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# **Strengthening Relationships between Rescuers and Law Enforcement**

Equine Allies

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**Supporting Law  
Enforcement  
Agencies in Maryland  
and throughout the  
Eastern United  
States since 1989**

# DeEtte Hillman

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## Equine Programs Director

- Certified Equine Investigator
- Former Equine Humane Investigator for the State of Illinois
- Former Shelter Manager for the Humane Society of Central Illinois
- Certified in Technical Large Animal Rescue & Lead of ERT
- Director of DEFHR's intake, rehabilitation, retraining, and adoption programs
- Keeper of Records for DEFHR and court witness on behalf of the prosecution



# A Rescue's Perspective

Considerations for working with law enforcement.

**Define Your Relationship**

**Best Practices**

**Overcoming Pain Points**

**Opening Doors for Collaboration**



# Determine the objectives of your relationship

Mission focused

Vision driven

Resource allocation

Education-based

Financial assistance



# Where can you help?



- **Personnel**  
**Equipment/Materials**
- **Local, state, and national industry partners**
- **Logistics**  
**Networking**  
**Collaborators**
- **Records management**  
**Financial assistance**

# Best Practices

**1**

**Clearly defined objectives**

**2**

**Firmly established protocols**

**3**

**Detailed Standard Operating Procedures**

# Knowledge is Vital

## Connection is Key



### Be a student!

- State animal welfare laws.
- Local codes and ordinances.
- Due process of the law.

### Build relationships!

- Law enforcement agencies.
- State's Attorney's Office.
- State Veterinarian.
- Attorney General's Office.





# Pain Points: Lessons Learned

**Imperfect laws. Imperfect justice system. Enforcement by Imperfect People.**



**Work within the  
boundaries of the law**

**Advocate for change**



**Train in Incident Command**

**FEMA Course: ICS 100**



**Be an effective leader**

**Clear communication**





Days End Farm Horse Rescue, Inc.

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This Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") is entered into this \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ between the \_\_\_\_\_ and Days End Farm Horse Rescue, Inc., a Maryland corporation ("DEFHR"), regarding the seizure of up to \_\_\_\_\_ equines.

The \_\_\_\_\_ and DEFHR have agreed to a partnership with the following understanding:

DEFHR agrees to:

1. Provide board for said equines without assuming legal "Care of Custody" or "Full Legal Custody".
2. Collect evidentiary photographs, documentation, and written medical assessment on all equines impounded.
3. Assume the cost of care and fundraise to assist in the financial care of the equines.
4. Share all records and documentation records with: \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Provide care management of seized equines, this includes behavior assessments, medical management, ground training, and ongoing horse recordation.
6. Accept "Full Legal Custody" at such a time legal custody is granted to: \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Seek to arrange the final placement of seized equines once custody is determined (facilitation of adoptions).

The \_\_\_\_\_ agrees to:

1. Enforcement of Replevin, or Bond and Forfeiture provisions as required by applicable state and local laws and regulations.
2. Provide the case number, name, and address of the defendant.
3. Regular communication and case status updates not to exceed 60 days, to ensure timely coordination and informed decision-making regarding the seized equines.
4. Grant DEFHR the option to assume legal custody of equines immediately upon the transfer of legal ownership.
5. Allow DEFHR to publicly share non-evidentiary images to facilitate in fundraising efforts.

This Agreement becomes effective upon execution and shall remain in effect until either party terminates it with 30 days' written notice or the adoption of all the equines. This MOU shall be governed by the laws



# MOU = Clear Communication



# Open Doors to Collaboration



Creative ways to  
make an impact!





**THANK YOU!**

**DeEtte Hillman**

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