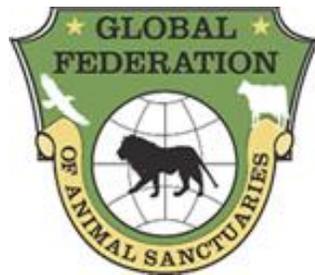


# **Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries**



## **Standards for Equine Rescues and Sanctuaries**

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## INTRODUCTION

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### GFAS PRINCIPLES

The Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS) will designate an organization as “accredited” or “verified” based upon its substantial compliance with the standards listed below.

Consistent with GFAS’ philosophy and the standards below, it is expected that a sanctuary does not adopt policy positions that are in opposition to the welfare of the species of animals in the care of the sanctuary (for example, while it is not required that a primate sanctuary affirmatively promote a policy against laboratory research using primates, it should not promote a policy in favor of such research).

Note: Several standards make reference to a sanctuary’s “Director.” GFAS recognizes that a sanctuary may use a different title, and the term “Director” is intended to reference the sanctuary’s Sanctuary Director, who may be called an Executive Director or Chief Executive Officer, etc. Also, although the terms “rescue” and “sanctuary” are sometimes used interchangeably throughout the document, in general in the equine field, the two terms are differentiated by whether or not an organization provides for the adoption of domestic equine.

GFAS also recognizes that sanctuaries may rely on volunteers for certain functions, including some aspects of animal care (such as feed preparation). Standards referencing “caregiver” may take into account appropriately qualified and trained volunteers as well as paid staff.

Further guidance/suggestions on facility design and equine care can be found on the GFAS website [www.sanctuaryfederation.org](http://www.sanctuaryfederation.org). These are not requirements but rather provide rescues/sanctuaries with access to knowledge gained from experience at other equine care facilities.

## ANIMALS COVERED BY THESE STANDARDS

### 1. Family / Genus / Common Names

- a. Family: Equidae
- b. Genus/Species/Common Names:

Genus	Species	Common Names
Equus	africanus	African wild ass, African ass
Equus	ferus	Przewalski’s horse, Asian wild horse, Mongolian wild horse
Equus	ferus caballus	domestic horse
Equus	grevyi	Grevy’s zebra



Equus	hemoionus	Asiatic wild ass, Asian wild ass, kulan, onager
Equus	kiang	Kiang
Equus	quagga	Plains zebra, Burchell's zebra, common zebra, painted zebra

**Version Updates:**

New and Updated content released on February 2015

- G-1 Nonprofit/ Non-Commercial Status, P-3 Disposition Ethics and Responsibility, P-4 Disposition of Live Equines, P-7 Euthanasia

Clarification released on March 2014

- S-2 Security and Emergency Coverage – see Appendix I

New and Changed content released on July 2015

- V-7 Breeding/Contraception – section a.

## **EQUINE STANDARDS**

***GFAS notes that there may be other acceptable ways of meeting the intent of each standard, aside from those detailed below, and that in some instances there may be legal, cultural or other significant barriers to meeting GFAS requirements. The standards are considered mandatory, but GFAS will consider specific exceptions to some of the listed requirements (e.g., exact enclosure size, manner of record keeping, legal requirements that impact a sanctuary's acquisition policy, etc.). GFAS encourages rescues and sanctuaries to offer feedback on the standards and to explain any reasons why they believe they cannot meet a particular standard or why the standard is not applicable and/or appropriate to their situation. Sanctuaries are also welcome to indicate a timeline for meeting a standard if the standard is not yet met at the time of application for accreditation or for verification.***

***The exceeding of the standards is encouraged. In addition to meeting these standards, an organization is expected to comply with all applicable international, national, state/province, and local laws and regulations.***



## **EQUINE HOUSING**

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### **H-1 Types of Space and Size**

**Unless otherwise directed by a veterinarian, equines are provided sufficient opportunity and space to exercise daily and have freedom of movement to reduce stress and maintain good physical condition.**

#### **General**

- a. Habitat and living conditions seek to meet the physiological and psychological needs of equines.
- b. The physical space provides opportunities for the equine to roam, graze, play, roll and interact with other equines.
- c. Facility design takes into account caregiver and equine safety.
- d. The physical space does not create 'dead ends' potentially inhibiting the freedom of movement of subordinate individuals.
- e. The habitat provides security from predators and unauthorized human access.

#### **Pasture and Open Space Settings**

- f. Pasture provides primary housing, freedom of movement, and allows socializing. Grazing opportunity is provided, with some exceptions for desert terrain. Grazing up to 20 hours per day is normal. Pastures have sufficient area per animal to accommodate normal individual and group behavior. Population density normally allows for 1 acre per individual to provide freedom of movement and 2 acres per individual if pasture is designed to be a major source of nutrition as well as activity.
- g. Where release to pasture or open spaced areas is not possible, equines are exercised, as appropriate, through line work, riding, etc., unless a veterinarian or other expert instructs otherwise for health reasons.
- h. Design allows for regular inspection of animals and facility maintenance as needed.
- i. Where pasture or open space settings are the primary housing, the following are also provided:
  - Shade and man-made shelter which provides protection during inclement and extreme weather. See Standard H-5.
  - Alternate housing for sick, injured or compromised individuals.
  - Enclosure is designed to allow all animals with physical limitations easy access to water, feed sources and shelters.

#### **Paddocks/ Yards and Dry Lots**



- j. Paddocks, yards and dry lots (including designated quarantine enclosure) provide sufficient space for natural activities but are also designed to allow caregivers to monitor each individual animal on a daily basis, to easily shift individuals, pairs or small groups as needed and to isolate animals for individual care.
- k. Many factors influence the minimum space required for a group of equines including, but not limited to; group size, group composition, and enclosure terrain. The following guidelines are minimum recommendations. Facilities should provide as much space as is possible and/or practical.
- l. Rescues and sanctuaries meeting only the minimum requirements for enclosure space employ additional enrichment, focusing on physical and mental exercise to compensate for reduced space. The use of a rotation system, which allows groups and/or individual equines to regularly spend time in a larger or different space, is utilized to rest pasture (where applicable), increase enrichment and encourage activity.
- m. The design of outdoor paddocks, yards and dry lot enclosures includes:
  - Shade and man-made shelter which provides protection during inclement and extreme weather. See Standard H-5.
  - Minimum dimensions of 2500 square feet (50 ft. x 50 ft.) for a single equine plus 2500 sq. ft. for each additional equine. Enclosure shape may be variable to take in natural features in landscape such as rock formations, hills and trees Whenever possible more space is provided to allow for movement, grazing and play behaviors.
  - Alternate housing for sick, injured or compromised individuals.
  - Separate area for introduction of new individual to a group or temporary isolation of an equine for health or social reasons or weight management.

### **Indoor Housing/Barns/Stalls**

- n. Indoor housing provides secure shelter and protection for equines during inclement weather as needed. Indoor housing also provides alternate temporary placement for sick, injured and compromised animals. Room dimension is dependent on intended purpose and/or duration of confinement. Indoor spaces are large enough to allow all animals to comfortably move around and to lie down.

Note: Dimensions cited are for larger equines and can be adjusted for miniatures and burros.

- Minimum size 10.5 ft. x 10.5 ft (3.7 x 3.7 m) for temporary stall or short term confinement. Minimum vertical dimension of 12 feet (3.7 m.). This space is not primary housing for any equine.
- Stalls are available inside the barn to house sick/injured animals and accommodate a companion as needed.
- Separated animals have visual and tactile access to group members



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- The ability of equines to rear up on their hind legs is taken into consideration in the placement of lights, fans, plumbing, etc.
  - **Note:** Equines are not kept in stalls during hurricanes or tornados unless the facility is designed and rated to endure such storms.
- o. Mixed species housing
- Where multiple species share an outdoor enclosure, the total dimension is adjusted to reflect the minimum spatial requirements of each species housed.
  - Minimum indoor dimensions remain unchanged for each species.
  - Mixed species groupings are appropriately researched to ensure compatibility and to avoid unnecessary stress for all species.



## **H-2 Containment**

### **Equines are safely contained.**

#### **General**

- a. Other than when being transported or for medical reasons, equines are kept at all times in secure enclosures or other appropriate areas.
- b. All enclosures are designed, constructed and maintained to securely contain equines and to present no likelihood of harm to them.
  - Sharp edges are minimized and fencing is clearly visible to the equines.
- c. Enclosures are designed to allow for proper, safe cleaning and drainage.
- d. Materials are appropriate for their particular application and are maintained in good repair.
- e. All fencing is monitored on a regular basis and any enclosure in need of repair is immediately repaired or replaced or equines are relocated to a secure enclosure.
- f. Containment fencing for incoming studs, recently gelded males and aggressive or fearful equine are in good condition and able to safely prevent escapes.
- g. Equines do not have access to cattle guards.

#### **Outdoor Enclosures/Pasture/Dry lot**

- h. Perimeter containment of outdoor areas is constructed so as to deter predators if applicable.
- i. Fences and enclosures are inspected daily to ensure safety and effectiveness is maintained. Where fencing meets hard surfaces such as rock or concrete, the fencing is securely anchored in place.
- j. Barbed, high tensile and razor wire are not used to contain equines.
- k. A variety of building materials can be used provided they are able to withstand equine strength and safely contain the animals.
- l. The supporting posts for fences are firmly fixed into the ground. Metal T-posts used as supporting posts for fences must have safety caps.
- m. Fence material is sufficiently secured to supporting posts in such a way that the weight of the equines could not detach it from the support nor dislodge the supporting posts.
- n. Gates and doors are at least as strong and as effective in containing the equines as the rest of the enclosure barriers. In particular, gates and doors are designed and maintained so as to prevent animals from lifting them from their hinges or unfastening the securing device.
- o. Dimensions
  - Maximum of 2 in. x 2 in. (5 cm x 5 cm), 4-6 gauge mesh, if used.



- Minimum vertical dimension of 4 ft. (1.2 m).
- 6 ft. (1.8 m) for non-domestic equines.
- Bottom rail is 8-12 inches from the ground surface.

### **Electric Fencing**

- a. Electric wire, braid or tape is visibly marked.
- b. Electric fence energizers emit at least 9,000 V with a joule rating appropriate for the length and condition of the fence (25 joules is recommended).
  - A 5 wire fence is the minimum for controlling predators with more wires providing better predator control.
- c. Energizers are connected to battery or generator backup for continuous power supply during outages. In dry climates, the earth rod area is watered to ensure adequate grounding.
- d. Safety signs on electric wire are visible to caregivers and bystanders.

### **Barns/Stalls and Yards/Paddocks**

- e. Walls between stalls are constructed of wood or other synthetic, non-toxic wood substitutes.
- f. Walls are of sufficient strength to contain equines.
- g. Stall doors and gates are of sufficient size (at least 4 feet wide) to allow safe passage of equines.
- h. Stall doors and gates are constructed and engineered to prevent any protrusions that may cause injury.

## **H-3 Ground and Plantings**

**Ground surfaces indoors and out are healthy for equines. Plantings are appropriate and safe.**

### **Vegetation**

- a. Any vegetation capable of harming equines is kept out of reach.
- b. Trees within or near animal enclosures are regularly inspected, trimmed or felled as necessary to avoid equines being harmed by falling branches, toxicity, or trauma.
- c. Any natural materials (e.g., plants and their products, such as seeds or fruit) are assessed for toxicity to equine.



#### **Outdoor enclosures/pasture/paddocks**

- d. All outdoor enclosures/pastures have a natural substrate (e.g. soil, sand, grass) that provide good drainage with a dry area that can be raked free of debris.
- e. Where possible, pasture includes safe, living vegetation free of large holes, obstructions and debris.
- f. Where possible, natural pasture is available to provide equines with grazing opportunities and natural resting surfaces.
- g. Bedding materials are provided in sufficient amount/depth to prevent direct contact with any concrete surfaces.

#### **Indoor enclosures/barns/stalls**

- h. Stall floor surfaces are dirt or clay. Where manmade substances replace natural dirt or clay surfaces, the surface should be smooth but not slippery; with cement surfaces, rubber mats (or an adequate alternative) is used.
  - Floors are quick drying and sloped to a drain to reduce risk of foot problems and bacterial growth.
- i. Stalls are designed to accommodate an adequate depth of litter substrate for drainage and cushioning.
  - Bedding materials suitable for equines (including but not limited to; wood shavings, straw, sawdust, shredded cardboard and commercial bedding products) are provided in sufficient amount/depth to provide adequate cushion and absorption.
- j. All equines are observed regularly for signs of illness that may be related to ingestion of foreign objects, including bedding or other materials that may pose a hazard.

### **H-4 Gates and Doors**

**Equine enclosure gates and doors are appropriately designed to ensure both animal and human health and safety.**

#### **General**

- a. Gates and doors are a key element of facility design. Gates and doors are at least as effective in containing equines as the rest of the enclosure fencing.
- b. Large enclosure/pasture fence lines include at least one drive-in access point for emergency access.
- c. Gates and doors are of sufficient size to allow safe passage of equines and necessary vehicles and equipment.



