



The Kind Farm Inc Risk Management Plan

VERSION 1, May 2023

RISK ANALYSIS AND MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE FOR HORSE CONNECTION SESSIONS

The Kind Farm Inc Risk Management Plan	1
VERSION 1, May 2023	1
RISK ANALYSIS AND MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE FOR HORSE CONNECTION SESSIONS	1
Activity - Horse connection sessions	2
• The Kind Farm Inc. Horse connection sessions	2
Introduction to risks and hazards	2
PART 1 – RISK ASSESSMENT TABLE	3
PART 2 – Hazards	3
Risk assessment table - scores before management strategy	4
PART 3 – MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES	5
The Kind Farm Inc. key safety strategies	5
Specific strategies for inexperienced people around horses:	5
Risk scores with The Kind Farm Inc. management strategy	5
Specific strategies that will, reduce or eliminate the likelihood of an incident or accident occurring.	8
Part 4 - SAFETY INDUCTION	8
PART 5 – SESSION INCIDENT / ACCIDENT REPORT	8
Incident Report Form:	8

Activity - Horse connection sessions

- **The Kind Farm Inc. Horse connection sessions**

Description: The Kind Farm Inc. offers people the opportunity to learn how to connect with a horse. This involves education about horses, learning the story of the different horses who have been rescued, reading horses' body language and herd behavior.

You will learn how to approach a horse and how to invite a horse to come up to you and engage gently. In some circumstances, this will be over a fence/rail and for suitable horses and participants, you will enter a field with the horse/s.

There is no riding in these sessions or touching the horse other than face, shoulders and neck.

These sessions are educational and are often very healing to the horses and the humans as almost always a certain horse and human have a lovely, gentle connection and interaction through patting and simple grooming.

Introduction to risks and hazards

Hazard identification, risk assessment, and risk control are fundamental principles applied in workplaces to uphold safety and health standards. Here are the essential steps.

- 1. Spot the Hazard - Hazard Identification**

At its core, a hazard is anything that has the potential to cause harm to individuals or their surroundings. Identifying hazards entails recognizing possible risks and understanding what could potentially go wrong to cause harm.

- 2. Identify the Risk**

Once hazards are spotted, the next step is to clearly identify the associated risks. This involves understanding the specific ways in which each hazard could lead to harm or injury.

- 3. Analyze the Risk**

Risk analysis involves assessing the likelihood and severity of harm that could result from exposure to each identified hazard. This step helps prioritize which risks need immediate attention.

- 4. Prioritize the Risk**

After analyzing the risks, prioritize them based on their severity and likelihood of occurrence. This ensures that resources are allocated effectively to address the most critical risks first.

- 5. Treat the Risk - Make the Changes**

Effective risk control involves implementing measures to mitigate or eliminate the identified hazards. This includes developing and implementing controls that reduce the likelihood of harm and minimize the severity of consequences.

- 6. Monitor the Risk**

Risk management is an ongoing process that requires continuous monitoring and review.

Regularly monitor the effectiveness of implemented controls and adjust them as necessary to maintain a safe working environment.

These systematic steps form a comprehensive approach to managing safety and health in the workplace, ensuring that risks are identified, assessed, prioritized, treated, and continually monitored to protect the well-being of employees and others involved.

PART 1 – RISK ASSESSMENT TABLE

Overview of risk exposure, probability and consequences.

Likelihood	Consequence					
	1 - Negligible	2 - Minor - requires onsite first aid	3 - Moderate - requires first aid and rest	4 - Major - injury requires hospital attention	5 - Critical - serious injury	6 - fatality
1 - Rare	2	2	3	4	5	7
2 - Unlikely	3	4	5	6	7	8
3 - Possible	4	5	6	7	8	9
4 - Likely	5	6	7	8	9	10
5 - Almost Certain	6	7	8	9	10	11

PART 2 – Hazards

Working with horses involves various risks and hazards that individuals should be aware of to ensure safety for both humans and the animals.

Specific consideration is given to allow for the safety of **inexperienced people around horses and for people unfamiliar with rural environments.**

Common risks and hazards associated with horses:

- Physical Injury from Kicks, Bites, or Trampling:** Horses are large animals with powerful legs and teeth. They can kick, bite, or accidentally trample handlers or riders, causing serious injury.
- Falls:** Even handling horses on the ground can lead to falls if not done carefully.
- Equipment Malfunction:** Tack (lead ropes, head collars, bridles, etc.) and other equipment can fail, causing accidents or injuries to both the handler and the horse.
- Behavioral Issues:** Horses can spook, bolt, or behave unpredictably, especially in unfamiliar situations or when stressed. This can pose risks to anyone nearby.
- Lifting and Handling:** Tasks such as lifting hay bales, cleaning stalls, or moving equipment can lead to strains or other musculoskeletal injuries.
- Zoonotic Diseases:** Horses can transmit diseases to humans (such as ringworm, salmonella, or leptospirosis), so proper hygiene and health precautions are important.

