



# Volunteer Handbook

## Mission Statement

Casey's Safe Haven is a holistic equine rescue dedicated to healing horses, ponies, donkeys, and mules in need. We accept equine from animal control facilities, pony ride facilities, retirees from lesson programs, police force and race tracks. We will also accept healthy animals from loving homes that for reasons beyond their control can no longer provide care. Our mission is to be part of the solution by educating the public on proper care of each equine, so they receive the respect and dignity they deserve as living beings. We are a group of dedicated volunteers teamed together to create a loving, safe and caring environment for our "guests" to heal in mind, body and spirit. Our goal is to find a forever loving family for every animal that comes through our doors.

## Casey's Story

Casey was purchased at an auction of 63 thoroughbreds that were malnourished and living in horrible conditions. He was one of the lucky ones that day, as a majority of the horses ended up being purchased for slaughter. For 26 years, Casey was best friend to Co-Founder and now retired, Sue Balla, before he passed over at the age of 28. Sue's love for Casey inspired her to open *Casey's Safe Haven* in 2012 to ensure Casey's spirit lives on so his rescue success story is repeated through the many animals we save and strive to find their forever home.



## Casey's Safe Haven is Located at Brundige Partnership Farms

Casey's Safe Haven (CSH) is located within **Brundige Partnership Farms**. Sitting on ten acres, the facility has 26 stalls for horses and a varied number temporary stalls for ponies. Casey's does not own the property, but through our lease contract, has the use of this wonderful facility and will always be Casey's Safe Haven's Holistic Horse Rescue and Sanctuary's home.



**Because we do not own the property we expect all volunteers to respect and adhere to the following rules:**

- ✓ Barn time is by appointment only.
- ✓ Under no circumstances are volunteers allowed on the property without a manager or a member of the Board of Directors being on site and prior approval is necessary.
- ✓ The south side of the property (driveway and house) is private and off limits; this is a private home. Please use the barn driveway and staying within the barn area.
- ✓ Respect all grass while parking in the ample parking lot. Park in front of the barn and do not use the driveway that goes to the back of the barn.

## Casey's Safe Haven Volunteer Policies

Many of our volunteers have little to no experience around horses. For the safety of staff, volunteers and our equines, it is imperative that Casey's policies, rules and our mentoring/training program for volunteers are adhered to at the barn.

Although some volunteers come to us with some horse experience, they still are required to follow our training/mentoring and safety policies and rules with handling our equines – both rescues and boarder horses. Working at a rescue is entirely different than a regular barn. Many times we have no history of the neglect or abuse of our rescues and they can bring with them anger, fear, physical disabilities and we always need to be aware of these personality traits of each animal.

### Before Starting

- ✓ Every volunteer must read and sign CSH liability waiver. Along with the Illinois equine activity law which states: *"Each participant who engages in an equine activity expressly assumes the risks of engaging in and legal responsibility for injury, loss, or damage to person or property resulting from the risk of equine activities"*. Volunteers under the age of 18 must have a parent or legal guardian sign on their behalf.

### Training Requirements:

- ✓ New volunteers will be shown how to correctly perform different tasks. Supervisors will work with volunteers until they are fully trained to complete tasks without constant direction.
- ✓ CSH has specific ways everything at the stable is done for the safety of humans and horses. Volunteers are expected to follow the guidelines they are given when trained. When in doubt – ask.
- ✓ Horse handling is earned through experience and volunteer hours. A volunteer must attend a clinic and watch a video on horse handling, be evaluated by staff, and be familiar with each horse and their personality. Only then, be able to walk horses/ponies out to pastures and back into their stalls and groom Casey's horses. One should always feel comfortable and not hesitant with the particular horse you are leading or grooming. Horses will recognize hesitation or nervousness and may react in a potentially frightened manner.