- d. Gates and doors are designed to remain functional under all circumstances, are maintained in good working order and free from any encumbrances that may prevent opening and closing.
- e. Doors and gates are designed to allow caregiver view of enclosures while operating the doors.
- f. Minimum dimensions of stall doors and gates are such that equines can maintain normal posture without touching sides or top when passing through the opening.
- g. Doors and door hardware are maintained to ensure proper functioning.

#### **Security**

- h. Gates, doors and their frames are constructed of materials similar in strength to those used in the primary enclosure.
- i. Particular attention is given to preventing hay/shavings from affecting door mechanisms.

### **H-5 Shelter**

**Equines have access to man-made shelter that provides each individual with protection from extreme weather (including, but not limited to, prevailing wind, snow, sleet, rain, sun, and temperature extremes).**

- a. Equines have space to seek refuge from sun, wind, inclement weather and enclosure mates.
- b. Shade and shelter are provided in multiple locations within enclosures to ensure that all animals have access throughout the day, taking into account social structure and relationships within the herd.
- c. Shade can be created through natural and artificial means including shade trees and man-made structures.
- d. Man-made shelter areas provide sufficient dry space during wet weather, as well as protection from wind, to allow all equines to turn around, lie down and move freely.
- e. Man-made shelter design does not result in dead ends in which subordinate individuals can be trapped by dominant animals.
- f. Man-made shelter is constructed or modified to allow free airflow to control humidity, avoid temperature extremes, reduce airborne contaminants and prevent air stagnation. Ventilation takes precedence over warmth in most instances.



## **H-6 Sanitation**

**Proper sanitation is practiced to reduce pathogen transmission.**

### **General**

- a. Local, county, state laws regarding proper waste removal are observed.
- b. Enclosures are designed to promote sanitation and maintenance as appropriate for the health and well-being of the equines, without resulting in undue disturbance or stress. Equines are transferred from stalls prior to cleaning. Equines are transferred to outside enclosure if blowing barn aisles with “leaf blower”.
- c. Uneaten perishable feed is removed within a timeframe appropriate for the type of feed and size of enclosure, prior to molding or contamination.

### **Removal of Animal Waste**

- d. Animal waste is removed from the enclosure as often as necessary, to minimize disease hazards and to reduce odors. This also enables caregivers to collect fecal samples.
- e. Soiled bedding material and substrate are removed and replaced with fresh materials daily, or as needed to prevent buildup. If odorous, bedding is changed regardless of how long in place.
  - Where equines are routinely stalled, stalls are cleaned at least once daily or more often if equines are housed indoors for extended periods.
- f. Damaged and soiled enrichment items are removed regularly.
- g. Efforts are made to prevent native wildlife such as rodents from getting access to equine waste.

### **Tools**

- h. Tools are labeled when use is restricted to specific areas such as quarantine and foaling barns. Sanitation tools or equipment, including wheelbarrows, are not used for transport or storage of foodstuffs or bedding.

### **Cleaning and Disinfection**

- i. Feeding areas, automatic water devices, water and feed containers are cleaned and disinfected as needed.
- j. Care is taken to minimize disinfectants and overspray of waste, directly or via aerosolizing, into adjacent spaces during cleaning.
- k. Disinfectants are used in well-ventilated areas and label instructions for proper use and safety are observed.
- l. All hard surfaces including walls, floors, ceilings, sinks, wash stalls and work areas are sanitized regularly to the extent possible. Note that in large outside enclosures



with plenty of exposure to sunshine and rain, there may not be a need for scrubbing and cleaning but areas must be monitored for potential sanitation problems.

- m. Cleaning and disinfection standard operating procedures are developed and followed to address:
- Safe disinfectant use to prevent hazards to the animals, caregivers and the environment.
  - Cleaning and disinfecting protocols for feed preparation and veterinary care areas using more powerful disinfectants on hard surfaces.
  - Daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly cleaning schedules for all hard surfaces including walls, floors, ceilings, wash stalls, and work areas designed to minimize the risk of disease transmission.
  - Disinfectants and other cleaning products stored separately from foodstuffs.
- n. A Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) or equivalent is readily available for all cleaning products in use and all containers are properly labeled as to contents.

## **H-7 Temperature, Humidity, Ventilation, Lighting**

- a. The temperature is within an acceptable range for the health and age of equine housed.
- Weather is considered in addition to temperature as wind and rain reduce the temperature range that can be comfortably tolerated.
  - Although equines can tolerate temperatures near freezing, allowance is made to accommodate individual animals not able to tolerate temperatures above or below the usual range of comfort.
- b. Equines have access to shelter or shade when ambient temperature falls below 30°F (-1.1°C) [ 50°F (10°C) for zebra], adjusted for wind chill, or rises above 75°F (23.8°C). All animals are provided with access to dry, well-bedded space. Caution is taken with elderly, young and compromised equines.
- Blanketing of domestic equines can extend time spent outdoors during cooler seasons. Blanketing is considered for equines who don't develop a heavy coat.
  - Equines are prevented from having direct contact with heat sources. Note: Infrared bulbs or 'heat lamps' are not recommended as heat sources due to risks associated with fires and injury.
- c. Windbreaks are sufficient in number to accommodate all animals simultaneously with consideration for social structure and relationships in a group.
- d. Shade is available throughout the day in a number of areas and space is adequate to accommodate all animals simultaneously with consideration for social structure and relationships within the herd.
- e. Humidity is maintained within optimal range using proper ventilation, mechanically or naturally.



- f. Proper ventilation of indoor enclosures is maintained, yet barns/stalls are not drafty. Ventilation is provided via heat recovery ventilators, energy recovery ventilators or proper window and door placement.
- g. Natural lighting is optimal, and is provided via skylights, windows, roll-up doors or other means.
- h. Supplemental lighting is provided as needed to ensure adequate light, both day and night, for caregivers to observe animals, clean enclosures and perform related animal care tasks.
- i. Supplemental lighting is available for use in outdoor areas in event of an emergency.

## **PHYSICAL FACILITIES AND ADMINISTRATION**

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### **PF-1 Overall Safety of Facilities**

**The premises, tools, equipment, animal care records, and hazardous materials are appropriately kept clean and safe.**

- a. The rescue/sanctuary is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy environment for all staff, volunteers, visitors and equines and conforms to health and safety practices as outlined under applicable national and state/province laws and regulations (*e.g.*, the Occupational Health and Safety Administration [“OSHA”] in the United States or an equivalent international/national occupational safety organization/agency).
- b. Premises (buildings and grounds) are kept clean and in good repair in order to protect staff, volunteers, visitors and equines from injury and to facilitate appropriate animal care.
- c. Materials and equipment are safely stored when not in use, and there is an effective system in place for regular inspection and maintenance of tools and equipment.



## **PF-2 Water Drainage and Testing**

**Water drainage is rapid and complies with all regulations, and soil and water are tested regularly.**

- a. A suitable method is provided to rapidly eliminate excess water.
- b. The rescue/sanctuary's method of drainage complies with applicable national, state/province, and local laws and regulations relating to pollution control or the protection of the environment.
- c. Outdoor enclosures are checked regularly for potential water contamination and soil contaminants.

## **PF-3 Life Support**

**There are adequate and reliable utilities, with back up.**

- a. Adequate and reliable electric power, potable water, water supplies and plumbing are available on the premises.
- b. An emergency power system, such as a generator, is in place in the event of a power outage.

## **PF-4 Hazardous Materials Handling**

**Hazardous materials are appropriately handled according to applicable regulations and laws, protective clothing and other equipment in quarantine enclosures are not used elsewhere, and waste is taken care of appropriately.**

- a. The method for disposal of sewage, toxic/hazardous materials, garbage, and equine wastes follows all guidelines for hazardous materials. All national, state/province and local legal and regulatory requirements are met.



- b. All toxic/hazardous materials are labeled with the name of the contents, appropriate hazard warnings, and the name and address of the manufacturer as provided on the Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS Sheets) or equivalent, if used in the country in which the sanctuary is based.
- c. If applicable, Material Safety Data Sheets for each hazardous material to which employees may be exposed, are kept in the area where the materials are stored. Employees are made aware of, have access to and understand how to interpret the MSDS Sheets.
- d. All staff and volunteers utilizing hazardous materials are appropriately trained in the use of, and made aware of the potential hazards of using these materials.
- e. Protective equipment and clothing is utilized where required, such as working with hazardous chemicals and potentially infectious equine waste.
- f. Accumulations of trash is placed in designated areas and cleared as necessary to protect the health of the equines, staff, volunteers, visitors and the surrounding environment.
- g. The sanctuary considers the potential risks of releasing parasites, diseases or non-native plants through effluent water and other routes.
- h. Provision is made for the safe and legal removal and disposal of equine and feed wastes, bedding, animal carcasses, trash and debris.
- i. Disposal facilities are so provided and operated to minimize rodent and insect infestation, odors, and disease hazards while complying with applicable international, national, state/province, and local laws and regulations relating to pollution control or the protection of the environment.

## **PF-5 Security: Equine Enclosures**

**Proper security measures are in place to safely contain equines at all times.**

- a. Entry and exit to equine enclosures is designed to prevent animal escapes during caregiver access, and protocols are in place for procedures to protect equine when vehicles enter enclosures.
- b. An adequate number of clearly visible safety signs, providing warning by means of a symbol, words or a combination of symbol and words, are displayed at each enclosure as needed.



## **PF-6 Perimeter Boundary and Inspections, and Maintenance**

**The perimeter boundary is designed to discourage unauthorized entry, with suitable exits, and any enclosures in need of repairs is immediately repaired or replaced, or equines are relocated.**

- a. The perimeter boundary, including access points, is designed, constructed, and maintained to discourage unauthorized entry and as an aid to the safe confinement of all the equines within the sanctuary.
- b. Gates and doors to rescue/sanctuary perimeter are securely locked so as to prevent unauthorized openings.
- c. Each exit from the rescue/sanctuary is kept clear and is capable of being easily opened from the inside to allow the release of staff, volunteers and visitors.
- d. All such gates are capable of being closed and secured to prevent the escape of equines and entry of unauthorized animals and visitors.
- e. Safety signs on any electrified section of the perimeter fence or enclosures are easily visible.

## **PF-7 Security: General Safety Monitoring**

**Appropriate fire extinguishers and alarms are in place and in working order, weather is monitored, and all physical features of the sanctuary are designed and maintained to ensure the safety of the equines.**

- a. Adequate fire extinguishers and alarms are installed, regularly tested, maintained in good working order and the staff and volunteers are trained in their use. Fire alarms can automatically be heard from the permanent residence.
- b. The sanctuary has a system in place to provide early warning of severe temperature extremes and weather patterns. This is communicated directly to the sanctuary Director in case of emergency.
- c. Steps have been taken to protect equines as much as possible from fire, flood, and other natural hazards. This includes not storing more than the daily ration of hay and bedding in the same building in which equines are housed.
- d. All barn equipment, including electrical and heating apparatus, are installed and maintained in such a way that they do not present a hazard to equines, and their safe operation cannot be disrupted by the animals.
- e. Tools and other portable equipment are not left unattended in places where they could cause equines harm.



## **PF-8 Insect and Rodent Control**

**An appropriate, effective, humane and safe rodent control program is in place as needed. Insects are safely controlled as needed.**

- a. An insect and humane rodent control program is in place, supervised by a veterinarian to determine the degree of toxicity that products in use may pose to equines, native wildlife and staff.
- b. Insect and rodent control is implemented in all appropriate areas of the sanctuary, including storage areas for feed items.
- c. Any pesticides are used in accordance with government regulations. Whenever possible, less toxic or non-toxic agents such as silica gel, diatomaceous earth or insect growth regulator products are given preference.
- d. Disposal facilities are provided and operated to minimize rodent and insect infestation, odors and disease hazards while complying with applicable international, federal, state, and local laws and regulations relation to pollution control or the protection of the environment.

## **PF-9 Record Keeping**

**Records are maintained appropriately as required by local, state and national regulations and as necessary for good husbandry, management and veterinary care.**

- a. Detailed individual and group records are kept, as necessary for good husbandry, management and veterinary care. All nationally required records are kept, as well as records required by GFAS to meet other standards in this document (e.g. Standard P-2 “Acquisition Recordkeeping and Monetary Exchange”).
- b. An electronic database format is recommended for most record keeping, but in either case, the sanctuary has a back-up system for the records.
- c. Records, if not required by law, are required by GFAS include but are not limited to:  
**Individual Records**
  - Individual animal records showing origin, age, species, gender, microchip number, tattoo or brand, and registration papers.
  - A complete set of photos (front, both sides and rear) of each equine on intake and periodically as needed.