7. **Environmental Factors:** Working outdoors exposes individuals to weather-related risks such as heat stroke, hypothermia, or sunburn. Working on different terrain can increase the risk of trips/stumbles and falls.
8. **Stable Management Risks:** Cleaning stalls, handling manure, and working with cleaning chemicals can expose individuals to respiratory issues or other health hazards.

To mitigate these risks, individuals working with horses should undergo proper training, use appropriate safety equipment, maintain good situational awareness, and handle horses with care and respect their nature as flight animals.

Risk assessment table - scores before management strategy

#	Risk	Score	Environment	Human	Equipment
A	Heat/dehydration	3	Hot weather	Not drinking adequate water not wearing sun protective hat or clothing	Ensure guests close to water stations periodically or carry water with them.
B	Sunburn	3	hot and sunny weather	Not wearing hat or sunscreen Not being used to climate	Hat, protective light weight clothing. Sunscreen
C	Horse kick	7	Human and horse not separated.	Participant unaware of horse behaviour. Horses not selected and yarded appropriately to promote calm interactions.	Unsuitable horses yarded together. Fence not adequate to separate horses and participants.
D	Horse bite	4	Horses being fed. Not choosing best horse for participant	Participant not aware of horse body language. Inexperienced participant feeds horses. Suitable horse not matched to participants' ability.	Interacting with unsuitable horses
E	trip/fall	3	Uneven ground. Horse moves suddenly. Participant not stable on feet. Rainy/muddy conditions.	Not wearing appropriate shoes. Not being aware of horse behaviour.	Uneven surfaces, hazards not marked. Horses not in appropriate yards.
F	Insect Bite or sting	2	Outside environment Walking in long grass	Touching or approaching unsafe creatures or insects.	not wearing protective clothing Not wearing insect repellent
G	Shock from electric fence	2	Electric fences used to contain horses.	Not listening to safety induction.	Not turning off fences when participants arrive.
	Zoonoses	3	horses can transmit diseases	Participant does not wash hands and then eats or wipes mouth, face.	Wipes and antibacterial/antimicrobial hand rub supplied

PART 3 – MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

The Kind Farm Inc. fully endorses the Safe Work Australia “**Guide to managing risks when new and inexperienced persons interact with horses**”. This is an authoritative and useful document which helps any business introducing people to horses in any way, with their WHS requirements and responsibilities in keeping their people safe.

This can be found at:

SAFE WORK AUSTRALIA - HORSE SAFETY GUIDELINES

<https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/guide-managing-risks-when-new-and-inexperienced-persons-interact-horses>

The Kind Farm Inc. key safety strategies

KEEPING PARTICIPANTS, HOSTS AND HORSES SAFE:

- All sessions begin with a comprehensive safety induction
- All sessions are gentle and observing and learning is the key component of each session.
- Only small (usually 3 people) groups of people interact with horses
- Majority of interaction is with old or less mobile horses
- Majority of interaction is over a safe fence.
- Only calm, happy, well known, well trained, friendly horses are interacted with.
- Sessions are tailored to the participants ability and experience.
- There is no riding.
- Sessions are only conducted in favourable weather conditions.
- The sessions only involve horses who choose to engage - they are not forced to stand or be petted if they do not want to.
- Ensure safe exit available at all times - standing near gates, gates open both ways, electric fences off when interacting with horses.
- Exclude unknown, unpredictable horses, or those known to be reactive from all activities with participants and volunteers.
- Participants prompted to wash/clean hands at end of session
- Booking of all sessions requires agreement with The Kind Farm Inc. risk acknowledgement disclaimer

Specific strategies for inexperienced people around horses:

- Participants may interact only with calm horses and extra special care is taken to understand horse body language and safety around horses. Experience may include learning about horse and patting and grooming head only of any horse who chooses to engage.
- The session is conducted for the least experienced or most at risk person to stay safe. This may mean that all interaction is over a barrier - with humans on one side and horses on the other.
- Safe fences/barriers are used to keep humans safe in all circumstances. If horses are to be fed, it is at the very end of a session.

Risk scores with The Kind Farm Inc. management strategy

#	Risk strategies with existing controls					Residual risk assessment after activities	
	Risk	Score	Environment	Human	Equipment	Exposure Probability Consequence	Score
A	Heat/dehydration	5	Offering sessions in cooler times or day and using shaded areas where possible	Participants advised to bring water, hat, sunscreen.	Water available. Sessions conducted near water availability or participants reminded to carry water.	Likelihood - 3 Consequence - 1	4
B	Sunburn	5	Offering sessions in cooler times or day and using shaded areas where possible	Participants asked to wear hat, protective clothing and sunscreen at booking and reminded again at start of session	Sessions are facilitated in areas where shade is available where there is a risk of sun over exposure.	Likelihood - 3 Consequence - 1	4
C	Horse kick	7	Horses interacted with over the fence unless participant has skills and only interact with very consistent, calm horses. No moving behind horses. Host holds horse on lead rope appropriately. Horse is only touched/groomed/patted from shoulder forward.	Specific instruction on horse safety including avoiding being kicked is given. Participants constantly monitored and only in yard with horse if they demonstrate ability to listen, watch and stay safe.	Facility set up to avoid participants being in kicking range or scenario. Only calm, gentle horses interacted with.	Likelihood - 1 Consequence - 4	5

