

Legal counsel to equestrians from equestrians



Leone Equestrian Law LLC

News and Tips - January 2019



## Donating Your Horse to a College Riding Program: What to Consider

By Armand Leone, Leone Equestrian Law

**Q: I'm no longer able to ride and show my horse regularly, so I'd like to donate my horse to a college riding program. Is there anything that I need to consider before doing this?**

**A:** Good question, and there are a number of things that need consideration. The first thing that always comes to mind for me as the most important is: what happens to the horse when it's finished its usefulness as a riding horse? Does it go to the vet school for experimental purposes? Do they have acreage out there where they can turn it out?

But let's backtrack a bit and work our way to that question!

First, consider how well you know the college's riding program and if your horse is a suitable fit for that program. If it's your own alma mater, you're likely familiar with the quality of care of the horses and how they are used, but if not, it's a good idea to ask questions about how the horse will be used. You also should be realistic about your horse's abilities to do well in that program. For instance, is the horse tolerant of numerous riders? If the horse generally needs a large amount of turnout, can the program facilitate that?

Next, find out the requirements for donation for the school. If it's a university with a highly successful riding program that accepts donated horses on a regular basis, the school likely has a donation application and screening process in place. **[Here's one example from the University of Findlay.](#)**

All colleges will require some form of paperwork, and many may request that the horse be appraised by a certified equine appraiser as part of that paperwork and application process. When hiring an appraiser, be sure to ask around for reliable references and find someone with experience with your style of riding and type of horse, as they will be basing the appraisal on factors such as the fair market value for your type of horse, the horse's show record, and its behavior and conformation.

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**When a Horse Owner Tries to Leave with Unpaid Bills: How to Enforce a Horseman's Lien**

- Provide notice of outstanding bill to the boarder.
- Contact the local police and arrange to give police a copy of the statute along with proof of the unpaid bill.
- Make police department aware that the horse owner may try to come and take the horse from the property and that the barn owner has a legal right to prevent the horse from being taken off the property.
- Having done all of this, you may be able to prevent the horse from being taken from the property, provided the police are willing to enforce the law as it is written.

### Tip of the Month: The Horseman's Lien

How can a barn owner try to protect themselves against unpaid bills? With 'the Horseman's Lien!'

Find this tip and more on Facebook here!

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