### Volunteer Cancellations:

- ✓ Please remember it is very important to let CSH know **as soon as possible** if you are unable to make the times for which you are scheduled to volunteer.
- ✓ Contact Beth Huss – your volunteer coordinator: [volunteers@caseyssafehaven.org](mailto:volunteers@caseyssafehaven.org)

## What to Expect as a Volunteer at Casey's Safe Haven Overview and Opportunities

Volunteer hours are AM Hours: 8:00<sup>am</sup> – Noon; PM Hours: 2:00<sup>pm</sup> – 5:00<sup>pm</sup> every day. Although these hours are our standard schedule, we are flexible with our volunteers' time and understand that their time is valuable. If you can give an hour or two, we are extremely grateful. It is recommended to volunteer for each of these times slots as chores are different between the am and pm programs and this will help volunteers gain the fullest amount of knowledge we can give – through hands on opportunities. Additionally, the schedule sometimes changes during seasons.

### Daily AM Chores

Volunteers will help in the daily care of our equine and feline. Daily chores include but are limited to \*feeding, cleaning stalls, turning out horses (need approval by management to work with horses and new volunteers doing a clinic), scrubbing buckets, sweeping aisles, organizing supply rooms, am food preparation (need to be trained) and the overall upkeep of the stable. Levels of physical activity varies by the activity done. Chores will be assigned accordingly for those who cannot take part in the more strenuous activities.



### Hands on Work with the Horses and Ponies –

#### See last bullet on page four under Training Requirements.

Once the am daily chores are complete, volunteers will be given the opportunity to spend time with the animals in our care; brushing and loving on each resident is incredibly important to their recovery. Volunteers may groom ponies and horses, along with other activities. Daily quality time spent with each horse is not only essential for them to learn to trust again, but also to assess their progress and any changes under our care. The horses and ponies in our care come from many different backgrounds. They carry physical and emotional scars from their time before Casey's. **These are not riding horses; volunteers should not expect to ride any horses under the care of Casey's Safe Haven.** Not only are the majority of the horses we take in not physically able to be ridden due to age or injury, the horses in our care may arrive at Casey's Safe Haven with minimal to no trust in humans. **Without written permission, volunteers do not groom boarders' horses. It is a liability concern for both Casey's and the owners.**

### Daily PM Chores

Afternoon chores consist of bringing the horses in at end of day, \*feeding, grooming, light barn maintenance (changes daily), and helping to shut down for evening.

**\* Because hay allocation often changes and each horse receives different amounts of hay, no volunteer should distribute hay to any of the horses without staff overseeing. Our ponies cannot have hay for physical reasons and should never be given hay.**



### Project Days and Special Work

On occasion special projects need to be done to keep Casey's running smoothly. These projects range from repairing fencing to laying down new mats in the stalls and everything in-between. This type of work is scheduled separately from the daily volunteer work.

## Youth Opportunities

### **Ages 12 - 16:**

Volunteers in this age group require an adult to accompany them for their entire time at CSH. A consent form must be signed by volunteer and a parent or guardian. No child-volunteer should ever be alone in a paddock or in a stall without an adult/parent.

### **Ages 17 - 18\***

Volunteers require a signed form from a parent or guardian and initially need adult supervision during orientation hours. After basic orientation and approved by Casey's staff, volunteer may come without adult supervision.

\* Please note, students looking for school credit or sign off of hours must inform Casey's Safe Haven (CSH) prior to first scheduled work day. Further information from the school may also be required. Youths looking for this type of volunteer opportunity will be held to a higher standard when it comes to work ethic, punctuality, and jobs performed. CSH holds the right to refuse sign off on service hours.

