

SERENITY FARM EQUINE SANCTUARY

(501c3 Non-Profit Organization)
Louisa, Virginia 23093
(540) 842-1756



ADOPTION CONTRACT

This agreement is made and entered into between Serenity Farm Equine Sanctuary (SFES) and _____, hereinafter called Adopter.

Animal Description:

Name: _____ Age: ____ Height: ____ Breed: _____
Sex: _____ Weight: _____ Reg. ____ Color: _____

Adopter agrees to the following:

1. Adopted animal will always be treated with kindness, affection and respect. Adopter will abide by all anti-cruelty laws in any state of residence.
2. Adequate and conscientious food, water, shelter, exercise and professional medical, dental and hoof care will be provided according to this animal's needs. This includes and is not limited to yearly vaccinations, hoof care at least every eight weeks or as recommended by the farrier, dental check yearly or as recommended by the veterinarian, and regular de-worming.
3. This animal will not be contained in a box stall. Daily turnout must be provided for any animal in a stall/pen situation.
4. Adopter agrees to keep this animal on his or her own personal property. If other arrangements are necessary, notification and a facility visit by SFES is required.
 - Fencing guidelines do not allow the use of barbed wire on properties or pens less than 10 acres. All fencing must be horse safe and in good repair.
5. **This animal is not to be sold, traded, leased, given away, abandoned or disposed of in any way without prior notification to and approval of SFES. Any individual or organization in possession of the equine as of the date of the agreement and any time thereafter is bound to not sell the equine at auction for slaughter or allow the equine to be sold, transferred, released, or otherwise placed into possession of any person or organization that will cause or allow the equine to be sold at auction for slaughter.** Humane euthanasia shall be employed when this animal is not mobile and a veterinarian is of the opinion that mobility or when this animal is experiencing continual pain for which there is no medical relief or the relief is not within the financial capability of the Adopter; when this animal is affected by a degenerative medical condition for which there is no cure; or if this animal is dangerous to itself or other animals or humans.
6. **This animal is a herd animal and must be provided a companion.**
7. **If this animal is a mare, there is a no breed stipulation attached to ownership.**

8. All information that SFES has on this animal is released to the Adopter. The Adopter understands that SFES is a rescue service and is in no way responsible for the accuracy of information received about temperament, habits, ride-ability, or physical condition of this animal.
9. If at any time this animal is found to be in unsatisfactory condition or not properly cared for, SFES or any of its representatives may enter any property on which this animal is kept and reclaim it immediately.
10. In the event that the Adopter is in breach of this contract, this contract will be considered null and void. SFES will retake possession of this animal and the Adopter agrees to pay any and all attorney fees and court costs.
11. The Adopter agrees to hold SFES, its officers, directors, volunteers, representatives and agents free from all liability to any person(s) or damage to or loss of property, real or personal, caused by any reason whatsoever related to the adopted animal, effective immediately as of the time this contract is signed and forever after.
12. Ownership of this animal will be retained by SFES for a period of six months from the date of adoption. After that time, a facility visit may occur, at the discretion of SFES, before ownership is relinquished to the Adopter.
- 13. This contract is in effect for the life of the horse and will transfer to any new owner.**
14. Upon signing this contract, the Adopter acknowledges that he or she has read, understood and agreed to be bound by the SFES Adoption Contract.
15. This contract is entered into in the Commonwealth of Virginia and will be interpreted and enforced under the laws of this State.

The Adopter's payment in the amount of \$_____ is non-refundable.

This document constitutes the entire agreement between SFES and the Adopter and there are no other agreements between them.

Adopter:_____Date:_____

Driver's License #:_____

Adopter:_____Date:_____

Driver's License #:_____

Address:_____

City:_____State:_____Zip:_____

Adopter(s) Signatures:

SFES Representative:  Date:_____

SERENITY FARM EQUINE SANCTUARY



Adoption Contract

The adoption contract allows Serenity Farm Equine Sanctuary to track each horse's progress for a year. Adopters are required to send in three photo and written updates, which are forwarded to the donor of each horse. In the event a horse is determined by the adopter to be unsuitable within sixty days following the receipt of physical possession of the horse, the adopter may return the horse to Serenity Farm Equine Sanctuary in exchange for a credit equal to the adoption fee. The adopter is responsible for providing transportation for the horse to return to the program.

Serenity Farm wants every adoption to be successful and forever, however, if the Serenity Farm Equine Rescues retains the right to retake possession of the adopted ours without granting a credit to the adopter in this event the adopter will be responsible for any recovery expenses.

