

**GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
ANIMAL INDUSTRY DIVISION**

**INJURIES FROM EQUINE ACTIVITIES**

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**4-12-1. Legislative findings.**

The General Assembly recognizes that persons who participate in equine activities or llama activities may incur injuries as a result of the risks involved in such activities. The General Assembly also finds that the state and its citizens derive numerous economic and personal benefits from such activities. The General Assembly finds, determines, and declares that this chapter is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety. It is, therefore, the intent of the General Assembly to encourage equine activities and llama activities by limiting the civil liability of those involved in such activities. (Code 1981, § 4-12-1, enacted by Ga L. 1991, p. 680, § 1 and Ga L. 1995, p. 335, § 1.)

**4-12-2. Definitions**

As used in this chapter, the term:

(1) “Engages in a llama activity” means riding, training, assisting in providing medical treatment of, driving, or being a passenger upon a llama, whether mounted or unmounted, or any person assisting a participant or show management. The term “engages in a llama activity” does not include being a spectator at a llama activity, except in cases where the spectator places himself or herself in an unauthorized area and in immediate proximity to the llama activity.

(2) “Engages in an equine activity” means riding, training, assisting in providing medical treatment of, driving, or being a passenger upon an equine, whether mounted or unmounted, or any person assisting a participant or show management. The term “engages in an equine activity” does not include being a spectator at an equine activity, except in cases where the spectator places himself or herself in an unauthorized area and in immediate proximity to the equine activity.

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

(4) “Equine activity” means:

(A) 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, three-day events, combined training, rodeos, driving, pulling, cutting, polo, steeple chasing, English and western performance riding, endurance trail riding and western games and hunting;

(B) Equine training or teaching activities, or both;

(C) Boarding equines;

(D) 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;

(E) Rides, trips, hunts, or other equine activities of any type however informal or impromptu that are sponsored by an equine activity sponsor;

(F) Placing or replacing horseshoes on an equine; and

(G) Examining or administering medical treatment to an equine by a veterinarian.

(5) “Equine activity sponsor” means an individual, group, club, partnership, or corporation, whether or not the sponsor is operating for profit or nonprofit, which sponsors, organizes, or provides the facilities for an equine activity, including, but not limited to, pony clubs; 4-H clubs; hunt clubs; riding clubs; school and college sponsored classes, programs, and activities; therapeutic riding programs; and operators, instructors, and promoters of equine facilities, including, but no limited to, stables, clubhouses, pony ride strings, fairs, and arenas at which the activity is held.

(6) “Equine professional” means a person engaged for compensation in:

(A) Instructing a participant or renting to a participant an equine for the purpose of riding, driving, or being a passenger upon the equine;

(B) Renting equipment or tact to a participant; or

(C) Examining or administering medical treatment to an equine as a veterinarian.

(7) “Inherent risks of equine activities” or “inherent risks of llama activities” means those dangers or conditions, which are an integral part of equine activities or llama activities, as the case may be, including, but not limited to:

(A) The propensity of the animal to behave in ways that may result in injury, harm, or death to persons on or around them;

(B) The unpredictability of the animal’s reaction to such things as sounds, sudden movement, and unfamiliar objects, persons, or other animals;

(C) Certain hazards such as surface and subsurface conditions;

(D) Collisions with other animals or objects; and

(E) The potential of a participant to act in a negligent manner that may contribute to injury to the participant or others, such as failing to maintain control over the animal or not acting within his or her ability.

(8) “Llama” means a South American camelid which is an animal of the genus lama, commonly referred to as a “one llama,” including llamas, alpacas, guanacos, and vicunas.

(9) “Llama activity” means:

(A) Llama shows, fairs, competitions, performances, packing events, or parades that involve any or all breeds of llamas;

(B) Using llamas to pull carts or to carry packs or other items;

(C) Using llamas to pull travois-type carriers during rescue or emergency situations;

(D) Llama training or teaching activities or both;

(E) Taking llamas on public relations trips or visits to schools or nursing homes;

(F) Participating in commercial packing trips in which participants pay a llama professional to be a guide on a hike leading llamas;

(G) Boarding llamas;

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

(I) Using llamas in wool production;

(J) Rides, trips, or other llama activities of any type however informal or impromptu that are sponsored by a llama activity sponsor; and

(K) Trimming the nails of a llama.

(10) "Llama activity sponsor" means an individual, group, club, partnership, or corporation, whether or not the sponsor is operating for profit or nonprofit, which sponsors, organizes, or provides the facilities for a llama activity, including, but not limited to, llama clubs, 4-H clubs, hunt clubs, riding clubs, school and college sponsored classes, programs, and activities, therapeutic riding programs, and operators, instructors, and promoters of llama facilities, including, but not limited to stables, clubhouses, fairs, and arenas at which the activity is held.

(11) "Llama professional" means a person engaged for compensation:

(A) In instructing a participant or renting to a participant a llama for the purpose of riding, driving, or being a passenger upon the llama; or

(B) In renting equipment or tact to a participant.