**Ages below 12: Exceptions are sometimes granted if the child under the age of 12 has experience with horses or family is an owner of a horse(s). Due to legal/insurance liability, this exception may be revoked if the rules for volunteers are not followed.**

## Volunteer Opportunities Outside of the Barn

- ✓ Fundraising
- ✓ Help with our fundraising events throughout the year
- ✓ Organize an event or participate on a committee
- ✓ Write grants
- ✓ Clerical help
- ✓ Professional help with grants, events, legal and accounting
- ✓ Always promote and represent Casey's in a positive way



## General Barn Rules

The following rules are in place for the safety of the horses and humans at CSH. We expect every volunteer to respectfully follow them. We want everyone to have a fun and safe experience!

1. Casey's Safe Haven is located on private property, please respect the boundaries and stay within barn and pasture. If you are unsure of the boundaries, please ask. At no time can you share the address of CSH with the public. A supervisor or member of the Board of Directors must be present for any member of the public to enter the barn.
2. There is **NO SMOKING** allowed in or around the barn. The barn contains many flammable materials including hay, shavings, cleaning and medical supplies and of course the wooden structure.
3. CSH provides a drug and alcohol-free volunteer opportunity. While on CSH premises, a volunteer may not use, possess, distribute, sell or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
4. There is **NO RUNNING** in the barn or around the horses. Horses have a strong "flight" instinct and running in the barn areas can cause unpredictable behavior. Remember horses can be easily frightened by new experiences.
5. There is **NO CLIMBING** on any of the horse corral panels or gates. A large portion of our fence is older and will not support the weight of volunteers.
6. **NO Jewelry** while volunteering, long jewelry can get caught and cause injury to you or a horse.
7. **NO** volunteer is allowed to operate any mechanical equipment including our motorized cart without prior approval of the staff.
8. All volunteers **MUST** wear closed toed shoes to the barn. Horses can step on toes! Please keep yours protected.
9. At CSH we **DO NOT** hand feed the horses. This can cause them to become aggressive and increase the risk of being bitten. Horses will also fight among themselves around treats which could cause injury to the horses and people. The only time treats are given is on an individual basis and should be fed in a bucket rather than by hand. Some horses and ponies cannot have treats for health reasons, **PLEASE DO NOT FEED ANY TREATS WITHOUT PERMISSION.**
10. Please close and lock **ALL GATES at ALL TIMES.** This rule is for your safety and the horses. A horse typically runs to its stall when a gate is left open. Anyone working in the barn or aisle would be at risk of being trampled. In addition, a horse that escapes an outside gate can run into the road and injure themselves or others.
11. Only perform tasks you are trained and qualified to perform. Our goal is to teach you new skills each time you volunteer. Please be patient on doing new tasks until the staff is comfortable that you are ready to take on new tasks.

## General Barn Rules continued

12. CSH has policies for animal care and handling and expects all volunteers to follow these policies even though it may be different than what you are used to or how you care for or handle your own animals. These consistent policies are necessary for the animals' rehabilitation, safety of the animals and people, and the consideration of the various baggage animals may have developed before coming to CSH.
13. No one may use force, hit or use inhumane handling tactics with any animal housed at CSH.
14. Please call Visitor Coordinator if you would like to visit the barn outside of your scheduled hours. Visitors are allowed by appointment only. Visitor Coordinator: **Kris Anderson**  
**visitors@caseyssafehaven.org**
15. You will need to complete an emergency contact form prior to working with the horses.
16. If in doubt, please ask! There are no "dumb questions" when it comes to your safety and the safety of the horses!

**Thank you for volunteering your time, talents,  
and energy. We hope to make this a rewarding  
experience for all who volunteer.**

*People Helping HORSES Helping People*

Casey's Safe Haven | Mailing: PO Box 103, Elburn, IL 60119 | 8N005 IL Rte 47, Maple Park, IL 60151  
[info@caseyssafehaven.org](mailto:info@caseyssafehaven.org) | [www.caseyssafehaven.org](http://www.caseyssafehaven.org)

Registered Illinois Horse Rescue License #14155 | Approved Illinois Charitable Organization  
Tax-Exempt 501(c)3 Organization | Internal Revenue Service File #45-2865627





## Human Safety and Accident Prevention and Liability

Our training program will focus on the safety and well-being of our volunteers, staff members and our equine guests. Following the barn rules, training guidelines and using good common sense will help to keep everyone safe. However, equines are animals and are therefore unpredictable.