Please fill out and sign the adoption contract and either email or fax the contract to the Serenity Farm Equine Sanctuary. Conformation of receipt for both the adoption contract and adoption fee must be made before the adopter can pick up the horse or before SFES will transport (if applicable). A copy of the adoption contract will be signed by a SFES Director and will be included in the go-home packet which will be sent with the horse.



Boarding Agreement

If the horse will be kept at a boarding facility, the owner of that facility will need to fill out and sign the boarding agreement. Please send the agreement along with the adoption contract.

Return Policy

If an adopted horse is no longer wanted by the adopter and it is beyond the sixty day trial but before twelve months from adoption Serenity Farm Equine Sanctuary must be contacted. Serenity Farm Equine Sanctuary will help assist in finding the horse a new home or the horse may return to the facility it was adopted from once space is available.

Third Party Bill of Sale

After twelve months from the adoption date and adopter may sell the horse to a third party but must send a Bill of Sale to Serenity Farm Equine Sanctuary. This form will help ensure that the third party is aware that the horse shall not be placed in training as a racehorse, entered in a race, offered for sale at public auction or used as a means of transportation on any public roadway. It also makes them aware that Serenity Farm Equine Sanctuary is available to help if the horse is ever in need of a home in the future.



Serenity Adoption Policy:

Serenity Farm Equine Sanctuary's primary **responsibility** is to ensure that our equine eligible for adoption are placed into a safe, forever-home with the means and the infrastructure to support them. Below is a description of the minimum requirements that we expect from our potential adopters. Serenity Farm Equine Sanctuary (SFES) reserves the right to deny adoption of any horse for any reason.

Financial Ability: Adopter is financially capable of caring for the horse. The adopter must assert on the application that they are financially capable of providing for the horse including the items listed below.

Shelter: Adoptee must provide the horse with adequate shelter in order for the horse to be protected from the elements. At minimum the shelter must be a three-sided structure in good repair. A tarp, carport or trees is not considered adequate.)

Fencing: Safe, secure fencing in good repair (no barbed wire). Metal T-Posts are dangerous but with caps and proper height, may be approved.

Feed: Sufficient hay, grains and supplements to maintain the horse in good health, and a free choice supply of clean, fresh water at all times. SFES will provide a nutritional program for each horse upon adoption. We discourage any change of feed for 3-months. The transition is stressful for the horse so, please, give them time to adjust before changing diet.

Access to a mud-free turnout: Horses must be turned out on a daily basis for 6 - 8 hours. A mud-management plan must be in place for winter months. We understand that Virginia sometimes experiences months of rain. In the fall, it's unavoidable. Mud is inevitable but for the most part, it should be managed. Stables or other situations where horses are not turned out daily and/or they are kept in stalls for over 18 hours a day will not be considered. Paddocks and pastures must be free of debris or unsafe items.

Required veterinarian and Farrier care: include routine checkups, vaccinations, teeth floating, and emergency care. Additionally adoptee must provide regular farrier care and deworming. SFES will provide information on veterinary care, worming program and farrier care upon adoption. Horses at SFES are barefoot unless there is a need for corrective shoes.

First-time Horse Owners: If you haven't owned a horse for some time, consider yourself a first-time owner! We welcome first time horse owners to apply for adoption. Because our first concern is the safety of the horse and the new owner, we strongly suggest that before you adopt you complete a horsemanship series that is offered through Serenity Farm Equine Sanctuary. This is a one-on-one period of instruction to help you experience the joys of equine, safely.

A first time owner must have taken or is planning on taking lessons and/or have the help of an experienced horse person before the adoption takes place. Care, training, treatment and riding has changed a great deal over the past 10 -15 years. We now understand a lot more about how a horse thinks and what works and does not work in terms of training. Horses are much more sensitive than most of us recognize. Make sure you understand horse and recognize common ailments and diseases so you know how to care for your horse properly. Nutrition is also very important.

Riding Style: Most horses can adapt to Western or English. We train using Clinton Anderson's "METHOD" and utilize a very loose rein. Horses can have difficulty readjusting to close contact or severe bits. When we use bits, we use snaffle bits. Most horses here are ridden bitless.

Special Needs Horses: Occasionally, SFES will offer a special needs horse for adoption, semi-feral horses (to experienced adopters only) or an off-the track-Thoroughbred. These horses require a special care to keep them in good health. Adoptees must have a working knowledge of these horses to be eligible to adopt them.

