



Calvin Center Equestrian Program

2020 Rider

Handbook

Welcome!

Thank you for your interest in Calvin Center's equestrian programs. This book will serve as your guide to the program. Please save this book as a reference.



GENERAL INFORMATION

Why is Calvin Center's Program Unique?

We are a faith-based program. We believe spiritual growth is equally as important as developmental and physical growth. Participants not only learn about riding and caring for horses while meeting developmental and physical goals, but they also have opportunities to grow in their faith.

About Us

Calvin Center (originally named Camp Calvin) opened its property in 1960 for two weeks of summer camp. Today, placed on 536 acres in beautiful Metro Atlanta, Calvin Center is a year-round retreat & conference center! Because of this, we offer a welcoming sanctuary for re-creation and Christian nurture. In 2001 Calvin Center began it's therapeutic horseback riding program. The Equestrian Program has continued to grow and develop into a facility that offers both therapeutic and recreational horseback riding lessons Tuesdays through Saturdays.

Ensuring that every rider has a quality experience is our number one priority. We are a PATH (Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship) Premiere accredited facility and follow the PATH standards and guidelines to ensure all riders and equines are safe and well cared for. Our facility also holds a certification from CHA (Certified Horsemanship Association).

All of our lessons are taught by, or under the direction of, PATH certified instructors. All Calvin Center instructors have previous equine and teaching experience. Staff are First Aid and CPR certified.

Volunteers are an integral part of the program. All volunteers are required to complete an application including a reference

and a background check. They participate in a specialized training including safety procedures, handling horses and assisting riders with disabilities.

Horses are carefully selected and trained for their jobs in the therapeutic riding program. Each horse undergoes hours of training before entering the program. Staff and volunteers follow professional standards and risk management plans to minimize risks when working with horses.

FACILITY LOCATION

The Calvin Center is located at 13550 Woolsey Road in Hampton, Georgia. The equestrian entrance is located about three quarters of a mile East of the Calvin Center main entrance.

ACCREDITATION

The Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship (PATH) International is the national non-profit association that promotes and supports equine-facilitated activities for individuals with disabilities. PATH International sets the safety guidelines and teaching standards for the industry. The Calvin Center is a Premier Accredited member of PATH International, which is the highest possible accreditation, and Calvin Center Instructors are certified by PATH International.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Calvin Center accepts students regardless of race, color, nationality, ethnic origin or economic status.

INTRODUCTION TO EQUINE ASSISTED ACTIVITIES

Equine assisted activities including therapeutic riding, recreational riding, trail rides and the and the Horses and Warriors program, have been shown to improve muscle tone,

balance, coordination, social skills, confidence, and motor development. They help children and adults with developmental, physical, or learning disabilities meet personal goals through interaction with horses. Riders increase positive self-image, independence, self-discipline and concentration. They are challenged, stretched, encouraged and applauded. The quality of life for riders is improved, enhanced and enriched as a part of the program. Riders have fun in a safe and faith-nurturing environment



PROGRAMS

For any of the programs listed below, please ask your Instructor or the Equestrian Director for more information.

RIDING LESSONS

Each lesson incorporates the educational, physical, social and recreational goals of the individual student. The 1hour lesson includes grooming, tacking, mounting, warm-up time, an exercise, an activity or game, skill development, skill review, a closing activity and dismounting. Group lessons have no more than 3 students per therapeutic lesson-and no more than 4 students per recreational lesson.

Lessons include unmounted time devoted to expanding horsemanship skills. Students will learn how to groom, saddle, feed, bathe or perform other appropriate activities that develop horsemanship skills. Independent riders are encouraged to arrive 10-15 minutes early to their lesson to begin the grooming and saddling of their assigned lesson horse to allow for as much mounted activity as possible during their scheduled lesson time.

Continual participation and arriving on time to lessons is suggested for maximum therapeutic benefits.

