



SAFE | Save a
Forgotten
Equine

Values Statement



Our Mission

To rescue, rehabilitate, and retrain horses facing neglect or abuse, and provide them with the best opportunity for a permanent home and a lifetime of safety.

Our Vision

A world in which all horse owners take responsibility for their animals:
responsibility for their care,
responsibility for their safety,
and responsibility for their passing.

Our Values

Transparency • Integrity • Honesty • Professionalism • Compassion

Practicing Responsible Rescue in Our Community

Managing the day-to-day operations and individual needs of SAFE's herd of 28 horses is a challenging job in and of itself. Designing a sustainable equine welfare organization that will exist long after we are gone is an even more daunting but vital task. Over the last year, it has become abundantly clear that our community wants to help us build an organization whose values and vision will extend far into the future.

Throughout SAFE's history, we have strived for transparency. We communicate openly with our community, sharing the rationale behind our decisions and actions. Over time, we have developed a set of core principles. These principles define SAFE as an organization, serve as a solid foundation for making decisions, and shape our vision of the future. By articulating these principles to our community, our current leadership, and our future leadership, we aim to set a high benchmark that continues to inspire us to practice sustainable and responsible rescue.

It is our goal to lay the foundation for an organization that will exist in perpetuity, until the day that our community takes such responsible and compassionate care for its horses that SAFE is no longer needed. It is our hope that fifty years from now, there will still be a herd working to save a horse.



Strategic Overview

SAFE Horses

As SAFE grows, we will continue to stay focused on our horses. As we work to increase our staffing and establish a permanent facility, the end result must be ongoing improvements in the quality of life and care of our horses. As funding increases, so will our capacity to assist in large seizures and increase the number of horses we can serve at one time.

A SAFE Community

Our vision is a world where people take responsibility for their animals. We will grow community outreach programs to encourage people to take responsibility for their horses, to help bridge the gap for responsible owners in critical financial situations, and to offer a peaceful end when an owner can no longer care for an aged or ailing horse.

SAFE Volunteers

Our volunteers are our organization. Whether it is a person cleaning paddocks on a cold rainy Monday morning or the members of the Board of Directors, SAFE is an organization primarily staffed by volunteers. Our goal is to have every volunteer have a rewarding and joyful experience.

Financial SAFETY

Meeting the needs of a herd of horses over the long-term requires absolute financial stability. We will continue to regularly assess and control our expenditures to ensure that donor funds are being put to their highest and best use. We will continue to produce timely and transparent financial reports. We will establish six months of savings to allow SAFE to temporarily go above its cap to assist in a large seizure or to weather a major economic event or natural disaster. As SAFE continues to grow, we will respect our herd cap, we will prioritize growth in donor funds for program services, and we will consider both the short and long-term financial impacts of any major decision.





SAFE's mission is to rescue, rehabilitate, and retrain horses facing neglect or abuse and provide them with the best opportunity for a permanent home and a lifetime of safety.

As SAFE continues to grow, we will focus on improving our horses' chances to be successful over the course of their lives.

Intake

- We practice an adoption model, not a sanctuary model. SAFE prioritizes intaking horses that are likely to be adoptable, so that we can continue to help new intakes. We support responsible equine sanctuaries, but we do not strive to be one ourselves.
- We prioritize assisting Animal Control agencies by intaking horses that have either been seized by or surrendered to Animal Control.
- When space is available, we intake horses surrendered by their owners who are either in dire financial circumstances or otherwise recognize they are unable to provide their horse with appropriate care.
- We avoid enabling irresponsible behavior by not taking horses from equine hoarders or individuals who have otherwise shown a strong likelihood to repeat behavior that puts horses at risk.
- We only intake new horses if we have the financial and volunteer resources to continue to provide excellent care to the horses already in our program.

Veterinary and Farrier Care

- We provide every horse with a health care exam at intake followed by timely routine veterinary care: including vaccinations, dental exams, fecal exams and deworming, farrier care, and other routine care as needed.
- To the best of our ability, within our budgetary constraints, we provide diagnostic care and treatment to horses showing lameness or suspected physical discomfort.
- We believe there are situations in which humane euthanasia is a responsible and necessary choice.