SFES Adoption Procedures and After Adoption Policies

We welcome visitors anytime and encourage you to come out and meet our horses to see if one might be a candidate. However, prior to working with the equine, you must submit an **Adoption Application**. The application can be found beginning on page 4 of this document. Our questions are designed to help you understand our expectations and safeguard each equine.

The application requires three personal references, only one of which may be a family member. Your references should be someone who can vouch for your horse experience such as a trainer, someone you ride with or if you don't have a reference for a horse it should be people who can answer questions about your animal care. Your veterinarian must be able to attest to your ability to properly care for the horse.

Site Visits: A site visit will be performed by a SFES representative prior to approval. The representative will meet with the adopter at the location where the horse will be kept to assess that all the above requirements are met. If the potential adopter lives over 75 miles from SFES we will contact an approved SFES representative in your area to do the site visit. If we don't have an approved representative available we may not be able to adopt the horse to you at this time. Horses may not be moved from their approved location or leased out to a third party without our approval during the first year after adoption. We are looking for adopters that will keep their horse on their property and interact with them as often as possible. They need that.

Resale Policy: SFES's mission is to find permanent, forever homes for our horses. We realize that there are times when adoptees can no longer keep their horse. SFES's policy is that adopters may not sell, lease, trade or give the horse to another party without written permission from us. Any individual or organization in possession of the equine as of the date of the agreement and any time thereafter is bound to not sell the equine at auction for slaughter or allow the equine to be sold, transferred, released, or otherwise placed into possession of any person or organization that will cause or allow the equine to be sold at auction for slaughter. Serenity Farm Equine Sanctuary has first right of refusal no matter the situation. If the adoptee feels they have found a suitable home, SFES must approve the home. Prospective owners must meet our adoption criteria for SFES to approve the request to re-home the horse and we will ask the new owner/guardians to sign an adoption contract. If a suitable home cannot be found, the owner can relinquish the horse to SFES. To be clear, we are not preventing you from selling, leasing or re-homing the horse but we want to be assured that the horse will not end up in the same situation that initially brought it to SFES...

No-Breeding Policy: The horses that come to Serenity Farm Equine Sanctuary have been abandoned, unwanted or have been seized or relinquished. Usually this is a result of the previous owner's inability to care for the horse or the horse no longer fits their needs. There are over 150,000 horses going to slaughter from the US every year and until there are homes for every horse Serenity Farm Equine Sanctuary will not approve the breeding of any of our horses. Therefore, the adopter must contractually agree not to breed any of our adopted mares and all stallions and colts will be gelded before being offered for adoption.

Visits by Serenity Farm Equine Sanctuary staff after Adoption: Adoptee agree that SFES may visit the horse from time to time without notice. You may also be contacted from time to time to get an update on the horse. If the horse passes on, adoptee needs to advise SFES.

Our Sanctuary reserves the right to remove the horse if the horse is not being cared for properly or the horse's environment does not meet Serenity's standards. This right will be in force for the rest of the horse's life.

To Begin

1. Check out our [available horses](#).
2. Contact Rhondavena or Bill at Serenityfarmequinesanctuary@gmail.com to meet the horse you're interested in and submit a pre-adoption application (downloadable just click on the name adoption application on the left hand side at the bottom of this page). Please fill out all fields and let us know if you have questions or difficulty with the form. Again, you cannot ride or manage the horse without being identified as an "approved adopter".
3. We invite you to include property photos to expedite the process. If you live more than 50 miles from our farm, current pictures of your facility are required. Pictures must include shelter areas, stalls, turnout and fences.
4. Your application will be reviewed and you will be contacted to let you know if you are tentatively-approved.
5. At that time we may make an appointment for you to come spend more time with the horse so we can determine if you are a good fit for each other. We require multiple visits with observed interaction over a 30 to 90 day period depending upon the horse and how much you'd like to learn while working with the equine before SFES will offer final approval. This is to do all that we can to ensure a successful adoption.
6. A site visit is performed before final approval. If we are delivering, and you have provided good information prior, we may consider the delivery the site visit.
7. Once fully approved, you pay your adoption fee and sign our legally binding adoption contract.

At this time the horse is formally adopted and may be transported to its new home.

