



## **ONTARIO EQUESTRIAN FEDERATION**

### **MINIMUM SAFETY REQUIREMENTS for COACHING AND INSTRUCTION OF RIDING PROGRAMS**

- the facility must have liability insurance in place and be able to show proof of coverage at any time
- 'Release and Acknowledgement' forms must be signed by all participants. Those participants under the age of 18 must have 'Release and Acknowledgement' forms signed by their parent or legal guardian
- signage relative to important rules to abide by when around horses should be posted in a prominent area and should be discussed with and understood by all students participating in any type of riding program
- fire precautions and emergency evacuation procedures should be posted and understood by staff in the event of an emergency
- hazardous material or equipment of any kind should be stored out of reach of horses, riders and the general public
- all head instructors shall be at least 18 years of age and have a minimum of 5 years' experience or be certified by the Ontario Equestrian Federation
- assistant instructors shall be allowed to instruct only while under the supervision of a head instructor and must be 16 years of age with a minimum of 3 years' riding experience
- all instructors and assistants must understand and periodically review safety precautions and the steps to be adhered to if an accident occurs
- all instructors shall have a valid first aid certificate and CPR training
- accident forms must be available at the facility and must be completed by the instructor and any witnesses immediately after an accident has occurred

- all instruction will take place in a safe and suitable environment
- no public lessons are to be left unattended
- it is recommended that there be a ratio of 6 students to one instructor (maximum 8:1)
- instructors should ensure that all students can handle the horse appropriately and understand the basic safety and tacking-up rules
- all riders need to be at least six years of age before they are allowed to ride a horse without direct assistance. Until a rider is able to stop, turn, and ride in a balanced and controlled manner, they should not be allowed to ride without direct assistance in an uncontrolled environment
- beginners should be supervised by a knowledgeable employee of the facility during the pre-mount handling and tacking-up of the horse or pony
- an approved riding helmet and proper footwear with a defined heel must be worn at all times when riding any type of horse
- all tack must be properly fitted for horse and rider, and must be in good repair
- no stallions, horses under five years of age, sick, lame or blind horses will be used by anyone participating in lessons



## ONTARIO EQUESTRIAN FEDERATION

### MINIMUM SAFETY REQUIREMENTS for TRAIL OR PACK RIDING ESTABLISHMENTS

- the establishment shall have liability insurance in place and be able to show proof of coverage at any time
- 'Release and Acknowledgement' forms must be signed by all participants. Those participants under the age of 18 must have 'Release and Acknowledgement' forms signed by their parent or legal guardian
- signage relative to important rules to abide by when around horses should be posted in a prominent area and should be discussed with and understood by all participants
- fire precautions and emergency evacuation procedures should be posted and understood by staff in the event of an emergency
- hazardous material or equipment of any kind should be stored out of reach of horses, riders and the general public
- minimum age for riders is 10 years of age (6 years of age if the rider is ponied by an employee of the facility)
- riders will be permitted only on horses known to be safe, sound and schooled for the purpose intended, regardless of the rider's ability
- no stallions, horses under five years of age, lame, sick, or blind horses will be used by anyone on the ride, including guides
- riders will be matched to horses according to aptitude, suitability and size by stable management. Each horse should be assigned a maximum weight limit
- all horses, including those of guides, must be properly fitted with their own set of suitable tack; bareback riding is not permitted. Girths must be checked and/or tightened before the rider is mounted, and again before the ride sets out, by stable management
- saddles must properly fit the rider

- stirrups must be the proper size for the rider's foot. Length of stirrups must be properly adjusted for the rider's leg length and checked by stable management
- all riders under the age of 18 years, including guides, will be required to wear an approved riding helmet equipped with a safety harness. All other riders must have safe riding helmets available for their use, and must have their use strongly recommended to them. If a rider aged 18 or over chooses not to wear a safe riding helmet, he/she must sign a 'Release and Acknowledgement' form which states that he/she has chosen not to wear a safe riding helmet even though he/she understands that horseback riding is a high-risk sport and that a helmet has been recommended to him/her
- all riders will be required to wear footwear appropriate for horseback riding (minimum half-inch heel, maximum two-inch heel, no platform soles) or the facility will provide appropriate safety stirrups
- while riders are mounting, horses must be held by an employee. The use of a 'mounting block' is strongly recommended
- dismounting during the ride will not be permitted unless the duration of the ride exceeds one hour, and then only with the assistance of the head or assistant guide(s)
- maximum one rider per horse. NO EXCEPTIONS
- it is recommended that all rides have a ratio of one head guide to five riders, with a minimum of two guides per ride
- while riding uphill or downhill, all horses must be kept to a walk. The last five minutes of every ride must be completed at the walk
- every ride must have functional two-way communication with the stable (walkie-talkies or cell phones)
- all guides must have a valid first aid certificate and CPR training
- all guides must understand and periodically review the safety precautions and steps to adhere to if there is an accident
- accident forms must be available at the facility and must be completed by the head guide and any witnesses immediately after an accident has occurred
- all head guides must be at least 18 years old and have at least three years' guide experience