

**EMPLOYEE MANUAL**

Table of Contents

**WELCOME TO COURAGEOUS CONNECTIONS 3**

**INTRODUCTION TO EQUINE SERVICES** 3

**ESMHL JOB DESCRIPTION 4**

**MHP JOB DESCRIPTION 5**

**POLICIES AND GUIDELINES 6**

**CODE OF CONDUCT 7**

**WELCOME TO COURAGEOUS CONNECTIONS**

**Mission Statement:** *To promote the physical and emotional development of people of all ages and unique abilities through safe, therapeutic, outdoor experiences.*

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We are excited to have you as part of our team! **All employees are required to read and comply with the policies and procedures contained in the Employee Manual.**

**INTRODUCTION**

Courageous Connections uses equine assisted activities for the purpose of contributing positively to the cognitive, physical, emotional and social well-being of our participants. At Courageous Connections, equine activities encompass three distinct programs:

**Equine Assisted Learning** (EAL)-This unmounted class is designed to help participants develop self-confidence, resiliency, respect, and effective communication skills as they build strong, healthy relationships with both the horses and staff. These classes are conducted by an Equine Specialist in Mental Health Learning (ESMHL) and consist of activities such as grooming, leading, and other activities specific to their individual goals. Horses are allowed a loose lead so that they can move about freely during the class. These may be private or group classes. Volunteers in this class are Horse Leaders.

**Equine Facilitated Psychotherapy** (EFP)-This unmounted class is designed for participants with mental health challenges that require a Mental Health Professional (MHP). These classes may have similar activities, but the MHP determines the goals and works with the ESMHL to construct a class to assist participants to meet them. These are usually private classes. Volunteers in this class are Horse Leaders.

**Adaptive Riding**

This is a 50 minute mounted group class with 1-3 riders similar in cognitive age and ability. These lessons focus on riding skills while gaining therapeutic benefits such as increasing muscle tone, strength, self-esteem, coordination, balance, social interaction, and communication. Class activities include developing riding skills and trail rides, as well as activities such as competitive games. These classes are planned and conducted by a Therapeutic Riding Instructor (TRI). Volunteers in this class are Horse Leaders or Side-Walkers.

**(note: as of March 2020 Adaptive Riding program is on hold)**

**ESMHL JOB DESCRIPTION**

**Position Title:** Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning

**Reports to:** Executive Director or directly to Board

**Hours:** 5-10/week **Classification**: Part Time / Exempt WAGES: $25/Hour, paid once per month

Hours of operation are typically Sundays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays.

**Responsibilities:** This position is responsible for providing and managing both, Equine Assisted Learning and Equine Facilitated Psychotherapy classes according to PATH standards, with the utmost attention given to safety. Responsibilities include serving as liaison among participants, their families/caregivers and Courageous Connections (CC); maintaining current participant documentation; ensuring safety and innovation in lessons. Free orientation and training is provided to all employees.

**Job Duties:**

1. Program:

• Ensure that CC delivers safe, effective and respectful equine assisted services, meeting the needs of program participants.

• Promote all aspects of CC’s programming.

• Communicate with Board on horse-related issues and assist (as inclined) with equine selection, initial and ongoing training, volunteer horse-handling training, class scheduling, and retirement.

• Provide input to Volunteer Coordinator about volunteer training and orientation.

• Ensure compliance with PATH Intl. standards and CC Operating Standards. Make recommendations to Board for updates to CC Operating Standards.

• Implement CC’s Class Cancelation policy (including closures) when necessary.

1. **Participant Services:**

• Review all participant documentation to gain an understanding of life goals, medical conditions (such as seizure forms) and photo releases.

• Ensure procedure to respect participants without signed photo releases.

• Communicate with staff about key issues/updates related to health and medical information.

• Ensure relevant data entry and file management of participant documentation and updates. This includes but is not limited to: Participant Goals and Objectives and End-of-Session Assessments.

• Ensure, through periodic evaluation, goals and objectives are appropriate and current for participants equine assisted services.

1. **Professional Behavior:**

• Represent CC in a positive and professional manner.

• Maintain safety as CC’s paramount concern. Place safety first in all actions and activities.

• Promote and support an effective team environment, including adherence to Ethical Communication practices with staff, participants, volunteers and community members.

• Demonstrate respect, interest, compassion and caring for program participants, volunteers and community members.

• Know, support and promote the Mission, Values and Goals of CC.

* Attend and participate in staff meetings (Not to exceed once per month).
* Performance evaluations to be provided annually.

**POSITION TITLE:** Mental Health Therapist

**REPORTS TO**: Executive Director or directly to Board

**HOURS**: 5-10/week **CLASSIFICATION**: Part Time / Exempt **WAGES**: $40/Hour, paid once per month

**RESPONSIBILITIES**: This position is responsible for providing Behavioral Health Services through our Equine Facilitated Psychotherapy (EFP) program. This is a unique opportunity for a Licensed Mental Health provider to amplify their work by partnering with horses and an Equine Specialist in Mental Health in Learning, who are focused on supporting the Therapist in identifying horse behavior and help maintain safety in session. EFP compliments most therapeutic modalities and in this position, the Therapist has autonomy to work in their specialized area of interest but must be open to taking clients that apply to the program. This position does not include clinical supervision, so is only appropriate for Therapists who are fully licensed or have supervision through another entity. The Therapist must also have either their own private business license or are operating under a practice that allows them to obtain clients off-site. This opportunity will allow you to be our primary referral source for our EFP program and will provide you with a pool of new clients. Responsibilities include serving as liaison among participants, their families/caregivers and Courageous Connections (CC); complete timely participant documentation up to Licensure requirements and state mandates (i.e. WAC), maintain current Licensure requirements. Free orientation and training is provided to all employees. Hours of operation are typically Sundays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays.

