

# AGREEMENT for NCWC EQUINE ACTIVITIES

*To portray an equine involved scenario, mounted or unmounted*

- My horse and I must take the equine evaluation to participate in any and all NCWC functions, e.g. parades and scenarios on or off the field of battle. I understand that any horse I ride or drive must be evaluated as well.
- By taking the NCWC evaluation this allows me to participate in equine activities appropriate to my skills level with consent of my unit commander.
- I acknowledge my responsibility to promptly report safety concerns to my commanding officer.
- I acknowledge that I portray an equine involved persona during the American Civil War and with that comes the necessity to follow military orders and discipline.
- I acknowledge that I may be asked to stand down or leave the battlefield, scenario or other equine activity by my unit commander or battalion staff.
- I acknowledge that safety is an awareness and safety takes priority. I may excuse myself from participation at any time and I will not ride or put myself in a situation which I am not comfortable for myself and my horse.
- I acknowledge at any time I can be asked to be reevaluated by my superior officers.
- I acknowledge that both State and Federal laws pertaining to animal cruelty apply to me at all times at all NCWC sponsored functions.
- I acknowledge that equine activities can be dangerous and lead to injury or death.
- I acknowledge I have signed the Release of Liability for Equine Activities Form.

Upon signing this document I am acknowledging I have read, understand and will abide by the above terms. I further agree to indemnify and hold the NCWC club and its officers, directors and members harmless from any liability, damage or death caused by my participation or otherwise.

\_\_\_\_\_ (initial) By initialing I acknowledge I have received a copy, read and understand the Responsibilities and Expectation for Equine Involved Participants, NCWC Safety Rules, Code of Conduct and a copy of my evaluation.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Rider's Name Printed: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Parental Signature (if Minor) \_\_\_\_\_

Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

Battalion: \_\_\_\_\_ Union \_\_\_\_\_ Confederate \_\_\_\_\_ Artillery \_\_\_\_\_ Civilian Alliance

Impression: \_\_\_\_\_ Cavalry \_\_\_\_\_ Infantry \_\_\_\_\_ Artillery \_\_\_\_\_ Civilian

## Responsibilities and Expectations for Participants in NCWC Equine Activities

### All Participants in Equine Activities\* must:

(\*Civilian and military riders, drivers and horse handlers, every rank and branch of service)

- 1) Read, understand, and comply with the NCWC Safety Rules and Code of Conduct pertaining to care and treatment of horses.
- 2) Provide supervision and proper care of your own horse at events (feeding, watering, cleanup, supervision, vet care if needed)
- 3) Ensure that all tack, harness, and equipment is in good repair, fits and adjusted correctly, is appropriate to the horse and its level of training. **ALTHOUGH WE HAVE INSPECTIONS, THIS IS ULTIMATELY EACH INDIVIDUAL'S RESPONSIBILITY!**
- 4) Complete Level 1 of the NCWC Equine Activity Evaluation before **bringing** any horse to an event.
- 5) Complete Levels 1, and 2 of the NCWC Equine Activity Evaluation before **riding** any horse at an event. Complete Driving Skills Test "C" before driving any horse at an event.
- 6) Complete Levels 1, 2, and 3 of the NCWC Equine Activity Evaluation before **participating in battle scenarios**. Complete Levels 1 and 2 plus specific requirements, asterisked (\*), for **parades**. Complete Driving Skills Test "B" before driving any horse drawn vehicles on the battlefield.
- 7) Obtain training, if needed, to meet these minimum standards for the activities in which you wish to participate.
- 8) Understand and comply with your chosen unit's requirements for training and/or evaluation as they may be more comprehensive or exacting than the minimum NCWC requirements.
- 9) If the owner of a horse allows another person to ride, drive, or handle his horse at NCWC events, he shall make a reasonable effort to ascertain the suitability of his horse to the participant, and must obtain the unit commander's approval. He must disclose any existing health or behavioral issues to the rider and evaluator. The horse and participant must also be evaluated by an NCWC approved evaluator through levels 1 and 2 of the NCWC Equine Activity Evaluation, or Driving Test C, before bringing the horse to an event.
- 10) Notify your commanding officer of any issues (health or behavioral) with your horse. If your horse has a propensity to kick, tie a red ribbon in its tail as a warning to others. However it is your responsibility to keep your horse out of range of others—NOT their responsibility to avoid you!
- 11) Promptly report any safety concerns to your commanding officer.
- 12) Withdraw from the battlefield or any activity if your horse is having issues.
- 13) Comply with reasonable and safe orders by superior officers.

