

Special Equestrians

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Dear Riders, Parents and Caregivers,

At Special Equestrians Therapeutic Riding and Driving Program, we have always tried to make our services available to as many people as possible. Unfortunately, riding is not an appropriate activity for everybody and we have occasionally had to decline services to those for whom riding is contraindicated.

As a NARHA (North American Riding for the Handicapped) Member Center we must follow NARHA guidelines, "riding is contraindicated if:

1. The staff is unable to safely manage the client in any situation, including an emergency dismount.
2. " Safety or comfort of the horse is compromised"

In the past, we simply had a maximum weight limit of 200 lbs. We have found this limit to be insufficient for the safety and comfort of our horses as well as the safety of our Volunteers, Staff and the riders themselves. For example, a person who is 5 feet tall and weighs 170 lbs. will have much more difficulty balancing on a horse and following the movements the horse makes than a person who is 6 feet tall and weighs the same amount. From the horses prospective, the short, heavy rider is much more difficult to carry than the tall one due to the distribution of the weight.

The chart on the following page shows the maximum weight per height that is appropriate for our center at this time. No riders whose weight is above the maximum listed for their height will be enrolled.

This has been a very difficult decision for us to make because we truly care about all of the riders at Special Equestrians and want to continue the benefits extended to them by their participation in Equine facilitated therapy and activities. Please understand that this decision was made with the best intentions for all who participate in our program. Feel free to contact us with any questions.

Thank you,

Special Equestrians

