

Windrush Farm Client Manual

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Letter from the Windrush Staff

Dear Client,

Thank you for taking the time to read this manual, in which you will find information pertinent to your experience as a client at Windrush Farm.

Our goal is to offer a positive experience that addresses each client's strengths and builds opportunities that enhance client goals. It is our wish to challenge our clients to fulfill their goals and even exceed their expectations both physically and mentally.

Please familiarize yourselves with our policies and procedures. We would like your input as we continuously evolve as a premier riding facility. We greatly appreciate your interest and time. You are a valuable resource and an important voice to be heard.

Best regards,

The Windrush Farm Staff

Windrush Farm Mission Statement

Windrush expands and enriches the personal, emotional and physical abilities of all those we serve by partnering with our horses and the environment.

Windrush: Experience, Expertise, Education and Excellence

Experience

Since 1964, we have been transforming the lives of our clients and students. Windrush is one of the first therapeutic riding centers in the United States and a PATH Intl. premier accredited facility.

Expertise

Our special team of horses, carefully trained and led by our in-house professionals, work together every day to challenge our clients to push beyond their perceived limits in a safe and controlled environment. Windrush trainers, volunteers and staff members, many of whom have been with us for decades, are committed to providing the best services to our students in the most compassionate manner.

Education

We are educators who focus on providing our clients and community with customized and comprehensive programs to meet their ever-expanding needs. We aim to facilitate the advancement of equine-assisted activities and therapies through educational opportunities offered by our team of skilled, licensed and PATH Intl. certified professionals. It is our goal to be the benchmark by which other centers are measured, thus, we continually evaluate our programs to ensure that we are operating to the highest and safest standards.

Excellence

At Windrush, we aim to promote and celebrate excellence in all that we do. The numerous accolades we have received from the industry and our community are testament to our position as a leader in the field. However, it is the achievements of our students that we cherish so deeply. We are proud to have enhanced the quality of life for thousands of individuals and families, and how we have helped build a connection between our horses and clients.

“All of us are more capable than we think”

About Us: Who We Are and Where We Come From

In 1964, equipped with the firm belief that “all of us, disabled or not, are capable of more than we think,” accomplished horsewoman Marjorie V. Kittredge put six learning-disabled and emotionally challenged students from the Gifford School in Cambridge on her own horses and founded Windrush Farm, one of the first therapeutic riding centers in the United States.

Since then Windrush has expanded to provide equine-assisted activities to children and adults with a wide range of psychological, emotional, physical, learning, and developmental disabilities. We aim to promote and celebrate excellence in all that we do, and continually evaluate our programs to insure that we are operating to the highest and safest standards. We have achieved Premier Therapeutic Riding Center accreditation from the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH Intl.), hosted the Massachusetts Special Olympics Equestrian Fall Tournament since 1992, and been repeatedly named a Massachusetts Horse Farm of Distinction. The numerous accolades we have received are testament to our position as a leader in the field, but it is the achievements of our students and the opportunities they have received that we value the most.

In the years since 1964, we have been proud to help thousands of individuals with disabilities sit taller, grow stronger and become more confident. Each year more than 500 invaluable volunteers invest tens of thousands of hours of their time in the Windrush programs. Thanks to them, each year we can continue to provide services more than 2000 individuals, including children and adults with disabilities, veterans and military-connected families, survivors of human trafficking, and underserved youth.

Our Horses

The Windrush horses are invaluable educators and therapy partners. Therapeutic horse activities have long been shown to benefit the educational, physical, emotional and social activities of humans. A horse doesn't care what we look like, or if we can see, if we just got out of a wheelchair, or what happened to us at school or home today. Horses live in the moment. They respond to gentleness, kindness and patience, not appearances or expectations. Gaining the trust and respect of a 1000-pound animal takes self-control and builds self-esteem. Taking care of an animal, especially a large animal, teaches children and adults to accept responsibilities. Learning to work with and ride a horse requires determination and perseverance. Our horses encourage their riders to stretch, to improve posture, to correct balance, to work on coordination. Their rhythmic movement can soothe spasms and strengthen muscles. They can carry our clients outside to feel the fresh air, the sunshine, the breeze. Horses offer the opportunity to sit tall, feel powerful, have fun, be in charge, be free.

The horses at Windrush Farm come from a variety of backgrounds. Some have had careers as show horses; others were used for dressage or trail riding. Some are on loan, some are donated, and others are purchased. Each has his or her own unique personality and needs. We try to choose horses that have an exceptional level of tolerance, a gentle and well-mannered temperament, general good health, and the sound rhythmic movement important to therapeutic riding. Horses that meet the criteria are accepted on a two-month trial, placed in an extensive training program, and gradually introduced to classes as our instructors continue to evaluate their progress.

Our horses receive the very best care. Each horse is on a schedule to assure good overall health. This includes veterinary care, hoof care, tooth care and a de-worming program. In addition, each horse's work schedule is tracked and recorded in compliance with PATH Intl. standards and guidelines.