- Transport records to and from the rescue/sanctuary to include; health certificate, current negative Coggins test (required in US), date of transportation, transfer method, euthanasia or other disposition of the animal.
- Documentation of condition such as a body condition score.
- Individual veterinary record including medical history, vaccinations, Coggins tests, deworming schedule, dental health, fecal counts and treatments.
- Hoof condition and farrier appointments.
- Behavioral and psychological assessment and measures taken to ensure well-being.
- Reproductive status and history, if known.
- Weight and weight history, current diet and record of diet changes.
- Training and rehabilitation records showing completed objectives and those in development.
- Acquisition documents; as required by law or documented evidence of acquisition when equine obtained from such sources as auctions, law enforcement or other government official. (*see Standard P-2, "Acquisition Recordkeeping and Monetary Exchange"*)

#### **Group Records**

- Group records for equines and all rescue/sanctuary animals including information regarding; disease prevalence, morbidity and mortality rates, daily census, intake activity and disposition statistics.
- Inspection Reports, as applicable, from international, national, state/province and local agencies, as well as accrediting organizations.
- Other animal documentation, as applicable, such as complaints or police reports pertaining to specific animal.

### **PF-10      Animal Transport**

**All necessary equine transport is conducted to maximize safety and minimize stress and in accordance with all local, state/province, national, international requirements and laws.**

#### **General**

- a. Pre-transport health examinations normally include a complete physical exam with attention to parasite checks, necessary vaccinations, and completion of any tests required by regulations of the receiving state/province or country.
- b. Health certificates and any required transport permits (e.g. negative Coggins test in US) accompany the equines when being transported interstate or internationally. All transport abides by local, state/province, federal and international law. A veterinarian is responsible for preparing and signing the health certificate.



- c. Prior to transport, the rescue/sanctuary ensures that adequate facilities are available at the receiving end and feed items that are familiar to the equine are available.
- d. Where possible and appropriate, equines are acclimated to the transporting trailer prior to transport. Transportation methods (including methods of catching) consider the animal's temperament and behavior in order to minimize injury and distress.
- e. At a minimum, transport enclosures meet appropriate animal welfare standards (e.g., IATA, US Animal Welfare Act Transportation Standards or similar).
- f. Transport trailers and vehicles are in good condition, readily available for use and meet federal and/or international standards.
- g. Where equines are transported in vehicles without climate control, animals are not transported in severe weather; transport is timed for the coolest part of the day; there are windows that can be opened to increase ventilation as needed.
- h. Any equine taken outside the rescue/sanctuary, for an approved reason such as medical treatment or transfer to a more appropriate facility, is in the personal possession of the sanctuary director, or of competent persons acting on his/her behalf and adequate provision is made for the safety and well-being of the animal and public safety.
- i. All equine taken outside the rescue/sanctuary are kept securely at all times. Equines are managed outside the facility in such a way that the animal is under control and not likely to suffer distress, cause injury or transmit or contract disease.
- j. Complete medical records, diet and husbandry information, and identifying papers (e.g., describing brands, or other identification methods) accompany all transported equines.

## **NUTRITION REQUIREMENTS**

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### **N-1. Water**

**Fresh clean water is available in sufficient quantity.**

#### **Quantity**

- a. Fresh clean water is available at all times to all individuals. Equines being trained, worked, ridden or transported are provided water as often as necessary to ensure their health and comfort.
- b. Multiple water sources are available for group-housed equines to ensure high-ranking individuals do not dominate water sources.

#### **Quality**

- c. Water quality parameters are maintained at a generally acceptable level for equines in terms of turbidity, salts, etc.
- d. Potable water sources are tested for contaminants annually.



- e. All water sources (including water buckets, troughs and tubs) are cleaned as often as needed to maintain high quality of water.
- f. If automatic water devices are not used, all water sources (including water buckets, troughs and tubs) are appropriate for equines and safely positioned to minimize spillage and accidents.
  - Care is taken to ensure that water is available at all times.
  - In cold climates water is kept free of ice during winter months. Where heat sources/defrosters are used to prevent water from freezing, wiring is secured out of any equine's reach.
  - In hot climates, water sources are shaded or changed multiple times to avoid overly hot water.
  - A written schedule confirms adequate attention to water availability in hot and cold climates.

#### **Automatic Water Devices**

- g. Devices are tested daily to ensure water is available.
- h. Devices are easily disabled when animals must be fasted for medical purposes.
- i. When monitoring of water consumption is required, an alternative means of providing water is devised or the float on the automatic water device is disabled.
- j. In colder climates, steps are taken (such as installation of heat sources) to ensure water consumption does not decrease with lower ambient air temperatures. Wiring for such devices is kept out of equine reach.
- k. In warmer climates, steps are taken to ensure temperature in automatic water devices remains temperate.

## **N-2. Diet**

**A properly balanced and healthy diet is provided based on the needs of each equine following veterinary instructions for special needs.**

#### **General**

- a. A veterinarian or qualified nutritionist periodically reviews all aspects of equine diets at the rescue/sanctuary.
- b. Diets of individual equines (including supplements) are of a quality, quantity and variety to match the physiological and psychological state of the individual as each equine changes over time, with consideration for the age, life stage, species, condition, and size of the individual.
  - Starved equines are provided with an appropriate, veterinarian approved re-feeding diet.
  - Diets of pregnant or lactating mares are adjusted as needed to meet their increased nutritional needs.



- c. Feed is wholesome, palatable, and free from contamination and of sufficient quantity and nutritive value to maintain all animals in good health.
- d. The rescue/sanctuary utilizes a feeding regimen that ensures each individual receives adequate nutrition regardless of status in social group.
- e. When needed to insure correct protocols, each equine's daily dietary needs are documented and made available to caregivers.
- f. In open space enclosures/pastures, routine observation of feeding activity ensures all animals are able to access sufficient feed.
- g. Other than commercial diets prepared specifically for equines, only feed "fit for human consumption" is fed.

### **Forage**

- h. Forage is the basis of the equine diet. Equines ingest 1.5% to 3% of their body weight each day and at least half of their diet should be forage, such as hay, pasture or hay products.
- i. Where natural forage is insufficient in quality or quantity, quality hay and or hay products are used to supplement the diet.
- j. Equine caregivers are trained as needed to identify safe, non-toxic plant species appropriate to feed.

### **Commercially Milled Grains**

- k. A mixed grain diet may be offered as part of a balanced diet that includes sufficient pasture, hay and hay products, to meet the specific ration needs of an individual equine. The grain portion of an equine's diet should never exceed 50% by weight of an equine's total daily ration. Pelleted and extruded feeds provide an alternative to traditional grains.
- l. Special grain mixtures such as "complete or senior feeds" are considered for geriatric equines (greater than 20 years of age) who have difficulty maintaining body condition. All diet changes are considered in consultation with the primary veterinarian or equine nutritionist.

### **Supplements**

- m. Prior to offering supplements (including vitamins and minerals), the health and condition of the individual equine, as well as the total diet, is reviewed by a nutritionist experienced in equine care and/or the attending veterinarian.

### **Treats**

- n. Treats are seldom offered, and if offered, only at very infrequent intervals and in small volume due to the typically high calorie content of these items, and the danger of creating behavioral issues (e.g. nipping). Treats do not replace the equine's daily dietary needs and are of nutritional value.



- o. The calories in foods used as enrichment are considered when planning the overall diet.

### **N-3. Feed Presentation and Feeding Techniques**

**Feed is presented appropriately based on the needs of each individual equine.**

#### **General**

- a. Feeding and drinking receptacles are placed in positions that minimize the risks of contamination from soiling by the equines themselves, wild birds, rodents and other potentially invasive species.
- b. Feed receptacles are appropriate for the species housed in terms of number, size and placement, and are cleaned as needed.
- c. Receptacles for animal feed and water are designed to minimize spillage and are not used for any other purpose.
- d. To reduce waste, potential contamination and the risk of colic or disease/parasite transmission, equines are not fed grain on the ground.
- e. Equines are offered their diet a minimum of twice daily, early morning and late in the day with sufficient hours remaining to allow necessary forage time.

#### **Feeding Techniques**

- f. Feed (hay and/or grain) is provisioned at multiple feeding sites throughout enclosures to ensure that all equines have access and to reduce or eliminate aggression that results from competition for food resources, especially preferred items.
- g. Where possible integrated individuals are fed together to maintain social relationships, however, it may be necessary to separate animals to prevent aggression over feed and to allow accurate measurement of feed consumption.
- h. Supplemental hay is dispersed widely throughout pastures and dry lots to reduce or eliminate aggression that results from competition for feed.

#### **Diet Changes, Increases or Decreases**

- i. Adjustments made to an already formulated and nutritionally balanced diet are made to the entire diet to ensure continued nutritional balance.
- j. Diet increases or decreases take into consideration issues such as weight and condition of the individual equine, feed consumption, activity level and other medical or behavioral considerations.
- k. Diet increases or decreases are made in modest increments with animal response to the change assessed for a minimum period before additional changes are made.



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- I. Underweight individuals experiencing health or behavioral problems may be separated for supplemental feeding as needed.



#### **N-4. Feed Storage**

**Feed is stored appropriately.**

##### **General**

- a. Separate and secure facilities are provided for proper and hygienic storage of feed.
- b. Grains are stored in clean, dry storage areas in sealed containers or on pallets. Products are dated and rotated to use oldest stock first. Expired feed, as well as bags damaged by pests, are discarded.
- c. Grass hay, alfalfa, straw and other baled products are stored in a sheltered area on pallets or via some other means of ensuring the products will stay dry.

#### **N-5. Feed Handling**

**Feed is handled and prepared in an appropriate manner to retain nutritional value, freshness, and freedom from spoilage, invasive species or other forms of contamination.**

##### **General**

- a. Feed is protected against dampness, deterioration, mold, and/or contamination by insects, birds, rodents or other animals.
- b. No feed that is spoiled or otherwise contaminated is served.
- c. Diets are prepared in a safe and hygienic manner to reduce the possibility of contamination or spoilage.

### **Veterinary Care**

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#### **V-1. General Medical Program and Staffing**

**There is a written veterinary medical program, overseen by a licensed veterinarian, with adequate support staff at the Rescue/Sanctuary, with 24/7 veterinary care available on call.**

- a. The rescue/sanctuary has a written veterinary medical program, including long term preventative medical protocols and disease surveillance and containment procedures. The medical program is developed and carried out under the



- supervision of a licensed veterinarian who has training or experience in providing medical care for the equines and other species housed at the rescue/sanctuary, and who is aware of specific health concerns regarding the equines at the facility.
- b. One or more full-time veterinarians specifically concerned with the veterinary medical program is highly recommended for rescues/sanctuaries whose budget will support the salaries of such trained personnel. Sanctuaries unable to employ a veterinarian have access to a licensed veterinarian, with training and experience in equine medicine.
  - c. Veterinary care is available 7 days per week and 24 hours per day for the rescue/sanctuary on an on-call basis when a veterinarian is not physically on grounds. When the primary veterinarian is unavailable, there are other suitably experienced veterinarians on call.
  - d. Support staff, caregivers and volunteers carry out the following roles: (1) Husbandry (equine caregivers), (2) Technical (medical technologists, veterinary nurses, or individuals trained at the sanctuary), and (3) Clerical. The rescue/sanctuary has available properly trained and qualified professional and supporting personnel as necessary to implement these roles.
  - e. A caregiver is trained to deal with emergencies until a veterinarian arrives or is reached. He or she is able to direct any restraint of any equine, provide first aid, be responsible for administration of post-surgical care, and be skilled in maintaining appropriate medical records.
  - f. Medications are stored appropriately on site, according to label directions. Medications requiring refrigeration are stored separately from food items.

## **V-2. On-Site Veterinary Facilities**

**Veterinary facilities are appropriately located, designed and equipped.**

- a. Any on-site veterinary facility or area at the rescue/sanctuary meets all local and state/province building regulations.
- b. Surfaces in the on-site veterinary facility/area with which equines can come in contact are non-toxic and can be readily disinfected.
- c. The on-site facility/area is located away from areas of heavy public use to minimize the noise levels for hospitalized equines.
- d. The on-site facility has separate areas for any of the following veterinary functions performed on-site; physical examinations and medical treatments, enclosures for hospitalized equines, sterile surgery, necropsy, medical quarantine, laboratory, radiology and pharmaceuticals storage which includes, when necessary, a locked safe for narcotics that meets the standards set by applicable regulations (e.g., the Drug Enforcement Administration [DEA] in the United States).



- Feed preparation areas, storage areas and staff locker room/housing with showers are separate from the medical area.
- e. If the sanctuary does not have an on-site veterinary facility, or only a partially outfitted veterinary area, it has a contract or similar arrangement with a nearby veterinary hospital for off-site treatment as needed.
- f. See also Standard V-4 “Clinical Pathology, Surgical, Treatment and Necropsy Facilities.”

