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**MESA COVID-19 Infection Control Plan for Outdoor Lessons**

**All Persons Involved in MESA**

1. No one with signs or symptoms of any communicable disease or sickness should come to the lesson site. Posters will be displayed with signs and symptoms.
2. Instructors will do a verbal health check with riders and volunteers in their sessions at the beginning of every session asking about: signs and symptoms, travel, and exposure. Documentation will be recorded in lesson notes.
3. Upon arrival, everyone will wash their hands at a hand washing station or use hand sanitizer following CDC guidelines.
4. If any person, who comes onto the lesson site, tests positive for COVID 19, they must inform us and the program will be shut down immediately for a minimum of 14 days. Anyone who was on site at the time of possible exposure will be contacted immediately.
5. If any person who comes to the lesson site, is exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 the program will be shut down immediately for 14 days and possibly longer. Anyone who was on site at the time of possible indirect exposure will be contacted immediately.
6. All participants and volunteers will follow the recommended State & County Health guidelines regarding travel and self-quarantine and should follow these guidelines prior to returning to the program.

**Rider Screening**

1. A customized Risk Benefit Assessment will be completed for each rider prior to acceptance into the session program. This assessment will also include a copy of the MESA COVID 19 Infection Control Policies for Indoor and Outdoor sessions. This form will be signed by the family and the MESA Executive Director.

1. If a risk/benefit assessment is performed, and a significant greater risk is determined, particularly with patients with respiratory or immune issues, families may be asked to get an additional doctor release, or an alternate option to riding may be explored.
2. A risk/benefit assessment may indicate specific considerations; this will be a case by case basis.
3. A risk/benefit assessment that the rider would be at greater potential of exposing others, albeit inadvertently, will be performed. For instance, a person who sneezes a lot – the rider would be required to wear a mask.
4. For now, no rider requiring a full time thigh hold will be able to participate in on horse sessions due to close proximity of riders to volunteers for an extended period. The reasoning for this policy is that volunteers would be at an angle in front and below the riders for an extended period of time.
5. Full time knee holds are acceptable. If a rider who does not normally require a thigh hold is having a bad day and is needing a prolonged thigh hold then the rider will be dismounted and the lesson will be discontinued.

**Family/Rider Procedures**

1. Families should bring the minimum number of people needed to care for the rider to help limit the number of people on site.
2. Riders will be required to have their own helmets.
3. Riders will be issued their own clean reins with input from instructors for rein selection. Reins will be placed in the cleaning bucket at the end of the lesson.
4. Families will bring their own chairs. They can bring a simple folding chair - without a bag. MESA reserves the right to refuse a chair due to safety concerned of horses. MESA picnic tables, chairs, and barrels will be removed.
5. Riders will wait in cars until a volunteer/instructor comes to get them at the start of a lesson. Families will be offered a designated area to observe that will be in close proximity to their vehicles. Please do not keep cars running in parking lot.
6. Riders will be dismounted and exited from the arena one at a time.
7. Families will be asked to leave promptly after class to allow for disinfecting and to limit the number of people on site.

**Volunteers**

1. Volunteers will wear face masks the entire time they are near a rider. Volunteers will be encouraged to bring their own masks however a small supply will be available on site.
2. If volunteers want to wear gloves, they can come onsite, wash hands and use gloves that are provided.
3. Volunteers will be trained in proper face mask use, hand washing techniques and signs/symptoms of COVID 19. Training will be documented.
4. All volunteers on arrival will wash hands or used hand sanitizer. Volunteers can bring a simple folding chair- without a bag. MESA reserves the right to refuse a chair due to safety concerned horses.

