

EAPD Guideline for Riders

- **A minimum age of 4 years is required.**
- Where a rider is fully balanced a maximum upper weight limit of 65 kg is applicable. A rider must be able to support their own weight and mount with the minimum of physical assistance, i.e. they need to be able to place their left foot into the stirrup, whilst supporting their own body weight, then swing their right leg over the horse and sit in the saddle gently with the minimum of physical help. Thereafter they need to be able to sit in a balanced position without support.
- Where a rider is totally non weight bearing and needs complete support to mount and dismount along with requiring physical support during the lesson a maximum weight of 35 kgs is permitted.
- Where a rider has poor balance and coordination and is unable to stand to mount/dismount the horse without some support, but needs little support once mounted, a maximum weight limit of 50 kgs is permitted.
- The rider must have adequate stretch capacity in the legs to straddle the horse comfortably and to maintain this position for the duration of the lesson.
- The rider must be able to hold an upright sitting position for a period of 15 minutes minimum.
- Given the nature and content of the EAPD Programme we are unable to accept any riders with the following conditions:
 - Any type of inflammatory processes
 - Acute intervertebral disc problems
 - Atlanto – axial instability/ poor head control
 - Severe or fixed scoliosis (spinal fixation)
 - Hip luxation/dislocation
 - Severe osteoporosis
 - Seizures (if not controlled by medication)
 - Extreme allergies
 - Recent surgery
 - Severe behavioral problems
- The EAPD facility can accommodate a maximum number of 4 wheelchair/pushchair users per group. However this may vary depending on the abilities of the riders and how much support they require from volunteers.



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- Where possible the EAPD allocate each group on the basis of a rider's capability – not by age or disability likeness.
- The above list is an indication of our main requirements, but is not exhaustive, we may feel we need to apply specific criteria to a certain rider upon assessment from the EAPD team. Ultimately the final decisions as to whether or not a person is allowed to ride, is in the sole discretion of the EAPD and any decision is always made with the rider's safety at the foremost of EAPD's mind.

DISCLAIMER

Each rider shall be required, without exception, to provide the EAPD with a written disclaimer before riding. By visiting or participating in the EAPD Programs you agree to the terms and conditions.

Ultimately by attending the premises of Equestrian Association for People of Determination ("EAPD") and thereby interacting with horses, the surroundings, program facilities and equipment used as part of the program or visit, ("EAPD Programs") the rider and their guardian acknowledge that such activities are inherently dangerous that may result in damage to my property, bodily injury, and/or death. Each rider by themselves and their guardian knowingly assume all risks (whether known or unknown, foreseeable or unforeseeable, or patent or latent) when participating in the EAPD Programs.

All visitor/riders relinquish, release and discharge all employees, representatives, appointed personnel, guardians, or owners of EAPD (hereafter collectively referred to as the "EAPD Group") from, any and all rights, claims, and actions that they now have or that they may have in the future against EAPD Group, relating in any way to their participating in EAPD Programs or visiting the EAPD center.

Each visitor/rider agrees to indemnify, defend, and hold EAPD Group harmless from and against any and all losses, claims, damages, costs, expenses (including lawyer's fees and costs) and other liabilities incurred by EAPD Group relating in any way to their participating in the EAPD Programs or visiting the EAPD Center.

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Frequently Asked Questions

How can I get my child involved in EAPD lessons ?

The first step is to read our riders guidelines and if your child fits our criteria please complete the rider application form and return it to info@eapd-dubai.ae. We will then place your child on our waiting list and contact you when an opening in an appropriate class becomes available. You will then be required to attend an assessment on your child.

Are there any requirements ?

EAPD caters to children and teenagers with special needs. The student needs to have been diagnosed with a disability. Each applicant must submit a completed medical history form, physician's consent form and a guardian consent form. The family or school must make the necessary arrangements to ensure that the rider will attend classes regularly. We understand some of our riders have medical difficulties but if student is ill, we expect the parents to phone EAPD so that the appropriate number of volunteers can be scheduled for the day. Failure to notify EAPD of the rider's absence will result in his/her cancellation from the class.

Are there any restrictions ?

Certain precautions apply to some disabilities (down syndrome, spinal cord injury or disease, etc) and these can be discussed in more details with the EAPD team. Children must be at least 4 years of age and there are some weight restrictions. Also, uncontrolled aggression towards people or animals would prohibit participation in the program.

Why can't I choose the exact time for the riding lesson ?

The rider needs to be scheduled into a suitable class so that he or she will ride with others of similar age and ability. Also, the right size of horse or pony needs to be available. And most important, we need to have enough volunteers to ensure the rider is safe.

Is therapeutic horseback riding safe ?

EAPD follows international standards in order to make the lessons as safe as possible. This is why we ask your family doctor to complete a medical form and sign a physician's consent form verifying that the horseback riding is safe for your child.



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How long is each lesson ?

The instructor will determine the appropriate length of time for each lesson. Most classes are scheduled for approximately 45 minutes. However, depending upon age, attention span and type of disability some classes may be shorter.

Tell me about a typical riding lesson ?

Lessons plans are designed specifically to the individuals in each class. Classes include a warming up period with stretching followed by learning a specific aspect of horseback riding such as holding the reins, steering the horse or trotting. The lesson includes activities designed to involve gross-motor skills, fine motor-skills, memory, sensory, etc. In the end of each lesson the children will go for a walk outside the arena to relax and enjoy the beautiful environment of Desert Palm. The duration of the walk varies on the time which is left after the lesson activities are complete.

What should the rider wear ?

The rider should wear long, comfortable trousers. Shorts are not permitted. Open toe shoes or sandals are not permitted. Riders must wear socks. Shoes or boots should have a heel. EAPD provides helmets that are mandatory during the lesson.

Why do you use different activities each week ?

Activities are an important part of many therapeutic riding lessons. They make the lessons more fun for the riders, volunteers and the instructor. Activities can approach different areas of the riders such as social interaction, gross and fine motor skills, physical skills etc.

All these activities reinforce basic riding skills such as whoa, steering, walk on. Students are working on their riding skills while doing the activity.

How does this kind of therapy improve the children's quality of life ?

This unique kind of therapy leads to a variety of benefits for children. Each child responds differently to this therapy and benefits in a different way. Children don't feel like they are attending a conventional therapy session. They go 'horseback riding'; they look forward to spending some time with the horse. It's fun and for many children the highlight of their week.

It builds up their self-esteem and self-confidence. Children develop body awareness and accept their own impairments and learn how to live with them.

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Will my child learn to ride ?

Your child will only learn basic riding skills such as holding reins, steering, etc. If you would like your child's riding skills to exceed a basic level we recommend you attend a mainstream riding school.

What else do I need to know ?

EAPD has a waiting list of children who would like to ride. Therefore, if your child does not attend classes regularly, we will assume that attending a weekly class is difficult for your schedule or your child is not interested and we will make room for another rider. We understand some of our riders have medical difficulties but if a student is ill we expect parents to phone EAPD so that the appropriate number of volunteers can be scheduled for the day.

If a child does not attend two classes with adequate cancellation notice (3 hours) then their space will be offered to someone else.

A registration fee of AED 1000 per season applies. After the end of each season the EAPD Team will decide whether your child will be offered a place for the next season. After two full seasons your child will go onto the paid program; a fee of AED 150 per lesson will then be charged.

The season runs from the end of October until the end of April.

All charges are subject to 5% VAT.