### **V-3. Preventative Medicine Program**

**The rescue/sanctuary has a complete preventative medicine program.**

- a. Appropriate preventative medicine protocols are in place to manage all equines, with special attention paid to geriatric, pregnant and young animals.
- b. The preventative medicine program includes quarantine procedures, parasite surveillance and control, immunization, contraception, infectious disease screening, dental prophylaxis, and periodic reviews of diets, and husbandry techniques and invasive species control (e.g. rats).
- c. The attending veterinarian, in consultation with the sanctuary director, determines schedule for routine physical examinations, including dental and implements any necessary treatment.
- d. A veterinarian, veterinary technician, or other trained person performs regular fecal examinations to look for parasites and other pathogens (random enclosure sampling is adequate for group-housed equines). Results are recorded. Fecal examinations are repeated following treatment to evaluate efficacy.
- e. All equine are immunized as recommended by the attending veterinarian, using currently recommended procedures and products as appropriate for the country, species and individual. Where possible, killed vaccines are utilized to minimize the potential for adverse reactions. Schedules and products are dictated by the disease status of domestic and wild animals in the area surrounding the sanctuary and relevant local and national laws.
- f. When equines are immunized, the type, serial number, and source of product are recorded in the individual animal's medical record.



#### **V-4. Clinical Pathology, Surgical, Treatment and Necropsy Facilities**

**Clinical pathology, surgical facilities and services, medical treatment for rescue/sanctuary equines and necropsy are all high quality, humane, professional, legal, and safe.**

##### **Clinical Pathology**

- a. Diagnostic laboratory services are available on- or off-site to assist with the examination of equines and the diagnosis of disease.
- b. Diagnostic capabilities include radiology, cytology, microbiology, parasitology, complete blood count, blood chemistry, urinalysis, serology and other appropriate laboratory procedures.

##### **On-site Surgical**

- c. The rescue/sanctuary has access to surgical facilities (either on-site or at a nearby veterinary hospital) that are clean, free from excessive noise and unnecessary pedestrian traffic, have adequate lighting, ventilation, and temperature controls, and that can be easily cleaned and disinfected. For sanctuaries utilizing off-site aseptic surgical facilities, an on-site area that can be adapted for occasional or emergency aseptic surgical use is available.
- d. On-site surgical facilities have access to appropriate anesthetics including injectable and inhalant anesthetics, reversal agents, etc. Where gas anesthetic equipment including scavenger units is used, equipment is cleaned and calibrated and filters are replaced annually at a minimum. Gas cylinders are safely stored and replaced regularly.
- e. On-site facilities have sterilized surgical packs, surgical preparation solutions, intravenous fluids, fluid administration equipment, pulse oximetry, heart monitoring equipment (e.g. electrocardiogram, stethoscope), and emergency drugs on-site with appropriate maintenance and/or replacement schedules for each.
- f. If on-site, the rescue/sanctuary ensures that surgical equipment is maintained in good working order and is on a program of routine preventive maintenance.
- g. Only a licensed veterinarian performs surgery, using standard operating procedures. (Note: A veterinary technician appropriately trained by a veterinarian in states or provinces where such action is permitted by veterinary practice acts can perform surgical first aid.)
- h. Veterinarians and support personnel are compassionate and knowledgeable about the humane aspects of equine treatment, including the proper use of anesthetics and analgesics.
- i. Surgical incisions are observed daily, or as frequently as possible while minimizing stress to the equines for signs of dehiscence or infection. Analgesics are administered post-operatively as recommended by a licensed veterinarian.



### **On-site Treatment**

- j. Medications are maintained and used in accordance with local, state/province, and national laws and regulations and are administered in accordance with the state veterinary practice act or equivalent outside the US.
- k. The rescue/sanctuary has a pharmacy on-site where routinely used drugs, such as emergency medications, antibiotics, anthelmintics, fluids, anesthetics, analgesics, tranquilizers, etc. are maintained.
- l. All medications are purchased, prescribed and administered under the guidance of the primary veterinarian.
- m. When distributed to equine caregivers, medications are properly labeled and packaged, with the contents identified and instructions for the amount, frequency and duration of administration as well as the name and identification of the animal to receive the medication, the expiration date of the medication, prescribing doctor and number of refills if any.
- n. All medical treatments and drug prescriptions are documented in the animal's medical record.
- o. Basic restraint equipment to facilitate medical treatment is available at the rescue/sanctuary.

### **On-site Necropsy**

- p. Whenever possible, there is an isolated area on the grounds for performing necropsies, or appropriate storage facilities until the deceased equine can be transported to a facility for a postmortem examination, as soon as possible, understanding that necropsies performed longer than 24 hours after death be of limited value due to autolysis. (Note: Any refrigerated area for holding deceased equines is physically separate from live animal holding, treatment, and surgery areas and from feed supply storage or preparation areas.)
- q. Disposition of deceased equines and their body parts meet all legal restrictions.
- r. Biological specimens not used are incinerated or disposed of as deemed suitable by the veterinarian in accordance with local, state/province and national regulations.

## **V-5. Quarantine and Isolation of Equines**

**Appropriate quarantine and isolation policies and accommodations are in place and utilized. Compromised equines are treated under veterinary guidance.**

- a. The rescue/sanctuary has a detailed quarantine policy that is developed and monitored by the primary veterinarian in coordination with appropriate personnel. Equines undergo quarantine for a minimum of 14 days or according to the protocol established by the primary veterinarian, or for a longer period if required by law.



Local, state/province, or federal regulations may dictate quarantine length and procedures.

- b. The rescue/sanctuary has holding facilities for the quarantine of newly-arrived equines and isolation facilities for the treatment of sick/injured equines. Quarantine facilities are physically isolated from the rest of the resident equines.
- c. If the rescue/sanctuary does not have an adequate quarantine facility, steps should be taken to have equines undergo quarantine under these guidelines prior to their arrival. If this is not possible, equines are housed so as to minimize contact with other equines. Any equine that is severely distressed by quarantine procedures may require an earlier release or modification of the quarantine area.
- d. Compromised or difficult to handle equine need not be vaccinated immediately, nor should they be bathed, groomed or have their hooves trimmed unless advised otherwise by the primary veterinarian. De-worming an equine with unknown de-worming history is performed on the advice of the primary veterinarian.
- e. All equipment and outer clothing used in quarantine are restricted to that area.
- f. Protective clothing, boots and footbaths are used by all caregivers entering the quarantine area or areas containing quarantined animals. Quarantine clothing is not removed from the quarantine area, except in a sealed container for cleaning.
- g. All caregivers working in quarantine facilities observe established protocols to prevent cross-contamination to other equines, such as personal hygiene and disinfecting of footwear, clothing and equipment
- h. Where possible, caregivers working in quarantine areas do not work with other rescue/sanctuary animals. If this is not possible, work is done in the quarantine areas last.
- i. Quarantine caregivers attend for newly admitted equines in their quarantine area before caring for sick animals unless advised otherwise by the primary veterinarian.
- j. The quarantine area allows for daily cleaning and sanitation. All waste is removed and disposed of properly.
- k. In enclosures housing animals carrying infectious or transmissible diseases, to the extent possible, all surfaces of the enclosure are properly sanitized.
- l. Quarantine animal waste is handled separately from all other manure or compost at the facility. Because of the risk of disease transmission, quarantine waste is not spread on pastures or composted.



## **V-6. Medical Records and Controlled Substances**

**Complete medical records are maintained, appropriate statistics maintained, equines have individual identification, and controlled substances are prescribed and stored legally.**

### **Medical Records**

- a. Complete medical records are maintained on all equine individuals and/or groups.
- b. Medical records are dated, legible and indicate examination findings, treatments (types of medication, dosage, duration), surgical procedures, anesthetic procedures (type of agent, dosage, effect), results of all laboratory tests (parasitologic, hematologic, bacteriologic, etc.) pathology reports, plus immunization records with all relevant dates, equine identification and nutrition/diet information, and, where applicable, necropsy reports.
- c. Copies of medical records accompany any equine who is transferred to another rescue/sanctuary.
- d. Medical records are maintained under the direction of the veterinarian or trained equine caregiver. Duplicate record sets are stored at another site, in a fire proof or theft proof safe on site or an online storage system.
- e. Statistics are tabulated regularly on the rates and nature of illness and mortality in the rescue/sanctuary.

### **Controlled Substances**

- f. Only a licensed veterinarian prescribes controlled substances used at the rescue/sanctuary, and all such substances are secured in accordance with any applicable laws.
- g. The rescue/sanctuary maintains appropriate records and logs for all controlled drugs used. All drug logs are kept up to date and comply with any national or other legal requirements (such as the Drug Enforcement Agency in the U.S.).
- h. Expired drugs are marked as such and stored separately.
- i. When disposing of drugs, they are discarded in accordance with applicable national, state, and local law and regulations (such as the USDA and DEA in the United States).



## V-7. Breeding/Contraception

**No intentional propagation of equines occurs, and sound practices are in place and implemented to prevent propagation and to properly care for foals born at the sanctuary.**

- a. Although GFAS recognizes the importance of appropriate “conservation breeding” programs, they fall outside the mandate of GFAS Accreditation programs unless they adhere to the following guidelines:
  - Animals are not brought into captivity for the purpose of breeding. Animals that are allowed to breed should enter a wildlife facility as a result of normal acquisition protocols such as surrender or government confiscation and be considered an endangered or threatened species with available release sites within the state/province, conducted with specific conservation goals, in accordance with local, state/province, national, and international law and regulations.
  - Breeding should not be forced – that is, not the result of artificial insemination or being placed in enclosures of insufficient size or otherwise not in keeping with GFAS standards.
  - Breeders – that is, the parent animals – should be released into the wild with their young. If breeding animals are deemed unreleasable, there should be documented evidence from a qualified professional that the animals cannot be released because of a physical condition or other reason that would make them unable to survive in the wild. Offspring of unreleasable parents should not be released until an age of species-specific maturity for survivability.
  - Unreleasable breeding animals should receive the care required of all animals under the GFAS standards and should not be maintained for the purpose of breeding if they have incurable or unmanageable pain or suffering and do not have an acceptable quality of life.
  - The facility should have an identified release site for the breeding animals and offspring, with any necessary permits or memoranda of understanding in place. While GFAS may consider whether a definite plan (such as ongoing surveys of land for potential release sites and a timeline for releasing animals) is sufficient, it will not be sufficient for a facility to simply say that it hopes or plans to be able to release the animals one day. Thus, a facility may not breed any animals in captivity, even highly endangered animals in order to create a sustainable population, without a definite release plan in place.



- b. The rescue/sanctuary has equine-appropriate contraceptive programs in place with the method of contraception used based on current best practice and attending veterinarian recommendations. Stallions are gelded unless otherwise suggested by a licensed veterinarian.
- c. If mares arrive at the facility pregnant, the sanctuary provides necessary care and the mare is allowed to deliver unless there are valid health reasons for terminating the pregnancy, or unless the attending veterinarian feels the pregnancy is in such an early stage that aborting the fetus is an option, if so desired by the rescue/sanctuary.
- d. Foals born at the sanctuary remain with the mare as appropriate for natural rearing, generally for a minimum of 4 months. Foals are only removed from mares for hand-rearing if there is a threat to the life of the foal or the mare.
- e. In cases of maternal rejection, a veterinarian is consulted regarding safe weaning for foals unable to be re-established in their social herd.

## **V-8. Zoonotic Disease Program**

**The personnel and rescue/sanctuary veterinarian are knowledgeable about zoonotic diseases that may affect equines at the facility, and implement appropriate policies and procedures as needed to mitigate risk and deal with any exposures that occur.**

- a. The rescue/sanctuary's veterinarian is knowledgeable about zoonotic diseases that may affect equines at the facility. All potential or emerging diseases have emergency procedures and a defined process to avoid transmission of diseases through bites, scratches, body fluids, direct contact with animals and other means. (Note: Additional precautions may be necessary for caregivers with increased susceptibility to disease, including those who are immune-compromised.)
- b. Any equine diagnoses of salmonellosis, campylobacteriosis, ringworm and cryptosporidiosis are carefully evaluated in order to prevent transmission to other equine and/or humans.
- c. A physician with expertise in infectious diseases is consulted whenever a caregiver contracts an unusual illness or is exposed to an equine diagnosed with a zoonotic disease.
- d. When a reportable disease is identified, all appropriate local, state/province, and national regulatory officials are contacted.
- e. All areas in which caregivers have direct contact with equines have hand-washing facilities available in the immediate vicinity (or an equivalent such as bactericidal hand-wipes).



- f. Human food consumption by caregivers does not occur in the immediate area of equine contact.
- g. Rabies testing and vaccination protocols vary by location. Federal, state or province and local rabies prevention protocols supersede recommendations made in this document.
- h. When there is contact with rodents, consideration is given to the risk of bites, past history, and exposure to hantavirus, salmonella and tularemia.
- i. See also Standard S-14 (“ First Aid and Zoonotic Disease Training, and Staff First Aid ”).

