Introduction

Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH Intl.) is a nonprofit organization with individual and center members. PATH Intl. members represent a cross-section of individuals from various fields, disciplines and professions associated with equine-assisted activities and therapies (EAAT).

The PATH Intl. mission statement is “PATH Intl. promotes safety and optimal outcomes in equine-assisted activities and therapies for individuals with special needs.”

Acknowledgments

The Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International Standards for Certification and Accreditation reflects the cooperative efforts of many individuals, including the PATH Intl. Board of Trustees, all PATH Intl. committees and staff.

History and Development of Standards

From the organization’s inception in 1969, members have focused on the establishment of guidelines to ensure that participants receive the best possible instruction and that centers adhere to the highest quality standards. The commitment of early leaders to center accreditation and instructor certification has become a cornerstone of the organization. The PATH Intl. goals and objectives have continued to place emphasis on the importance of these programs.

Initially, standards were developed and assessed by instructor certification examinations. By 1974, work began on the first accreditation program. Regional examiners reviewed the first centers in 1975. By 1980, the accreditation process was streamlined under the Standards and Education Committees and the examining team was enlarged. Initially, the association absorbed the expense of the on-site accreditation process. As demand for accreditation increased, an accreditation fee was borne by the centers. Despite fears to the contrary, the number of applicants grew.

Membership in the association and the resulting demand for accreditation increased substantially during the 1980s.

The on-site process was hampered by high costs and long waiting periods. In 1989, the process was revised, and accreditation was granted after the Accreditation Subcommittee made a thorough review of videotapes, photographs and written documentation submitted by centers.

In 1990, the first edition of Standards for Centers was adopted by the association’s (then known as NARHA) Board and presented to the membership. The document was published in the NARHA Guide and distributed to all members.

The association’s Board of Trustees appointed a task force in 1993 to develop a process of on-site accreditation.

In 1994, the task force submitted to the board and members a process for on-site accreditation using peer review and objective assessments of voluntary compliance with industry standards. The new process met with enthusiastic approval from both groups, and the association prepared to implement the on-site peer review program in 1996.
The Standards Process

The standards process sets the procedures to propose, evaluate, modify and ultimately change Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International standards to reflect the evolving world of equine-assisted activities and therapies.

1. Any individual, committee, section, affiliate or nonmember may request consideration for the need to develop a standard. Such requests shall be communicated in writing to the PATH Intl. office, ATTN: Program and Standards Oversight Committee. The Program and Standards Oversight Committee will consider the request.

2. If approved by the Program and Standards Oversight Committee, the committee will assign a task force to investigate the feasibility of the standard.

3. Once a task force is assigned, the Program and Standards Oversight Committee will appoint a task force chair subject to approval by the PATH Intl. CEO.

4. After the task force has collected and documented input to the standard, the standard is presented to the PATH Intl. Program and Standards Oversight Committee.

5. The Program and Standards Oversight Committee either:
   a. Approves the standard for field test.
   b. Disapproves the standard for field test.
   c. Refers the standard directly to the board for immediate action.

6. If approved for field test, the standard is published in the next edition of the PATH Intl. Standards for Certification and Accreditation. The membership is notified of the field test standard through PATH Intl. publications.

7. If the standard is disapproved, the originator will be notified by the Program and Standards Oversight Committee.

8. If the standard is approved for implementation, it will either be published in the next edition of the PATH Intl. Standards for Certification and Accreditation or distributed directly and promptly to the membership through PATH Intl. publications. The PATH Intl. Board of Trustees will determine the effective date.

9. When a standard is being tested in the field, it is scored during accreditation site visits and by the PATH Intl. Membership remitting feedback. The Accreditation Subcommittee reviews the scores and feedback. If a trend emerges that suggests a revision of intent, the standard is automatically referred back to the task force from which it originated. After the task force has made the necessary changes to the standard, it is presented to the Program and Standards Oversight Committee for approval.

10. Field test standards that fail in greater than 30% of the site visits of centers that have practical application are referred back to the task force of origin.
11. The Accreditation Subcommittee recommends to the PATH Intl. Program and Standards Oversight Committee that a field test standard is mature enough to be put to the membership to vote. The PATH Intl. Program and Standards Oversight Committee determines if the field test standards are ready for a vote.

12. Voting

   Representation

   When presented, all eligible voting PATH Intl. Individual Members are charged with the responsibility of voting for or against field test standards.

