

# DREAM CATCHER STABLES, INC.

A Not for Profit Texas Corporation  
Established August 23, 1999

IRS Public Charity  
501(c)(3) under 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(1)(A)(vi)

## POLICIES and PROCEDURES MANUAL Abridged Edition

Revised EDITION

April 2025

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### Our Mission Statement

To provide a place in perpetuity where people with disabilities can be successful, equal, and capable, growing to their maximum life's potential through interaction with horses in a positive environment.

We accomplish our mission by providing recreational, educational, and sport programming, including vocational/prevocational opportunities, to youth at risk and persons with disabilities. Individuals are accepted without regard to race, religion, ethnicity, or socioeconomic background. Our funding comes from individuals, corporations, and foundations.

Dream Catcher Stables, Inc.  
P.O. Box 1454, Spring, TX 77383-1454  
Phone: 281-216-3494  
Website: <http://dreamcatcherstables.org>



## Our Logo

Description: A dream catcher with eight connecting points representative of the eight legs of a spider. The center is a copyrighted pen and ink drawing "MouseHorse" by Kerry David. Three rawhide streamers embellished with a word duplicated on each side of the streamer to represent feathers. The words are Where Dreams Begin. The copyright is held by Sanna Roling.

The mouse is taken from the Native American tale "Warrior Mouse" and the horse is patterned after the horse in Man of La Mancha. Warrior Mouse saved a Hopi village (whose chief monetary system was barter trade using chickens) from the devastation of a chicken hawk. Kerry is a renowned Kachina carver and family friend who does not draw horses well. Sanna explained that a horse in the style of the horse in Man of La Mancha but not so skinny was just what she wanted. The pen and ink drawing was offered as a logo for Sanna's charity and was chosen at the Dream Catcher Stables Inc formational meeting. In keeping with native American tradition, the three strings of rawhide were used as it is not possible to locate proper pictures of traditional dream catcher feathers. Initially the name of the organization was chosen as Dream Catcher Stables – Where Dreams Begin. The Inc was added and the name shortened to Dream Catcher Stables for incorporation purposes. The words Where Dreams Begin were kept and duplicated on the rawhide strings to create the illusion of feathers.

The Mouse represents our people with disabilities who, given a real chance can do great things. The horse was purposely drawn to represent any and all breeds as therapeutic riding horses come in all shapes and sizes, colors, and breeds. What is most important is their temperament and willingness to help. The web of the spider represents the web of life. The dream catcher itself allows the good dreams to be cherished and the bad dreams to be lost.

In 2023 our Board of Directors requested an updated logo replacing the mouse as some people have a fear - even phobia - of mice. The center of our updated logo



Updated Logo  
Became official  
August 23, 2024

is a silhouette of Kim Springer on Ima Lil Doc Bar. The actual picture was taken during Top Hands Horse Show 2017. Kim was a participant in the organizational meeting establishing Dream Catcher Stables Inc. She suggested the name "Where Dreams Begin" and in the final vote the group unanimously approved "Dream Catcher Stables -Where Dreams Begin" as our name. Shortened to Dream Catcher Stables Inc for incorporation purposes we have used the Where Dreams Begin to artistically create the feathers in the actual Dream Catcher. The spirit, sportsmanship, and community participation that Kim has always displayed as well as her equestrian capability are the reasons she will always be a visible part of Dream Catcher Stables Inc.

# Welcome to Dream Catcher Stables, Inc

Dear Volunteer, Athlete, Family, Staff Member, Donor:

We're very happy to welcome you to Dream Catcher Stables. Thank you for joining us! We want you to feel that your association with Dream Catcher Stables will be a mutually beneficial and pleasant one. You have joined an organization that has established an outstanding reputation for quality services. Credit for this goes to every one of our staff (volunteer or paid). We hope you, too, will find satisfaction and take pride in your work here.

The policies and procedures in this manual define

- 1) the manner in which we at Dream Catcher Stables conduct our business,
- 2) our responsibilities to you, and
- 3) your responsibilities to Dream Catcher Stables.

From time to time, the information included in our Policies and Procedures Manual will change. Every effort will be made to keep you informed through various lines of communication, including posting on the bulletin boards and/or notices sent directly to you.

Whatever your reasons for joining us, we hope you count personal satisfaction gained from working with horses and helping someone with challenges among your reasons for participating. Upon completion of reading this manual your signature affixed to the front page of our site copy assures us that you have read and intend to follow these policies and procedures.