## **Well-Being and Handling of Equines**

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### **W-1. Physical Well-Being**

**All equines are routinely monitored to ensure their physical, psychological and behavioral well-being. All aspects of husbandry, including veterinary care, training, enrichment and diet are designed to optimize the equines well-being.**

#### **General Well-being**

- a. The welfare of each individual equine is the overriding consideration in all rescue/sanctuary actions.
- b. Equines are able to fully express their natural behaviors. This is achieved by adopting husbandry and management procedures, including appropriate housing and enclosure design, positive reinforcement training programs and a balanced diet to meet nutritional requirements.
- c. Veterinary care emphasizes disease prevention.
- d. The rescue/sanctuary has a complete preventative care program to include but not limited to; quarantine procedures, parasite surveillance and control, immunization, contraception, infectious disease screening, dental care and periodic reviews of diets, husbandry techniques and hoof care.
- e. All procedures and treatments performed on equines employ current professionally accepted humane methods of assessment and treatment.
- f. Regular assessments are performed in an effort to quantify and measure the welfare of individual animals through monitoring of nutritional, physical and social conditions. Qualified caregivers conduct daily observations of each equine to monitor for signs of physical abnormalities. Note: In free-ranging enclosures for feral or wild equine, it may not be possible to observe each animal on a daily basis. In such habitats, it is



important to get an accurate count and to spend time observing all equines on a weekly basis.

- g. Compromised equines are assessed on a regular basis for fitness, strength and muscle tone prior to the commencement of any training program with a goal to restoring or maintaining maximum physical function.
- h. Where possible and appropriate, records of individual equines are kept to provide both behavioral and veterinary history.
- i. Henneke Body Condition Scoring is used to evaluate overall condition. All equines maintain a score between 4 and 7 unless;
  - Equines have been cared for at the facility for less than six months and are showing continued and documented improvements,
  - Equines with certain chronic health conditions,
  - Equines more than 20 years of age may have body condition scores outside this range.
- j. A veterinarian supervises the medical care, including routine parasite treatment and re-feeding programs, of equines scoring 4 or less.
- k. A veterinarian supervises the medical care, treatment and diet changes for equines scoring greater than 7.
- l. Fecal exams are performed as recommended by the primary veterinarian and equine are treated for parasites as needed. Manure is managed to help control insects and parasites.
- m. Manure management and use of fly sprays, masks and other methods are used when possible to control insects in the summer months,
- n. Vaccinations and required tests are given as recommended and/or required. These may include but are not limited to, Eastern and Western Encephalomyelitis, West Nile Virus, Rabies and Tetanus.
- o. Equine receive age-appropriate and condition-appropriate dental evaluations and treatment to facilitate proper and adequate feed digestion. Equines younger than 5 years or older than 15 years require more frequent dental evaluations.
- p. Equines receive regular hoof care, maintenance and trimming every six to eight weeks or as directed by a veterinarian or qualified farrier.

## **W-2. Social Housing and Herd Management**



**Equines are grouped appropriately with the safety of animals and caregivers in mind.**

**General**

- a. Equines are pastured in natural bonding groups, appropriately managed for social compatibility as well as dominance and aggression, with space to exercise, play and interact socially with other equines.
- b. Equines are not housed or pastured near animals that interfere with their health or cause them physical or psychological discomfort.
- c. Equines are housed or pastured so that no individual endures constant harassment or suffers physical injury, and social behaviors do not prevent any individual from maintaining proper nutrition and hydration.
- d. Close attention is paid to equines in social housing, with age, species, and sex of animals housed together taken into account.

**Social Housing and Herd Management**

- e. Rescue/sanctuaries strive to house no less than two equine wherever possible. Equines are allowed to graze together and form natural bonding groups. Gelded males and females are allowed to stay together. Equines have been successfully pastured with cattle, goats, and llamas.
- f. Equines pastured together are monitored to ensure that more dominant equines do not prevent others from accessing shelters, water or feed.
- g. Equines are kept outside as much as possible, ideally with 24 hour access to a pasture, (or an outdoor paddock or enclosure supplemented with exercise) unless otherwise recommended by the primary veterinarian. This provides opportunity for each equine to move freely and interact with other equine.

**Solitary Housing**

- h. In general solitary housing is temporary and reserved for situations including but not limited to quarantine, medical assessment or care, lack of appropriate social partners, or social tension resulting in disruption to the main herd or physical aggression leading to injuries.
- i. Singly-housed equines have visual access to other equines and are closely observed for distress at separation from pasture mates. Steps are taken to mitigate such distress.
- j. It is recognized that some socially aberrant adult equines currently exist and these equines may need to be managed singly if every effort to introduce them to a social group is not successful and the anti-social behavior is not correctable.



### **W-3. Introduction of Unfamiliar Individuals**

**Introduction of any new equine to a social group is done according to appropriate introduction techniques with safety of caregivers and equine ensured.**

#### **General**

- a. The rescue/sanctuary has the ability to manage introductions and separations of an equine from a herd.
- b. Caregivers are aware of each equine's social compatibility and the dominance hierarchies of each herd.
- c. Feed and water consumption is monitored carefully to ensure that all equines have access.
- d. All equines in a herd have access to shelter, ample room to move away from each other and no opportunities to be cornered.
- e. Desired outcomes are identified for each step in the introduction process, such as:
  - physical location of animals during visual contact period;
  - benchmarks for proceeding to physical introduction;
  - space and enclosures to be used for physical introduction;
  - criteria for separating animals if physical introduction does not proceed safely;
  - post introduction management and husbandry protocols.
- f. The plan establishes behavioral goals for introductions and is not driven by schedules, and is open to modification as introduction/integration develops and evolves.
- g. All caregivers have a clear understanding of the plan including contingencies for problems that might occur, and are empowered to take appropriate action in the event of perceived emergency.

### **W-4. Behavioral/Psychological Well-Being**

**The behavioral/psychological well-being of each equine is evaluated and addressed, and a welfare plan and report is part of each animal's file.**

#### **General**

- a. All equine caregivers are trained to recognize normal and abnormal equine behavior and clinical signs of illness. Measures of well-being assessed include:
  - Natural equine behavior and interaction with other animals;



- Response to variable environmental conditions, physiological states, developmental stages, and social situations as well as adverse stimuli.
- b. Stereotypic behavior, self-injurious behavior, and inappropriate responses to various stimuli are documented and a welfare plan to address concerns is developed.
- c. A behavioral/psychological profile is maintained for each individual, or herd of equines and updated as needed.

## **W-5. Equine-Caregiver Relationships**

**Positive relationships between equines and caregivers are maintained. Animals are not fearful or aggressive in response to human presence or routine care procedures.**

### **General**

- a. Prior experiences of equines are taken into account when handled to ensure well-being and safety.
- b. Facility design plays a key role in caregiver-equine safety and the ability to maintain a positive relationship.
- c. All new caregivers are supervised until familiar with each resident animal
- d. A positive relationship between the equines and regular caregivers, animal managers and veterinary staff is essential for the well-being of the equine.
- e. The animals do not become fearful or overly aggressive in response to human presence or routine care procedures.
- f. Interactions with equines do not cause overheating, excessive cooling, physical harm, or unnecessary discomfort, and minimizes physical and psychological stress or trauma as much as possible.
- g. Negative interactions are avoided. However, when they occur, efforts are made to recover trust and a positive relationship.
- h. Physical abuse, deprivation of food or water, aversive spraying with a hose, and other forms of negative reinforcement or punishment-based training are never used to train, shift or otherwise handle equines. Note: This does not preclude the use of hoses or other watering devices in caring for equines who enjoy this form of play.

## **W-6. Handling and Restraint**



**Any necessary handling, catching and restraint are done safely and appropriately, with minimal distress to equines, and staff are trained in safe handling techniques/practices.**

**General**

- a. Handling for veterinary care is done as expeditiously and carefully as possible in a manner that does not cause trauma, overheating, excessive cooling, physical harm, or unnecessary discomfort, and minimizes physical and psychological stress as much as possible.
- b. Direct physical interaction with some equines, e.g. feral and wild equines, may pose a risk to caregivers.
  - In these cases the sanctuary director, veterinarian or animal care manager determines the appropriate restraint methods to be used to perform essential veterinary or management activities.
  - Only fully trained personnel participate in these activities.
- c. Where possible and appropriate, positive reinforcement training is used to minimize the need for chemical sedation and immobilization and to reduce stress during procedures.
- d. If physical restraint or chemical sedation must be used, the lightest and least stressful methods that are appropriate are chosen, bearing in mind the safety of caregivers and animal.
  - If an animal appears distressed during physical restraint, it is allowed to rest and recover before continuing the procedure.
- e. Chemical sedation/immobilization is performed only by a licensed veterinarian or by trained staff under the guidance of a licensed veterinarian, or other qualified individuals authorized by the sanctuary director or veterinarian, following the laws and regulations of country where the animals are housed. Specific anesthetic protocols, including record-keeping, are followed.
- f. Chemical sedation is not used when multiple animals are in an enclosure except in an emergency situation. In such cases, all possible precautions are taken to prevent threats to the handlers and the animal being sedated.
- g. Multiple caregivers are trained in techniques to “catch an equine”. Use of a dart gun or other restraint equipment, are used by only authorized and trained individuals.
- h. As part of their training, caregivers are instructed to report any medical conditions or physical limitations that may hinder their ability to employ safe handling techniques.



## STAFFING

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### GENERAL STAFFING

#### S-1. General Staffing Considerations

**The rescue/sanctuary has a sufficient number of caregivers (paid staff and volunteers), adequately supervised, to provide humane care, with clear job duties and equitable compensation, if applicable.**

- a. The rescue/sanctuary employs or enlists a sufficient number of qualified staff or volunteers to provide the appropriate level of care for the equines and to ensure adequate supervision of all staff and volunteers. (Note: Caregiver-to-animal ratio will vary greatly given the nature of the facility and the type of equines and other animals at the sanctuary.)
- b. As described in Standard G-3 (Succession Planning), there is a written job description for the executive director and other senior management positions at the rescue/sanctuary, providing a clear description of their duties and responsibilities.
- c. A list is maintained of all caregivers authorized to work with equines, indicating lines of responsibility. Paid staff receives fair compensation commensurate with their skills. At a minimum, each salary complies with generally accepted standards of compensation for employees of the rescue/sanctuary.
- d. There is a clear management structure within the rescue/sanctuary, which is communicated to all staff, and to volunteers as appropriate.

#### S-2. Security and Emergency Coverage

**Personnel are available at all times to respond to emergencies.**

- a. A qualified senior caregiver or the sanctuary director should live on the sanctuary grounds. If a senior caregiver does not live on rescue/sanctuary grounds, then at least one trained and qualified caregiver or trained volunteer is immediately reachable via telephone, radio or pager, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- b. The director is generally available to the rescue/sanctuary on a full-time basis (40 hours per week); when the director is not available due to vacation or another reason, there is a designated back-up from among the senior caregivers. Caregivers have various means to contact the director at all times in case of emergency.



- c. A qualified veterinarian trained in the care of the equines housed is available in person or via phone at all times in case of emergency.

### **S-3. Volunteer and Internship Programs**

**Volunteers and Interns are appropriately supervised, and those playing an integral role in the sanctuary receive the manuals, training and safety protocols.**

- a. Volunteers/interns and community workers are assigned to an experienced caregiver responsible for their recruitment, training and supervision.
- b. Volunteers/interns and community service workers allowed to work with or around equines do so only under the appropriate level of supervision of a fully trained equine caregiver.
- c. Volunteers/interns who play an integral role in the sanctuary are treated as an employee would be treated, regarding the provision of manuals, training, and safety.

### **S-4. Manuals**

**The rescue/sanctuary has a current personnel manual, standard operating procedure manual, and, if applicable, manuals for volunteer and internship programs. Manuals are reviewed and updated regularly.**

- a. The rescue/sanctuary has a written personnel manual that includes information pertaining to topics including: personnel practices, benefits, leave of absence, sick leave, personal appearance and conduct, environmental concerns, filing complaints, and performance evaluation. The personnel manual is given to all new caregivers as appropriate.
- b. A standard operating procedure (SOP) manual is available on the premises and in a location accessible to all caregivers at all times. The manual contains a detailed outline of all daily procedures, as well as emergency protocols and other policies relating to the care and safety of the equines.
- c. Care procedures for each equine species at the sanctuary, as well as other animals at the sanctuary, are written down (either in the SOP manual or elsewhere) and include detailed information specific to that species or individual.
- d. If the sanctuary has a volunteer and/or intern program, it has prepared manuals outlining volunteer and/or intern responsibilities. Copies of the manuals are given to all new volunteers and/or interns.



- e. All manuals are reviewed at least annually and updated as necessary, and employees, volunteers and interns are advised of any changes.

### **S-5. Caregiver Training and Continuing Education**

**Training and supervision are carried out in a manner to ensure the highest and safest level of care for the equines, including during unforeseen changes in personnel.**

- a. New caregivers participate in a probationary training period under the strict supervision of a fully trained senior member before working directly with equines at the rescue/sanctuary.
- b. At least one caregiver and backup are trained in all aspects of equine care for all species housed at the rescue/sanctuary to ensure that an experienced caregiver is always available to care for all equines in case of personnel changes; and that caregiver and backup are noted in writing.
- c. The sanctuary Director ensures that plans for continuing education to improve equine care and management techniques are in place.
- d. Continuous in-house personnel training and development (including availability of relevant literature) is offered to staff and volunteers as appropriate, including such topics as: equine husbandry, equine welfare, health and safety, first aid, action in emergencies or escapes or illness, safety procedures, emergency euthanasia, health monitoring, food hygiene, disease prevention.



