



**Equine Operations Lead**

	<b>Guiding Principles</b>
<b>Job Title</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equine Operations Lead</li> </ul>
<b>Works With</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Board of Directors at Heaven's Gait Ranch, Inc., its Staff, Participants, Veterans, Riders, Families, Caregivers, Instructors, Volunteers, Veterinarian, Farrier, Horse Owners, Facility Owners, and Guests</li> </ul>
<b>Reports to</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Program Coordinator</li> </ul>
<b>Organization Overview</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heaven's Gait Ranch, Inc. is a nonprofit, therapeutic riding center whose mission is to build a compassionate community that embraces individuals who recognize the need to heal and challenge their adversity to grow.</li> <li>Heaven's Gait Ranch strives to be a community leader in improving the quality of life in individuals with special needs and disabilities through Equine-Assisted Learning, Therapeutic Riding, and Equine Services for Heroes.</li> <li>Heaven's Gait Ranch, Inc. is a Premiere Accredited Therapeutic Riding Center under the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship (PATH) International.</li> </ul>
<b>Role Summary &amp; Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Equine Operations Lead will complete on site tasks that fulfill HGR's equine daily needs.</li> </ul>
<b>Qualifications &amp; Preferred Experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5+ years of experience working with horses and successfully managing their various needs</li> <li>Effective problem solving skills &amp; initiative</li> <li>Ability to communicate effectively with individuals at all levels of the organization</li> <li>Current First Aid, CPR, AED Certification preferred</li> <li>Experience operating a bobcat/toolcat, including various attachments</li> <li>Ability to lift up to 50 lbs and be on your feet for the majority of the day</li> <li>Demonstrated ability to independently catch, halter, and lead all animals on site,</li> <li>Demonstrated ability to tack, lunge, and ride</li> <li>Knowledge and understanding of various equine training methods</li> <li>Knowledge and understanding of the uses and implications of positive and negative reinforcement strategies</li> <li>Veterinary technician or related experience preferred</li> <li>Knowledge &amp; compliance of PATH Intl. Standards.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Note: PATH Intl. CTRI is required for instructing at HGR.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Strong customer service &amp; interpersonal skills</li> <li>Excellent written &amp; verbal communication skills</li> <li>Excellent attention to detail for facility needs</li> <li>Demonstrated mastery of Microsoft Excel, PPT, Google Drive, Sheets &amp; Docs</li> </ul>



<p><b>Leadership Pillars and Competencies</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Creates a positive environment for professional, safe, &amp; appropriate behavior</li> <li>● Shows care and pride in one's work &amp; place of employment</li> <li>● Shows initiative and safety in equine &amp; facility management</li> <li>● Ability to complete tasks independently within HGR's established management system, working toward a common goal</li> <li>● Committed to helping people and horses through therapeutic horsemanship</li> </ul>
<p><b>Responsibilities of the Equine Operations Lead</b></p>	<p><b>General Responsibilities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Oversee the safety and soundness of horses &amp; their work-related areas at HGR</li> <li>● Be on call for emergencies including before &amp; after hours</li> <li>● Adhere to PATH Intl.'s Equine Welfare and Management Standards</li> <li>● Maintain &amp; attend to equine health and medical needs             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ensure that hay, grain, stall shavings, supplements, medications, and first aid kits are well stocked and labeled to administer.</li> <li>○ Administer daily equine cares, including hay, grain, stall shavings, supplements, medication, &amp; first aid</li> <li>○ Purchase general barn/horse supplies to be reimbursed or make financial requests to the Program Coordinator at least 2 weeks prior to needing them.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Maintain &amp; tend to daily equine needs, M-F (rotating weekends &amp; holidays will apply as needed Ex: administering medication, checking water tanks, fences, etc.)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Clean areas that staff, volunteers, and equines utilize on the property.</li> <li>○ Daily focus: stalls and aisles within the big barn and pony barn</li> <li>○ Daily focus: client facing areas including the reception room, restrooms, observation room, tack room, and offices</li> <li>○ Tend to facilities, repairs, and misc. needs, indoor &amp; outdoor</li> <li>○ Adhere to PATH Intl.'s Facility Standards</li> <li>○ Maintain safety in the paddocks &amp; arenas, by dragging paddocks, dragging the indoor arena, and spreading MAG flakes seasonally for dust control.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Specific Daily Duties:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Leadwalk and/or sidewalk as necessary</li> <li>● Ensure daily nutrition and care for horses in and out of the barns             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Provide each stall with clean water, hay, required grain, and necessary supplements</li> <li>○ Provide general equine first aid, daily medications, seasonal vaccinations, dewormers, etc. (or as needed)</li> <li>○ Coordinate with Program Coordinator and manage coverage for food, water, and med shifts (am/pm/wknd/holidays) as needed</li> <li>○ Formulate &amp; oversee feed/turn out schedule using good herd management.                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ex: Prep stalls with food, water, and salt licks before bringing horses in the barns.</li> <li>■ Ex: Do not lead/handle two horses at one time.</li> <li>■ Ex: Pick a stall so that it is clean before leading another animal into it.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Ensure safety within paddocks and barns.                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Unplug electric fences upon arrival; plug in fences prior to leaving at the end of the day; verify fences are working (look &amp; listen).</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>