Training

- Providing a horse with training is a cornerstone for creating a lifetime of safety.
- We provide our horses with the training appropriate for their age, temperament, and soundness level.

Adoption

- We provide full disclosure on our horses to prospective adopters, including a complete health and behavior history as well as any known or suspected veterinary issues.
- We perform due diligence to ensure a prospective adopter is an appropriate match.
- We perform interviews, site checks, and reference checks to ensure that the adoptive home is appropriate for the horse.
- We follow up with our adopted horses on a yearly basis, providing them with a safety net to last a lifetime.

Staffing

- When planning additional staffing, we will prioritize adding staff that directly impact SAFE's Program Services, adding non-operations staff only when they become necessary to implement improvements to Program Services.



A SAFE Community

It has long been our goal to alleviate some of the root causes leading to a horse needing rescue. SAFE is committed to expanding its community outreach services and playing an active role in reducing the incidence of neglect and abuse.

- We will host educational seminars at Safe Harbor Stables.
- We will establish a short-term Community Outreach assistance program by:
 - Creating an application for short-term assistance, requiring each applicant to not only demonstrate financial need but provide a comprehensive plan to either re-establish financial stability or rehome the horses.
 - Providing a one- to three-month supply of hay and a vitamin supplement to qualified applicants
 - Following up with applicants and potentially offering to intake horses if financial stability has not been established and the horses remain at risk.
- We will partner with local veterinarians to provide low-cost gelding services.
- We will continue to maintain and make available the Serenity Fund, which provides no-questions-asked euthanasia for horse owners in need.
- When asked, we will mentor leaders from newly established rescue organizations.



Sapphire
*10 year old Arab mare,
removed from her owners
after severe neglect*



SAFE Volunteers

Our volunteers play key roles in the lives and success of our horses. We recognize this connection is the reason we all stay inspired to keep volunteering with SAFE.

- We will focus on the retention of our existing volunteers by striving to make volunteering with SAFE a joyful and rewarding experience by:
 - Respecting and honoring every volunteer's ongoing donations of time and energy
 - Ensuring that volunteers receive positive feedback about their hard work, and not just corrections for mistakes.
 - Keeping Safe Harbor Stables an attractive and satisfying environment where volunteers are proud to spend their time.
 - Taking and considering constructive feedback from our volunteers and using that feedback to improve our organization.
- Many of our volunteers are new to horses or returning to horses after a long break. We will provide opportunities for volunteers to learn about basic horsemanship and responsible horse ownership.
- We will proactively prevent overtaxing volunteers in key leadership positions by:
 - Establishing one-year terms for operational leadership roles to allow volunteers to set attainable, time-sensitive goals.
 - Creating leadership and growth opportunities for volunteers so they can deepen their involvement in the organization and have an array of opportunities to do satisfying work.
 - Posting titles and job descriptions of key organizational roles.



Kai
9 year old Thoroughbred gelding, surrendered by his owner due to neglect



Financial SAFETy

Since its inception, SAFE has made financial transparency a cornerstone of its program. Each year, we take steps to improve our budgeting process and implement more transparent and sophisticated financial planning and financial management practices. It is our goal that donors are confident that their donations are being used in a responsible and organized manner.

- Our Board of Directors is tasked with ensuring that SAFE has the ongoing financial resources required to fulfill its mission.
- We will continue to produce and publish transparent financial reports in a timely manner.
- We will take steps toward having our financial statements reviewed by a third party on an annual basis.
- We will reassess our revenue and expenses annually and produce annual budgets based on real-time information.
- We will reassess our expenses on an annual basis and reduce costs when feasible.
- We will establish three years of pro-forma statements to make informed financial decisions.
- We will respect SAFE's current cap of 28 horses.
- We will establish six months of savings to weather a major economic event or natural disaster.
- Increases in program services spending must be linked to short-term or long-term improvement in care for SAFE's horses.
- We will carefully consider the short-term and long-term financial impacts of any major decision.
- We will put donor funds to their highest and best use.



Oscar
*18 year old Arab stallion
(now a gelding), seized
by Animal Control due to
starvation and neglect*



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www.SAFEHORSES.org

SAFE Horses
A SAFE Community
SAFE Volunteers
Financial SAFETy

Become part of SAFE's Future by visiting
www.safehorses.org