## **SAFETY POLICIES, PROTOCOLS AND TRAINING**

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### **S-6. General Caregiver Safety**

**Equine caregivers have a thorough understanding of the potential risks of working with equines and are appropriately trained in safety procedures.**

- a. All caregivers have a thorough understanding of the potential risks of working with equine.
- b. Protocols involving high risk equine (feral, wild and non-domestic equine) include redundancies to reduce the risk of equipment failure and human error.
- c. Two qualified equine caregivers are present during contact with high risk equine.
- d. Caregivers are trained in appropriate manual restraint techniques for equine.
- e. All caregivers working with or near equines have the ability to maintain verbal contact. Radios, cell phones, etc. are used as needed to ensure safe contact is maintained.
- f. All slides, doors and gates in equine areas are kept closed and securely fastened at all times unless needed for equine access.
- g. Locks, gates and doors are double-checked after each use and inspected regularly to ensure proper functioning.
- h. All caregivers working with equines are trained to recognize and respond appropriately to threat displays and other behaviors that could signal an impending kick, strike or bite.

### **S-7. Communication System**

**The rescue/sanctuary has a reliable communication system in place.**

- a. A reliable communication system such as pagers, 2-way radios, cell phones, intercoms, or other electronic devices is in place, with a back-up system.



## **S-8. Emergency Response Plans and Protocols**

**The rescue/sanctuary has appropriate written disaster preparedness plans in place, needed information is posted, and appropriate coordination takes place with community emergency services.**

- a. The rescue/sanctuary has a written disaster preparedness plan in place to cover emergency procedures in the event of a natural disaster, fire, injury, etc. The plan has taken into account all necessary equine handling under situations of extreme stress.
- b. The written plan is provided to staff and, where appropriate, volunteers.
- c. Emergency information is posted throughout the rescue/sanctuary indicating emergency contacts and phone numbers including the local police department, fire department, attending veterinarian, sanctuary director, supervising personnel, location of nearest hospital and other important information.
- d. A detailed outline of communication lines, procedures and locations of all exits and entrances to the rescue/sanctuary are clearly defined and known by the entire staff. This information is reviewed for needed updates periodically. Maps are posted throughout the facility indicating the best evacuation route.
- e. All emergency plans are coordinated with local community emergency services as appropriate including fire, police, hospitals, and ambulance services. Appropriate community personnel and agencies are aware that equines are housed at the sanctuary.
- f. The location of the rescue/sanctuary does not pose any undue hazards and minimizes risk from natural disasters (e.g. flood zone, riverbed). If such risks are present, the rescue/sanctuary has addressed this in the written disaster plan.
- g. The rescue/sanctuary is located in an area that is removed from heavily developed areas to the extent possible. If the facility is near heavily developed areas, it has taken steps to address problems this may cause for the surrounding community or the equines such as additional perimeter fencing.
- h. A secure location is identified where equine records (*i.e.*, acquisition, transport, medical, welfare assessment reports) are protected from fire, flood, and other hazards. (e.g. backed up offsite storage and web-based storage of electronic records.) Governance documents, financial records, and permits and licenses are also stored securely.
- i. Provisions are made for long-term archiving in a secure format. A regularly backed-up copy should be stored in a separate location or online.



### **S-9. Escaped Equine Protocol**

**A written escaped equine protocol is in place and understood by all caregivers (staff and volunteers); and any escapes are documented.**

- a. A written escaped equine protocol is in place addressing situations in which equines escape from their enclosures, regardless of whether the equines have escaped the property in the past. The protocol is reviewed and understood by all caregivers.
- b. The protocol includes communication with local emergency services such as the fire and police departments if necessary.
- c. The protocol includes the following:
  - A clearly defined chain of command in an emergency situation;
  - Possible equine escapes occurring during off-hours, when staff/volunteers may not be immediately available.

### **S-10. Emergency Training**

**Personnel participate in ongoing training for emergency response, and drills are conducted regularly.**

- a. All staff, and volunteers where appropriate, participate in ongoing training on all emergency, escape, and disaster preparedness procedures consistent with the rescue/sanctuary's written protocols, with drills held at a minimum of every 6 months.
- b. Records of training are maintained, including a list of those staff and volunteers who participated in training. Drills are evaluated to ensure that procedures are being followed, that the facilities communication system is effective, that caregiver training is effective, and that improvements to protocols are made where appropriate.

### **S-11. Firearm Policy**

**The rescue/sanctuary has a written firearm policy, including identified personnel, and covering proper care and storage of firearms.**

*(Note: Not applicable for rescue/sanctuaries that do not need or use firearms.)*

- a. A written firearm policy exists in compliance with all applicable laws; and personnel qualified to use firearms are identified and made known to sanctuary staff.



- b. Firearms, ammunition, where provided, are available for immediate use, used by licensed and trained operators only, cleaned and maintained and tested as recommended by the manufacturer, and kept securely under lock and key when not in use or under maintenance.

## **S-12. Firearm Training**

**If the rescue/sanctuary has firearms, appropriate personnel are identified for weapons training, and receive documented and up-to-date training.**

*(Note: This standard may be waived when firearms are not needed or used at the rescue/sanctuary.)*

- a. All staff and volunteers qualified and licensed to use firearms undergo training and periodic refresher training and practice, including a review of current sanctuary protocols and policies. Such training is recorded.

## **S-13. Chemical Restraint and Sedation**

**The rescue/sanctuary has a written chemical sedation/restraint policy, which covers appropriate use, maintenance and storage of chemical sedation/restraint equipment and attendant drugs.**

- a. A written policy for the humane chemical sedation/restraint of equines is in place and in compliance with the Drug Enforcement Agency (or comparable agency outside the United States), to include:
  - Training and certification in the equipment, humane chemical restraint/sedation, immobilization process, and the use of drugs for veterinary purposes or emergencies;
  - Procedures list, at a minimum, those persons authorized to administer equine drugs, situations in which they are to be utilized, location of drugs in a safe and secure place, and those persons with access to them, and an emergency procedure in the event of accidental human exposure.
- b. All controlled drugs are obtained from the attending veterinarian and are locked in a safe as required by the Drug Enforcement Agency (or comparable agency outside the US).
- c. Expired drugs are marked as such and stored separately.



- d. The rescue/sanctuary maintains appropriate records and logs for all controlled drugs used.

#### **S-14. First Aid, Communicable and Zoonotic Disease Training, and Caregiver First Aid**

**An appropriate written first-aid plan is in place, caregivers are informed when a zoonotic or communicable disease occurs at the rescue/sanctuary, and training is provided.**

- a. The rescue/sanctuary has a written first-aid plan that is accessible to all caregivers on the premises.
- b. Caregivers are trained in basic first aid.
- c. At least two caregivers are trained and certified to perform CPR. A list of CPR certified caregivers is available.
- d. Written instructions are provided for staff (and volunteers as appropriate) on the provision of emergency health care and the procedures to be followed in the event of an incident involving any equine and a visitor, volunteer or staff. First-aid stations are readily and easily accessible and are located throughout the rescue/sanctuary.
- e. Caregivers have adequate training in equine communicable and zoonotic disease transmission, including potential sources of disease, modes of disease transmission and clinical signs associated with disease. Each signs a form that clearly states that he/she has been fully trained in these procedures. Training and attendance are logged.
- f. All personnel and active volunteers are informed when a zoonotic or communicable disease occurs at the sanctuary.
- g. See also Standard V-8, Zoonotic Disease Program.



## **GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE**

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### **GOVERNING AUTHORITY**

*Note: The term “Board of Directors” is used in this section to reference the governing authority for the sanctuary. In some instances, another term may be used (e.g., “Trustees”).*

#### **G-1. Nonprofit/ Non-Commercial Status**

**The rescue/sanctuary and/or its governing organization have national legal nonprofit status, or is operated as a non-commercial entity by a national or local government.**

- a. A facility and/or its governing body (if the facility is a program of one or more organizations) satisfies one of the following:
- A sanctuary, or its governing organization has obtained national nonprofit status in the country of governance or operation. For example, sanctuaries located in or operated by organizations in the United States or its territories should have 501(c)(3) status, and sanctuaries located in or operated by organizations in the United Kingdom should have registered charity status.
  - A facility (such as a wildlife rescue center) is operated as a non-commercial entity by a national or local government.
- b. An exception to this standard will be made if non-profit registration is not available in the country of governance or operation.

#### **G-2. Ownership of Rescue/Sanctuary Property and Contingency Planning**

**Sustainability of the rescue/sanctuary is promoted by ownership of the sanctuary property or a properly written lease agreement.**

- a. All property on which the rescue/sanctuary sits is held in the name of the organization (or its governing organization) as either owner or lessee.
- b. The rescue/sanctuary’s governing body has confirmed that the organization is located on property for which it is allowable (by law or regulation, such as zoning laws) to operate the facility and the activities conducted by the organization.
- c. If the rescue/sanctuary is on another person’s property [e.g., housed in someone’s home or on their land, including government land], there needs to be a written lease agreement between the property owner and the sanctuary (or its governing organization).



- d. If property is leased, a long-term (three years or longer) contractual lease is in place, with a termination clause requiring sufficient notice (a minimum of a year) to allow the rescue/sanctuary to relocate or transfer its animals to another appropriate facility that has committed to providing their lifetime care.
- e. If property is leased, the rescue/sanctuary has a detailed written contingency plan describing the steps to take to relocate or transfer its animals to another appropriate facility at the end of the lease, or upon an unexpected termination of the lease.

### **G-3. Succession Planning**

**The rescue/sanctuary has a written succession plan for its continuance should the director or other key management be unable to continue in their positions.**

- a. The rescue/sanctuary has a written plan outlining succession scenarios for key positions within the organization, covering at a minimum the sanctuary director. Depending on the structure of the sanctuary management, this may also cover the assistant director, director of operations, director of finance, etc.
- b. For the director position as well as other key management, written job descriptions should exist outlining the primary functions and responsibilities of each position.
- c. The succession plan should include an emergency plan outlining who will carry out the key responsibilities in the event of a sudden and unexpected absence by the director or other key management in both short- and long-term scenarios.
- d. A succession plan should also define the role of the Board of Directors/Trustees in overseeing transition in the event of a planned departure of the sanctuary's director, including functions such as hiring and oversight of an interim director, determining salary ranges, re-assignment of responsibilities, and the appointment of a transition committee.

### **G-4. Board of Directors/Trustees**

**The Board of Directors/Trustees organizes itself and carries out its duties in an appropriate, legal and responsible manner, and has appropriate relationships with staff and volunteers.**

- a. A Board of Directors/Trustees is in place with a minimum of three (3) members, or a greater number if required by law, where at least one board member is not a family member.



- b. The Board of Directors/Trustees has organized itself in a manner that allows its duties to be carried out in a timely and responsible manner and in accordance with all relevant non-profit regulations.
- c. Bylaws, in accordance with applicable law, have been developed and adopted as the general policies and rules that govern the sanctuary and define the Board's composition and structure.
- d. The Board of Directors/Trustees has regularly scheduled meetings, and minutes are kept. The Board has a written position description describing the responsibilities of its members, and members are knowledgeable of their legal obligations and accept responsibility for self-regulation, accountability, ethical practice of the sanctuary, and sound financial management and oversight.
- e. The Board is supportive of the rescue/sanctuary abiding by GFAS standards.

### **G-5. Ethics and Grievance Procedures**

**The rescue/sanctuary's policies and actions of the Board and caregivers reflect adherence to a high code of professionalism and ethics.**

- a. Business and related activities, including outreach and interactions with other rescues/sanctuaries, are conducted in a professional manner, with honesty, integrity, compassion and commitment, realizing that an individual's behavior reflects on the sanctuary and greater humane communities as a whole. A code of ethics/conduct for the rescue/sanctuary has been adopted by the Board of Directors/Trustees.
  - The code of ethics/conduct addresses the core values of: integrity, openness, accountability, service and charity, and reinforces standards of professional behavior. (Note: In recognition that some animals are used for food, and rescues/sanctuaries are in the business of protecting animals, all organizations should ensure that their events are conducted in a manner that is consistent with their mission.)
  - All personnel associated with the rescue/sanctuary, including volunteers, have been provided with access to the code of ethics/conduct and have agreed to adhere to it.
- b. The rescue/sanctuary has a written Conflict of Interest policy prohibiting any Board member, Director, or key caregiver from approving or voting on a transaction in which he or she has a monetary or other interest. Members of the Board of Directors and the Director, as well as key caregivers as appropriate, are asked to sign written acknowledgements of receipt of the policy and have disclosed potential conflicts of interest.
- c. The rescue/sanctuary has a written anti-discrimination policy, specifically referring to any protected class under law.
- d. There is a written grievance process that is clearly communicated to the staff and volunteers to communicate the procedure for reporting a concern regarding workplace-related issues, including ethics complaints; includes an alternate pathway



if the normal person to whom one should take concerns is non-responsive or the focus of the concern; and allows for fair, prompt and meaningful resolution.