Horsemanship CLUB

Calvin Center's Horsemanship Club provides a learning opportunity for riders and volunteers to work on their horsemanship skills with Calvin Center horses. The club offers monthly classes to learn about different ground and mounted schooling

techniques as well as weekly opportunities for club members to school their assigned horse. While certain competencies must be met to join the Horsemanship Club, we strive to be as inclusive as possible. Ground work and mounted work are structured so that all qualifying riders and volunteers can participate, regardless of whether they are therapeutic or recreational.

PERFORMANCE EVENTS

Calvin Center offers the opportunity for therapeutic riders to compete in the Georgia Special Olympics Equestrian Games in October every year. This event requires 10 hours of practice to be completed for a rider to be eligible to compete.

Calvin Center hosts an annual schooling show that allows both therapeutic and recreational riders the opportunity to demonstrate their skills in a competitive setting.

SUMMER CAMP

Summer camp is offered in the months of June and July. The Equestrian Program facilitates ground and mounted lessons as well as trail rides for campers enrolled in horse camps. This includes both day camps and overnight camps.

Horses and Warriors

We offer specialized programming for veterans including therapeutic riding and unmounted classes designed to help with the emotional and physical challenges of military service.

Volunteering

Volunteers are an integral part of our program and new volunteers are always welcome. Volunteers may assist in the roles of side walker, horse leader, hospitality, barn assistant, feeder, fund-raising, administrative support and more. In order to be a side walker or a leader during lessons, a volunteer must be at least fourteen years old. Other opportunities are available for people younger than fourteen, depending on interests and abilities.

Parents and relatives are welcome to volunteer for sessions, but usually not sessions involving a direct relative. To maintain a safe, quality program, all volunteers are required to attend a training and orientation session prior to volunteering. Ask Calvin Center staff for a volunteer application or download the application at www.calvincenter.org

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

FEES

Therapeutic and Recreational Riding

Lessons are paid by monthly session. Each session is 4 weeks (excluding the month of November, which will be prorated for 3 weeks to accommodate the week of Thanksgiving).

Private Lessons: \$240.00

Group Lessons: -\$180.00

Initial Assessments for all programs

Assessments are \$50.00 per rider and are to be paid online prior to the assessment. Assessment fees are non-refundable if rider doesn't show for the scheduled assessment time.

Please note: Participants are required to pay for full session, or pay -weekly. If paying weekly, payment is due at the beginning of the lesson. Participants who have not paid will not be allowed to ride.

Participants who start the program mid session will have session fees pro-rated.

SCHOLARSHIPS

It is Calvin Center policy that no one should be denied an opportunity to participate because of an inability to pay for their lessons. In order to receive a scholarship, riders must apply. Scholarship amounts are not guaranteed and can be taken away if the scholarship guidelines are not being met.

MAKING A PAYMENT

Payment for lessons are due **before** services are performed.

Thank you for making a payment through one of four ways:

1. By automatic recurring credit card deduction:
 - Select recurring payment option online when registering for lessons.

2. By Check:

- Deposited in the student payment box in the Calvin Center main office
- Mailed to: Calvin Center, 13550 Upper Woolsey Road, Hampton, Georgia, 30228
- Requests for special payment arrangements must be made prior to receiving services. Any participant with a 90-day balance or greater on their account is subject to dismissal.

If payment is processed through a third party, it is the responsibility of the rider (or their caregiver) to get payment in prior to the start of lessons. You can request invoices by calling the Calvin Center office at 770-946-4276 or emailing the Equestrian Director.

ATTIRE

All students must wear an ASTM/SEI approved riding helmet with the chin harness secured when riding, driving or working around the horses.

For student safety, appropriate footwear for horseback riding is important. This includes a sturdy-soled, ankle-high boot with a heel. The heel should be no greater than one inch. Shoes with bulky rubber soles do not move easily into and out of the stirrup and are therefore unsafe for horseback riding. Footwear for students with special physical needs will be considered on an individual basis.

Appropriate trousers/pants for horseback riding include

jeans, heavy cotton trousers, riding breeches or chaps over trousers. Shorts are prohibited. Stretch pants, snow pants, satiny leggings and other loose fitting or stretchy materials are not recommended.