   Voting Protocol

   All eligible voting PATH Intl. Individual Members will electronically vote for or against the field test standard. The process for the electronic vote is determined by the PATH Intl. staff and Programs and Standards Oversight Committee Chair.

13. The results of the standards votes are presented to the PATH Intl. Board of Trustees for ratification. The PATH Intl. Board of Trustees shall determine final action.
Standards for Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International Centers

Content of Standards
Administration and Business Standards:
Include organization, emergency procedures, safety regulations, risk management, business practices, documentation and written policies and procedures.

Facility Standards:
Include safety and maintenance of buildings, grounds and activity area, equipment storage and maintenance.

Equine Welfare and Management Standards:
Include equine management, equipment and care.

Activity Standards:
Mounted
Driving
Interactive vaulting
Ground

Service Standards:
Equestrian Skills (The goal/outcome of a session is for the participant to gain equestrian skills.)
Medical/Mental Health (The goal/outcome for the participant is achieved by a licensed/credentialed health care professional. This section includes standards relating to hippotherapy, equine-facilitated psychotherapy and direct service health care providers.)

Field Test Standards:
A standard or a group of standards placed before the membership for evaluation and review prior to becoming a standard.
Composition of the Standards
A3 (Standard number)

The bold type text following the standard number is considered the “standard.” For scoring purposes, centers are responsible to meet the requirements identified in bold type (i.e., the standards).

1. If the standard has numbered subparts, all numbered subparts must be in compliance in order to answer yes to the standard.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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*Compliance Demonstration:* Explains the method(s) the visitors will use to determine compliance with the standard.

*Interpretation:* This text is to help the center and the visitor understand the intent of the standard and to serve as an educational tool.

Some standard numbers are preceded with an * and followed by the word MANDATORY. Compliance with standards marked *MANDATORY are required for center accreditation.

Some standards are preceded with DNA (does not apply) and text outlining the rationale to be used to determine if the standard is to be scored by the visitor. This rationale is the only reason for not scoring the standard.
Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship
International Mandatory Standards

MANDATORY standards are deemed to be significant in the assurance of safety precautions, certifications and liability.

Administrative Standards

*A14 Does the center require a signed, dated, written waiver or release of liability available onsite from all participants, volunteers or from participant’s parent/legal guardian?

*A32 Does the center have an implemented written policy that all volunteers and personnel wear a helmet certified by the American Society for Testing and Materials - Safety Equipment Institute (ASTM-SEI) or an international equivalent helmet for equestrian use while mounted, driving or vaulting?

Facilities Standards

*F10 Does the facility include a private area suitable for conducting a confidential interview or processing sessions with equine-facilitated psychotherapy or mental health participants?

*F18 Does the center have the following:

1. An available working telephone or similar communication device in a designated location known by personnel and volunteers?
2. Written emergency information and instructions for use posted adjacent to the telephone or similar communication device?

*F22 Is there an implemented procedure to ensure that tack and equipment are safe and in good repair?

*F26 Is there an implemented written procedure that ensures the vehicle is regularly maintained?

Equine Welfare and Management Standards

*EQM 4 Does the equine training and conditioning program for interactive vaulting also include the following:

1. Lungeing?
2. Equipment specific to interactive vaulting?
3. Mounted gymnastic exercises?
4. Continued conditioning?
5. Ongoing training to different vaulting exercises and movement games on and around the equine?
*EQM 6  Is there documentation regarding equine workload limits that includes the following:
1. A written policy that sets a maximum limit for each equine’s working session to no more than three continuous hours and workday to no more than six hours?
2. Written records of the number of hours and types of sessions for each equine per day?

*EQM 8  Is there an implemented written policy to limit the workload of each interactive vaulting equine specific to the individual equine?

Mounted Standards

*MA 1  Is there written evidence that all equine-assisted mounted activities are conducted or directly supervised by a currently certified Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International Certified Riding Instructor?

*MA 3  Is there an implemented written policy regarding the use of stirrups with safety features AND/OR is there an implemented written policy that participants wear riding boots or hard-soled shoes with heels?

*MA 6  Do all participants wear a helmet certified by the American Society for Testing and Materials -Safety Equipment Institute (ASTM-SEI) or an international equivalent helmet for equestrian use while participating in a mounted activity?

If a helmet that is not ASTM-SEI or international equivalent approved for equestrian use is worn for mounted activities, is there WRITTEN documentation meeting the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International Guidelines for Alternative Helmet Use?

