



High Hopes Re-Open Phases and Guidelines For Volunteers, Participants and their Families

High Hopes Therapeutic Riding is committed to providing the safest environment possible for our participants, volunteers, and staff. To ensure we are doing so as thoroughly as possible, we have reviewed State of Connecticut, Federal, and PATH International guidelines and have updated our reopen plan as of August 6, 2020. In the event additional best practice protocols are released, we will update our plan accordingly. Our expectation is that all staff, participants, and volunteers will follow the guidelines of this document. If there are questions or concerns regarding the ability to meet these expectations at return, please let us know immediately by emailing cbourn@highhopestr.org.

Phases:

- Phase One- minimal feeding volunteers return
- Phase Two- Low risk, independent riders, carriage drivers who can drive AI independently, and independent unmounted/ELP participants return
- Phase Three- Low risk participants with leaders and select horse handler volunteers return
- Phase Four- Low risk participants with leaders and sidewalkers, carriage drivers, and unmounted/ELP participants, sidewalking, carriage driving header, ELP, barn, and office volunteers
- Phase Five- All participants and volunteers return

General Guidelines

- High Hopes will be open by appointment only. Tours and meetings may resume on sight, with priority to meeting outdoors wherever possible. When not possible, staff will minimize spaces accessed indoors (e.g. if meeting in the classroom, visitors will enter through the classroom), employ 6-foot distancing, and ensure face masks are worn for the entirety of the indoor activities.
- Staff, volunteers, and participants will stay home if they or someone they reside with are feeling ill and/or if they have been exposed to someone with COVID-19.
- All volunteers and participants must sign a COVID-19 liability waiver prior to their first engagement at High Hopes: <https://highhopestr.org/05/22/covid-19-release/>. It is the responsibility of the event organizer to ensure liability waivers are completed.
- All individuals must provide their own masks until such time regulations are lifted. High Hopes will have a limited number of masks available at each entrance for those who arrive without one.
- Hand washing and/or hand sanitizing is required immediately upon entrance for all. High Hopes will provide hand sanitizing stations at all entrances and expects individuals to utilize sanitizer before touching any item. Gloves are not recommended for PPE by state or federal guidelines.
- High Hopes staff are responsible for disinfecting common surfaces.
- High Hopes staff requested survey response from all volunteers and participants regarding their comfort and risk level then will assign volunteers and participants based on the below phase system. In addition to state, federal, and PATH, International guidelines, programming will reflect the number of individuals comfortable and capable of coming back.
- To minimize risk, our plan accounts for minimized “touches” to common items. Please note role specific changes within each phase.
- Volunteer and participants schedules may change between phases (different days/times) to accommodate various guidelines.
- Volunteer and participant activities may change (as appropriate based on capability/training/appropriateness) to accommodate disinfecting, phase changes, and efficacy.

Phase Four- Begins September 1st, 2020

During Phase Four, volunteers and participants who do not possess significant risk factors and who are comfortable may return. Unless there are significant changes in guidelines, phase four will continue until December 2020.

Participants

Due to Connecticut Department of Agriculture guidelines, all personal equipment (helmets and footwear) must be used by one individual only. High Hopes helmets and footwear will be available on a first-come, first-serve basis and will be assigned to one individual for the entirety of the phase. Please note that this may require some individuals to purchase their own helmets/footwear. All helmets must be ASTM/SEI approved for Equestrian Use and must be manufactured within the last five years. If you are in need of recommendations for helmets/footwear please let us know. On your first day, staff will request the manufacture date of the helmet to document in our system.

Masks must be worn at all times when indoors (including the barn) and outdoors when 6-foot distancing is not possible. This means that all drivers (with the exception of those driving AI independently), all riders will leaders and/or sidewalkers, and all ELP participants must wear a mask for the entirety of their lesson. Face masks must be worn over the nose and mouth and face shields are not an acceptable alternative to face masks.

Participants may wait in the lounge (entering through the sliding doors) prior to their lesson start. Hand sanitizer will be available immediately upon entrance and after sanitizing, participants should in the designated areas of the lounge, remaining mindful of 6-foot distancing. Wherever possible, participants should wait independently so as not to crowd the space. If participants are utilizing a High Hopes helmet, staff will leave it out on the bench with their name affixed to it. Please do not touch helmets on the wall.

Lessons will occur in the outdoor arena unless there is inclement weather or another concern is determined by the instructor. If lessons occur indoors, spectators observing from the lounge or the barn aisle near the end of the mounting ramp should respect social distancing guidelines. If the lesson occurs in the outdoor arena, spectators may observe from the picnic tables or personally provided lawn chairs, being mindful of 6-foot distancing. Drivers may not idle in the parking lot for the entirety of the lesson (same as before).

Your horse will be groomed/tacked/schooled as necessary and will wait for you in the arena where the lesson is scheduled to occur.

Last, though we have missed seeing and talking to you, please plan to leave promptly after your lesson – no walks around the property or visits down the runway are permitted at this time.

Volunteers

Masks must be worn at all times when indoors (including the barn) and outdoors when 6-foot distancing is not possible. This means that volunteers in program will likely wear a mask for the entirety of the lesson. Face masks must be worn over the nose and mouth and face shields are not an acceptable alternative to face masks.

All volunteers (except office volunteers) will enter the facility through the dutch door near Aladdin's stall. Prior to touching any item, please disinfect your hands with the provided sanitizer. You may leave personal belongings in the receptacles near the volunteer table. In the event multiple volunteers arrive at once, please do not congregate and remain 6 feet away from others. Volunteer name badges for first-time returning volunteers, as well as the daily schedule, will be available at the table. There is a maximum of eight individuals in the barn at a time, and in order to maintain reasonable numbers it is important to be timely. Barn volunteers should arrive at their designated time, not earlier. Side walkers/ELP Coaches should arrive no more than 10 minutes before their lesson start. Leaders/CD Headers should arrive 30-minutes prior to lesson start in order to groom and tack the horse they are

working with unless the horse is being schooled prior to their lesson (which will be communicated in advance). Sidewalkers/ELP coaches will wait in the barn aisle for the instructor to bring their participant out to them.

In order to minimize risk, only barn volunteers responsible for setting up tack will go into the tack room. A maximum of two volunteers at a time are permitted in the tack room. Upon lesson completion, please leave tack on a rack/door in the aisle and a staff member will put away and disinfect. After the lesson, leaders (with the assistance of participants as appropriate) will untack, then leaders will groom/bathe, and turn out. In the event leaders are not available to assist with these tasks, High Hopes' staff will do so.

Volunteers should log their hours through the website at <https://highhopestr.org/volunteers/current-volunteers/volunteer-hours-log/> and should take their name badges home. Volunteers will not enter the building unless necessary to use the restroom or complete tasks required for their volunteer role. If they do need to enter the building, they should enter through the green door near the indoor mounting ramp –not through the sliding doors or through the lounge.

Last, though we have missed seeing and talking to you, please plan to leave promptly after volunteering – no walks around the property or visits down the runway are permitted at this time.