- Securely latch all gates and lock doors prior to leaving
- Clean shelters, check water levels & clean Ritchie outdoor water tanks. Check hay quality & quantity, as well as integrity of fences & gates. Make repairs as needed.
- Follow the herd's feeding schedule & use the toolcat once a week to put round bales in the paddock (Ex: Wednesday mornings)
- Pull horses from paddocks prior to feeding with the toolcat or dragging in the paddocks (work on open side first, then transfer when finished)
- Implement prescribed treatment/maintenance plan for equine care
  - Ensure each horse and donkey at HGR is groomed every day (even if not in lessons) M-Th, at least once a day; this includes picking feet.
  - Horses at HGR are groomed in cross ties or while tied in the arena (not in the stalls) to limit unnecessary dust & debris in the stalls and shavings.
- When bringing in animals for grooming, grain/meds/supplements, evaluate & address lameness issues.
  - Contact Program Coordinator if you need physical assistance.
  - Call Fredonia Veterinary Clinic in an emergency.
  - Report all emergencies, document occurrences, & relay immediate care needs to the Program Coordinator within 24 hrs.
  - Adjust horse line up/workload on lesson schedule as needed.
- Take direction from the Program Coordinator to implement the daily exercise schedule for equines before & outside of lesson times to sustain/enhance the physical & mental health of the animals at HGR for programming purposes
  - Action plans reflect each animal's age, work load, and quality of life
  - Exercise program horses in both directions at a walk, trot, & canter, as they are physically able.
  - Perform the conditioning plan as prescribed by the Program Coordinator
  - Catch, pull, & stall horses from the paddocks at least 30 min before the lesson day begins to prepare them for lessons
- Provide each animal on site with hands-on attention for 15-20 minutes per day, Monday-Thursday. Lesson times count. Administer grain & medication daily.
  - Ex: 6 horses are on the schedule for the day; 3 horses + 1 donkey still require attention. If you are not lead/side walking in lessons themselves, utilize working space elsewhere with other horses and volunteers.
- Trained volunteers may help groom, lead, lunge or ride under direct supervision of a CTRI. If you need a volunteer, the Program & Volunteer Coordinator is responsible for directly communicating & coordinating specific times & ensuring proper paperwork & training have been completed. Volunteers must not be left unattended on site.
- Manage cleanliness by tending to needs within the barns & facility.
  - As a Premier Accredited PATH Intl. Center, take pride in HGR as a place of employment.
  - This includes thoroughly picking all stalls & removing waste, clearing paddocks & fencelines of hazards
  - Clean all stalls ensuring each has dry shavings and is free from all manure and urine that results from bringing horses in/out of the paddocks/barns
  - When a horse comes out of a stall, the stall is immediately picked. Do not wait until the end of the day.



**Responsibilities continued...**

- Sweep barn aisle throughout the day as horses walk in and out, scooping debris into wheelbarrows
- Remove the wheelbarrow with manure from the barn & dump it in the pile in the woods every day, whenever it is full, and at the end of the day. No manure should be left in any of the barn stalls overnight.
- No manure should be left in either arena overnight. Trail should be maintained to be free of manure to minimize parasites for the horses and irritants for our riders with special needs.
- Dump all manure buckets at end of day.
- Manage seasonal requirements and the necessary inventory to provide best management practices for the herd.
- Clean both restrooms, including sinks & toilets; remove trash at the end of the day, taking it to the dumpster, & restock supplies (soap, toilet paper, hand towels as needed) so that each day begins fresh for fellow staff, volunteers, participants, and guests to arrive.
- Oversee turnout & end of the day barn clean up M-Th and/or whenever on site
  - This includes picking stalls, sweeping & using the blower to clean aisles, dump manure buckets, plug in electric fences, & latch/lock gates & doors.
- Enter the following week's tack line up on the master schedule within Google Drive by Friday at noon.
  - The Program Coordinator will have already entered the horse line up based on the confirmed lesson schedule & participant needs.
  - Tack line up includes appropriate saddles, girths/cinches, bridles & safety stirrups
  - M-Th, no horse will exceed two lessons in one day before another horse is scheduled first
  - Understand and provide input to align horses' and participants' needs
  - Manage safety and control inventory of tack
  - Maintain barn & tack cleanliness; use laundry as needed (or at least once a week Thursday/Friday) for 2 saddle pads at a time.
  - Manage, organize and itemize tack, including tack donations. Store appropriately.
  - Sanitize & condition tack (saddle pads, saddles, bridles, bits, reins, & halters)

