

Georgia Department of Agriculture

Equine Health Section



Impound Facility Volunteer Manual

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Georgia Department of Agriculture

Capitol Square • Atlanta, Georgia 30334-4201

Gary W. Black
Commissioner

Dear Potential Impound Volunteer:

I would like to thank you for interest in becoming a volunteer for our equine impound program. We are fortunate to have a law in Georgia that requires humane care and treatment for all equine. While many of the Department's cases are resolved without requiring impoundment, it is disheartening that the number of equine impounded has risen in the last few years.

As you may or may not be aware, the impound program operates without the benefit of state appropriated funds and must rely on monies received from the sale of impounded horses and charitable donations. The meager sale prices combined with the increasing cost of providing appropriate care is an economic challenge for our Department.

I certainly appreciate your offer to become a part of our team in caring for our impounded equine. I commend you for wanting to give such a valuable contribution as your time to these animals in need.

Again, we appreciate your support and look forward to our combined efforts in looking out for the best interests of the equine in our care. If I may ever be of assistance to you, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Gary W. Black

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE CONTACT INFORMATION*

- Venessa Sims-Green, Director, Animal Protection and Equine Health -
Animal Protection Office (404)-656-4914
Equine Health Office (404) 656-3713
Verizon (404) 535-2677
- Robert M. Cobb, Jr., DVM, Asst. State Veterinarian - Office (404) 656-3667
Verizon (404) 273-7594
- Mark Thompson, Barn Manager, DeKalb County - Verizon (404) 210-8842
- Mark Thompson, Barn Manager, Jasper County - Verizon (404) 210-8842
- Corey Cravey, Site Supervisor, Pulaski Women's Prison - Verizon (229) 977-3696

**Please note that these numbers are NOT to be distributed to any other persons*

GENERAL PROVISIONS:

- “Regular Volunteers” are individuals that are responsible for daily feeding and cleaning. “Regular Volunteers” must be on the schedule for a minimum of once a week.
- “Occasional Volunteers” are those individuals that are available for special projects or “workdays.” “Occasional Volunteers” may be requested by the Department to assist with feeding and cleaning.
- Any person interested in volunteering as a regular or occasional volunteer must submit a completed volunteer application to the Equine Health Section office.
- The application will be approved by the Equine Director. Once the application is approved the Barn Manager will meet with the prospective volunteer to review the policies, determine the ability of the volunteer to engage safely in volunteer activities and determine the ability to safely manage the animals.
- Only approved volunteers and state employees are allowed access into the Impound Facilities. Volunteers are not to bring unapproved individuals with them including friends or family.
- All approved volunteers must sign a “liability waiver” and “volunteer statement.”
- All non-emergency questions or concerns should be made through contact with the Director or a Manager in the Georgia Department of Agriculture (GDA), Atlanta office. In the case of an emergency at the Impound Facilities, contact the Barn Manager immediately.
- **All information regarding the horses at either Impound is confidential and is not to be discussed outside of the Impound Facility.** Impounded horses are involved in legal investigations and information about their case must be released through proper channels by Department officials only. Any information, although seemingly trivial, discussed outside of the Impound could be detrimental to the investigation and final outcome of the case.
- **No files or case documents are to be taken from the Impound Facility by a Volunteer for any reason.**
- **No pictures are to be taken at the Impound Facility without expressed permission from the Barn Manager.** No pictures are to be distributed to outside sources at any time unless provided by a Senior GDA Staff Member.
- No dogs, horses, or personal pets of any kind are allowed at either Impound Facility. Stray animals on the property should be reported to the Barn Manager.
- Front gates are to be closed at all times.
- Telephones are available at both impounds. However, they are not meant for personal use. No long distance or directory assistance calls (except in an emergency) are permissible. Barn managers must be notified of these calls! *69 calls are not acceptable.
- GDA staff is responsible for ordering the feed, supplies, and equipment. Please notify GDA Staff when supplies are getting low.

VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES:

All volunteers must sign in and out as well as describe the duties performed for the workday at the barn per established protocol. The safety of personnel and horses is a priority!

Volunteer responsibilities are limited to the following:

- Feeding
- Watering
- Cleaning
- Medicating and treating only upon request by the Barn Manager
- Grooming (limited to currying and brushing) specific horses. The Barn Manager will provide a list of horses that can be groomed.
- Bathing only with the assistance of the Barn Manager or an inspector. Must be pre-approved by the Barn Manager. All bathing is to be done outside and the horse is not to be tied.
- Riding will only be done by those pre-approved by Barn Manager/Sale Manager to do so; this includes leaning over a horse's back.
- Lunging will only be done by those pre-approved by Barn Manager/Sale Manager to do so.

Volunteers are not to do any of the following:

- Clipping (either with clippers or scissors)
- Pulling or cutting of manes and tails
- Tie any horse to any object
- Halter breaking
- Remove or place halters on horses (unless instructed by GDA staff)
- Picking up or oiling feet (unless instructed by GDA staff)
- Mow or operate any equipment (unless authorized)

EQUINE CARE

WATER:

- Five gallon buckets are to be used in the stalls (2 buckets may be used if necessary). Muck buckets are to be used for water in the paddocks. Five gallon and muck buckets must be dumped and cleaned at least once daily.
- Water troughs are to be used for water in the pastures and should be dumped and scrubbed with bleach every Monday and Thursday or more if needed. Do not fill troughs more than half full (due to difficulty in emptying).
- If horses are permanently removed from stalls or paddocks, the buckets should be scrubbed with bleach and placed in storage.
- If horses are permanently removed from the pastures, the troughs should be scrubbed with bleach and tipped upside down.