All volunteers should alert the onsite supervisor of ANY injuries. These included, but are not limited to: falls, bites, kicks, other horse related, equipment related, and/or facility related injury.

Casey's Safe Haven DOES NOT provide health or accident insurance for its volunteers. In the event that you get hurt, CSH will notify the Emergency Contact Person(s) you've listed on your Liability Release Form and assist in getting medical attention for you. We will call 911 or provide transportation to an emergency room for you. CSH will not, however, be responsible for charges incurred by these actions. An Accident Report will be filled out for our records.

Volunteers must have current medical insurance in order to volunteer. ***By signing the Release of All Claims form, you are confirming that you have current medical insurance.***

The legal use of prescribed drugs is permitted during volunteer service only if it does not impair a volunteer's ability to perform the essential functions of the volunteer position effectively and in a safe manner that does not endanger themselves or other individuals in the workplace.

Please inform Supervisor if you have a medical condition that may require medical assistance from a staff member. This information will be kept confidential.

Please inform the Supervisor or staff member if you see anything within the facility that you feel could be dangerous to humans or horses. This can include equipment left in a walkway, nails in stall areas, slippery flooring, etc. Barn chores create an ever changing flow of work, occasional equipment may not be put away. We are all dedicated to keeping the barn safe!

(First Aid Kit located in the front office.)

**Casey's Safe Haven Holistic Horse Rescue & Sanctuary**

8N005 Rte IL 47  
Maple Park, IL 60151



**RELEASE OF ALL CLAIMS**

The undersigned hereby requests permission to enter the property and use the facilities of Casey's Safe Haven, located in Maple Park, Illinois, to participate in equestrian and other activities on the premises.

The undersigned acknowledges that he or she has inspected the premises and knows the risks and dangers involved in such activities, and that unanticipated and unexpected dangers may arise during such activities, and that the premises and activities are inherently hazardous, and the undersigned specifically assumes all risks of injury to the undersigned's person and property that may be sustained in connection with said activities in and about the premises.

In consideration of the permission granted to enter the premises and participate in the activities, the undersigned hereby, for himself, herself, his or her heirs, administrators, and assigns, releases and discharges the owners, operators and sponsors of the premises and the activities, particularly but not limited to use the facilities of Casey's Safe Haven, Brundige Farm Partners, LLC and Board of Directors, Casey's Safe Haven and their or its employees, agents, heirs, administrators, and assigns, and all other participants in the aforementioned activities, of and from all claims, demands, actions and causes of action of any sort, for injuries sustained to the undersigned's person and/or property due to the undersigned's presence on the premises and participation in activities on the premises due to negligence or any other fault or reason.

If the undersigned is a parent, guardian or next friend of a minor, and this request, by said parent or minor, includes the minor's presence and participation in activities on the premises, said undersigned executes the Release on behalf of said minor as said minor's parent, guardian or next friend, and agrees to indemnify and hold harmless Casey's Safe Haven, Brundidge Farm Partners, LLC, Casey's Safe Haven's Board of Directors and their or its employees, agents, heirs, administrators and assigns from any loss or damage arising out of any claim for loss or damage by or on behalf of said minor.

**WARNING: Under the Equine Activity Liability Act each participant who engages in an equine activity assumes the risks of engaging in and legal responsibility for injury, loss, or damage to person or property resulting from the risk of equine activities.**

I have read this agreement and agree to comply with its content. In witness thereof, I have executed this request and release in Maple Park, Illinois on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature:  
\_\_\_\_\_

**If Minor:**

Parent's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian's Signature:  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Volunteer Information – Please Complete:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, St, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like to receive our digital newsletter? \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact: Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_