(12) "Participant" means any person, whether amateur or professional, who engages in an equine activity or who engages in a llama activity, whether or not a fee is paid to participate in such activity. (Code 1981, § 4-12-2, enacted by Ga. L. 1991, p. 680, § 1 and Ga. L. 1995, p. 335, § 2.)

#### **4-12-3. Immunity from liability for injury or death; exceptions.**

(a) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this Code section, an equine activity sponsor, an equine professional, a llama activity sponsor, a llama professional, or any other person, which shall include a corporation or partnership, shall not be liable for an injury to or the death of a participant resulting from the inherent risks of equine activities or from the inherent risks of llama activities and, except as provided in subsection (b) of this Code section, no participant or participant's representative

shall make any claim against, maintain an action against, or recover from an equine activity sponsor, an equine professional, a llama activity sponsor, a llama professional, or an other person for injury, loss, damage, or death of the participant resulting from any of the inherent risks of equine activities or resulting from any of the inherent risks of llama activities.

(b) Nothing in subsection (a) of this Code section shall prevent or limit the liability of an equine activity sponsor, an equine professional, a llama activity sponsor, a llama professional, or any other person if the equine activity sponsor, equine professional, llama activity sponsor, llama professional, or person:

(1) (A) Provided the equipment or tact, and knew or should have known that the equipment or tact was faulty to the extent that it did cause the injury.

(B) Provided the animal and failed to make reasonable and prudent efforts to determine the ability of the participant to engage safely in the equine activity or llama activity and to safely manage the particular animal based on the participant's representations of his or her ability;

(2) 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 or should have been known to the equine activity sponsor, equine professional, llama activity sponsor, llama professional, or person and for which warning signs have not been conspicuously posted;

(3) 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; or

(4) Intentionally injures the participant.

(c) Nothing in subsection (a) of this Code section shall prevent or limit the liability of an equine activity sponsor, equine professional, llama activity sponsor, or llama professional under liability provisions as set forth in the products liability laws. (Code 1981, § 4-12-3, enacted by Ga. L. 1991, p. 680, § 1; Ga. L. 1995, p. 335, § 3.)

#### **4-12-4. Warning required; effect of failure to comply with notice requirement.**

(a) Every equine professional and every equine activity sponsor shall post and maintain signs which contain the warning notice specified in subsection (b) of this Code section. Such signs shall be placed in a clearly visible location on or near stables, corrals, or arenas where the equine professional or the equine activity sponsor conducts equine activities. The warning notice specified in subsection (b) of this Code section shall appear on the sign in black letters, with each letter to be a minimum of one inch in height. Every written contract entered into by an equine professional or by an equine activity sponsor for the providing of professional services, instruction, or the rental of equipment or tact or an equine to a participant, whether or not the contract involves equine activities on or off the location or site of the equine professional's or the equine activity sponsor's business, shall contain in clearly readable print the warning notice specified in subsection (b) of this Code section.

(b) The signs and contracts described in subsection (a) of this Code section shall contain the following warning notice:

**WARNING**

**Under Georgia law, an equine activity sponsor or equine professional is not liable for an injury to or the death of a participant in equine activities resulting from the inherent risks of equine activities, pursuant to Chapter 12 of Title 4 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated.**

(c) Failure to comply with the requirements concerning warning signs and notices provided in this Code section shall prevent an equine activity sponsor or equine professional from invoking the privileges of immunity provided by this chapter. (Code 1981, § 4-12-4, enacted by Ga. L, 1991, p. 680, § 1.)

**4-12-5. Warning signs or notices posted by llama activity sponsors or llama professionals.**

(a) Every llama professional and every llama activity sponsor shall post and maintain signs which contain the warning notice specified in subsection (b) of this Code section. Such signs shall be placed in a clearly visible location on or near stables, corrals, pens, or arenas where the llama professional or the llama activity sponsor conducts llama activities. The warning notice specified in subsection (b) of this Code section shall appear on the sign in black letters, with each letter to be a minimum of one inch in height. Every written contract entered into by a llama professional or by a llama activity sponsor for the providing of professional services, instruction, or the rental of equipment or tact or a llama to a participant, whether or not the contract involves llama activities on or off the location or site of the llama professional's or the llama activity sponsor's business, shall contain in clearly readable print the warning notice specified in subsection (b) of this Code section.

(b) The signs and contracts described in subsection (a) of this Code section shall contain the following warning notice:

**WARNING**

**Under Georgia law, an llama activity sponsor or llama professional is not liable for an injury to or the death of a participant in llama activities resulting from the inherent risks of llama activities, pursuant to Chapter 12 of Title 4 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated.**

(c) Failure to comply with the requirements concerning warning signs and notices provided in this Code section shall prevent a llama activity sponsor or llama professional from invoking the privileges of immunity provided by this chapter. (Code 1981, § 4-12-5, enacted by Ga. L. 1995, p. 335, § 4.)