

**Recreation Division
Fort Gordon
Hilltop Riding Stables
Standard Operating Procedures
for Boarding Horses**

AMIM-EIW-WR

October 12, 2023

SOP NUMBER 15, BOARDING HORSES

1. **PURPOSE:** To establish rules and regulations governing the administration and operation of Hilltop Riding Stables (HTRS). The stables provide horseback riding, instruction, and horse boarding facilities to all eligible personnel, primarily active-duty military.
2. **SCOPE:** Regards to privately owned horses, the privilege of using the riding stables facility will be based on the patronage eligibility and eligibility category of the legal owner(s) of the horse(s). Privately owned horses at the stables will primarily be used and cared for only by the owner and their family members, friends and guests. As a rule, the owner or an eligible family member must always accompany guests. On a case-by-case basis, owners may request in writing an exception for the day-to-day operation of the riding stables. Any appeals to their decision will be made to the Chief of Recreation Division. The written exception, to be kept on file, will be for a specific time period and will authorize only a specified individual who will present the written exception to the stable employee in charge. The manager may also allow exceptions on a one-time basis when an exception is not required for an extended period.
3. **ELIGIBILITY:** Patronage eligibility as described in AR 215-1, 7-1. Paid staff of the riding stables in tasked to regularly check patrons for proper identification. Eligible personnel are established by categories as follows:
 - a. **Category I:** Wounded Warriors and their immediate families. Family members guests of priority patrons assume the same priority.
 - b. **Category II:** Active Duty (AD) military personnel and families. Family members guest of priority patrons assume the same priority.
 - c. **Category III:** All other eligible personnel, retired military and DOD civilians, immediate family members of retired military.

- d. Category IV: Civilians based on local demand and capacity and at garrison commander discretion, per Family Moral Welfare and Recreation Command (FMWRC) letter on file.
 - e. Wait List: As described below, if space becomes filled, a wait list will be maintained for space that may become available in the future. Names on the waiting list will be prioritized by the owner's eligibility status and request date.
4. **STABLING PRIVATELY OWNED HORSES:** Category I and II owners, upon request, will receive a permanent stall. Category III and IV owners will receive temporary stalls and are subject to being "bumped" by a higher category owner. We are renting only to wounded warrior, active duty, retired, DOD civilians, and civilians on a first come first serve basis within each category. A limited number of stalls will be rented, and the renters will have use of trails and pasture. A waiting list will be maintained for stalls that may become available in the future.
5. **ASSIGNMENT OF ADDITIONAL SPACE:** Space is defined as one horse stall and one feed/tack storage area.
6. **PROCEDURE FOR BRINGING A HORSE ON POST:**
 - a. The stable manager will be contacted a minimum of ten (10) working days prior to bringing a horse on post to determine the availability of stalls and incoming veterinary inspection date.
 - b. After determining that a stall(s) is available, the stable manager will require proof of a negative Coggins, current shot records, current health certificate, completion of a boarding agreement, and Hold Harmless Agreement(s) for all family members. After concurrence from the Post Veterinarian (5 working days), the stable manager will schedule an incoming date and assign a stall(s) and locker(s) for the incoming horse(s).
 - c. Horses staying on Fort Gordon are required to be vaccinated for rabies, equine encephalomyelitis (EEE), western equine encephalomyelitis (WEE, Venezuelan equine encephalomyelitis (VEE), West Nile Virus encephalomyelitis, tetanus and Rhinopneumonitis, annually. Horses are required to be wormed every twelve weeks. Horses are also required to be tested for Equine Infection Anemia (EIA) by the Coggins test annually. The Garrison Commander's Policy No.25, requires microchipping, this may be provided by post veterinary services or arrange privately but chip information must be registered with HTRS. Routine deworming, vaccination, and testing services will be available from the Fort Gordon Branch Veterinary Service at the time of entry onto the installation

and semiannually during vaccination clinics for government horses. Alternately, vaccination, de-working, and EIA testing may be performed by the veterinarian of the owner's choice. Vaccinations must be performed by or under the supervision of a veterinarian. Proof in writing of vaccinations, de-worming, (both tube and owner administered), and EIA testing must be presented to the post veterinarian and HTRS within seven (7) working days of the date scheduled for the procedure by the owner's veterinarian. At any time, an owner may add or remove a horse from the list of those horses' provided vaccination and de-worming services by the veterinary services by the veterinary service, if the request is made in person or in writing. Also, the post veterinary service and HTRS must be notified if a horse is sold or removed from the riding stables in writing. Internal sales, within the stables, require a current Coggins test per state regulations. In order to facilitate the identification of horses, a sign or card must be posted on each horse's stall. The name of a civilian veterinarian to be contacted in the event of an emergency may also be listed.

