



## **EQUINE ADOPTION POLICY**

### **EPONA HORSE RESCUE**

**AS OF FEBRUARY 2017**

#### **1. Policy**

- 1.1 This Equine Adoption Policy is intended to help ensure that all equines in the care of the Shelter are placed with suitable homes. The adopter of the equine must be at least 21 years of age with no history or criminal history of animal abuse or neglect.
- 1.2 Anyone who relinquishes an equine to the Shelter is not eligible to adopt an equine within 2 year(s) of the donation. Exceptions may be made on a case by case situation. Exceptions will not be made when parties are banned from adopting from said rescues. Anyone who adopts and subsequently returns an equine to the Shelter may be ineligible for future adoptions through the Shelter.

#### **2. Application Approval Process**

- 2.1 The approval process will begin upon receipt by the Shelter of a completed Adoption Application form and payment of the application fee by the applicant. The Application will then be reviewed to conclude if the applicant meets the requirements of the Shelter and to verify the references of the applicant, as well as to perform a criminal background check of the applicant. Any applicant who does not meet the requirements, receives unfavorable references, or does not pass a background check will not be approved.
- 2.2 After the initial review is completed, an inspector will be assigned to conduct the on-site inspection of the applicant's property. The inspector will verify that all the animals on the property are properly cared for, and the property is safe for the equine to be adopted. If the equine will be boarded elsewhere, the inspector will interview the owner of the boarding facility and notify them that the equine will be continue to be owned by the Shelter for the initial 2 years of the Adoption Agreement. If the adopter fails to pay boarding fees, abandons the animal, or otherwise neglects his/her responsibilities with respect to the equine, the Shelter is to be notified immediately.
- 2.3 The Adoption Application requires that you provide references from the following professionals:
  - (a) A licensed Equine Veterinarian (DMV), and
  - (b) An equine professional, such as a farrier, equine trainer, riding instructor, stable manager, equine breeder, or similar person.

### **3. Adoptive Standards of Care**

The following standards are based generally on good equine management practices and are required of all persons adopting an equine. While not comprehensive, they offer basic parameters for responsible equine ownership. The number of equines adopted must not exceed the ability of the adopter to feed, care, and shelter the animals properly. Such limits are dependent not only upon the physical health of the individual, but also the adopter's financial ability to maintain proper equine management. In addition, any individual keeping equines must comply with all relevant State and local laws.

### **4. Completion of Approval Procedure**

4.1 After the equine property inspection has been successfully completed and the applicant's facility has been approved, the Adoptions Committee will notify the applicant that he/she is approved to adopt an equine. At this time the applicant may request priority on a specific equine.

### **5. Placement for Adoption**

5.1 When placing an equine with an adoptive home, the following procedures must be followed:

- (a) The Shelter will set an adoption fee for the equine. This fee is subject to change as the equine progresses in training, and may be reviewed periodically and adjusted higher or lower.
- (b) Once an approved adopter makes a request to adopt the equine, the Shelter Staff will review the adopter's capabilities and needs to see whether there are any obvious reasons why the equine requested would not be a good match for the adopter. Subsequent approved adopters who request the same equine will be placed on a waiting list.
- (c) It is recommended that the adopter spend time with the equine if it is going to be ridden. It is important that the adopter and/or anyone else in the adopter's family who will be riding or driving the equine also get to know the animal before the adoption proceeds. If, after observing the adoptive family with the equine, the shelter staff has a reasonable belief that the equine is an unsuitable match for the adopter, a decision will be made as to whether a second visit should be scheduled or whether the adoption process should be halted. If the equine is to be a companion animal only, a pre-arranged meeting will be at the option of the applicant.
- (d) While the Shelter tries to evaluate each equine as fully as possible, the Shelter cannot make a final recommendation on the suitability of an equine for any particular purpose. It is recommended that the adopter have a veterinarian evaluate any equine he/she wishes to adopt. If adopting for a particular purpose or event, a trainer or instructor should also meet and evaluate the equine.
- (e) If the Shelter approves the adoption, the applicant is responsible for transporting the equine to its new home within two weeks of the approval. The Shelter must receive the Adoption Agreement and adoption fee before the equine can be transported.
- (f) If the Adoption Agreement and fee have not been received within the two-week period following approval, the adoption will become null and void, and the equine may be put

back up for adoption. The adoption fee may be paid by credit card, cashier's check, money order or cash. The adoption fee is **non-refundable**.

- (g) For a period of 2 year(s) from the date of the Adoption Agreement, the equine will remain legally owned by the Shelter; follow-ups will be conducted throughout this time period by a representative of the Shelter. The initial follow-up will be conducted 3 months after the adopter takes possession of the equine, and additional follow-ups will be conducted thereafter every 3-6 months until the end of the said 1 year period. Under certain circumstances, more frequent follow-ups may occur at the discretion of the Shelter.
- (h) The adopter may return the equine to the Shelter for any reason, upon 30 days' advance written notice to the Shelter. The adopter will be responsible for arranging for transport, and for paying the costs of transporting the equine back to the Shelter. The adopter will also be liable for the cost of any veterinary work needed as a result of injuries or illness sustained by the equine while under the adopter's care and control, and the costs of any expenses incurred by the Shelter as a result of the adopter's acts or omissions while in possession of the equine. The Shelter will not reimburse the adoptive home for any expenses incurred with respect to the equine while in the adoptive home. Should the adopter decide that he/she can no longer care for the equine after the said 2 year period of the Adoption Agreement, the adopter understands that the Shelter has first option to take the equine back and attempt to place it with another adoptive home.

#### **6. Farrier**

The Adopter must ensure that the equine will receive hoof care and maintenance every six to eight weeks, or as directed by a veterinarian or farrier. All hoof care must be performed by an experienced farrier. Exceptions may be determined by veterinary or other expert consultation when such care is unnecessary or would endanger the equine and/or its caretaker.

#### **7. Health Guidelines**

The Adopter is responsible for ensuring that the adopted equine maintains a body condition score of no less than four (4) on the Henneke Body Condition Scoring Chart. Exceptions shall be made for equines under regular veterinary care for a medical condition. If the health of an equine in adoptive care is in decline and weight loss occurs, the Adopter must immediately notify the Shelter of such circumstances.

#### **8. Humane Euthanasia**

- 8.1 Only a licensed veterinarian may administer euthanasia, except in extreme emergency when a veterinarian is not available. A veterinarian shall examine the carcass to verify, in writing, such immediate need. The carcass shall be disposed of in compliance with all applicable laws. The Adopter shall immediately notify the Shelter of such euthanasia and provide a veterinary statement and record of the euthanasia.

#### **9. Financial Responsibilities**

Upon agreeing to adopt an equine, the Adopter takes full responsibility, once the equine is in their care, for all maintenance costs of the equine including boarding fees, grain and hay, paste wormer, veterinary, farrier, and other usual and customary costs of care and maintenance of the equine.