FEEDING:

- Volunteers should arrive to feed between 7:30 a.m. - 8:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. This feeding schedule must be strictly adhered to.
- All diets will be assigned by the Barn Manager when horses first arrive at the Impound Facility. This diet will vary based on the needs of the individual animal.
- All feeding schedules and diets are to be followed by the letter. Changes are to be made only by the Barn Manager or the Associate State Veterinarian. No carrots, apples, or other treats are to be fed to any impounded horse at any time.
- Feed buckets should be washed out as necessary and scrubbed with bleach prior to being used by a different horse.
- **Do Not** attempt to feed or water any animal that appears to be sick. Contact the Barn Manager immediately.
- If a horse does not finish their grain, contact the Barn Manager.

HAY:

- Feed hay prior to feeding grain. It is not necessary to wait until they finish eating their hay in order to feed the grain. This not only keeps them occupied while grain is being prepared, but also helps prevent them from bolting their grain.
- Feed hay as directed – do not over feed. The hay being fed at both Impound Facilities will typically be feeding a Coastal Bermuda.
- Do not feed moldy, wet, or discolored hay – if there is any doubt, do not feed it. If any is found, please report it to the Barn Manager.

GRAIN:

- Do not put new grain on top of old grain in the storage containers. Allow each container to get down to the bottom then cycle the old grain on top of the new grain.
- Grain is to be fed only as directed. Even the smallest deviation from the diet or schedule can mean a sick or even dead horse!

CLEANING:

Stalls and paddocks

- Stalls and paddocks are to be cleaned twice daily.
- Old hay left in a paddock or pasture from the previous day or week should be cleaned out and disposed of.
- Manure piles in pastures near gates should be removed twice daily.
- When dumping manure, please pile as high as possible.

Feed Room / Aisle / Loft

- Sweep feed room daily.
- Remove empty feed bags and garbage frequently.
- Do not leave personal garbage at the Impound Facility.
- Sweep or rake aisle daily.
- Keep aisle clear of buckets, tools, and debris. They should be returned to storage after use.
- Sweep hay loft as needed. Do not feed sweepings – take them to the manure pile.

BIOSECURITY:

ALWAYS follow biosecurity protocols as directed by the Barn Manager, an attending veterinarian, the Associate State Veterinarian, or the Equine Director.

MEDICATIONS, VETERINARY TREATMENT AND FARRIER CARE:

- Medications and treatments will typically be handled by the Barn Manager. Do not attempt to treat or medicate any horse unless you have been instructed to do so by the Barn Manager.
- Any treatments, medications, injuries, illnesses are to be documented on the horse's health record by Department personnel. Volunteers that have been instructed to medicate are to document the medication and time on a treatment chart that will be provided at the barn.
- Regular veterinary and farrier care will be scheduled by the Barn Manager.
- In the event of an injury or illness, contact the Barn Manager immediately. If the Barn Manager is unavailable, contact the Associate State Veterinarian.

IMPOUNDMENT PROCESS:

- Barn Managers should be notified within 24 hours prior to arrival of any new incoming animals coming to the barn to determine which facility they should go to based upon sex, health, condition or behavior.
- In accordance with the Humane Care for Equines Act, impounded horses will either be returned to the owner under stringent conditions, or advertised and offered for sale at public auction. Volunteers may bid on these horses at the auction.
- Horses may be viewed only at designated times and are sold "as is." Information regarding the horses can only be given out by Department personnel.

MANSFIELD IMPOUND: SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

- The lawn mower and cart may be used to transport grain and hay to the pastures.
- No vehicles, including trucks, tractors, and mowers, should be driven into the pastures or paddock areas unless authorized by the Barn Manager.
- Use of the tractor will be limited to assigned individuals at specified times. No one should operate any type of machinery if they are alone at the barn, with the exception of small equipment for feeding purposes only.

**CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT AND VOLUNTEER MANUAL
TERMS & CONDITIONS AGREEMENT**

I agree that I fully understand the following conditions as it relates to confidentiality:

- Facility without express permission from the Barn Manager. No pictures are to be distributed to outside sources at any time unless provided by GDA Full Time Any information regarding the horses at GDA Impound Facilities is not to be discussed outside of the Impound Facilities. Impounded horses are involved in legal investigations and information about their case must be released through proper channels by Department officials only. Any information, although seemingly trivial, discussed outside of the Impound could be detrimental to the investigation and final outcome for the case. Furthermore, any information discussed or forwarded outside proper channels can be grounds for termination as a volunteer. Furthermore, no information about any case, even those cases that are closed, should be distributed to anyone outside GDA.
- No files or case documents are to be taken from the Impound Facility by a Volunteer for any reason.
- No pictures are to be taken at the Impound Facility without express permission from the Barn Manager. No pictures are to be distributed to outside sources at any time unless provided by GDA Full Time Senior Staff Member(s).

I agree that I have received a copy of the *Impound Facility Volunteer Manual* and agree to Abide by All provisions set out in said Manual.

Printed Name

Date

Signature

Original to Equine Office File and Copy to Volunteer