Dream Catcher Stables is committed to doing its part to assure you of a satisfying experience. I extend to you my personal welcome and best wishes for your success and happiness at Dream Catcher Stables.

Sincerely,

*Sanna Roling*

Sanna Roling, President

# What is Dream Catcher Stables?

Chartered August 23, 1999 as a not-for-profit corporation in the State of Texas and designated as a public charity under the Internal Revenue Code of the United States of America we operate in the recreation, education, sport sector of the therapeutic riding industry.

OUR FOUNDERS BELIEVE that PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES CAN DO but sometimes learn differently.

The horse establishes a non-judgmental relationship with the rider. Compensating for the disability, the horse allows a person with disabilities to be equal to a person without disabilities. Dream Catcher Stables Inc provides an educational approach to horsemanship. Classes in theory and horseback riding encourage the student to:

- Remain in school
- Improve behavior
- Increase self-esteem
- Excel in academics
- Work toward pre-vocational and vocational goals
- Train and compete in Special Olympics, International Riding for the Disabled, and other venues

Location: On Bush Intercontinental Airport Property known as 20907 Birnamwood Blvd, Humble, TX 77338

## Standards of Conduct

Whenever people gather together to achieve goals, some rules of conduct are needed to help everyone work together efficiently, effectively, and harmoniously. At Dream Catcher Stables Inc, we hold ourselves to a high standard of quality where the rules and authority figures simply assure that quality is maintained. By joining our organization, you have a responsibility to yourself and your fellow staff members (volunteer and paid) to adhere to certain rules of behavior and conduct. The purpose of these rules is not to restrict your rights, but rather to be certain that you understand what conduct is expected and necessary. The ability to depend upon fellow workers to follow the rules of conduct ensures that the organization is a better place to work for everyone.

# General Policies

## Discrimination

NO ONE will be discriminated against based on RACE, RELIGION, SEX, ETHNICITY, OR SOCIOECONOMIC BACKGROUND.

WE ARE COMMITTED TO PROVIDING AN INTEGRATED PROGRAM WHERE OUR EQUESTRIANS CAN UNDERSTAND AND BE UNDERSTOOD BY PEOPLE OF ALL ABILITIES

ADA – The Americans with disabilities Act (ADA) has two subsets: facility accessibility and accommodations for people wishing to work.

By charter our organization exists exclusively for the disabled and at-risk populations. We reserve the right to require a physician's recommendation for entrance into our horsemanship program for persons whose disability(ies) are identified in the PATH Intl standards and guidelines or by the American Medical Equestrian Association (AMEA) as having precautions or contraindications.

Volunteer and staff opportunities are available to ALL persons who demonstrate the capability to carry out the duties of that position.

Dream Catcher Stables makes every effort to have all areas of the facility accessible to persons in wheelchairs and on crutches as well as persons with able bodies.

## Confidentiality

Important information about personal lives is entrusted to Dream Catcher Stables Inc. Safeguarding this information earns the respect and further trust of our equestrians, families, and agencies. Certain information is position specific. As a volunteer or paid staff member of our program you assume an obligation to maintain that confidentiality even after you leave our program. Therefore RECORDS are NOT to be removed or copied without prior management approval. Records will be maintained in the most secure manner possible. Failure to follow this policy could lead to separation from our organization.

#### Harassment

Harassment of any sort- verbal, physical, visual – will not be tolerated. Report incidents immediately to a superior or other management representative. Appropriate action will be taken and no adverse retaliatory action will be tolerated for good faith reporting.

#### Who do we serve

Persons with disabilities who are at least 5 years of age and reside in the greater Houston area especially Northern Harris County; Aldine, Spring, Humble, and surrounding ISDs, Montgomery and Galveston counties.

#### Suggestions are encouraged

Please put them in writing and submit to our President for further investigation and possible implementation.

#### Parking

With the exception of the Van accessible handicapped space(s) is on a first come first served bases. Please be responsible and considerate of others.

## SAFETY RULES

We are located on property belonging to the City of Houston and Bush Intercontinental Airport. For everyone's safety and security we adhere to City of Houston and Airport rules.

#### Smoke Free Facility

A number of our athletes, volunteers, and families are adversely affected by smoke. Also the potential for fire around hay and stall bedding is high. To prevent tragedy please do NOT smoke on our property. No smoking signs are posted in areas of greatest risk.

Alcohol, drugs, and firearms are NOT permitted by our lease:

Please do not create a situation where we must remove you from our facility permanently.