### Unit Commanders (ANY unit that has horses, not just cavalry!):

- 1) Provide and ensure all unit members (and their parents, if minors) , pay to play event members, and reciprocal organization members who handle, ride, or drive a horse, are given and sign the NCWC Equine Activity Evaluation, Safety Questionnaire and a Liability Waiver for Equine Activities.
- 2) Provide and ensure all participants who handle, ride, or drive a horse read and understand the Responsibilities and Expectations for Participants in NCWC Equine Activities, the Safety Rules, and the Code of Conduct pertaining to the care and treatment of horses.
- 3) Ensure that NCWC Equine Activity Evaluations, Driving Skills Tests, forms, and waivers have been completed for all members of your unit (and any pay to plays or members of reciprocal organizations) before they participate in equine activities. (Equine Activity Evaluations must be conducted by NCWC approved evaluators. Evaluators for driving may be from outside the NCWC but must submit resumes.) You must have original evaluations and tests (including reciprocal organization certifications) on hand for Battalion Commanders to inspect should questions arise, and provide a spreadsheet of all horses, riders, and drivers, in your unit and evaluation levels completed, to your Battalion Commander. This includes Infantry, Civilians, and Artillery.
- 4) Conduct at least one inspection of horses and tack before the first battle of each event. Inspection shall include NCWC Minimum Standards for treatment per Code of Conduct VII.c.1 and health per Code of Conduct VII.c.2.
- 5) Inspect horse camps for safety issues and correct any deficiencies found, post horse guards, ensure that all riders provide proper care of horses in camp.
- 6) Verify that riders have completed levels 1, 2 and 3 of the Equine Activity Evaluation before allowing them to participate in battlefield scenarios, and appropriate skills in Level 4 and 5 before allowing them to use those skills on the battlefield. Verify that drivers complete Driving Skills Test "C" before driving at an event, and Test "B" before driving on the battlefield.

- 7) If your unit requires training, knowledge or standards above and beyond the NCWC minimums, those requirements must be clear to not only the unit members but any pay to play or reciprocal players who participate.
- 8) Supervise riders, drivers, and horse handlers under your command on the battlefield. If a participant appears to be having difficulty, order them off the field, discuss issues and performance expectations, and require them to be re-evaluated before they are allowed back on the field.
- 9) Promptly respond to observed and/or reported safety concerns.
- 10) Allow participants to voluntarily excuse themselves from any equine activity. If a participant refuses a direct order on the grounds they believe it to be unsafe, allow them to do so without prejudice and discuss it with them after the battle is over.
- 11) Apply appropriate discipline/correction if participants disobey NCWC Safety Rules or Code of Conduct or fail to perform duties as above.
- 12) Note that safety rules, Code of Conduct, and supervision and evaluation requirements apply to all NCWC events, including parades.

\*Exception for Artillery Drivers who must be evaluated by Joe Hamer per NCWC Board, March 19, 2009.

**Battalion Commanders and/or their designees** (ALL battalions—Union, Confederate, Artillery, and Civilian Alliance):

- 1) Verify with unit commanders that all participants in equine activities meet the NCWC requirements to participate at NCWC events, have completed required NCWC evaluations, and have signed equine liability releases.
- 2) Accompany unit commanders on horse inspections
- 3) Inspect horse camps at least once during each event.
- 4) If it appears that the unit commander is allowing horse handlers, riders or drivers who do not meet the minimum standard for their level of participation, you have the option to ask the unit commander to re-evaluate the rider in your presence.
- 5) Supervise units/companies on the battlefield. Verify that units have the skills necessary before assigning duties on the field.
- 6) Approve and supervise practice of hand to hand scenarios.
- 7) Promptly respond to observed and/or reported safety concerns.
- 8) If a unit or its commander is acting unsafely on the field, order them off the field immediately. Apply appropriate discipline/correction if unit commanders disobey NCWC Safety Rules or Code of Conduct or fail to perform duties as above.
- 9) Allow a unit/unit commander to voluntarily excuse themselves from any activity. Allow them to do so without prejudice and discuss it with them after the battle is over.
- 10) If a unit under your command is having persistent issues, discuss this with unit commander, describe performance expectations (what they need to demonstrate before being allowed back on the field or back to an event).
- 11) Note that safety rules, Code of Conduct, and supervision and evaluation requirements apply to all NCWC events, including parades.

## DEFINITIONS

### Levels of Training for the Horse and Rider for Cavalry Re-enacting (Adopted January 21, 2106)

#### THE HORSE:

**Green Horse:** Untrained for the most part. Able to be haltered, led at the walk, groomed with little resistance, maybe saddled.

**Green “Broke” Horse:** The above plus able to saddle and bridle with little difficulty and allows rider to get on. Does not understand the aids (natural signals) of balance, seat, leg, or hands are attempts at communication.

**Beginner Horse:** The above performances and will move forward when asked although may need urging, will stop when asked within a few strides sometimes with corrective measures, will turn with generalized leg and balance signals or leading rein to the four points of the compass. The horse attempts to do as asked but is usually confused about what is being asked. May understand the trot but has difficulty going into the canter/lope. Generally out of balance, the horse is uncertain of how to carry the rider’s weight. Maneuvers are awkward and irregular. The bit is carried with the nose out or with the head held high and often the mouth is open and the neck bowed backward in resistance to the hands when pressure is applied. The horse lacks confidence in the rider and the situation of being ridden in general.

