



ELEVATING THE SPECTRUM  
FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH AUTISM

## Ranch Sport Specialist Job Description

<b>Job Description for:</b> Ranch Sports Specialist	<b>Start Date:</b> June 1 <sup>st</sup> – August 5 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Reports to:</b> Ranch Program Manager	<b>Program:</b> Adventures
<b>Starting Wage Range:</b> With Room and Board: \$435-\$550 per week Without Room and Board: \$19-\$21 per hour	<b>Term/Classification:</b> Summer- Full Time Seasonal With Room and Board: Exempt Without Room and Board: Non-Exempt

**About Ascendigo:** Ascendigo Autism Services is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization based in the Roaring Fork Valley near Aspen, Colorado. Founded in 2004 as a summer sports camp for children with autism, Ascendigo has expanded to offer year-round outdoor recreational options including summer and winter sports, a suite of community-based services for adults with autism, and behavior therapies for children with autism. Our goal is to integrate people with autism into community life, whether through outdoor recreation, assisting in basic life skills, finding compatible employment, or simply going out with friends to restaurants, museums, or concerts. Ascendigo takes full advantage of the unmatched natural facilities offered by Colorado's Rocky Mountains, as well as the area's charitable community spirit to open physical, experiential, and collaborative opportunities to individuals with autism. Currently, Ascendigo employs approximately 65 full- and part-time staff members with an additional 60-65 seasonal employees during the summer months.

**Job Summary:** Ascendigo Ranch Sport Specialists work closely with the Ranch Program team to provide a safe and fun ranch experience for our participants. Ranch Sport Specialists constantly monitor the ranch location to ensure the safety of campers and staff alike. Ranch Sports specialists help the ranch team facilitate ranch activities with our participants including but not limited to; warm-up exercises, games on and off the horses, catching the horses, leading the horses, grooming, saddling, equine care and horsemanship. Ranch Specialists help in the feeding and caring of the animals as well as teaching equine care and beginner horsemanship skills in groups or private sessions. Specialists work in close proximity with our campers and may need to assist with behavior prevention & mitigation and activities of daily living.

**Essential Job Functions:**

- Work with and around farm animals.
- Work with clients who may have challenging behaviors that have occurred in the past 6 months.
- Work in an outdoor and physical environment that requires situational awareness and quick thinking.
- Collaborates with Ascendigo Coaches and Interns to create sport lessons plans and goals that meet the client's needs.
- Act as a teacher and advocate for clients.
- Build positive rapport with clients and facilitate FUN!
- Oversees client well-being and safety in a camp setting.
- Work positively as a team with all Ascendigo staff members.
- Attend client and staff meetings and trainings as necessary.
- Communicate with staff effectively.

**Effective Date: 2022**

**Physical Requirements/Equipment Used:** Ability to spend full days outdoors being active and participating in ranch activities. Employees may facilitate physical prompts for teaching or safety, competent to learn new technologies related to disabilities, able to accompany participants on some exercise and ranch activities. Applicants must be able to lift 50 lbs.

**Additional Requirement:** Must be fully vaccinated for Covid-19 and can provide documentation.

**Qualifications:**

A genuine interest in working for and with people of varying abilities. An openness to learning new skills, facilitation techniques and methodologies. Previous experience working in a related field highly preferred. CPR/First Aid, Safety Care, Orientation and trainings required by CDHS Child Care Licensing, and Ascendigo Curriculum Coursework.

Must hold a bachelor's degree in a related field or 3 years professional experience.

- Must be proficient with horses, basic horsemanship, English and Western tack.
- Must be familiar with equine behavior.
- Must be able to perform adequate horsemanship skills.
- Be able to effectively teach basic horse care and horsemanship.
- Be able to properly and effectively handle and control animals on the ranch.
- Be observant of potential risks in all situations and be able to effectively minimize risk.
- Understanding and ability to learn behavioral approaches as practiced by Ascendigo, including the ability to allay maladaptive behaviors while maintaining calm and composure, principles of Natural Developmental Behavioral Interventions (NDBI), using positive behavior support plans and recognizing natural teaching opportunities and acting on them.
- Possess effective skills in active listening, coaching, and human supervision.
- Display a positive attitude, show concern for people and community, demonstrate presence, self-confidence, common sense, and good listening ability.
- Be organized and exhibit "follow through" on tasks and goals.
- Strong interpersonal skills, the ability to collaborate with colleagues and client families.
- Strong analytical and problem-solving skills.
- Ability to work independently, set priorities, and exercise good judgement
- Must be a team player.
- Follow the policies and procedures of the organization.

In addition:

- Must be age 18 or over and have legal working status.
- Must pass a criminal background check from CBI, FBI, and TRAILS
- Must successfully complete required trainings.
- Must provide a current CPR/First Aid certification.
- **May** be required to obtain certifications or successful training completion for crisis management and medication administration.
- Understands that some facilities may be under security surveillance including but not limited to video monitoring, and that video may be reviewed on a need-to-know basis on request by the Ascendigo CEO/President
- Must have a cell phone that can receive texts and phone calls
- Must arrive to work on time
- Engages in appropriate behavior with clients at and outside of work
- Conducts appropriate interactions with supervisors & managers,

- Attends trainings and meetings.
- Checks work emails daily
- May be asked to help with other Ascendigo programs as needed

**Personal Characteristics:** Should be committed and passionate about the Ascendigo mission of a holistic, active, community-based, independent, and person-centered life.

Employee should believe in the dignity and potential of our clients. Additionally, should:

- **Show maturity, responsibility, and dependability** and follow through on tasks with modest supervision.
- **Be diplomatic and discreet:** commitment to maintain strict confidentiality and respect of clients and the privacy of participants and their families.
- **Be proactive:** taking the initiative, willing to pitch in and assist. Receptive to feedback.
- **Behave ethically:** understand ethical behavior and business practices and ensure that their own behaviors is consistent with these standards and aligns with the values of Ascendigo.
- **Build relationships:** establish and maintain positive working relationships with others, both internally and externally.
- **Be Fun:** Ascendigo Summer Adventures camp is an opportunity for our clients to enjoy an amazing summer camp experience. Being positive, fun, and enthusiastic is essential!
- **Communicate effectively:** speak, listen, and write in clear, thorough, and timely manner using appropriate and effective communication tools and techniques.
- **Creativity/Innovation:** develop new ways to improve operations of Ascendigo and to create new opportunities.
- **Focus on client needs:** anticipate, understand, and respond to the needs of clients to meet or exceed their expectations and provide high quality care.
- **Foster teamwork:** work cooperatively and effectively with others to set goals, resolve problems, and make decisions.
- **Lead:** positively inspire others to achieve results that are in the best interest of Ascendigo.
- **Make decisions:** assess situations to determine the importance, urgency and risks, and make clear decisions which are timely and in the best interests of Ascendigo.
- **Organize:** set priorities, develop a schedule to accomplish required tasks monitor progress toward goals, and track details, data, information, and activities.
- **Solve problems:** assess problems situations to identify courses, gather and process relevant information, generate possible solutions, and make recommendations and/or solve the problem.
- **Be Flexible:** our work often requires a level of flexibility based on the needs and goals of our clients.
- **Express a Willingness to Learn:** we are all Leaders and are learning every day, and we welcome all applicants who wish to learn and grow with us.