#### DOG Policy:

K-9 and Service dogs with proper identification are welcome at Dream Catcher Stables. Without proper identification two questions will be used to determine entry onto premises.

- 1) Is the dog a service animal required because of a disability?
  - 2) What work or task has the dog been trained to perform?
- All other dogs and family pets should remain at home for liability reasons.

#### Restricted Areas

These will be posted and are designated as such for the safety of all concerned. Persons entering restricted areas without proper authority will be asked to leave the area immediately and may be subject to other penalties.

#### Spokesperson/Media Information

The Board of Directors has designated the spokesperson(s) for Dream Catcher Stables Inc. Only those designated may speak to the media on behalf of the organization or submit a press release. All others are asked to refer any media person to our President.

#### Visitors

Welcome during program hours or by appointment with our President, visitors are expected to follow all of our safety rules and procedures as well.

## Safety and Security Checks

Dream Catcher Stables, Inc may, without prejudice, exercise its right to inspect all packages and parcels entering and leaving our premises.

## WARNING

UNDER TEXAS LAW (CHAPTER 87, CIVIL PRACTICE AND REMEDIES CODE), A FARM ANIMAL PROFESSIONAL IS NOT LIABLE FOR AN INJURY TO OR THE DEATH OF A PARTICIPANT IN FARM ANIMAL ACTIVITIES RESULTING FROM THE INHERENT RISKS OF FARM ANIMAL ACTIVITIES.

## Essential General Procedures & Practices

The facilities have been designed with safety a priority. Help us achieve that safety by minimizing incidents adhering to the following

- If you open a door/gate close it

- If you turn on a light/turn it out when you finish.
- If you turn on the water, turn it off
- Last person out checks stall doors, paddock and arena gates, turns out/off everything, locks facility doors and gates.
- Sign in and sign out.
- Put it away right the first time and every time.
- Keep the records up to date by doing your part in a timely manner.
- Report all problems or incidents no matter how minor IMMEDIATELY.
- Cleanliness and neatness will help prevent accidents, fires, and entrance of vermin.
- Designation of Horse and Human First Aid Provider is made at beginning of each activity (lesson, event, tour, work group, etc.) by Instructor/Person in charge based on the individuals present. Person with highest level of First Aid Training is Human First Aid Provider.

## Personal Safety

HELMETS ARE MANDATORY FOR ALL MOUNTED WORK – ATHLETE, VOLUNTEER, STAFF, AND INSTRUCTOR

It is always preferable that a minimum of TWO persons be present when working with horses. Realizing that some chores will be carried out by unpaid/paid staff working alone, please follow these rules

- Log in to the appropriate register(s) EVERY TIME you enter or leave our facility.
- Equestrians must follow instructions for getting helmets, reins, and mounting as well as waiting in a safe area prior to mounting.
- Facility chores may be supervised by a volunteer(s) whose knowledge is sufficient to provide a safe environment for the person completing the chores.
- Unmounted work ratio of staff to equestrians is 1 staff to 4 persons actually doing the work.
- Mounted work must be supervised by an instructor with an additional staff to equestrian ratio of 3/1 to ¼ dependent on rider capabilities. No instructor may supervise more than six equestrians at one time providing the ¼ ratio is also met.

# Daily Standard Operating Procedures Check List

Care of horses, maintenance of facility, and program are conducted during daylight hours. NO ONE is approved to be on our property between dusk and dawn without express approval of our President or Facility Manager. UNAUTHORIZED entry or trespass will be dealt with accordingly.

- Checked horses
- Fed horses
- Watered horses
- Turned off water
- Completed program if applicable
- Locked Feed, Tack, and Tool Containers
- Turned horses out
- Closed and latched pasture gate
- Locked property gate

## Eligibility Guidelines

Everyone MUST execute Registration, Liability Release, and Emergency medical forms.

### Equestrian/Athlete

Must be at least 5 years old, have a disability, and have a Dream Catcher Stables Medical form completed and signed by a doctor in addition to Registration, Liability Release, and Emergency medical forms.

### Volunteers

Are accepted at the age of 14 or older. Under that age, on a case by case basis volunteers may be welcomed with their parent(s). Those 18 years of age or older also must complete the Consent for Criminal Background Check in addition to Registration, Liability Release, and Emergency medical forms.

## Acceptance Procedure

Upon review of the completed forms the Equestrian or Volunteer is accepted into our program. Volunteers will be required to read and sign off on the Policies and Procedures. Athlete families will be given instructions to request lesson times, attire, etc and to sign that they have received same.