- d. Horses that are removed from the stable grounds will upon return go directly to a wash rack and have hooves and body completely washed.

7. RESPONSIBILITY OF PRIVATE HORSE OWNERS:

- a. All owners are responsible to adhere to the rules that are stated in this SOP, as well as other posted rules and/or policies. If an owner witnesses a violation, it is their responsibility to report the violator to the stable manager as soon as possible. The owner's name will be held in confidence.
- b. Emergencies: Owners are responsible for all emergencies, medical and otherwise. The stable staff will only make notification. Corrective action will be the responsibility of the owner. If the owner is out of town or cannot be reached, the stable manager will take necessary action to correct the situation at the owner's expense. It is the owner's responsibility to notify the stables in the event the owner will be out of town and to provide the name of the individual who will care for the horse in the owner's absence in writing to the HTRS office.
- c. Owners are responsible for all environmental or other damages caused by their horse or anyone in control of the horse at the time of damages.
- d. Owners are responsible for the exercise of their personal horse(s)
- e. Owners are responsible for the care and safeguarding of their personal tack. Tack and feed storage containers placed in the storage area will have adequate ventilation as per post fire marshal. All feed storage containers, including hay and grain storage in the barn areas will always be secured to prevent horses from

gaining access. Keys and combinations for your storage area needs to be provided to the front office.

- f. Halters: Owners must provide a usable halter upon arrival. A halter and lead rope must be available and always hung on the horse stall, this is a safety requirement in the event of fire and emergency veterinary care.
- g. Shoeing: Private owners are responsible for the shoeing of personal horses. Hilltop Riding Stables will post notification dates(s) the HTRS farrier will be on site when the information is available. Farriers will only work in designated areas and clean up after themselves. Any payment that needs to be left for a farrier must be left in the office in a sealed envelope displaying the farrier's name, the horse's name, and the date. A handling fee of \$40.00 per hour will be assessed when at any time stable staff must assist the owner or the farrier.
- h. Veterinary care: Private owners are responsible for veterinary care necessary for personal horses. A handling fee of \$40.00 per hour will be assessed when at any time stable staff must assist the owner or the veterinarian.
- i. Inoculations: As prescribed by Army regulations, any owners wishing the post Veterinary Clinic to give shots and worming medication to their private horse must sign a release form with the post Veterinary Clinic. Owners will be responsible for restraining personal horse. Veterinary clinic staff will not enter stalls to retrieve a horse requiring vaccinations. Payment is due at time of vaccination. A handling fee of \$40.00 per hour will be assessed when at any time stable staff must assist the owner or veterinarian.
- j. Government owned horses will be wormed every twelve weeks. Private owners will see that their horses are wormed within seven days of the time that government horses are wormed. Owners will turn their "used" worming boxes into management for documentation, who will in turn provide a list for the post veterinary clinic.
- k. Feed: HTRS will provide a 45gal airtight container to store feed and supplements, which will be in front of the horse's stall. These containers can hold approx. four (4) 50lb bags of feed, as such any additional unopened bags of feed must remain in your tack locker. Owners must provide all supplements measured out in airtight bags (i.e., Ziplock) to be provided at feedings. Owners can choose to use HTRS barn feed or their own personal feed. If owners choose to use HTRS barn feed, they will be limited to a maximum of four (4) scoops of feed per day to be rationed at morning and afternoon feedings. Each horse is fed according to their written instruction card, any changes to feed must be done in writing and provided to the front office. Feed stall card changes will incur a \$5.00 fee for supplies.

