**Elegius Mini Equine Sanctuary**

**Animal Intake Policy/Procedures**

Equine can be accepted into the Elegius Mini Equine Sanctuary by owner surrender or from animal control/law enforcement or other animal rescue based agencies as space allows.

Owners will sign an Animal Surrender Form indicating they are transferring ownership of their equine to EMES. If veterinarian or other records are available for the equine, owners will be asked to provide copies of these.

Equine accepted to EMES are limited to miniature horses, donkeys, mules, and smaller ponies (under 11 hands)

There is no charge for surrendering an equine to EMES. Transportation can be arranged at no cost to owners if needed. Owners/agencies may transport animals in need to EMES with prior approval/notice.

If possible, EMES staff will arrange to visit the mini equine prior to their acceptance at EMES to assess their health and behavioral status to determine if their placement at EMES would be appropriate (i.e. they are in fact miniature equine). In emergency cases this meeting requirement can be waved with detailed information (including photos) from the owners/agencies involved.

Equine placed at EMES will undergo at least a minimum two week quarantine period to be observed for illnesses, diseases, and behavioral needs. Vaccinations, deworming, Coggin's test, and microchipping will be completed during this period. Farrier services for hoof trimming will be obtained as needed. Assessment for dental needs will be made and teeth floating or other dental services will be provided. Assessment for behavioral needs/training will also be performed during this time and plans for any needed training developed. Specialized feeding programs/schedules will be developed for those equine with specific dietary needs, such as in cases of emaciation.

Individual grooming kits (brushes, combs, hoof picks, etc) will be gathered and provided for each equine as will individual feeding bowls and water buckets that will be used with them.

In the case of stallions being surrendered, castration will occur after a few days of their arrival (to give time to settle in) and the animal will be kept separated from mares for six weeks to prevent unwanted pregnancies. In the case of older stallions or if their health care needs would prevent/delay castration, the needs of the animal will be considered and the best options obtained/provided for them. Unaltered stallions will not be permitted to interact with any mares.

Following completion of the quarantine period, the equine will be introduced to other horses over fences from adjoining pastures to see which group they might prefer and/or mesh well with. They will be assigned a stall of their own.

Training programs will be implemented to allow for safe handling of the horses. This will include being able to walk on lead, allow hooves to be picked up and cleaned and trimmed, allow brushing and basic grooming, follow simple commands (stand, back), and interact calmly and safely with humans.

Records will be maintained for medical, dental, and farrier services provided for each mini equine. Notes on training and any special interventions will also be kept.