Volunteers are welcome in the following capacities:

- Program
- Facility
- Fundraising
- Administration

## Your Actions are Important

Leave a good impression with everyone

- Act competently and deal with equestrians in a courteous and respectful manner.
- Communicate pleasantly and respectfully with other volunteers and staff at all times.
- Follow up on orders and questions promptly.
- Provide businesslike replies to inquiries and requests.
- Perform all duties in an orderly manner.
- Take great pride in your work and enjoy doing your very best.
- Be on time, or ahead of time. Timeliness sends a very positive message to everyone.

Volunteers have the right to determine their work schedule (day of week, time of day, and total number of hours) based on program needs.

KEY Volunteers – Secretary, Treasurer, Vice President, President, and Facility Manager and Chairman of various committees - are expected to reply to phone calls, texts, or emails in a prudent manner (preferably within one hour of receipt and no later than 24 hours after receipt). Failure to do so destroys trust and infers lack of respect for the person contacting and the organization as a whole. Ethics and transparency are keys to our long-term success.

# Non-Compete Agreement

It is not our intention to prevent our volunteers from working with other programs in the therapeutic riding field. However, in exchange for the training and expertise provided our staff (volunteer or paid) at Dream Catcher Stables Inc we expect that the information gained will not be used to establish a program or entity in direct competition with our charity.

## PROGRAM INFORMATION

### Dress Code/Attire

Jeans, boots, and a western shirt are always appropriate. During the heat of summer, walking/Bermuda shorts and short-sleeved t- or polo shirts are highly recommended. As a side-walker, horse handler, you are walking a lot. Tennis shoes or other comfortable closed toed shoes are permitted. Sandals and thongs are not appropriate around the horses as they offer no protection in the event a horse missteps.

WHEN MOUNTED EVERYONE IS REQUIRED TO WEAR A PROPERLY FITTED EQUESTRIAN SAFETY HELMET – NO EXCEPTIONS!!!!!!!!!!

## WARNING

UNDER TEXAS LAW (CHAPTER 87, CIVIL PRACTICE AND REMEDIES CODE), A FARM ANIMAL PROFESSIONAL IS NOT LIABLE FOR AN INJURY TO OR THE DEATH OF A PARTICIPANT IN FARM ANIMAL ACTIVITIES RESULTING FROM THE INHERENT RISKS OF FARM ANIMAL ACTIVITIES.

## Positions Requirements and Responsibilities

Criteria for all positions are the following:

- Capabilities of the position
- Desire to do that position
- Pass Reference/Criminal Background Check
- Probationary period of 10 hours or two program days

- Recommendation of supervisor (or at least 2 regular coworkers) and self
- Appointment by Program Director

### Instructor

Instructs one to four riders with disabilities in a single lesson. Supervises the horse handler, side-walkers, and Associate Instructor.

#### Responsibilities:

Maintains and coordinates instruction and safety for the lesson as well as a safe environment for all additional personnel. Communicates responsibilities and lesson directions to Associate Instructor, horse handler, and side-walkers. Communicates with family members and athlete.

#### Requirements:

Preferably certified by CHA Standard or IRD. PATH Intl and/or Special Olympics Coach and Educator certifications welcome too.

At least age 18, preferably 21 or over. Capable of teaching Western and English equitation preferred.

### Associate Instructor

May teach an individual equestrian under the supervision of an Instructor. May teach one or more theory packets.

#### Responsibilities:

Follow the lesson plan and directions of the Instructor. Provide a safe and pleasant lesson for the rider. Completes session notes as appropriate.

#### Requirements:

Able to re-teach lessons on control and position at the level of the rider. Recognize and correct basic position including leg, hand and rein position. Willing to take direction and learn from the Instructor. Recognizes and enforces safety. Recognizes positive and negative horse behavior and acts as appropriate to reward or correct.

### Therapist

Sets all medical goals, conducts the lesson with the instructor.

Responsibilities:

With the instructor, creates lesson plans. Communicates with equestrian and family. Completes paperwork and bills as appropriate.

Requirements:

Certification in specific therapy. Willingness to communicate with Instructor and Program Director. Knowledge of safety around horses and willingness to be part of a team.

Horse Handler

Controls the horse while an equestrian is mounting, dismounting, learning and unable to independently control the horse. Takes direction from the instructor and the Side-walker.

Responsibilities:

Provides a safe experience for the rider by controlling the horse and allowing the rider to be as independent as possible.