#	Risk strategies with existing controls					Residual risk assessment after activities	
	Risk	Score	Environment	Human	Equipment	Exposure Probability Consequence	Score
D	Horse bite	5	Only safe horses are used in connection sessions. Horses are fed only at the end of a session, if at all. Participants are always supervised when interacting with horses and are instructed on horse body language and how to pat or groom a horse, and only touch the head and shoulder of horses.	Specific instruction on horse safety including avoiding being kicked is given. Participants constantly monitored and only in yard with horse if they demonstrate ability to listen, watch and stay safe	Children and those with small hands, nervous people and inexperienced people only feed horses at the end of a session (if at all) and feed them from a tray so the horse's mouth does not touch hands. Experienced adults can feed horses from hand under supervision, from outside of the horse in yard.	Likelihood - 3 Consequence - 1	4
E	trip/fall	5	All surfaces monitored for safety. Unsafe - for example muddy paths are not used and cordoned off.	Participants are asked to declare any mobility requirements and session is tailored to suit.	Yards and yard floors and all areas used for horse sessions are checked and cleared regularly. Hazards are removed or cordoned off.	Likelihood - 3 Consequence - 1	4
F	Insect Bite or sting	2	Outside environment Walking in long grass	Touching or approaching unsafe insects.	Not wearing protective clothing Not wearing insect repellent	Likelihood - 1 Consequence - 1	2
G	Shock from electric fence	2	Farm environment. Some participants not aware of electric fencing.	Electric fences specifically addressed in induction.	Fences near participants turned off for each session. Electric fences signed.	Likelihood - 1 Consequence - 1	2
H	Zoonoses	5	Patting horses, letting horse eat from hand. Only healthy horses are interacted with.	Not washing hands after session or after exposure to saliva etc	Rub on antimicrobial gel plus wipes are supplied. Participants instructed to wash hands before eating.	Likelihood - 1 Consequence - 3	4

Specific strategies that will, reduce or eliminate the likelihood of an incident or accident occurring.

- All participants are asked, on booking to wear suitable shoes and protective clothing and to bring water.
- Sessions are only 1.5 hours - so food and water requirements are easily met by clients
- Small participant group - maximum of 3 participants per experienced instructor.
- No children under 5 allowed.
- Hosts and instructors are highly experienced and have intimate knowledge of each horse and the facility as well as proven horse and instructor experience.
- We only conduct experiences in suitable weather conditions and postpone/cancel where we can not provide the participant and horses with a safe and enjoyable session.
- Only horses known to be friendly and comfortable around people are interacted with in sessions.
- Participants are always supervised and guided closely.

Part 4 - SAFETY INDUCTION

All participants, regardless of their experience level receive workplace induction so they know about health and safety risks and control measures is an important step in helping them understand the workplace environment.

The Kind Farm Inc induction is given immediately at the beginning of each session.

It includes:

ASSESSING

participants' horse knowledge and experience.

EXPLAINING:

- how to behave around horses
- horse instincts and their response to fear
- how to use peripheral vision when handling animals determining an escape route
- how to recognise a horse's individual characteristics and body language particularly relating to warning signs of kicking and biting.
- How horses kick and bite and safe positions.
- Understanding of horse behaviour - not to corner a horses.
- Always give yourself and the horse a safe, easy exit.
- listening to and obeying instructions
- Electric fence awareness
- first aid and emergency procedures.

DEMONSTRATING

Instructor demonstrates and asks participants to demonstrate to ensure safety instructions are understood.

PART 5 – SESSION INCIDENT / ACCIDENT REPORT

Report of incident / accidents, cause of incident / accident and future management procedures to reduce or eliminate the incident / accident. For more details please see The Kind Farm Inc. OHS Policy.

Incident Report Form:

Date: Time: Location:

Person Reporting Incident:

- Name:
- Position/Role:
- Contact Information:

Persons Involved:

- Names:
- Roles:

Witnesses:

- Names:
- Contact Information:

Description of Incident:

- Describe the incident in detail, including what happened, how it happened, and any contributing factors.

Injuries or Damage:

- Specify any injuries sustained or damage caused.

Immediate Actions Taken:

- Describe any first aid administered, medical assistance sought, or actions taken to secure the area.

Additional Comments:

- Include any other relevant information or observations.

Recommended Follow-Up Actions:

- Suggest any measures to prevent recurrence.

Submitted By:

- Name:
- Date:

Reviewed By:

- Name:
- Date:

Approved By:

- Name:
- Date:

Notes:

- Ensure all sections of the incident report form are filled out completely and accurately.
- Encourage prompt submission of incident reports to facilitate timely review and follow-up actions.
- Maintain confidentiality of incident reports and handle them with sensitivity.
- Provide training and guidance on using the incident report form and following reporting procedures.