

New Hampshire Equine Activity Statute

New Hampshire Statutes

§ 508:19. Liability; Equine Activities

I. In this section:

(a) “Engages in an equine activity” means rides or drives an equine; or assists in medical treatment of an equine; or is a passenger upon an equine; or is a passenger in a vehicle drawn by an equine; or trains, whether mounted or unmounted, an equine; or who is involved in event management. The term “engages in an equine activity” does not include being a spectator at an equine activity, except in cases where the spectator is in an unauthorized area and in immediate proximity to the equine activity.

(b) “Equine” means a horse, pony, mule, donkey, or hinny.

(c) “Equine activity” means:

(1) Equine shows, fairs, competitions, performances, or parades that involve any or all breeds of equines and any of the equine disciplines, including, but not limited to, dressage, hunter and jumper horse shows, grand prix jumping, 3 day events, combined training, rodeos, driving, pulling, cutting, polo, steeple chasing, hunting, english and western performance riding, endurance riding, games, and eventing.

(2) Equine training or teaching activities.

(3) Boarding equines.

(4) Riding, inspecting, or evaluating an equine belonging to another, whether or not the owner has received some monetary consideration or other thing of value for the use of the equine or is permitting a prospective purchaser of the equine to ride, inspect, or evaluate the equine.

(5) Rides, trips, hunts, field trials, or other equine activities of any type, however informal or impromptu, that are sponsored by an equine activity sponsor.

(6) Placing or replacing shoes on an equine.

(d) “Equine activity sponsor” means an individual, group, club, partnership, or corporation, whether or not the sponsor is operating for profit or not for profit, which sponsors, organizes, or provides for, equine activities, including, but not limited to, pony clubs, 4 H clubs, field trial clubs, hunt clubs, riding clubs, school and college sponsored classes, programs and activities, therapeutic riding programs, stables, clubhouses, pony ride strings, fairs, and arenas at which the activity is held.

(e) "Equine professional" means a person engaged for compensation:

(1) In instructing a participant or renting to a participant an equine for the purpose of riding, driving, or being a passenger upon the equine.

(2) In renting equipment or tack to a participant.

(3) In providing daily care of horses boarded at an equine facility.

(4) In training an equine.

(f) "Inherent risks of equine activities" means those dangers and conditions which are an integral part of equine activities, including, but not limited to:

(1) The propensity of an equine to behave in ways that may result in injury, harm, or death to persons on or around them.

(2) The unpredictability of an equine's reaction to such things as sounds, sudden movements, and unfamiliar objects, persons, or other animals.

(3) Certain hazards such as surface and subsurface conditions not obvious to the equine participant or not known and reasonably not known by the equine professional or sponsor.

(4) Collisions with other equines or objects that can be reasonably foreseen as a result of normal equine activities.

(5) The potential of a participant to act in a negligent manner that may contribute to injury of the participant or others, such as failing to maintain control over the animal or not acting within the participant's ability; except where said negligence can be reasonably foreseen and the equine professional or sponsor has failed to take any corrective measures.

(g) "Participant" means any person, whether amateur or professional, who engages in an equine activity, whether or not a fee is paid to participate in the equine activity.

II. Except as provided in paragraph III of this section, an equine activity sponsor, an equine professional, or any other person engaged in an equine activity, shall not be liable for an injury or the death of a participant resulting from the inherent risks of equine activities and, except as provided in paragraph III of this section, no participant's representative shall make any claim against, maintain an action against, or recover from any other person for injury, loss, damage, or death of a participant resulting from any of the inherent risks of equine activities. Each participant in an equine activity expressly assumes the risk of and legal responsibility for any injury, loss or damage to person or

property which results from participation in an equine activity. Each participant shall have the sole responsibility for knowing the range of his or her ability to manage, care for, and control a particular equine or perform a particular equine activity, and it shall be the duty of each participant to act within the limits of the participant's own ability, to maintain reasonable control of the particular equine at all times while participating in an equine activity, to heed all posted warnings, and to refrain from acting in a manner which may cause or contribute to the injury of any person.

III. Nothing in paragraph II of this section shall prevent or limit the liability of an equine activity sponsor, an equine professional, or any other person engaged in an equine activity, if the equine activity sponsor, equine professional, or person:

(a) Provided the equipment or tack, and knew or should have known that the equipment or tack was faulty, and such equipment or tack was faulty to the extent that it did cause the injury; or

(b) Provided the equine and failed to make reasonable and prudent efforts to determine the ability of the participant to engage safely in the equine activity.

(c) Owns, leases, rents, or otherwise is in lawful possession and control of the land or facilities upon which the participant sustained injuries because of a dangerous latent condition which was known to the equine activity sponsor, equine professional, or person and for which warning signs have not been conspicuously posted.

(d) Commits an act or omission that constitutes willful or wanton disregard for the safety of the participant, and that act or omission caused the injury.

(e) Intentionally injures the participant.

Enacted in 1998; Effective January 1, 1999.