Cold Weather Attire

Students are encouraged to wear gloves when the temperature is 32° or lower. Hats are not permitted under helmets for safety reasons.

If not appropriately dressed, students may be offered a ground lesson if there is adequate staff/volunteer support.

SAFETY RULES

Calvin Center strives to provide the safest possible environment for students, volunteers, staff and visitors. Horses, however specially-trained, can react unexpectedly. Working around and riding horses is a risk activity.

The following rules **must** be followed at all times:

- Observe the 20 m.p.h. speed limit on Calvin Center grounds. Guests and animals are frequently near and on the roads.
- Arrive 15 to 20 minutes before your lesson is scheduled to begin.
- Dress appropriately. Riders must wear long pants and close toed shoes-preferably boots with ½" heel. Riders may borrow boots if they do not have their own. Every one at the barn, including parents and siblings must wear close-toed shoes.
- Calvin Center participants are required to wear ASTM-SEI approved riding helmet during lessons. We recommend that participants purchase their own riding helmet. Riders may borrow helmet if they do not have their own.
- Accessible restrooms are located in the parking lot and beside the covered arena
- Parents, siblings and others may observe the lessons

from the designated observation area outside the arena. Do not enter the arena or sit on the fence. For your safety, follow signs to observation area ~~and do not pass through barn~~. Please avoid distracting the riders and instructors.

- We welcome volunteer assistance with Calvin Center programs, however, PATH standards require that volunteers working in any capacity complete volunteer training. Untrained visitors including parents, siblings and drivers are not allowed to help with any part of the program.
- If you have a question or concern about a lesson, please talk with Calvin Center staff after the lesson.
- Observe all barn guidelines during lessons.

Barn Guidelines

We will go over the following guidelines with each rider during the assessment and orientation. We will also review them at the first lesson of each session. It is important that drivers, caretakers, parents, siblings or any one else who may be at the barn during lessons also familiarize themselves with and follow these guidelines.

- No smoking is allowed in or within fifty feet of barn.
- Pets are not allowed at the Calvin Center site, except for service dogs.
- Calvin Center participants must wear a helmet for entire lesson, even when not on the horse.
- Approach any horse only with Calvin Center staff permission. Trained volunteers and staff must be present any time you are approaching a horse.
- Enter restricted areas marked with Calvin Center signs, only with Calvin Center staff permission and only when accompanied by Calvin Center staff or trained volunteers.
- Sudden movements and loud noises may spook the horses. Talk in a normal voice and walk when around the horses. Sudden movements may include: removing coats, lifting arms, opening umbrellas, shutter flashes on cameras, running, jumping,

climbing or flapping clothes.

- Pet horses in the neutral zone, the shoulder area, not on the head or face.
- Feed horses only out of buckets or feed pans. Hand feeding encourages nipping and biting.
- Walk behind a horse to change sides, not under their neck.
- The number of people working around and with a horse should be kept to a minimum.
- Children not involved in lessons must be supervised at all times.
- Use gates and doors. Do not climb over or sit on fences.

POLICY FOR POSSESSING WEAPONS

It is Calvin Center's policy that no one shall possess any object that can be classified as a weapon or dangerous instrument in any Calvin Center building. Weapons or dangerous instruments shall include any object which is used or may be used to inflict physical harm or property damage or to threaten to inflict such harm or damage. This policy includes fireworks, explosives, or munitions. Any prohibited articles will be confiscated with no promise of return.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Thoughtful conduct and self-control factor into the safety and enjoyment of all participants. All persons at Calvin Center will be expected to adhere to the following code of conduct:

Respect all persons – no abusive language or actions
Respect all property
Refrain from loud, abrupt noises, actions or behaviors which may startle horses

The full version of the Calvin Center Code Of Conduct is posted in the barn and is also available online at our website.

GROUNDS FOR DISMISSAL

Students/Families who cannot adhere to the policies or the Code of Conduct set forth in this handbook will be dismissed from all program activities.