Requirements:

Capable of controlling a horse using a lead rope attached to the halter. Recognizes horse's actions and reactions a split second before negative movements.

Side Walker

Walks next to a mounted rider. Takes direction and responds to the horse handler and instructor.

Responsibilities:

Is responsible for maintaining that rider's balance in the saddle or, in the event the rider begins to fall, assuring the soft and safe dismount by taking appropriate hold of the rider and, if necessary allowing the rider to fall on top of the side-walker. Alerts horse handler and instructor of situations.

Requirements:

Age 14 or older, able to briefly support the rider should a fall happen, able to take direction and to communicate in an emergency. Able to walk next to a horse.

NOTE: Program volunteers may also from time to time supervise youth completing Adjudicated Community Service (CS). In this capacity they will direct the CS youth to complete tasks set by the Program Director or Facility Director reporting non-compliance or completion to the respective director.

## FACILITY/MAINTENANCE INFORMATION

### Positions Requirements and Responsibilities

Criteria for all positions are the following:

- Capabilities of the position
- Desire to do that position
- Pass Reference/Criminal Background Check
- Current Driver's license
- Ability to operate equipment

#### Facility Manager

Maintain facility, supervise construction and repair. Supervise use and maintenance of all tools by others. Verify ability of Facility Volunteers to operate equipment. Keeps records and provides appropriate documentation and records to Board President and Program Director.

#### Requirements:

Understands proper maintenance of equipment, grounds, and buildings. Able to operate and teach others to operate equipment including but not limited to tractor, hay fork, disc, post hole digger, box blade, brush hog, drag, generator, welder, riding lawn mower.

#### Responsibilities:

Provides for the proper maintenance, construction, and/or acquisition of the facility and equipment needed too maintain facility and support program. Works closely with Program Director. Accountable to Board of Directors

### Facility Volunteer

Mow lawns, build/repair equipment/facility  
Take direction from Facility Manager.

#### Requirements:

Willing to work out of doors, Also may be capable of operating a tractor safely, able to drive a truck and horse trailer, operate a manual or motorized lawn mower and tree trimming equipment.

#### Responsibilities:

Follow directions, complete tasks, document task completion, equipment maintenance, and/or facility repair in proper logs. Notify Facility Manager of any and all equipment malfunctions or damage immediately, then follow up in writing in the appropriate log.

The Facility Manager will verify equipment capabilities of the volunteer.

## FUNDRAISING and ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

### Positions Requirements and Responsibilities

Criteria for all positions are the following:

- Capabilities of the position
- Desire to do that position
- Pass Reference/Criminal Background Check

### Fundraising Director

Willing to plan and raise funds necessary for annual and capital budgets. Supports and disseminates Dream Catcher Stables Inc mission and program.

Requirements: A people person willing to create or utilize current and former contacts to raise funds for annual and capital campaigns. A visionary. Computer, social media, and person to person savvy.

Responsibilities: Review and approve plans, coordinate committees, present fundraising plan to the Board of Directors, verify that proper insurance has been acquired. Coordinates with the President.

#### Fundraising Volunteer

Willing to plan and/or carry out fundraisers – events, person to person campaigns, internet campaigns, etc. to raise funds necessary for annual and capital budgets.

#### Requirements:

A person willing to create or utilize current and former contacts to raise funds for annual and capital campaigns. A visionary. Willing to take direction and report in person and in writing.

#### Responsibilities:

Working as part of a committee, plan, execute, and report on the success of fundraising opportunities. Raise the funds necessary for annual and capital budgets. Reports to and takes direction from the Fundraising Director and President

#### Grant Writer

Research and write grants for Dream Catcher Stables.

#### Requirements:

Able to take no for an answer and go forward, able to write with correct spelling and grammar. Knowledgeable of the program and it's needs.

#### Responsibilities:

In collaboration with the President, Facility Manager and Fundraising Director, researches and writes grants.

#### Office Volunteer

Maintain the restrooms, great room, and office in a clean and safe manner, assist with administrative tasks such as filing, data entry, and/or assist with off-the-horse program, meet and greet visitors, volunteers, and athletes reminding them to sign in as appropriate.

**Requirements:**

Able to follow directions, file, type, and/or clean. Has a desire and ability to focus on attention to detail.

**Responsibilities:**

Clean and restock the restrooms, sweep the great room and assure that all program supplies are returned to their appropriate places after use, check to see that the office is safe and pleasing to a visitor's eye. File or enter data as requested. Interacts with visitors, volunteers, and athletes.