**Miscellaneous Duties:**

- Assist the Program Coordinator in program operations
- Schedule and be present for the farrier as needed (6-8 wks)\*
  - Be present and available before, during, & after farrier visits
    - Catch horses before the farrier arrives, clean animal legs and hooves, stall, hold, turn out etc.
    - Ensure the horses who need shoes have them on daily and alert/schedule the farrier for replacements when needed
    - Ensure and maintain farrier supplies – shoes, bell boots, etc.



# Heaven's Gait Ranch, Inc. Therapeutic Riding Center

## Job Description

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Make a concerted effort to find lost items in the pasture.</li><li>■ Implement prescribed treatment or maintenance plan for hoof care</li><li>● Schedule Fredonia Veterinary Clinic using appropriate discernment for care<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Be present &amp; available to assist before, during, &amp; after veterinary visits</li></ul></li><li>● Be prepared for donor visits at any time<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Take direction from the Program Coordinator to deep clean for scheduled visits or special events.</li><li>○ Lock main doors &amp; conduct safety checks, latching doors/gates daily before leaving</li></ul></li><li>● At least two weeks before running out of supplies, send a request to the Program Coordinator to purchase supplies.</li><li>● Be present for on site deliveries &amp; follow up to ensure follow through. (Ex: hay deliveries &amp; stall shavings)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Ex: Round bales of hay need a minimum of two weeks notice to coordinate delivery &amp; unloading.</li><li>○ Unload and stack hay bales delivered to HGR, including rounds in the toolcat garage and squares in the pony barn</li><li>○ Maintain clean workspaces including the tack room &amp; toolcat garage.</li></ul></li><li>● Tend to facility and maintenance needs<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Remove trash bags from the family room, restrooms</li><li>○ Use the toolcat for hay days, paddock dragging, and dumpster days<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Hay goes out on Wednesdays; empty old nets, remove nets from paddocks so they are not left in the mud, drag, clean water tanks</li><li>■ Use forks on toolcat to put the dumpster out at the end of the driveway and bring the dumpster back to the parking lot once emptied (once a month: follow scheduled pick up plan).</li><li>■ Be on call for equine or property emergencies</li></ul></li></ul></li><li>● Maintain &amp; update horse health &amp; conditioning records as well as facility checklists for PATH Accreditation.</li><li>● Prepare HGR for fundraisers and be present to work on site during the annual Hayburner Fundraiser &amp; Silent Auction, Meat Raffle, and Rounds for the Ranch</li><li>● Other seasonal and operational duties may be assigned as needed, including but not limited to spring/fall clean up, lead walking or side walking, or prepping for special events</li></ul>
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Updated 05.06.2026

Qualified candidates should email their resume & cover letter to [info@heavensgaitranch.org](mailto:info@heavensgaitranch.org)



**Employment  
Terms & Conditions**

**Start Date: May 18, 2026**

**Time Commitment & Compensation:**

Pay is based on education & experience, capped at 35 hrs/week including rotating weekend meds/vet/farrier appts. The person filling this position should expect to work approximately 20 hours a week related to equine operations and handling as well as 10 hours a week tending to facility needs.

**Requirements & Conditions:**

- The Equine Operations Lead must be at least 21 years of age. He or she must not only have experience working on a ranch and physically caring for horses, but he or she must also be familiar with the requirements and standards of a nonprofit organization that is also a Premier Accredited PATH International Center. He or she must be familiar with adaptive tack for individuals with special needs & disabilities.
- It is a requirement of Heaven's Gait Ranch for all individuals/guests to not only sign a liability release waiver but also wear an ASTM/SEI approved helmet for any mounted activity.
- Applicant must be able to independently lift approximately 50 lbs, including but not limited to square bales, bags of stall shavings, full trash bags, and hay nets in various seasons.
- Applicant must be able to independently catch and safely lead all animals on site, as well as properly tack horses requiring English & western saddles.
- Staff must follow policies and procedures outlined in HGR's Employee & Volunteer Handbooks.
- Applicant must record working hours & document HGR's equine conditioning log. Paychecks are distributed bimonthly.
- Professional attire as well as appropriate communication is expected at all times.
- Applicant must successfully complete onboarding with HGR's Program Coordinator.

**Benefits:**

- This position does not come with further benefits within the first year.
- Pay increases and an opportunity for a retirement match are discussed after year one.