

# HABITAT FOR HORSES

P.O. Box 213  
Hitchcock, TX 77563  
1-866-434-5737



## Euthanasia Policy

Revision Date: April 3, 2007

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### 1.0 Policy

The Euthanasia Policy of Habitat for Horses, Inc. (hereinafter referred to as “HfH”) is designed to determine under what conditions an equine in the care of HfH is to be euthanized and how the decision is to be reached.

### 2.0 Condition for Euthanasia

Humane euthanasia shall be employed when an equine:

- Is not mobile and a veterinarian is of the opinion that mobility will not return,
- Is experiencing continual pain for which there is no medical relief or the relief is not within the financial capability of HfH,
- Is affected by a degenerative medical condition for which there is no cure and is experiencing continual pain, or
- Is dangerous to themselves or other animals or humans.

Only a licensed veterinarian may administer euthanasia, except in an extreme emergency when a veterinarian is not available. A veterinarian must examine the carcass to verify, in writing, such immediate need. Carcass shall be disposed of in compliance with all relevant laws. The President must immediately be notified of such euthanasia. If the President cannot be reached, the Vice President or Foster Coordinator must be immediately notified respectively (hereinafter referred to as acting agent).

### 3.0 Procedure

When determining if an equine should be euthanized, the following procedures will be followed:

#### 1) Life Threatening Emergency:

- a) In an emergency such as severe colic, broken limbs or other obviously fatal injury, the foster family may opt for euthanasia per the suggestion of the attending veterinarian. A Euthanasia Report Form must then be filled out by both the foster home and by the attending vet describing the condition of the horse, how the event occurred, and the justification for the euthanasia. This form must be signed and dated by the foster home and the veterinarian and submitted to the Foster Coordinator within 24 hours for placement in the equine’s permanent file.

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- 2) **Non-Emergency Situations.** In a non-emergency situation, the following procedure will be followed:
- a) The equine will be examined by the foster home's veterinarian or by a veterinarian designated by the President or acting agent.
  - b) The foster home will report the veterinarian's diagnosis/prognosis via telephone to the President. If the President is unavailable, then the Vice President or Foster Coordinator can take the report.
  - c) If the President, or acting agent, agrees that euthanasia would be the most humane course of action for the equine, the foster home will then arrange to have the equine euthanized. It is highly recommended that a representative of HfH be there to verify the outcome.
  - d) If the President, or acting agent, decides that a second opinion is necessary, another veterinarian shall be requested. If a second opinion is requested, either the President or acting agent should speak to the attending veterinarian after the second examination to receive a detailed report of the results of the examination.
  - e) All communication relating to the disposition of the equine whether by email, letter, or telephone must be documented and placed in the equine's permanent file.

### 4.0 Investigation

The President or acting agent shall investigate all deaths of equine under the care of HfH. Such investigation shall include all medical records, veterinarian statements, witness statements and, if deemed appropriate, on site visits to determine any and all factors leading to the euthanasia or natural termination of the equine. Such reports shall be presented to the Board of Directors within 60 days and it shall then be for the Board of Directors to determine if any policy or procedure violations occurred, if changes in such policy and procedures are necessary to prevent a future occurrence and to direct such changes as may be necessary.

### 5.0 Attachments

Euthanasia Form

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