**Staff**

1. All staff members will use hand sanitizer or wash hands before & after each lesson and after handling used/dirty equipment.
2. Instructors will each have an infection control apron/fanny pack. The apron will contain supplies to mitigate contamination by bodily fluids including properly folded masks, sanitizer, tissues, Ziploc bags (for soiled tissues), and gloves.
   * Gloves will be worn with riders who are drooling, hands in mouth/nose, any other instance where they are considered needed.
   * Aprons to be machine washed daily.
3. Instructors will wear their masks during mounting and whenever within proximity of others, but will remove and store mask according to CDC infection control guidelines when further away for clear communication.
4. Staff have recently been trained in COVID 19 symptoms, Handwashing/ Eye/Face Safety, Personal Protective Equipment use, Blood Born Pathogen, and safe biohazard disposal.
5. Instructors will provide assistance to riders from the side or back as much as possible- avoiding standing directly in front of them as much as able.
6. Instructors have been trained in biohazard procedures.
7. Staff will manage all for proper social distancing- not normal in our environment- so many will need reminders initially.

**Programming**

1. There will be a maximum of 2 riders, 2 horse handlers, 2 sidewalkers and 2 instructors at one time in the arena.
2. Nothing gets attached to saddles.
3. There will be set weekly activities using easily washable objects.
4. Tie up areas will be enlarged. There will be a separate area for clean tack storage. Dirty/used tack will be placed for cleaning immediately after a lesson in a separate area**.**
5. The tack areas will have restricted access for authorized personnel only.

**Horses**

Horses that are used in class will be wiped down with cleaning solution after each rider***.***

**Tack**

*Grooming items*. Staff or trained volunteers will dunk or spray with disinfectant solution following CDC guidelines after use. Will use grooming tools with synthetic handles.

*Reins:*  We will use rope, nylon or cotton reins that can be more easily cleaned.  
Reins will be dipped in a disinfectant solution following CDC guidelines, and then dried. There will be a designated place for dirty tack. All areas will be clearly signposted.

*Saddles:* Saddles will be cleaned between riders.  
There will be a designated clean saddle area and a designated used/dirty saddle area.

*Lead ropes and halters:* Lead ropes and halters will be dipped in cleaning/disinfectant and then hung.

*Western saddle pads*: Will put a baby pad between the saddle and the pad. Baby pad to be placed to be placed forward to protect from rider sneezing on the pad. The baby pads will be used once and laundered.

*English pads:* Will be washed after each use.

*Girths, sidepulls, and other tack & equipment:* Will be cleaned after each use.

MESA will have designated cleaning staff/volunteers who will document when saddles are cleaned. All cleaning will follow CDC guidelines.

**Arena, Trailers, & Facility**

1. Will disinfect gate latches, cross tie snaps, hose ends, door knobs, light switches, ramp rail, and grooming tools twice a day.
2. There will be pedal trash bins provided. Biohazard will be disposed of in a double bag, according to CDC guidelines, and placed in separate trash container.
3. Disinfectants will follow the CDC recommendations.

**Phases of Re-opening of the MESA Lesson Program:**

1. Phase One: Independent riders who only need minimum support with grooming, tacking, mounting and dismounting. These riders also understand and can follow social distancing guidelines and good hygiene practices. All lessons will be individual lessons with no more that two lessons being in progress at one time. Staff members will be the only helpers to the riders at this time.
2. Phase Two: Riders who need only one lead walker and/or one side walker may be admitted to the program. Volunteers who are in the low risk category will be invited to return to lessons to help.
3. Phase Three: The remaining riders will be invited to participate in our lessons as the Risk Assessment conversation accepted by both the parents/guardians of the rider and MESA staff. Riders who have health conditions, or who have family members, that put them in a high-risk category according to the CDC guidelines will be admitted into the program later in the re-opening based on our Sublette County Health Guidelines.

Riders who have difficulty social distancing, practicing personal hygiene, or difficulty understanding and following directions will be admitted later regardless of physical independence.

We will be sensitive to our volunteers who may be older and/or who are also in the vulnerable population (or their family members). If they are at risk of exposure in our program, they will be invited into the lesson program later.

*I acknowledge that I have read this MESA Covid-19 Infection Control Plan and understand that these are required policies & procedures that need to be followed in order to be admitted back into the lesson program as it re-opens in phases based on the safety and well-being of all involved.*

**Participant / Volunteer Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Parent Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Printed Parent /Volunteer Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**MESA Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**MESA Printed Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**