Any horse unable to be taken directly to its new home at the time of adoption (when the adoption fee is paid) [can board at Serenity for a prorated boarding fee based on our monthly costs](#), which is currently \$300. Boarding is limited and not a permanent arrangement. Specifics are based on SFES's current status and will be detailed in your adoption contract. If the fee is not paid at the time of adoption, the fee is due when the horse is picked up or delivered. The boarding fee does not include veterinary care, farrier services or other incidental costs. We are unable to accept trades in lieu of an adoption fee. We prefer cash, check or money order for the adoption fee, but will accept PayPal. PayPal fees will be added to the adoption cost.

SFES will call references and complete a background check for all potential adopters.



If you are interested in adopting one of our rescues, please complete this adoption application form, send it your veterinarian and your references and will make a site visit prior to finalizing any adoption agreement. If your facility is over 50 miles, you may attach pictures to this application - Pictures must include shelter areas, stalls, turnout, and we will contact you to make an appointment for a personal visit. Please be aware that horses adopted from Serenity Farm

Equine Sanctuary cannot be sold, privately, via broker or auction, nor can they be bred. If circumstances arise wherein you need to rehome your adopted horse, contact us. We do not know the entire history of all of our rescue horses. We do our best to share with you our observations but cannot guarantee health, soundness, trainability, or appropriateness for a specific discipline.

Application Form

Applicant's Full Legal Name: _____

Telephone: (home) _____ Cell: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Which of our horses are you interested in? _____

What is your experience level? Beginner _____ Intermediate _____ Advanced _____

What type of riding will you do, or do you intend this horse to be a companion or pasture pet?

Will the horse have access to? (Check all that apply)

Acreage: _____ Loafing Shed/Run-in _____ Stall _____ Other _____

Other equine: _____

Address where horse will be located:

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Veterinarian: _____ Telephone: _____ Email: _____

How long have you worked with this Veterinarian? _____

Reference: _____ Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Reference: _____ Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Reference: _____ Telephone: _____ E mail: _____

1. Do you live alone or with family?

2. Do you have children? Do you plan for them to ride this horse?

☐ Yes ☐ No _____

3. Who else will interact with this horse and how?

4. Does everybody in your household agree with this adoption?

☐ Yes ☐ No _____

5. Does anyone in your household have allergies or asthma?

☐ Yes ☐ No _____

6. Who will be the primary caretaker?

7. Are you prepared to care for this horse for 10-15 years?

8. Who will care for your horse if you become ill or unable to do so?

9. Why do you want to adopt a horse?

10. Have you owned horses in the past? If so, elaborate.

☐ Yes ☐ No _____

11. Do you own your property or rent?

☐ Own ☐ Rent _____

12. Have you housed equine at your property in the past?

☐ Yes ☐ No _____

13. How will you provide water?

14. How do you plan to introduce a horse to your place?

15. Do you ride Western or English or both?

16. How long have you ridden? Did you take lessons? Do you take lessons? Where?

17. Will there be times daily that no one is on the property?

☐ Yes ☐ No _____

18. How will you prepare for vacations/trips?

19. How often will you exercise your horse?

20. Do you have enough time to interact regularly?

21. Did you ever have to surrender horse or pet to a pound or a shelter?

☐ Yes ☐ No _____

22. Do you currently have any other pets?

☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, what?

23. Will you stay up to date with immunizations?

24. How often will your horse receive hoof care and how often will your horse see a veterinarian?

25. Are you able to cover all the vet expenses?

26. Do you have a \$ limit for vet visits?

27. Do you have a preferred gender?

28. Do you have a preferred age?

29. What traits are you looking for?

30. Are there any behaviors that would be unacceptable to you?

31. How do you plan on training your horse?

32. Will you hire a professional trainer?

☐ Yes ☐ No _____

33. What if you'll have to move to a new place?

34. What if your family situation changes?

35. Do you travel a lot?

☐ Yes ☐ No _____

36. Under what circumstances would you give up an adopted equine?

37. What will you do if you can't keep an adopted equine?

38. Would you consider adopting an equine with a disability?

39. Are you willing to have a SFES representative to inspect your home?

40. How did you hear about our Sanctuary?

Do you have any further questions? If so, please email us: serenityfarmequinesanctuary@gmail.com

Thank you for your interest in adopting. If you are a qualified adopter, you will have the opportunity to handle and/or ride the horse you consider. We will demonstrate first and ensure that you know that particular horses cues, talents and eccentricities. Before handling or riding, adopters must demonstrate horsemanship skills or be willing to learn. We are more than happy to teach and provide up to 2 months of lessons for your horse free of charge. If you don't need them, you will complete a skills test.

...just want to do the best for each horse and each adopter!!!