**JOB DUTIES:**

1. **Program:**

* Deliver safe, effective and respectful EFP services, meeting the needs of program participants.
* Review/Understand PATH INTL standards regarding the delivery of EFP.
* Complete EFP assessments in a timely manner, utilizing clinical judgement to determine eligibility for EFP program.
* Promote all aspects of CC’s programming.
* Communicate with Board on EFP scheduling.
* Provide input to Volunteer Coordinator about volunteer training and orientation.
* Ensure compliance with Licensure standards and CC Operating Standards. Make recommendations to Board for updates to CC Operating Standards.
* Implement CC’s Class Cancelation policy (including closures) when necessary.

1. **Participant Services:**

* Ensure EFP intake documentation is complete prior to program engagement.
* Ensure procedure to respect participants without signed photo releases.
* Communicate with staff about key issues/updates related to health and medical information.
* Ensure relevant data entry and file management of participant documentation and updates. This includes but is not limited to: Participant Goals and Objectives and End-of-Session Assessments.
* Ensure, through periodic evaluation, goals and objectives are appropriate and current for participants in EFP.

1. **Professional Behavior:**

* Represent CC in a positive and professional manner.
* Maintain safety as CC’s paramount concern. Place safety first in all actions and activities.
* Promote and support an effective team environment, including adherence to Ethical Communication practices with staff, participants, volunteers and community members.
* Know, support and promote the Mission, Values and Goals of CC.
* Attend and participate in staff meetings (Not to exceed once per month).

**CC POLICIES AND GUIDELINES**

**Confidentiality Policy**

Courageous Connections’ staff and volunteers are required to maintain the confidentiality of all medical, social, referral and personal information in regards to participants and their families.

**Inclusion Statement**

Courageous Connections is committed to providing an inclusive community that promotes and values every individual.  We believe that organizations that are diverse in identity and perspective create an environment where everyone, from any background, can be their best self. Courageous Connections strives to develop a board of directors and hire staff that reflect the community we serve to remain accountable to this vision. We are an Equal Opportunity Employer.

**Covid Policy**

Courageous Connections will comply with all Federal, State, and local guidelines for safety during the Coronavirus Pandemic.

**VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES**

The following guidelines outline expected behavior while performing as a Courageous Connections Volunteer:

* Be aware of and practice safety rules at all times.
* Notify the appropriate person if you are unable to fulfill your commitment
* Do not possess, use, or be under the influence of alcohol and/or illegal drugs while in any Courageous Connections class or volunteering at any event, meeting, or activity.
* Do not use obscene or discriminatory language in any Courageous Connections’ class, event, meeting, or activity.
* Dress conservatively and appropriately at all times when on Courageous Connections’ premises and while volunteering for any Courageous Connections event.
* Respect individual confidentiality, rights, safety, and property of others whether they are staff, participants, or fellow volunteers.
* No cell phone use when ‘on duty’.  Cell phones must be turned off or on silent.
* No dogs allowed on the property or in your car.
* Do not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, political association, sexual orientation, age, mental condition or disability.
* Inform staff immediately if you have an injury or condition that would compromise safety to yourself, the rider, or others during your scheduled volunteer time.
* Follow established processes to report horse behaviors which are out of the norm to your instructor or therapist before you leave for the day.
* Handle Courageous Connections’ horses as you have been trained, which includes to never strike, hit, slap, jerk, or discipline the program horses in any manner. Report the mistreatment of the horses to Courageous Connections’ staff immediately.
* Do not feed or pet the horses during class.
* Wear your nametag on upper shirt or jacket area where it can be easily seen by participants, instructors, parents and other volunteers.

**COURAGEOUS CONNECTIONS CODE OF CONDUCT**

* In order to protect Courageous Connections staff, volunteers, and participants, at no time may a staff member or volunteer be alone with a single child where the staff member or volunteer cannot be observed by others.
* Staff and volunteers shall never leave a child unsupervised.
* Staff and volunteers shall not abuse children or use corporal punishment of any kind. This includes physical abuse, verbal abuse, sexual abuse, mental abuse, or neglect. Any type of abuse is cause for dismissal.
* Staff and volunteers shall not give gifts or special favors to individual children.
* Staff and volunteers will not have private interactions through social media, computer, or handheld devices with any children in the program.
* Staff and volunteers will not transport individual children in their vehicles.
* Under no circumstances should staff release children to anyone other than the authorized parent or guardian.
* Staff and volunteers are required to report any suspicion of child abuse to the proper authorities.
* Staff and volunteers will respect all participant’s rights to not be touched in ways that make them uncomfortable. Participants are not to be touched in areas of their bodies that would be covered by a bathing suit.
* Staff and volunteers will use positive techniques for guidance, including redirection, positive reinforcement, and encouragement rather than anger or harsh words.
* Using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs in or on the facility grounds is prohibited.
* Profanity, inappropriate jokes, and any kind of harassment are prohibited.
* Staff and volunteers will interact with each participant with respect and consideration at all times and treat everyone equally regardless of gender, race, religion, sexual identity, or culture.
* All staff are “At Will” employees.
* Staff are required to report any unusual incidents and fill out an Incident Report.

I understand that any violation of this Code of Conduct may result in immediate dismissal.