

Frequently Asked Questions about Equine Donations

1. Is this a retirement sanctuary?

Unbroken Equine-Facilitated Healing mental health facility that partners with equines in the trauma-focused therapeutic treatment of its clients. While it is not a sanctuary for retired equines or a rescue organization by design, it does often turn out to be a great “next chapter” home for older equines who are ready to retire from riding programs or more rigorous physical work but are still otherwise healthy and enjoy having a job of sorts. They continue to receive great care, love, and regular human interaction in our therapy program, while also living a more relaxed life in their natural element. They are very much free to “horse,” as we like to say. It is the policy of Unbroken to accept donations of equines from their owners for the purpose of our Equine-Facilitated Psychotherapy (EFP) program. While equines accepted into Unbroken’s program do not need to be rideable, they must be otherwise healthy and sound of mind, without major soundness issues causing constant chronic pain or discomfort that is not easily managed with medication. It is also very important that they have an interest in people and a desire to connect.

2. Do you have a trial period?

Yes, Unbroken requires a 30 day trial period.

3. Why do you have a 30 day trial period?

Within the first week or so, the equine gets acclimated to his new environment and then integrates into the herd. Because their only real “job” in our therapy program is to simply be themselves, most equines are able to begin participating in sessions fairly soon after their arrival with pretty minimal stress or effort (once they have had a chance to fully relax into their new home and herd, of course). We at Unbroken strongly believe horses have a right to enjoy their lives, which very much includes their job! We also trust that our equines will tell us in their own way if they are not happy. If there is ever a point during the trial period where we feel that our program is causing too much stress and your horse is not happy, we will opt not to keep him in the program and he will be returned to you within 7 days. Our therapeutic work is very much centered around relationship, and our horses are regarded not as tools for the betterment of someone else, but as equally important participants in that relationship with their human counterparts. It is Unbroken’s policy that therapy sessions be mutually beneficial to ALL those involved, including the equines!

4. I am at a boarding facility. What if my barn will not hold a stall open for 30 days?

We will work something out. It may mean that we take ownership earlier than 30 days and if he does not work out, and you cannot take him back, we will find him a good home.

5. Are there any horses that you will not take?

Unbroken may refuse an equine donation for any reason at any time, but absolutely will not take:

- Any equine with soundness issues severe enough to interfere with its day-to-day life, comfort, and ability to get around and function as a horse, especially if these issues are not easily managed with medication/treatment. Again - we want our equines to enjoy their work in our program, and it's very difficult to willingly participate in relationships when it hurts to be in your own body.
- Any equine diagnosed with Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) via a positive Coggins Test.
- Any equine diagnosed with Equine Protozoal Myeloencephalitis (EPM), and/or other neurological conditions.
- Any horse that is not current on all core vaccines - if horse is not current on vaccines owner is responsible for getting him vaccinated BEFORE he is transported to our facility for the 30 day trial period
- Any equine with a history of aggressive behavior towards people i.e. kicking, biting or rearing
- We do not take stallions at Unbroken

6. What kind of equines are you looking for, and do they need special training to be in your program?

The ONLY job of equines in our EFP program is to simply be themselves in all their glory. They require no special training, as there is a wealth of education and healing to be gained from simply observing and experiencing the way they naturally interact with the world around them. We welcome equines of all breeds (including donkeys and mules), shapes, sizes, backgrounds and especially personalities. We do NOT necessarily rule out horses for some minor bad manners (provided they are not dangerous ones like kicking, biting or rearing) - we actually welcome horses with personalities that require people to practice setting boundaries and be more mindful of personal space! We strive for a diverse herd with a vast array of personality traits - more stuff to work with in therapy sessions!

7. What does the evaluation look like?

- 2 evaluators will come to your horse's current living facility
- We will observe how he responds to you/people he's used to, as well as to us - we will be looking at ground manners and, more importantly, level of interest and desire for connection (curious and engaged vs. checked out and indifferent)
- We will lead him at a walk from both sides to check for soundness

8. How long does the evaluation take?

Generally no more than 20-30 minutes. It is much less involved and complex than an evaluation for a riding program; we mainly want to determine that the horse appears healthy, comfortable getting around at least at a walk, does not exhibit dangerous or aggressive behaviors towards people, and enjoys interacting with people.

9. What can cause a failure?

- If the horse is not sound at even a walk
- If the horse has other obvious indicators of current or chronic health issues causing pain or discomfort
- If the horse has negative behaviors such as biting, kicking, rearing, bolting, or even attempts any of those

10. Who is responsible for veterinary charges while my horse is in the trial period?

Any injuries sustained while at the property of Unbroken will be paid for by Unbroken. If after a vet check, the veterinarian recommends a treatment for an undiagnosed or undisclosed issue, we will consult with the owner. If the owner chooses to have treatment done, it will be at the owner's expense. If the owner does not treat a condition that could progress, then Unbroken may choose to end the trial and return the horse to its owner. Unbroken does not have colic surgery performed on equines on trial in our possession. We will make every effort to contact the owner/donor if you would elect to pay for colic surgery. The horse would then become your responsibility for rehabilitation.

11. What happens if there comes a time when the equine can no longer participate in the therapy program or can no longer stay at the Unbroken facility for any reason?

If an equine ever needs to be rehomed for any reason, the donor will be the first person contacted - **Donor will ALWAYS have first right of refusal.** If the equine cannot be returned to their care, a suitable home will be found for the equine.

12. Can I come and see my horse?

You can absolutely come and visit your horse - we just ask that you please contact us ahead of time so that we can plan on a specific day and time. Unbroken has a "No Drop-in" policy - this is due to the sensitive and confidential nature of our therapy sessions, for which we make every effort to provide privacy. Anyone who visits the Unbroken facility to interact with horses must also sign a liability waiver on arrival.

13. Are equine donations eligible for a tax deduction?

Unbroken Equine-Facilitated Healing, LLC is not a non-profit organization and does not currently have tax-exempt status, therefore equine donations will not be tax-deductible.