## **G-6. Required Licenses and Permits**

**The Rescue/Sanctuary has all legally required licenses and permits (or other necessary government approval) to operate as a rescue/sanctuary and to house each species of animal.**

- a. The rescue/sanctuary obtains and maintains all permits and licenses required under city, county, state/province, country and international laws and statutes for each animal housed at the facility.

## **G-7. Strategic Planning**

**The rescue/sanctuary has at least a three-year strategic plan in writing, to provide a structure upon which to base the fundamental actions that guide and shape operations.**

- a. The rescue/sanctuary has a written strategic plan in place, developed by the Board of Directors and Director, with input from other sanctuary management and caregivers where appropriate, that provides a structure within which fundamental actions of the sanctuary are based to shape and guide sanctuary operation. The strategic plan addresses at a minimum, three years.

# **FINANCIAL RECORDS AND STABILITY**

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## **F-1 Budget and Financial Plan**

**The rescue/sanctuary maintains an annual operating budget and a long-term financial plan.**

- a. An annual operating budget exists and reflects estimated future expenditures. The budget includes expenses related to staffing salaries and benefits, overhead expenses, supplies, capital improvements, ongoing maintenance, etc. The budget is approved by the Board of Directors/Trustees.



- b. Periodically during the year, the estimated budget is compared to the actual expenses of the sanctuary and where necessary, appropriate adjustments are reflected in future estimated expenditures.
- c. The rescue/sanctuary has a long-term (minimum of three years) financial plan that projects future revenue and expenses, consistent with priorities set out in the strategic plan. The plan builds in protection for the care of the animals (*such as* creating a “bare bones” budget; seeking endowments for lifetime care of animals; building up increased operating reserves; entering into written agreements with other facilities to take animals in the event of closure of the sanctuary; or other such “safety nets”) in the event that significant decreases in operating income occur.

## **F-2 Financial Reports**

**The rescue/sanctuary keeps accurate and complete financial records.**

- a. Detailed, accurate periodic financial reports are kept on file. The organization produces on a regular basis (at least annually) the following financial statements:
  - A Statement of Financial Position (also known as the Balance Sheet);
  - A Statement of Activities (also known as the Statement of Revenues and Expenses, or Operating Statement, or Income Statement, or Profit and Loss Statement); and
  - A Statement of Cash Flows.
- b. Other pertinent information, such as loan amortization schedules and lease commitments, are also maintained and updated at least annually.
- c. Copies of IRS Forms 990 (or comparable documents required to be filed to maintain non-profit status outside of the United States) and other tax documents, such as exempt status determination letters, are kept on file with other sanctuary documents and are available for public review, as required by law.

## **F-3 Financial Stability**

**The rescue/sanctuary has a strategy in place for securing and maintaining at least minimal financial reserves.**

- a. The rescue/sanctuary has a strategy in place, as reflected in strategic and financial plans, to maintain reserves equal to at least three months (or one month to achieve GFAS verification) of those operating costs essential to the proper care and welfare of the sanctuary animals.



- b. Consideration may also be given to cash equivalents as well as advance purchases of feed, supplies, etc.
- c. See also Standard F-1(c).

#### **F-4 Banking Responsibilities and Financial Transactions**

**The rescue/sanctuary maintains a bank account, keeps personal and sanctuary business separate, and properly records all contributions, petty cash transactions, and loans to the sanctuary.**

- a. There is a checking account registered in the rescue/sanctuary's name that is used only for rescue/sanctuary financial transactions.
- b. Personal business is kept completely separate from the organizations business (e.g., personnel and Board members cannot use sanctuary funds to pay for personal expenses or take loans from rescue/sanctuary funds).
- c. If the organization is being funded through personal loans, loan documents are signed and maintained in the accounting record. Repayment schedules are developed and followed.
- d. All contributions from donors are properly documented and promptly deposited. Donors are provided with receipts as required in accordance with applicable laws or regulations.
- e. If petty cash is kept on hand, transactions are documented and receipts are kept on file substantiating the related expenditures.

#### **F-5 Fundraising Activities and Disclosures**

**Fundraising is conducted in a legal, ethical and transparent manner.**

- a. Fundraising techniques conform to applicable tax regulations for maintaining non-profit status (e.g., sec. 501(c)(3) status in the United States) and conform to the spirit as well as the letter of all applicable laws and regulations.
- b. Fundraising activities are conducted with honesty and integrity, and put the charitable mission of the sanctuary above personal gain.
- c. All fundraising and soliciting materials are accurate, do not exaggerate financial needs nor incorrectly claim sole credit for joint efforts, correctly reflect the sanctuary's mission and use of solicited funds, and do not threaten to betray the



mission by making misleading and unprofessional statements (e.g., claiming animals will have to be euthanized if donations are not received immediately).

- d. The rescue/sanctuary ensures proper stewardship of charitable contributions, including timely reports (e.g., tax filings, annual reports, reports required by funders) on the use and management of funds. Restricted funds are expended in accordance with donor's intentions. Explicit consent by the donor is obtained before altering restrictions or conditions of a gift.
- e. Fundraising expenses are reasonable, and total fundraising expense is disclosed on financial reports and any required tax filings.
- f. Fundraisers for the rescue/sanctuary ensure that all information provided to donors is accurate and complete. Any statements about the taxable nature of donations indicate that all or part of the donation may be tax deductible as a charitable contribution under applicable law.

## **F-6 Insurance and Waivers**

**The rescue/sanctuary has adequate insurance coverage and secures signed waivers from all who enter the sanctuary property.**

- a. Insurance policies, where available, are in place that protect the financial resources of the sanctuary and staff, as well as protect the community from harm that the sanctuary might cause. The amount of coverage is commensurate with the size of the sanctuary and the implied risk associated with the animals housed at the sanctuary. Where available, this includes General Liability insurance and a management liability policy (often called Directors & Officers or "D & O").
- b. Visitors, volunteers, and employees, as necessary and appropriate, sign waivers that acknowledge the potential risks of being on rescue/sanctuary property.

## **EDUCATION AND OUTREACH**

### **E-1. Education Programs**

**Education programs are thoughtfully designed and overseen to promote a humane ethic, with careful respect and protection of all aspects of the individual welfare of the equines involved, and ensuring public safety.**



*(Note: Not applicable for rescues/sanctuaries that do not have an education program.)*

- a. Any education program is designed to promote awareness, empathy, and respect for all life through education and advocacy insofar as resources permit, and portray the issues surrounding why individual equines reside at the rescue/sanctuary, the equines' natural history and conservation status, and how the highest welfare of each individual animal is ensured.
- b. An education program is conducted in accordance with a written Education and Outreach Policy that articulates and evaluates program benefits, under the direction of qualified personnel and/or volunteers. The policy ensures that the equines are incorporated in a respectful, safe manner that does not misrepresent or degrade the animals. (Note: domestic equine may be well suited for educational programs, depending on temperament. Such equine should still have visual and tactile access to group members and not kept in isolation for educational purposes.)
- c. The education program is evaluated annually for effectiveness and content by the Director.
- d. Equines are not taken off the grounds of the rescue/sanctuary for incorporation into the education program unless as noted. Equines may be incorporated into education programs utilizing non-invasive educational methods/tools, such as audio-visual presentations, webcasts, or other forms of multi-media. In such cases, they are treated in a respectful, safe manner that does not misrepresent or degrade them, does not cause them distress, and does not put equines or humans at risk. Exceptions for education may be allowed as approved by the appropriate decision-making body of your sanctuary/rescue.
- e. See *also* Standards P-8 and P-9.

## **E-2. Tours**

**Tours are monitored and conducted in a careful manner that minimizes the impact on the equines and their environment, does not cause them stress, and gives them the ability to seek undisturbed privacy and quiet.**

- a. Non-guided tours are prohibited in feral and wild equine sanctuaries, and tour groups are closely monitored by caregivers. In domestic equine sanctuary/rescues, unescorted public visitation may be allowed if the visitors are outside the primary fence and the interaction is safe and does not cause distress for the animals. Visitors are evaluated by rescue/sanctuary caregivers in these cases.
- b. Tours, if allowed, are for an educational purpose consistent with the rescue/sanctuary's education policy and not used for entertainment (see E-1).
- c. All tours are conducted to minimize the impact on the equines and their environment.



- d. Equines are confined within a secure environment or under direct control of trained personnel. Wild and feral equines are provided the opportunity to escape from public view. Wild and feral equines are not in enclosures or habitats specifically designed to minimize their privacy and all wild and feral equines have the ability to seek undisturbed privacy and quiet.
- e. Equines that are easily stressed are excluded from tours.
- f. Physical contact between equines and the public ensures such interactions do not cause distress and are safe for both animals and humans. Contact is supervised. Physical contact with wild or feral equines is not allowed.
- g. Public feeding may occur under the guidance and supervision of qualified, trained caregivers. Any feed given must be nutritious and be considered as part of the daily requirements for the animals.

### **E-3. Outreach**

**Rescue/sanctuary caregivers are appropriate advocates for equine protection and welfare, and work cooperatively with other welfare organizations and the community.**

- a. The rescue/sanctuary works cooperatively with other organizations as applicable, keeping the equines' welfare as the first priority. (For instance, best practices are shared; organizations collaborate to arrange best placements for equines, etc.)
- b. Any community outreach is conducted in an ethical and professional manner. Involvement in community affairs is recommended. Guidelines are provided for employees and volunteers regarding appropriate cultural and political behavior when interacting with the community.
- c. The rescue/sanctuary does not adopt policies in opposition to the welfare of equines such as "soring" or the use of "cinch straps".



## POLICIES

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### POLICIES: ACQUISITION AND DISPOSITION OF EQUINES

#### P-1. Acquisition Ethics and Commercial Trade Prohibition

**Acquisition of equines by the rescue/sanctuary is legal and ethical.**

- a. The rescue/sanctuary has relevant legal documentation (including any required permits and licenses) for, and is in legal possession of all animals in its care.
- b. The rescue/sanctuary has a written policy governing its acquisition of equines, including the following provisions:
  - Equines are only accepted if the rescue/sanctuary has the financial resources to provide appropriate professional care.
  - Equines are only accepted if they will not jeopardize the health, quality of care or maintenance of equines currently housed at the rescue/sanctuary.
  - All acquisitions of animals by the rescue/sanctuary are consistent with its mission and in the best interest of the individual animals.
  - Acquisition of equines occurs through donation or rescue. Equines are not purchased. No commercial trade in sanctuary animals occurs (included, but not limited to, the sale of animals, animal parts, by-products, or offspring), and the rescue/sanctuary does not knowingly engage a third party to purchase an equine on its behalf. An exception may be made for the purchase of equines, with approval of an appropriate decision-making body of the rescue/sanctuary, if it is determined that the purchase is the only sure means of saving equines from certain abuse, suffering or probable death (e.g. purchase of equines who might otherwise end up in slaughter). *(Note: if animals have been purchased, or if the sanctuary has a policy in place that allows purchase under certain circumstances, the sanctuary must provide GFAS with this information, indicating why such purchases are consistent with the sanctuary's mission and why they do not sustain or promote the commercial exploitation of the species.)*
  - No acquisition results from the intentional breeding of animals for or at the rescue/sanctuary. An exception may be made for rehabilitation and release centers engaged in a bona fide breeding-for-release-program of endangered species with available release sites within the state/province, conducted with specific conservation goals, in accordance with local, state/province, national, and international law and regulations.
- c. Safe and humane transport is used for all acquisitions.



## **P-2. Acquisition Recordkeeping and Monetary Exchange**

**Acquisition contracts are clear, with ultimate responsibility for acquisitions clearly defined.**

- a. An acquisition contract is in place that clearly identifies the rescue/sanctuary as the "responsible party" for the equine and when such responsibility takes effect; whenever possible, the contract includes information on the "surrendering party" as well as any intermediary parties (rescue groups, law enforcement, zoos, etc.). This written contract is kept as part of the permanent record for each equine entering and housed at the rescue/sanctuary.
  - Permits as required to satisfy local, state/province, federal and international law.
  - Transport Records to and from the sanctuary/rescue to include: health certificate, current negative Coggins test (required in US), date of transportation, transfer method, euthanasia or other disposition of animal.
  - Titles, and other appropriate documents establishing a paper trail of legal acquisition, such as transfer from government official, are maintained whenever possible.
  - When such information does not exist an explanation is provided regarding such equines (e.g., if purchased in US from an auction or "kill buyer", there is a note about any ID info, photo of equine is obtained as soon as possible, receipts where possible).
- b. Financial expenses associated with acquisition of an equine may be received or paid in order to enable the rescue/sanctuary to responsibly acquire the animal and may include; medical testing, behavioral assessment, quarantine costs, shipping and transport costs. Lifetime care costs may be factored in as appropriate.

