VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT

This document outlines the Code of Conduct for all persons volunteering their service to the Connecticut Draft Horse Rescue, Inc. (CDHR). It covers your behaviour as a member of the CDHR volunteer community, in any forum, mailing list, Wiki, Web site, IRC channel, public meeting or private correspondence. If you cannot agree to all of these principles then volunteering with Connecticut Draft Horse Rescue is not for you. Accepting the role of volunteer assumes acceptance of these principles:

**Be Considerate**

You are working with others as a volunteer so be considerate of how your actions, words, or contributions affect your colleagues, CDHR and the volunteer community as a whole.

**Be Respectful**

Treat one another with respect. Everyone can make a valuable contribution to CDHR. We may not always agree, but disagreement is no excuse for poor behaviour or poor manners. We might all experience some frustration now and then, but we cannot allow that frustration to turn into personal attacks. It's important to remember that a community where people feel uncomfortable or threatened is not a productive one. We expect the members of the CDHR volunteer community to be respectful when dealing with other volunteers as well as with people from outside our programs. Avoid becoming involved in flame wars, trolling, personal attacks, and repetitive arguments. Do not use communal methods of communication to be a vehicle for your private “agenda” or to undermine CDHR’s ability to fulfill its mission.

**Be Collaborative**

CDHR is about collaboration and working together. Collaboration reduces redundancy of work done, and improves the quality of the work produced regardless of whether you are volunteering in our barns or performing some other task.

When you disagree, consult others privately not in open forums. Disagreements, both political and technical, happen all the time, and CDHR is no exception. Disagreement, debate and constructive criticism are often how progress is made and are a necessary part of doing complex work in a team. The important goal is not to avoid disagreements or differing views but to resolve them constructively. Above all, avoid making conflicts about CDHR into personal conflicts. Debate should never include reference to someone’s nationality, gender, religion or other personal characteristics. You should turn to the volunteer team and to the volunteer team process to seek advice and to resolve disagreements. A member of CDHR’s volunteer team should be the first place you turn and then to the Board of Directors if results are not satisfactory. The airing of conflicts and grievances in any public forum should be avoided at all times.

When you are unsure, ask for help. Nobody knows everything and nobody is expected to be perfect. Asking questions avoids many problems down the road and so questions are encouraged. Those who are asked should be responsive and helpful. However, when asking a question, care must be taken to do so in an appropriate forum. Off-topic questions at a volunteer meeting, such as inquiries about an adoption matter, detract from productive discussion and will not be allowed into the discussion out of respect for the other participants in the meeting.
Step Down Considerately

Just like a paid employment position, volunteers will come and go, and CDHR is no different. When you leave or disengage from CDHR, in whole or in part, we ask that you do so in a way that minimizes disruption to CDHR. This means you should tell people you are leaving and take the proper steps to ensure that others can pick up where you leave off.

Be Available

Check your e-mails regularly and answer them promptly—even if it's "I'll get back to you."

Be Honest

Sometimes the hardest thing to say is "no" or admit you've forgotten do something. Be honest with each other and yourself with regards to what you say and what you can realistically commit to.

Follow the Rules

Volunteers are expected to uphold CDHR's rules, policies, and procedures at all times.

Exercise Discretion and Confidentiality at Appropriate Times

Depending on your role, you will be privy to various levels of information. As a volunteer you are expected to keep site access details (such as logins, FTP details, etc.) secure at all times. Information contained within private forums & CDHR meetings (for example, info about serious security matters, legal cases, and personal details), private mailing lists, chats or other media is also to be kept confidential and within the meeting or forum that information is shared in, even after you have discontinued your service. Breaches in the area of privacy and confidentiality will be taken very seriously by CDHR.

Conflict of Interest

When using CDHR resources or making decisions within a committee concerning CDHR's policy positions you must do so based only on the best interests of CDHR. If you have a situation or affiliation that might constitute or lead to a conflict of interest or might be perceived by a reasonable person in the CDHR community to be a conflict of interest, disclose this to your volunteer team leaders or the team as a whole. If appropriate, after discussing with the team, you should remove yourself from specific decisions or discussions in which you may have a conflict of interest.

Exceptions

Members of the Board of Directors and Committee Members of CDHR are governed by additional guidelines and requirements and, where a conflict exists, these will take precedence over this Code of Conduct.

Violations

Violations to this Code of Conduct will be handled in accordance with the CONNECTICUT DRAFT HORSE RESCUE, INC. GRIEVANCE POLICY on page 7 of the CDHR Volunteer Manual.

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This code of conduct will be reviewed periodically and revised as the BOD sees fit.