**Note:** A “novice” horse may be very well trained, but new to a particular activity. Example, a 3<sup>d</sup> level dressage horse at its first reenactment is a “novice” reenacting horse.

**Intermediate Horse:** The horse has a general understanding of the basic aids and the rider’s directions at the three gaits. They will move out readily when asked and stop willingly within a few strides. They will attempt to understand the request even to the point of guessing what is wanted and acting on that. Maneuvers are fairly balanced and reasonably well formed with the horse carrying the rider willingly although a little awkwardly with relaxed energy. The bit is carried with the head level to the withers or slightly down and the neck is rounded with relaxed flexion behind the ears in a natural carriage, and the mouth usually closed. The horse responds to the riders changes in balance, leg, and seat pressures towards the eight points of the compass with understanding but not precision.

**Advanced Horse:** The horse is in full attention to and has a full understanding of the majority of the rider’s natural aids and responds willingly with precision. Maneuvers are precise, balanced, and quickly performed in response to the rider’s aids. Moving forward and halting is done without any resistance. Confidence is shown with the horse in full submission to the hand aids with the head level, neck rounded, face vertical, bit carried softly in the relaxed moist mouth. Responses to the leg and balance aids with excellent natural carriage are so fine that the rider scarcely has to move and the horse seems to perform on its own. This golden child will move to any point of the compass, whether flexed to the left or right, as asked.

#### THE RIDER:

**A GREEN rider:** Is completely untrained and unschooled. May be able to mount and dismount without assistance but is uncomfortable riding at any gait above the walk. Has no understanding of how to use the natural aids (seat, legs, and hands) to communicate with the horse and therefore no ability to independently control the horse. He can only be a “passenger” and follow others (e.g on a trail ride). The green rider easily loses balance when the horse speeds up, slows down, or changes direction, and often reacts fearfully to any unexpected movement. Only the most calm and tolerant horses are suitable mounts for the green rider.

For the purposes of NCWC Safety Rules, a “green” rider is one that can pass Level 1 of the Equine Activity Evaluation, but cannot pass Trot elements of Level 2 (can only ride at the walk.)

**A BEGINNER rider:** Has difficulty maintaining balance at gaits above a walk or slow trot (jog), and is in independent control of the horse less than 60 percent of the time. They are unaware of their own body position and their effect on the horse. They are unable to notice, or correct issues with their own body position or with the horse. Without close supervision the beginner rider is likely to cause discomfort or harm to themselves or their horse. As with green riders, only calm and tolerant horses are suitable mounts for beginners.

For the purposes of NCWC Safety Rules, a “beginner” rider is one that can pass Levels 1 and 2 of the Equine Activity Evaluation (ride at the walk and trot.)

*Bear in mind that some beginners may lack knowledge, but are confident and have good balance and core strength which gives them a stable basic body position. These “**confident beginners**” may perform at a relatively high level if they are on experienced, well trained, but forgiving horses. The performance falls apart however, when they ride beginner or intermediate horses and something is miscommunicated or goes wrong.*

**An INTERMEDIATE rider:** Has an effective seat and good balance and position most of the time (60-80 percent), can ride comfortably at the walk, trot, and canter. However there will be some moments of insecurity, imbalance, or loss of position; and there will be some times or moments of discomfort for the horse or rider. The intermediate rider is aware of his effect on the horse and can use seat, legs, and hands to influence the horse most of the time. He has the ability to self-correct. He can ride many horses independently, but will have difficulty with young, green, “difficult,” or spoiled horses.

For the purposes of NCWC Safety Rules, an “intermediate” rider is one that can pass Levels 1, 2, and 3 of the Equine Activity Evaluation (ride at the walk, trot, and canter.)

**An ADVANCED rider** has excellent balance; can use the natural aids of change of balance, seat, legs, and hands to effectively influence the horse when asking for a performance without resorting to unnatural cues, and can work with a horse without causing discomfort or harm to the horse or themselves. There is no bouncing at the trot or canter. The rider’s legs do not go out of position when in motion. The advanced rider is unflappable, and maintains his poise no matter what the horse is doing (or recovers it quickly). The advanced rider can ride most horses. He can communicate effectively with highly trained animals, and can train (or retrain) young, green, and “difficult” or previously spoiled horses.

For the purposes of NCWC Safety Rules, an “advanced” rider is one that can pass Levels 1, 2, and 3 of the Equine Activity Evaluation (ride at the walk, trot, and canter), and in addition is able to:

Canter on the correct lead, and perform turns on the forehand and turns on the haunches in Section 3.2;

Carry pistol, saber, and flag at the canter (Levels 4 and 5);

Perform all Courier elements (Level 5); and

Pony another horse at the walk and trot (Levels 5).