Driving Standards

*DA 1  Is there written evidence that all driving sessions are conducted or directly supervised by a currently certified Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International Certified Driving Instructor?

*DA 2  During a driving session, is there a means of attaching a lead rope to the equine?

*DA 4  Is there an implemented procedure to ensure that the equine is put to the vehicle prior to anyone entering the vehicle?

*DA 5  Are there implemented safety procedures that include the following:
1. Address participant safety during entering and exiting each vehicle?
2. Address the specific needs of the participants?
3. Require the presence of the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International Certified Driving Instructor?
*DA 6  Is there an implemented procedure that the ABW is in the vehicle and does the following:
1. Holds the reins and takes control of the equine before the participant enters and remains in the vehicle until after the participant exits?
2. Has a second set of reins to take control of the driving equine during the session if needed?

*DA 8  Are there implemented procedures that ensure the following:
1. There is only one wheelchair at a time allowed in the driving vehicle?
2. The wheelchair is secured so that it cannot move in any direction?
3. Attendants understand how to secure and release the wheelchair from the driving vehicle?

*DA 9  Are there implemented procedures that ensure safety considerations for power wheelchairs to include but not be limited to the following:
1. Battery power off and battery safely encased or removed while wheelchair is in vehicle?
2. Appropriate larger size and stability of the vehicle?
3. Ability of equine and equipment to pull the considerably increased weight?
4. Adequate device for entering and exiting the vehicle?

*DA 11 Is there an implemented procedure for the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International Certified Driving Instructor to verify the driving qualifications of the ABW, to include but not be limited to the following:
1. Is 18 years of age or older?
2. Has at least 50 hours of experience driving equines in varied settings?
3. Is trained in the use of the second set of reins and in assisting the participant while driving, if needed?

*DA 12  If the ABW has an impairment that limits his/her ability to respond to safety issues, is at least one other trained able-bodied person always in the vehicle?

*DA 17 Do all participants wear a helmet certified by the American Society for Testing and Materials-Safety Equipment Institute (ASTM-SEI) or an international equivalent helmet for equestrian use while participating in a driving activity?

**Vaulting Standards**

*VA 1  Is there written evidence that all vaulting sessions are conducted or directly supervised by a currently certified Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International Certified Vaulting Instructor?

*VA 3  Is an additional person present and available to assist at the activity site during all interactive vaulting activities?

*VA 5  Does the center have a written policy that sets a maximum limit for each equine of no more than six lungeing/vaulting sessions of 60 minutes each per week, with a minimum of six hours between sessions?

*VA 6  Do all participants wear a helmet certified by the American Society for Testing and Materials-Safety Equipment Institute (ASTM-SEI) or an international equivalent helmet for equestrian use while participating in interactive vaulting activities?
If a participant is not using an ASTM-SEI or international equivalent equestrian helmet while participating in interactive vaulting activities is there written documentation meeting the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International Guidelines for Non-Use of Helmets in Interactive Vaulting?

**Ground Standards**

*GA 1* Is there written evidence that all equine-assisted ground activities are conducted or directly supervised by an individual holding a current Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International recognized certification in the specific equine activity being held?

**Medical/Mental Health Standards**

*MMH 1* Is there written evidence that the health/mental health professional who provides direct treatment therapy services is credentialed, licensed, certified or registered in his/her specific discipline to legally provide services in accordance with the scope of that credential in the jurisdiction in which services are delivered?

*MMH 2* Is there written evidence that the health/mental health professional who provides direct treatment therapy services maintains current professional liability insurance?

*MMH 4* Is there written evidence that the health professional who provides direct treatment therapy services in a hippotherapy program is a PATH Intl. Registered Therapist or a Hippotherapy Clinical Specialist (HPCS), or is there an implemented policy that any health professional not a PATH Intl. Registered Therapist, is supervised by a health professional in his/her respective field who is a PATH Intl. Registered Therapist or HPCS?

*MMH 5* Is there written evidence that any health professional providing direct treatment therapy services in a hippotherapy program has received training in the principles of hippotherapy, equine movement and equine behavior, if they have not completed the requirements for PATH Intl. Registered Therapist or HPCS designation?

*MMH 6* Is there a written policy that PTAs and COTAs are supervised pursuant to jurisdictional requirements by a therapist who is a PATH Intl. Registered Therapist or HPCS in his/her respective field and who has evaluated and developed a treatment plan according to the laws of the respective jurisdiction?