Our Programs

Windrush offers weekly mounted and unmounted lesson programs during the school year. Most classes are held Monday - Friday, 8:30 - 6:30, although we do have limited and occasional special classes on the weekends. There are three regular sessions during the school year -- fall (September- December), winter (January & February), and spring (March- June). During the summer, we conduct special five-day programs.

Hours of Operation

The Windrush Farm office is open Monday through Friday from 9:00am to 5:00pm. The office is closed on weekends and on major holidays. There is limited coverage during public school vacations. We follow the North Andover Public School System for weather closing and delays.

Payment

Lessons are prepaid on a per session basis. The number of weeks in each session will be determined and communicated to you prior to the session start date, but generally average 14 weeks for Fall, 7 weeks for Winter and 15 weeks for Spring. A nonrefundable deposit is required at the time of sign up for each client. This deposit will be applied to the tuition due for the session. If for any reason Windrush is unable to provide a spot at the agreed upon day and time, the deposit will be refunded to you in full.

The tuition for each session is due by September 1 for Fall, January 1 for Winter and March 1 for Spring, unless a payment plan has been established through an individual arrangement with our business office. If a client signs up after the session starts, payment is due prior to the first lesson. Windrush Farm reserves the right to remove any client from the schedule who has a balance that is past due.

A fee of \$50 will be added to each invoice if not paid by the established due dates or if a payment plan is utilized.

Fees

Current fees are as follows (and are subject to change). Fees listed below are rates for each individual lesson, when a full session package is purchased.

If you choose to pay as you ride (PAR client), please add an additional \$20 to the amounts listed below.

Therapeutic Riding *(for clients with a diagnosis and completing the Physician's Statement)*

Group Lesson <i>(one hour)</i>	.....	\$50
Semi-Private <i>(one hour)</i>	.....	\$60
Private <i>(half hour)</i>	.....	\$60
Private <i>(one hour)</i>	.....	\$80
Unmounted Group <i>(one hour)</i>	.....	\$50
Unmounted Private <i>(one hour)</i>	.....	\$60

Recreational Riding *(for clients without a diagnosis)*

Group Lesson <i>(one hour)</i>	.....	\$60
Semi-Private <i>(one hour)</i>	.....	\$70
Private <i>(half hour)</i>	.....	\$70
Private <i>(one hour)</i>	.....	\$90
Unmounted Group <i>(one hour)</i>	.....	\$50
Unmounted Private <i>(one hour)</i>	.....	\$60

Barn Buddies *(unmounted session with a volunteer and a horse, working in the barn)*

Barn Buddies <i>(one hour)</i>	\$20
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Occupational Therapy on Horseback *(formerly known as Hippotherapy)*

Private <i>(45 minutes) (horse fee only)</i>	\$50
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Length of Lesson Changes

For any group lesson where only one client is present in a given week, the lesson will run for half an hour that week.

Fee Change

Our pricing is based on a group of 3 or more clients per class, referred to as a Group Lesson. In the event that the number of clients falls below 3 at any point during the session, the following will happen:

Windrush will work diligently on filling each group lesson to include 3 or more clients. By the 4th week of a class at less than 3 clients, Windrush reserves the right to:

1. Adjust the pricing and bill the client to reflect the appropriate non-group rates (semi-private or private) for all future classes,
2. Reassign the client to another group lesson, or
3. Cancel the lesson and refund any unused future lesson fees.

Windrush will work with each individual client to determine the best/most appropriate option.

Cancellations and Weather Closings

If you are unable to attend your class, notification must be made by calling the Windrush office at **978.682.7855**. Sufficient notice is needed so that we may communicate with the instructors, barn staff and volunteers.

Refunds, make-up classes or credits are not provided for any cancellations by a client* or due to weather closings. If an individual class is cancelled due to bad weather 3 or more times, Windrush will provide a credit to be used during the next riding session for the third, fourth, fifth, etc. cancelled class(es) during that session.

In the event Windrush must cancel a lesson for any other reason, we will attempt to schedule a make-up class. All reasonable attempts will be made to notify clients in a timely manner of the cancellation and make-up day and time. Windrush will provide a credit or refund for any class cancelled that is not offered a make-up.

The session charge is a non-refundable flat fee, and will only be carried over to the next session due to the bad weather clause listed above. Windrush cannot offer refunds or make up classes for lessons missed due to incomplete paperwork, vacations, illness, or scheduling conflicts on the part of clients. (Lesson fees help to cover operating expenses).

Windrush Farm follows the North Andover Public School System for weather closings and holidays, but not for election days or school administrative closings. In the case of a 2-hour school delay, Windrush will open at 10am. All classes scheduled before 10am will be cancelled.