- l. Owners will not remove horse(s) from the stables or bring in new horses without notifying the stable manager.
- m. Two weeks written notice will be given to HTRS before permanently removing any horse from the stables.
- n. Owners will not make alterations to stalls without prior approval of the stable manager. Owners will keep area around assigned stall(s) clean of hay, shavings, and other debris. Owners will remove debris and not sweep it into the middle of the aisles.
- o. The board agreements provide for a quick pick of the stall one (1) time a day by stable staff. Owners must deep clean their horses' stall(s) as needed. Owners not maintaining cleanliness of their assigned stall will be assessed a flat rate of \$45.00 each time stable personnel must deep clean or strip the stall.
- p. Stallions are not allowed at the riding stables. Colts will be gelded by 12 months of age.
- q. Bringing dogs to the riding stables is prohibited.
- r. Parents will always keep children 13 and younger under close supervision. Complaints will be addressed by management. Problem children may be barred from the stables.
- s. Speed limit on stable grounds is 10MPH. Horses have the right-of-way.
- t. During freezing weather, the water system will be shut off and the horses will be provided water by buckets daily by HTRS staff.
- u. HTRS will blanket all NAF, Full Board, and Training Board horses at 40 degrees and below. Owners will have one blanket of choice on their stall door. Owners may opt out of the "HTRS schedule."
- v. In cases of cold inclement weather NAF, Full Board, and Training Board horses will stay in their stalls per management discretion. Owners may opt out of the "HTRS schedule."
- w. Boarders may opt to have their horses to stay in the stall overnight at any time, but it is their responsibility to have the stall cleaned before lunch the following day. Wheelbarrows are provided to wheel manure out to the manure pit.

- x. Stalled horses will have hay in the hay racks in the stalls. Any extra hay wanted WILL be put in a hay nets; NOT thrown on the ground. Extra hay will be left on the hay cart for accessibility for after hours.
- y. Parking: Cars are to be parked only in parking lot. All other areas are designated as fire lanes.
- z. Loading and unloading trailers will be in No Man's Land.
- aa. Smoking: Absolutely no smoking (except in designated area).
- bb. Alcohol is not allowed on stable grounds.
- cc. Noncompliance of an owner's responsibility will subject the owner to the following:
 - 1) First Offense: verbal warning issued to the owner by manager.
 - 2) Second Offense: Written warning and inquiry/investigation could result in loss of privileges, including removal from stables.
 - 3) Third Offense: Removal from stables.

8. USE OF THE ROUND PEN:

- a. The round pen and riding arena may be used by all private horse owners of the stables and by personnel of the riding stables for the accomplishment of their duties.
- b. There is a 30-minute time limit on all users, when someone is waiting to use the round pen.
- c. The round pen and riding arena are not to be used as turn out pens. Horses will not be left unattended in either area.
- d. At no time will jumping be allowed in the round pen. Only saddle training will be permitted.

9. USE OF TURN OUT AREAS:

- a. Use of turn out areas numbered one, two, three, and four will be scheduled by stable manager and posted in barn on the message board.

- b. Number of horses on the property is followed by the general guidelines of one horse per three acres of pasture or per management discretion.
 - c. Horses will not be fed grain in these pastures.
 - d. Owners will be responsible for horses left out overnight should they become injured in any turn out areas.
 - e. Owners will not ride horses in the pastures, holding pens and line area.
10. SERVICES AVAILABLE: A boarded horse at the stables is afforded the following services:
- a. Stall, feed tub, hayrack, and water spigot (buckets are not to be hung on water spigot). Services limited to only Full or Training boarded horses.
 - b. Turn out areas (described above)
 - c. Lighted Arena, round pen, and holding area.
 - d. Tack storage lockers (limited number). Manager will assign lockers.
 - e. Hay and feed storage: Hay and feed storage is at a minimum due to lack of suitable space. All accommodations will be handled by the stable manager.
 - f. Trailer parking area, which is located by the front gate.
 - g. Hilltop Riding trails
 - h. Owner saddle area located at the back of the barn.
 - i. Owner wash rack located at the back of the barn.
11. UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR: No person shall publicly use obscene or otherwise socially unacceptable language or gestures. No person shall engage in fighting, gambling, or other physical acts that violate regulations.
- a. No person will interfere with work or programming of the stable or staff at HTRS.
12. DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY: No person shall willfully deface or discard HTRS property or privately owned property.