*MMH 7* During all EFP sessions:
1. Is a PATH Intl. Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning (ESMHL) present?
2. When conducting a mounted EFP session, are both a PATH Intl. Certified Instructor appropriate for the activity and a PATH Intl. ESMHL present?

*MMH 8* Is the health professional who is providing direct service either an appropriately PATH Intl. credentialed individual or is assisted by an appropriately PATH Intl. credentialed individual during all equine-related treatment sessions?

*MMH 11* Is there an implemented procedure to ensure that the equine handler during all hippotherapy sessions has received training specific to the needs of a hippotherapy session?
*MMH 18  Is there an implemented procedure that requires written documentation that personnel and volunteers are:

1. Assessed for ability to work with particular clients or client populations?
2. Consistently involved in the equine-facilitated psychotherapy program?
3. Oriented to the equine-facilitated psychotherapy program?
4. Oriented to the needs of the specific clients whom they assist?
5. Involved in post-session processing with the mental health professional, PATH Intl.
   Certified Instructor, PATH Intl. Certified Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning and other pertinent people?

*MMH19  Is there written documentation of an implemented procedure that establishes equine workload limits for the T-HPOT that conforms to the following:

1. Limits each T-HPOT session to maximum of 30 minutes inclusive of transitioning onto and off the equine?
2. Schedules T-HPOT sessions on non-consecutive days?
3. Allows no more than two T-HPOT sessions per day in non-continuous sessions?
4. Limits involvement in other EAAT on the same day the equine is involved in T-HPOT?

Disclaimer

The purpose of these standards is to educate program directors, program personnel/staff and the public regarding practices and procedures followed within the equine-assisted activities and therapies (EAAT) industry. The purpose is furthered to the extent that the standards provide a basis for accreditation of member programs by Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International. It should be understood that each standard or each part of every standard may not be applicable to all EAAT programs. Further, it is not the intention of PATH Intl. to attempt to include every practice or procedure that might be desirable for or implemented by a program since conditions, facilities and the goals or objectives of all programs are not identical or uniform. PATH Intl. does not suggest or imply that those who do not follow all of these standards or recommendations engage in unsafe practices. The Premier Accredited Center program of PATH Intl. is designed to be applied only to those member programs that are consistent with the stated definitions and satisfy the eligibility requirements of the identified designations. Programs outside of these definitions or criteria are not subject to PATH Intl. Standards and are not considered for accreditation.

In developing and applying these standards in the accreditation process, PATH Intl. does not undertake to verify or otherwise intend to represent the full and continuous adherence by those member programs or directors to any or all applicable standards or guidelines. Nor does PATH Intl. warrant, guarantee or ensure that compliance with these standards will prevent any or all injury, loss or litigation that may be caused by or associated with any person’s use of facilities, equipment, equines or other items or activities that are the content of these standards; nor does PATH Intl. assume any responsibility or liability for any such injury or loss.

Further, PATH Intl. hereby expressly disclaims any responsibility, liability or duty to member programs, directors, program personnel/staff, and to clients/students and their families for any such liability arising out of injury or loss to any person by the failure of such member programs, directors or program personnel/staff to adhere to these standards or guidelines.
Membership Requirements for All Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International Centers

These membership requirements apply to all PATH Intl. Centers regardless of accreditation status. Failure to follow these membership requirements may result in loss of good standing status as a PATH Intl. Center.

1. All PATH Intl. Centers must have their current center membership in good standing.

2. All PATH Intl. Centers must have at least one (1) instructor who holds a current PATH Intl. Instructor Certification. Centers must have at least (one) 1 PATH Intl. Instructor-in-Training prior to joining. New PATH Intl. Centers have 12 months from the time their center membership is purchased to acquire a PATH Intl. Certified Instructor.

3. All PATH Intl. Centers must have current insurance coverage in effect at all times that meets or exceeds the insurance requirements as stated in Standard A2. Appropriate insurance coverage must be confirmed to PATH Intl. annually at the time of the center’s renewal. New center members must submit proof of insurance within 30 days of the date their membership application is submitted.

4. All PATH Intl. Centers must be in compliance with all mandatory and applicable standards that apply to their program activities.

5. All PATH Intl. Centers must have a signed Annual Statement of Compliance form on file with PATH Intl. each year. This form is to be filled out and submitted in conjunction with a center’s annual membership renewal.

