



Equine Trainer – Colt Starting

Job Title: Horse Trainer (Permanent, Full-Time)

Location: The Horse Shelter Ranch, Cerrillos, NM

Reports To: Ranch Manager(s)

Schedule: Full-time; hours scheduled in coordination with the Ranch Manager

Job Overview: This is a permanent, full-time role focused on training equines using safe, effective and humane training techniques. Horse Trainers work under the guidance of the Ranch Manager supporting THS's mission to rehabilitate and prepare horses for volunteer handling, saddle training, and adoption.

Primary Responsibilities

- Train assigned horses to be safe, responsive and confident in basic horsemanship skills
- Gentling feral/wild horses; halter training; groundwork; saddle preparation; colt starting; retraining; behavior rehabilitation
- Perform training evaluations and soundness assessments on new arrivals
- Assess safety levels and basic personality traits of horses
- Develop individualized and overall training plans for assigned horses
- Personally execute training, including groundwork and under-saddle work
- Capable of having at least eight horses in training at any given time
- Identify and address behavioral challenges in horses
- Assist the Ranch Manager with behavioral and adoptability assessments
- Maintain accurate and timely training logs
- Support content creation for horse profiles—descriptions, photos, and videos
- Submit monthly training reports to leadership
- Collaborate on process and program improvements
- Assist veterinarians, farriers, etc., as needed
- Administer medications and perform wound care when required
- Adherence to all safety policies, which includes wearing a helmet when riding on our property. Helmet will be provided.
- Participate in adoption appointments to ensure appropriate horse-rider/handler matches
- Support emergency care and feeding as necessary
- Cross-train and step in for general ranch duties as needed (feeding, watering, mucking)
- Serve as a visible ambassador for The Horse Shelter

Required Qualifications

- Minimum 3 years of professional equine training experience

- Proven experience with successfully training at least five wild/feral horses; this means from gentling, halter training through finish as adoptable riding horses
- Deep knowledge of equine behavior, anatomy and biomechanics
- Proven success managing a comprehensive training program
- Strong foundation in safe, effective and humane training techniques
- Experience and confidence working with horses that are feral, untrained and/or have challenging behaviors
- Experience evaluating and assessing the training level and skills of horses with unknown backgrounds, training, or temperaments
- Clear communicator, team-oriented, and adaptable
- Willing to continue education and work alongside other knowledgeable, experienced trainers
- Physically capable of working outdoors year-round, spending most of the day on your feet or in the saddle and lifting 50 lbs.
- Valid driver's license and insurability
- Proficient with computers and basic tech platforms
- Must comply with industry guidelines that recommend rider and tack weight not exceed 20% of a horse's body weight; based on the average weight of our rescue horses, trainers must not exceed 190 lbs. with tack

Benefits

- Onsite Housing provided in a 2 bed, 2.5 bath, 1,600 sqft home. Utilities included. (\$24,000 value.)
- Salary range, starting at \$45,000 commensurate on experience
- Health, Dental, Vision, Life and Accident insurance benefits available.
- Free board and hay for two horses onsite (all other expenses paid by owner.)

About The Horse Shelter

Celebrating our 25th year, The Horse Shelter serves as a sanctuary for New Mexico's abandoned, abused, and neglected horses. Most horses are received through the NM Livestock Board when found abandoned, free roaming or after having been seized on cruelty charges. Rescued horses will be rehabilitated and adopted out whenever possible to environments that support their well-being and future long-term care.

The Horse Shelter Ranch is located in Cerrillos, NM on a beautiful 128-acre ranch, with currently 102 rescue horses onsite and the total capacity of 120.

Shelter horses are housed in run-in stalls, large paddocks, and turn-outs. We maintain a healthy feeding regimen and provide veterinary and farrier care. We aim to exercise our horses when appropriate. We utilize our training program to get them ready for adoption to carefully screened new owners.

For some horses, The Horse Shelter will be a life-long sanctuary due to history, age, or medical condition.

Please send indications of interest to: info@thehorseshelter.org