EQUINE LIABILITY LAW

Under Georgia law, an equine activity sponsor or equine professional is not liable for an injury to or the death of a participant in equine activities resulting from the inherent risks of equine activities, pursuant to Chapter 12 of Title 4 of the Official

ATTENDANCE

Absence/Refund/Cancellation Policies

It is expected that riders will attend all of the lessons in that month session. Please familiarize yourself with the cancellation policies.

No refunds or credits will be given for missed lessons.

Make up lessons will be offered only if one week's prior notice was given or if the lesson was missed due to a family emergency or illness.

If a rider is unable to attend a lesson instructors will offer the rider TWO times to acquire their make-up. If rider is unable to attend either of those times, there will be FOUR days previously assigned for make-ups every month we hold lessons. If rider is unable to attend any of the SIX make-up options, they will not receive a make-up.

Because we teach group lessons, a rider who is more than ten minutes late to a lesson will not be given a lesson and will not be eligible for a make up lesson.

Calvin Center staff may have to cancel a lesson due to hazardous conditions, which may include a heat index over 95 degrees, extreme cold temperatures, snow, ice or weather warnings..

If we cancel a lesson, lesson will be rescheduled, or riders will receive credit towards the next session. If we do not cancel a lesson and rider makes the decision not to come, rider will not receive a refund or credit for that lesson.

MISCELLANEOUS

WEATHER POLICY

Calvin Center may offer ground lessons if the weather is extremely hot or extremely cold. In extreme weather, some or all of a lesson may include horsemanship

education. We try to maximize riding time when the weather is good and save the equally important grounded lessons for when the weather doesn't cooperate. We know that some of our students thrive on keeping to a set of structured activities and coming to Calvin Center but not riding or driving may be difficult for them. If you are concerned about this possibility, please talk with your instructor to make a plan. Make-up lessons cannot be scheduled in lieu of ground lessons.

STUDENT RECORDS

Students are required to update their registration information and medical history forms annually. This paperwork is required to maintain our PATH International accreditation. All student forms must be updated between January 1 and March 1 of every year. Students are not permitted to participate without up-to-date forms.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Safety and maximizing the therapeutic benefits of equine activities are primary concerns of a successful program. Due to the capacities of volunteer sidewalkers and current program horses, insurance requirements and industry standards, Calvin Center is limited to instructing students who:

For riding:

- Weigh 275 pounds or less
- Are able to be effectively supported by sidewalkers

For all Calvin Center programs:

- Do not exhibit conditions that are contraindicated (as determined by Calvin Center staff)
- Have current signed and dated paperwork
- Benefit physically, emotionally, socially and/or cognitively from a Calvin Center program
- Do not threaten the health or well-being of other participants, horses, volunteers or staff

CONFIDENTIALITY

Student medical histories, diagnoses and related information are used by the Instructor to develop goal-oriented lesson plans. General information, as it relates to the success of the riding experience, is shared with volunteers on a need-to-know-basis.

CHANGING YOUR LESSON TIME

Calvin Center makes every effort to accommodate schedule changes when necessary, however an ideal time cannot be guaranteed. Parents or students should complete a Change of Lesson Request form (available from your Instructor) as soon as a change is anticipated. Changes are processed based on the order they are received and the availability of appropriate class groupings.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Problems or complaints are best handled immediately, confidentially and directly between the parties involved and their Instructor. Parents and students who feel that their concerns are not being adequately addressed may put their complaint in writing to the current Equestrian Director who will follow up appropriately.

VISITORS

Visitors are always welcome during business hours in the observation area of the facility. Children must be supervised at all times. If visitors would like more information about Calvin Center or a tour of the entire facility, please arrange this with an Instructor in advance. You are responsible for your guests. *Visitors are not permitted in the barn area unless escorted by a Calvin Center volunteer or staff member. All persons entering the barn area must follow the barn rules.*

PARKING

The parking spaces closest to the sidewalk are for student parking. If you do not need to park close to the door, please leave the most accessible parking spaces for students who do need them.

We look forward to working together and hope you enjoy your equestrian experience with Calvin Center.