6. The following changes to a center’s information should be submitted to the PATH Intl. office within 30 days of the change. PATH Intl. Premier Accredited Centers will have their changes reviewed by the Accreditation Subcommittee. All changes must be submitted using the appropriate change notification form included in the forms section (Section H) of this manual:
   • Contact information including mailing address, location and primary and secondary contacts
   • Any change in program activities, including the addition or deletion of programs
   • Change in critical personnel including directors, managers and instructors

Facts about PATH Intl. Center Membership:

• All center membership runs January 1st to December 31st. All centers are required to renew their center membership by December 31st each year, regardless of their initial date of joining. Centers that join after the first month of the year may pay a prorated amount for that calendar year’s membership, depending on the month the center joins PATH Intl.

• After one year of membership, member centers are eligible to participate in the accreditation program. Centers are not required to participate upon eligibility.

Please feel free to contact the PATH Intl. office if you have questions about PATH Intl. Center Membership.
Brand Policy

STANDARD PATH Intl. LOGO

All communications from PATH Intl. contribute to its brand identity. To protect and provide consistent brand equity, follow brand policy guidelines when using the PATH Intl. logo on all communication materials.

Brand Components

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<tr>
<td>Communicative Name</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corporate Mark</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seal</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tagline</td>
<td>Ensuring excellence and changing lives through equine-assisted activities and therapies*</td>
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- PATH Intl. Centers are to use the standard PATH Intl. logo on all promotional materials.
- An electronic version of the logo suitable for reproduction is available on the My Center Membership page on the PATH Intl. website or by contacting the PATH Intl. office.
- Individual PATH Intl. Members may not use the standard PATH Intl. logo without explicit, written permission from PATH Intl.
- The PATH Intl. logo is to be used by PATH Intl. and other entities upon special permission from PATH Intl.
- When using the PATH Intl. logo, no alterations may be made to the logo. Use the tagline when possible. The registration mark must always be used.
- The corporate mark may not be rotated and must remain in a horizontal position.
- Use the following colors when printing the PATH Intl. logo:
  - Pantone 541, black and white (reversed)
  - For black and white ads, print the logo in 100% black.
  - If the background is more than 60% gray, print the logo in white (reversed).
  - The PATH Intl. office must approve any variations of color.
- The brand components must not be touching or overlaid onto other text or artwork.

Please avoid placing the logo on the left-hand side of the page. The logo is best centered or on the right-hand side of the page.

Important: The PATH Intl. brand is the legal property of PATH Intl. Any violations in its required use are strictly prohibited and use privileges may be taken away.

For any questions concerning brand policy, please contact the PATH Intl. office at (800) 369-7433.
Brand Policy

PATH Intl. PREMIER ACCREDITED CENTER LOGO

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- PATH Intl. Premier Accredited Centers are to use the specialized PATH Intl. Premier Accredited Center logo on all promotional materials.
- An electronic version of the logo suitable for reproduction is available by contacting the PATH Intl. office.
- Use the artwork provided. No alterations may be made to the logo. Do not delete the words “Premier Accredited Center” or “PATH Intl.” Please use the tagline when possible. The registration mark must always be used.
- The corporate mark may not be rotated and must remain in a horizontal position.
- Use the following colors when printing the PATH Intl. Premier Accredited Center logo:
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Brand Policy

PATH International EQUINE SERVICES FOR HEROES LOGO

Centers may use the PATH International Equine Services for Heroes logo as long as the center:

• Is a center in good standing with PATH Intl. (fully compliant and membership dues up-to-date), and
• Has developed or is in the process of developing for presentation within the next 12 months a PATH International Equine Services for Heroes program serving military veterans and wounded service personnel.

Guidelines for use of the PATH International Equine Services for Heroes logo:

• PATH Intl. Centers may acquire an electronic version of the logo from the Equine Services for Heroes webpage at www.pathintl.org
• PATH Intl. Centers may not use any pictures on the PATH Intl. website associated with the PATH International Equine Services for Heroes program without express, written permission from the PATH Intl. office.
• When using the PATH International Equine Services for Heroes logo, no alterations should be made to the logo.
• Individual PATH Intl. members may not use the PATH International Equine Services for Heroes logo without explicit, written permission from PATH Intl.
• The logo components must not be touching or overlaid onto other text or artwork.
• The PATH International Equine Services for Heroes logo is the property of PATH Intl. Any violations in its required use are strictly prohibited and use privileges may be revoked.