



Name: _____

As a volunteer with Stand Tall Foundation and the COPE Farm School, you play a vital role in creating a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for our participants, horses, staff, and community. All volunteers are expected to uphold the following standards of conduct at all times.

1. Respect & Professionalism

- Treat all participants, families, staff, fellow volunteers, and visitors with kindness, dignity, and respect.
- Maintain appropriate language, tone, and behavior at all times.
- Refrain from discrimination, harassment, bullying, or inappropriate conduct of any kind.
- Follow all instructions given by STF/COPE Farm School staff and program leaders.

2. Safety First (Humans & Horses)

- Always prioritize the safety of participants, horses, and yourself.
- Follow all barn rules, safety protocols, and equine handling guidelines.
- Never engage in unsafe horse handling, riding, or activities unless authorized and trained.
- Report any safety concerns, injuries, or incidents immediately to the volunteer coordinator or manager.

3. Youth Protection

- Maintain appropriate boundaries with children and minors at all times.
- Never be alone with a minor unless explicitly authorized by staff.
- Do not discipline participants physically or verbally.

- Any suspected abuse, neglect, or inappropriate behavior must be reported immediately to STF/COPE Farm School leadership.

4. Animal Welfare

- Treat all horses and animals with patience, compassion, and respect.
- Do not feed, discipline, or handle horses without permission.
- Never use force, fear, or punishment with animals.
- Report any signs of illness, injury, or distress in horses immediately.

5. Confidentiality & Privacy

- Respect the privacy of participants, families, and fellow volunteers.
- Do not share personal, medical, or identifying information outside the program.
- Do not post or share photos, videos, or stories of participants on social media or anywhere else without written permission from Stand Tall Foundation/COPE Farm School.

6. Substance-Free Environment

- Volunteers must not be under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or impairing substances while volunteering.
- Smoking or vaping is prohibited on STF/COPE Farm School property unless in designated areas.

7. Representation of Stand Tall Foundation / COPE Farm School

- Volunteers represent STF/COPE Farm School and are expected to act in a manner consistent with its mission and values.
- Do not speak on behalf of the organization, provide medical/therapeutic advice, or make promises to participants unless authorized.
- Use STF/COPE Farm School branding, name, and materials responsibly.

8. Compliance & Accountability

- Follow all STF/COPE Farm School policies, procedures, and state/local regulations.
- Failure to comply with this Code of Conduct may result in corrective action, including dismissal from volunteer service.

- Volunteers serve at the discretion of STF/COPE Farm School.

9. New York State Compliance Statement

STF/COPE Farm School operates in accordance with all applicable New York State laws and regulations, including but not limited to those relating to volunteer service, child protection, workplace safety, animal welfare, and nondiscrimination.

Volunteers agree to:

- Comply with all New York State and local laws, rules, and regulations while volunteering.
- Follow all STF/COPE Farm School policies, procedures, and safety protocols.
- Immediately report any conduct that may violate NYS law, including unsafe practices, suspected abuse or neglect of a minor, or animal mistreatment.
- Acknowledge that failure to comply with NYS requirements or organizational policies may result in immediate removal from volunteer service.

10. Mandatory Reporting & Youth Protection (NYS-Aligned)

- Volunteers understand that STF/COPE Farm School serves children and vulnerable populations. Any suspicion of abuse, neglect, inappropriate behavior, or boundary violations involving a minor must be reported immediately to PonyUp4Kids leadership. Volunteers may also be required to report concerns to appropriate authorities as mandated by New York State law.
- Failure to report may result in termination of volunteer service and possible legal consequences.

11. Non-Discrimination & Equal Opportunity (NYS Human Rights Law)

- STF/COPE Farm School provides equal opportunity and does not tolerate discrimination based on race, color, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, disability, national origin, marital status, or any other protected class under New York State Human Rights Law.

12. Authority & Chain of Command

- STF/COPE Farm School operates under a clear chain of command.
- Volunteers must respect the authority of the owner/founder, program directors, and designated staff.

- Volunteers may not contradict staff instructions, interfere with programming, or attempt to override leadership decisions.
- Concerns or disagreements must be addressed respectfully and through proper channels.
- Volunteers report to the Volunteer Coordinator prior to reporting to Manager.

13. Zero Tolerance Policy: Harassment of Owner or Staff

STF/COPE Farm School maintains a zero-tolerance policy for harassment, intimidation, threats, retaliation, or hostile behavior toward the organization's owner, directors, staff, participants, or families.

- Harassment includes, but is not limited to:
 - Verbal abuse, insults, or demeaning language
 - Bullying, intimidation, or threats
 - Unwanted contact or repeated inappropriate communication
 - Disruptive, aggressive, or disrespectful behavior
 - Harassment in person, online, via text, email, or social media
- Any harassment of the owner or leadership will result in immediate dismissal from volunteer service, and may lead to further action, including being barred from the property or reported to authorities if warranted.

Violation of these policies may result in:

- Immediate suspension or termination of volunteer privileges
- Removal from STF/COPE Farm School property
- Further action as permitted under New York State law
- Volunteer service is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked at the discretion of STF/COPE Farm School leadership.

14. At-Will Volunteer Status (Important for NYS)

Volunteer service with STF/COPE Farm School is at-will. This means the organization may end a volunteer relationship at any time, with or without cause, and without prior notice.

Acknowledgment

By volunteering with STF/COPE Farm School, volunteers acknowledge that they understand and agree to comply with all New York State requirements, organizational policies, and behavioral standards outlined above. By volunteering with STF/COPE Farm School, you acknowledge that you have read, understand, and agree to abide by this Code of Conduct.

Volunteer Signature

Date

Print Volunteer Name

Volunteer Phone Number

Accepted by

Date

