training

Staff and volunteers must receive training in the horseback riding safety plan. Training must include an opportunity to discuss the plan and ask questions.

Knowledge and Conduct

Staff and volunteers must know and follow the horseback riding safety plan procedures.

- Each staff member / volunteer must receive training on the horseback riding safety plan and be allowed to ask questions regarding the plan
- The camp must keep documentation that each staff member / volunteer received the training before the beginning of camp.

Availability

The horseback riding safety plan must be on file in the camp headquarters or office and a copy must be available to the staff / volunteers.

- Each staff member / volunteer must know where the horseback riding safety plan is kept and / or be provided with their own copy of the plan.

Writing a Horseback Riding Safety Plan and Procedures

Provide the following descriptions and action in your horseback riding safety plan:

1. Describe the health and safety risks of the activity.
2. Describe all safety rules, standards, and practices for the horseback riding activity.
3. Describe the equipment to be used, your safety procedures, and proper use of the equipment.
4. Describe your maintenance procedure and proper storage for the horseback riding activity equipment to ensure it remains in good working condition.
5. Describe the steps taken to ensure that the horses remain health and are well cared for, including the stable meeting COMAR 15.16.01.
6. Describe the required staff; staff qualifications; and each staff member's responsibility before, during, and after the horseback riding activity and trail excursion. Minimum state requirements for staffing are below. The camp's requirements may be stricter.
 - a. Staff to camper ratio is 1 staff to 10 campers.
 - b. An instruction must be present.

- c. Director (an individual who is 21 years old or older and has at least 24 weeks of supervisory experience) present at camp or at activity site, when the activity is not at the camp.
7. Describe the following when the horseback riding activity is not on camp premises:
 - a. How the campers are transported to the activity.
 - b. Where and how the health and emergency information for campers, staff members, and volunteers will be kept.
 - c. How the group participating in the horseback riding activity communicates to emergency services (911), parents, and main camp office in an emergency.
 - d. Who will be the contact person for the horseback riding activity and their phone number.
8. Describe the procedure (who/how) for taking attendance before, during, and after the horseback riding activity.
9. Describe how attendance of all campers is taken quickly during horseback riding activity in an emergency.
10. Describe how parents, staff, and campers are notified of the activity, prior to the horseback riding activity.
11. Describe how the camp obtains written authorization from the child's parents for the camper to participate in the horseback riding activity.
12. Describe the minimum requirements for campers to participate (i.e., age, skills, etc.).
13. Describe how the camper's horseback riding abilities are evaluated before participation in the horseback riding activity.
14. Describe how the campers are assigned to appropriate areas (ring or trail), equipment, and activities once the riding evaluation is completed.
15. Describe how campers are instructed in safety procedures, the use of any protective equipment, and appropriate attire.
 - a. Protective headgear that bears the label of American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) F1163.
 - b. Shoes with heels or uses closed stirrups.
16. Describe how, where, and when staff member / volunteer will be trained on this horseback riding safety plan.
17. Describe how the camp will document that each staff / volunteer has received and understand the horseback riding safety plan training prior to camp and where that documentation will be kept.
18. Describe how the staff / volunteers will have access to the horseback riding safety plan; where copies of the plan will be kept and / or copies provided to the staff / volunteers.