## **P-3. Disposition Ethics and Responsibility**

**The rescue/sanctuary assumes lifelong responsibility for the resident equines, with some noted exceptions, with ultimate responsibility for dispositions clearly defined.**

- a. The rescue/sanctuary assumes lifelong responsibility for the equines acquired and only in specific circumstances do equines permanently or semi-permanently leave the rescue/sanctuary, with the exception of releasable wildlife introduction and:
  - Adoption of equines
  - Foster care of equines on private properties



- A rehabilitation center assumes responsibility (in accordance with national and local law) for the appropriate disposition of animals it acquires, with the goal or reintroducing native wildlife, where possible, to its natural habitat.
- b. Other acceptable reasons for disposition, when movement of equines to another sanctuary does not compromise the welfare of that individual or the other equines with which s/he will be housed, include:
  - Health concerns that cannot be adequately addressed by the rescue/sanctuary, where another accredited sanctuary or comparable facility is better equipped to provide care for the equine.
- c. Another accredited sanctuary or comparable sanctuary can provide a better long-term environment.
- d. Other reasons for disposition include: financial insolvency or closure of the sanctuary, return of confiscated wildlife to its country of origin, or death of the equine.
- e. Detailed records of equine disposition are logged and maintained.

#### **P-4. Disposition of Live Equines**

**Responsible steps are taken to ensure that any disposition of a live equine is in the life-long best interests of that individual.**

- a. The rescue/sanctuary has a written disposition policy that adopts substantially the language of this standard.
- b. Equines are not transferred/adopted to individuals or sanctuaries/rescues or other facilities that lack the appropriate expertise and/or resources and/or facilities to care for them appropriately. Before transfers, the rescue/sanctuary is convinced that the recipient has the expertise, financial stability and facilities required to properly care for the animals. Equines are not “loaned” to other facilities.
- c. Equines are not disposed of at auctions or to breeders, dealers, brokers, “kill buyers”, or slaughterhouses.
- d. Organizations engaged in rescue, rehabilitation and release of wild equines are subject to all pertinent regulations and laws. Animals are released within native ranges, in accordance with local, state, national and international regulations.
- e. An equine may be transferred to another accredited sanctuary or other appropriate facility, if it appears that environment will better suit the individual.
- f. See also Standard P-7 “Euthanasia” below.



## **P-5. Adoptions**

**Equine adoptions are accompanied by appropriate legal documents designed to provide a lifetime safety net for the equine and to ensure responsible and humane care.**

- a. Adopted equines are provided with physical facilities and levels of care equal to or above that of the primary equine sanctuary/rescue facility. No equine will endure less than adequate housing and husbandry as a result of being adopted.
  - All facilities adopting equines will be inspected prior to animals being placed.
- b. All equine adoptions are accompanied by a legally binding document prohibiting the adopter from selling or placing the equine in question with another owner or facility without first contacting the facility from which the equine was adopted. The original owner may then allow said facility the opportunity to assume possession of the equine.
- c. All equine adoptions are accompanied by a legally binding document prohibiting the adopter from breeding the equine in question.
- d. All equine adoptions are through a legally binding contractual agreement specifying the duties and expectations of each party and contain wording related to the recovery of the equine should the adopting party fail to abide by such duties and expectations.
- e. Equine adoption agreements specify the methods wherein the primary equine rescue/sanctuary facility may inspect the adopted equine to insure compliance with the terms of the agreement and the length of time such agreement is binding.

## **P-6. Foster Care**

**Foster homes are inspected and caregivers sign legal documents designed to ensure responsible and humane care.**

- f. All equine foster homes provide physical facilities and levels of care equal to or above that of the primary equine sanctuary/rescue facility. No equine endures less adequate housing or care as a result of foster care.
- g. All equine foster care placements are accompanied by a legally binding document specifying the duties and responsibilities of each party, making clear the



responsibilities of the foster care home, and the steps to be taken should any equine show signs of illness or heightened distress, and under what conditions, if any, the foster care-givers may take the equine off the property.

- h. All foster care agreements contain wording related to the recovery of the equine should the foster home fail to abide by such duties and expectations, or if the foster home can no longer keep the equine.
- i. Foster care agreements specify the methods wherein the primary equine sanctuary/rescue facility may inspect the fostered equine, in person or virtually, to insure compliance with the terms of the agreement.
- j. Equine foster care agreements specify how potential adopters will be able to visit the equine and under what circumstances and conditions.
- k. Equine foster home caregivers have access to veterinarians able to make emergency calls, and the names and telephone numbers of those veterinarians are kept on file with the primary sanctuary/rescue facility.

## **P-7. Euthanasia**

**Euthanasia is governed by an ethical humane euthanasia policy, and deceased equines are handled appropriately.**

- a. The rescue/sanctuary has and maintains a written humane euthanasia policy (as part of the disposition policy) for equines and other animals at the sanctuary, and in compliance with any national or local law, administered under the strict supervision of a licensed veterinarian.
- b. Euthanasia is only be used as a final option. Euthanasia is not used as management tool (such as a means to create space for more animals).
- c. Examples of cases where euthanasia may be accepted are:
  - Incurable disease/injury that is likely to cause unmanageable pain or suffering;
  - Disease/injury where treatment is likely to cause unreasonable pain or suffering;
  - Disease/injury where treatment will not be effective in restoring the equine to an acceptable quality of life;
  - Disease/injury where treatment is beyond the normal community standards of monetary expenditure and would cause an excessive burden on the sanctuary resources, and no other sanctuary can step in, after reasonable efforts to locate such a sanctuary;
  - The process of aging has resulted in an unacceptable quality of life;
  - In the event of presenting an infectious disease risk to some or all of the residents.



- For facilities engaged in the rehabilitation and reintroduction of wildlife, it is determined in accordance with an appropriate protocol or other “decision tree” analysis that an animal cannot be reintroduced to its natural habitat and there is no appropriate (consistent with these standards) long-term care option.
- d. A licensed veterinarian or his/her authorized representative, or a trained staff member who is knowledgeable and skilled in performing euthanasia in a compassionate and professional manner and ideally with an established relationship with the sanctuary and the equine, recommends and performs humane euthanasia. However, in extreme circumstances of animal suffering when a veterinarian is unable to reach the sanctuary in a timely manner, a method such as the use of a firearm to euthanize an equine may be required and is performed by a trained and qualified staff member when no other humane option is available.
- e. Euthanasia is performed so that it minimizes distress to the equine, and unless impossible, is performed out of view of other equines.
- f. With regard to deceased equines:
  - Personnel conduct themselves in such a manner that is respectful during disposition activities;
  - Body parts are never sold, traded or donated (see exception at Standard P-12 “Ethics in Research”);
  - Disposition of deceased equines meets the requirements of all acceptable practices along with applicable local, state, national, and international regulations and laws.
- g. The species and ecosystems are carefully considered during disposition activities.

## **POLICIES: PUBLIC CONTACT AND RESTRICTIONS ON USE AND HANDLING OF EQUINES**

### **P-8. Public Contact**

**Contact between wild and feral equines and the public is not allowed or is restricted appropriately.**

- a. Where wild or feral equines reside, no unescorted public visitation occurs. This is not to exclude discrete, nonintrusive observation by a carefully evaluated person as allowed by the appropriate decision-making body of the sanctuary.
- b. No direct contact between the public and wild and feral equines occurs.
- c. See also Standard E-2 “Tours.”



### **P-9. Removal from Rescue/Sanctuary for Non-Medical Reasons**

**With few exceptions, non-domestic equines at the rescue/sanctuary are not removed from the rescue/sanctuary for non-medical reasons.**

- a. Wild and feral equines are not taken from the rescue/sanctuary for exhibition, education, or research purposes. Suitable domestic equines may be removed for non-medical purposes approved by the appropriate decision making body of the rescue/sanctuary, if the activities are deemed to be safe and not to be distressing to the equines

### **P-10. Public Viewing of Human/Equine Interaction**

**Human/equine contact occurring within public view must be safe and appropriate for handler and equine.**

- a. Handling of wild equines within public view is not allowed. Where possible, visitors are educated regarding appropriate interactions with equines during this time. Handling of domestic equines within public view must be safe and appropriate. Where possible, visitors are educated regarding appropriate interactions with ruminants during this time.
- a. Handling of equines for purposes of providing medical care is performed out of public view, except in cases of emergency.

### **P-11. Appropriate Portrayal of Equines**

**The rescue/sanctuary portrays equines appropriately in any text, photos, video, or other media.**

- a. The rescue/sanctuary does not publish material that portrays equines inappropriately.



## **P-12. Non-Harmful, Non-Exploitive Fundraising**

**Fundraising activities are not distressing or negatively disruptive to equines, nor do the activities involve improper use of the animals.**

- a. Fundraising activities approved by an appropriate decision-making body of your sanctuary are allowed provided the following:
  - The activities do not violate any of the other GFAS Standards, including those regarding contact with the public, handling of equines, and removal from the sanctuary or enclosures/habitats;
  - The activities are deemed to not be distressing or in any way negatively disruptive to the equines and their normal routine. Equines are not raffled or sold.

## **P-13. Ethics in Research**

**Any research conducted is devoted to benefiting the health and welfare of the individual equines involved, and does not cause pain or distress.**

- a. No resident equines are made available for participation in research studies unless the studies are strictly observational and do not interfere with the normal daily activities of the individual animals. Interventions that cause pain or distress are not acceptable.
- b. An exception may be made, with approval of an appropriate decision-making body of the sanctuary, if:
  - It is determined that the health and welfare interests of the individual equine are best served by participating in a new treatment study;
  - There is reason to believe that outcome of the study will be a tangible benefit for the individual animal involved;
  - The study does not prevent normal activities of daily living.
- c. An exception may also be made for research involving biological sampling if it will have a demonstrable health, conservation, or genetic benefit to captive equine management and/or wild equine population conservation. In such cases, samples are only to be taken during routine examinations of the animal (which are otherwise needed for the welfare of the individual) or routine cleanings of enclosures, or during a necropsy that does not violate any other GFAS standards. Sanctuaries should



ensure that any biological samples are used ethically by the receiving institution or laboratory, and that any applicable CITES regulations are followed.

## **R-1. Rescue Of Equines**

**The rescue/sanctuary has developed guidelines for rescue work, taking into account caregiver and animal safety, contingencies for caring for the animal once rescued, and any local, state or national regulations or agency cooperation required.**

- a. Rescues and sanctuaries that assist in law enforcement investigations and seizures of equine neglect and abuse have knowledge of laws concerning abuse and neglect in applicable state and understand which city, county and state authorities are authorized to act.
- b. The rescue/sanctuary has developed working relationships with appropriate law-enforcement officials including; police departments, animal shelters, animal control officials and humane societies.
- c. Staff/volunteers are trained to assist in a seizure, investigate neglect complaints and provide detailed reports as required by local law enforcement.
- d. The rescue/sanctuary has facilities, space and resources to hold seized equines until a hearing or trial which could be for an undetermined time period.
- e. The rescue/sanctuary has emergency funds readily available to provide veterinary care and rehabilitation of seized equines.
- f. A euthanasia policy is in place to address situations where the animal's prognosis for survival based on the advice of the attending veterinarian, is too low to warrant attempting treatment. See also Standard P-6, "Euthanasia."

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### **Physical Well-being**

The following links provide an overview of the Henneke Body Condition Scoring system and a copy of the scoring checklist.

<http://www.gerlltd.org/Education/Equine%20Body%20Condition%20Score%20Presentati%20on.pdf>

[http://www.trfinc.org/mc\\_images/category/4/henneke\\_scale.pdf](http://www.trfinc.org/mc_images/category/4/henneke_scale.pdf)



## **APPENDIX I**

### **Security and Emergency Coverage**

**Clarification:** The purpose of this standard is to protect animals to the extent possible and reasonable from emergencies associated with primarily fire and intruders. Some equine and farm animal rescue/sanctuary organizations may not have personnel actually living on the premises but living nearby. In order to make a determination that animals are protected to the extent possible, the following criteria (which are elements of other standards) will be taken into consideration for each unique situation:

- A fire detection system exists that is directly connected to the senior caregiver and/or emergency personnel.
- Existing fire suppression system in the barn.
- A neighbor in close proximity has expressed willingness to respond to an emergency alarm that can be heard from this residence.
- Fire prevention is advocated on the property by: nonsmoking policy; hay or bedding is not stored in barn where animals reside; electric wire is in conduits; no extensive use of extension cords; dust and cobwebs removed regularly etc.
- Senior caregiver/volunteer lives within a 2 mile radius of the facility or can respond within 15 minutes.
- All access points to the property are securely locked after hours.
- No trespassing signage at all access points.
- A neighbor in close proximity has expressed willingness to report an intruder.