13. **REGULATORY SIGNS, INSTRUCTION AND MARKERS:** All persons will observe and comply with all regulatory signs, instructions, and markers.
14. **PICNIC AREA:** The picnic area may be used for BBQ's or picnics; however, the user is responsible for the cleaning up of areas and grill and restoring the area and equipment to previous arrangement and condition. Failure to clean up and straighten areas may result in a clean-up fee of \$50.00.
15. Guests are the responsibility of the boarder.
16. Boarders and their guest will not handle or feed MWR horses.
17. **USING HTRS FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES:** No person may use the HTRS facilities for commercial purposes or for private gain without proper permits or contracts. This includes, but is not limited to instruction, training, feed, stable services, leasing and sales of any kind.
18. **FOLLOWING RULES AND REGULATIONS:** All patrons are required to abide by all rules and regulations stated in the HTRS SOPs, established post regulations, and GA law.
19. **MOUNTS (HORSES/PONIES):**
 - a. Mounts maintained at the HTRS facility will be owned by authorized patrons.
 - b. Only mares and gelded horses or ponies will be maintained at the HTRS facility. Colts will be gelded as soon as their physical "development" permits, or they start becoming a problem. If the colt cannot successfully be gelded prior to 12 months of age, it must be removed from the HTRS facility.
 - c. Mare and Foals: Foals must be moved to a separate stall by three months of age (space available).
 - d. A mount which has proven itself to be unruly, has caused injury or excessive damage to property, or because its behavior is not compatible for retention at HTRS facilities due to possible damage to patrons and/or property, will be removed from HTRS at the direction of the Chief of Recreation Division. A minimum of one verbal and one written warning will be provided to the patron who has the unruly horse.
 - e. No one will feed a mount belonging to another patron without their written permission presented to the HTRS office.

- f. Owners having a second party training or exercising their mounts at HTRS will notify the management. A Hold Harmless Agreement will be signed and an exercise notice from will be on file at the office.
- g. Mounts that will be absent from HTRS for breeding, shows, training, etc., will be reported in writing to HTRS management at least 24 hours before the mount will be absent.
- h. In the event of owners going on leave, hospital stays, etc. a power of attorney may be obtained from the SJA office on post. It will be filed at the HTRS office prior to departure.
- i. If a mount must be put down or dies, the patron will be responsible for reimbursing MWR for labor and equipment required to dispose of the remains. Cost will be approximately \$300.00 and must be paid before MWR is contracted to bring the equipment and personnel to dispose of the remains. If possible, arrangements are to be completed between the hours of 0700-1700 Monday-Friday. In emergencies, on weekends, holidays, and after duty hours, cost will be considerably higher than the proposed \$300.00. Contact the office at 706-791-4864 or the emergency contact person posted on the office door.

20. SAFETY:

- a. Horses will be always walked within the stable area, except in exercise and show arenas and designated jump and training areas. For the purpose of this, the stable area includes all paddocks, roadways, except where such area may extend into a designated training or off-limits area.
- b. It is mandatory that riders under 18 years of age to wear protective headgear secured by a chin strap harness, when in the mounting area, riding and round pen.
- c. Horses will not be exercised inside a stall or pasture.
- d. Horses will not be turned loose in the stable area or in any open area. When leading, tying out, or grazing a horse, a halter and lead rope will be used at all times.
- e. Owners may use boarder tack area. Stable tack and line areas are prohibited.
- f. Owners may tie in the side walkway while picking their stall or to pick-up from storage (10-minute limit).

21. FIRE PREVENTION:

- a. No person will be permitted to smoke inside a stall, barn, tool room, or any other area posted as a NO SMOKING area.
 - b. Gasoline or other combustible materials must be stored in designated storage.
 - c. Combustible material will not be stored outside of provided paint lockers at HTRS.
 - d. Patrons are required to report all safety hazards. No patron shall cause or allow an exposed electrical wire of any kind to rest against a wooden or metal portion of a structure. If a patron observes such a condition, they will make an immediate report to HTRS management.
 - e. No combustible paint, oily rags, discarded paper or trash, or other potentially dangerous materials will be stored or allowed to collect in tack rooms, feed rooms, stalls or pastures.
 - f. Fire extinguisher will be in designated areas or as required by Post Fire Marshal.
 - g. Hay droppings in front of stalls must be removed.
 - h. There will be no zappers.
 - i. Heat lamps are prohibited.
 - j. Hot plates, coffeepots, and other electrical appliances that produce heat are prohibited inside tack rooms.
22. Point of contact for this SOP: Melissa Rocker-Jacobs, HTRS Facility Manager, 706-791-4864, Melissa.a.rocker-jacobs.naf@army.mil
23. REFERENCES: AR 215-1: 5-11, 7-1, Garrison Commanders Policy Memorandum NO. 25 – Mandatory Microchipping, 01-25-2010.
24. REFERENCES: Does my horse need a blanket? www.atlantaequine.com
25. REFERENCES: When to Blanket Your Horse www.sstack.com
26. REFERENCES: How Your Horst Stays Warm www.aqha.com

Larry W. Coggins
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