**Refunds will only be offered for a client cancellation due to a serious medical condition, (i.e. not a common cold/flu) which is accompanied by a doctor's note.*

Windrush Farm Class Closings

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- February School Vacation
- April School Vacation
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Columbus Day
- Veterans Day
- Day before Thanksgiving
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve Day
- Christmas Day
- Winter Holiday Break

Policies and Procedures

Age and Weight Policy

The minimum age for therapeutic riding at Windrush Farm is 6. There is no maximum age. The only requirement is that the person is able to physically and safely perform the activities required in the therapeutic riding classes.

The maximum weight for riding a horse is 185 pounds. We have many forms of unmounted programming for those over 185 pounds.

Precautions and Contraindications

Windrush Farm reserves the right to deny services to any individual if there are concerns for the client's safety and/or safety of the volunteers, staff, horses, or for other reasons.

Dress Code

Dress appropriately for the weather and wear layers if needed, including gloves, coats, and hats. Do not wear dangling jewelry. Boots with a small heel are ideal, but any closed-toed shoes with a flat sole or small heel are appropriate.

Riding Helmets

Windrush has riding helmets for our clients. If you bring your own riding helmet, it must be ASTM/SEI approved and less than five-years old from the date of manufacture. If you are unsure, an instructor would be happy to look at it for you. Only horse-back riding helmets are acceptable. Helmets should fit snugly around the head, not so tight to cause discomfort, should stay in place on the forehead with quick head movement. The chin strap should fit snugly under the chin so helmet stays in place.

Smoking, Alcohol & Drug Policy

Windrush Farm is a smoke-free environment. There is no smoking outside or inside any part of our property. If you need to smoke, please do so in your car and extinguish and dispose of your smoking material in your car. There is a no-tolerance policy with regards to alcohol and other controlled substances. Staff reserves the right to require anyone to leave the premises if they appear to be impaired.

Dog Policy

We are all animal lovers here at the farm, and appreciate the fact that dogs need to stretch their legs and get some exercise. In order to keep our clients safe, our horses content and our property as clean as possible, we ask dog owners to follow our policies:

- Please keep all dogs on a leash at all times.
- Dogs may only be walked on the road and on the trails – please no dogs in the parking area or farm yard (with the exception of Service Dogs).
- Please clean up and remove any dog waste.
- Please do **not** approach any horses with your dog.

Non-discrimination Policy

Windrush Farm provides programs to all people regardless of race, ethnicity, color, religion, gender, nationality or economic class.

Dismissal Policy

Windrush Farm reserves the right to discharge a client from the program for health or safety reasons, related to them or those around them, at any time.

Safety

Safety must always be taken into consideration when working with horses. Volunteers are taught emergency procedures and accident prevention in the case of a fallen client, a hurt/sick horse, or an unsafe environment for all parties. We will also teach you to understand a horse's body language, how to handle horses in different situations (such as shying or kicking) and proper safety procedures. Please inform staff immediately of any concerns regarding the behavior of the horses such as biting, kicking, etc.

Volunteer Information for Clients

Our volunteers come from many different places some are here representing their schools, their work organizations, or are simply community members. But no matter where they are coming from, they are here to share the love of our horses and clients. Our volunteers generally start at age 14 and have attended a volunteer training session, which goes over the policies and procedures as well as what to do in an emergency for both horses and clients. In addition to the initial training, our volunteers are highly encouraged to continue their training throughout their time at the farm.

Top Ten Tips for Clients

1. Approach a horse at his shoulder so as not to surprise him. Speak softly to him when approaching. Never run, make sudden movements, shout or scream around horses, as this can scare them!
2. Always cross tie a horse in the stall so that he is in a fixed position for grooming and saddling. Never walk under the neck of a horse. Never walk under or over a lead shank that is securing a horse's head. This can create a dangerous situation for you, and we don't want that!
3. Never tie a horse by the reins or the bit or leave the reins hanging on the ground for you or the horse to step on. These all create a possible safety or injury situation for the horse and human. Horse mouths are very sensitive and we don't want to accidently harm their mouths with undue pressure. At Windrush, we put the halter over the bridle so horses can be secured by the halter instead of the bit.
4. Never kneel down on the ground when grooming the legs of a horse. We want to make sure the horse knows that you are down there and have him feel your body against his, so standing next to him when grooming is best.
5. Never wrap the lead rope or reins around your hand, wrist, or any body part. If the horse gets scared, we don't want you to be trapped or potentially hurt.
6. Always check the tack for safety and fit before tacking the horse. Just like the proper size shoe for our own feet, the horses tack needs to be comfortable for them too! This includes securing the saddle with the girth at all times so the saddle does not have an opportunity to slip and fall. Please ask an instructor or staff member if you have any questions regarding tack fit.
7. Always recheck the girth for tightness before mounting. We want to make sure that the saddle stays snug and keeps the client upright! When it is time to mount or dismount, only instructors mount and dismount clients *unless* a volunteer or family member has been specifically trained to assist. Independent clients, please wait for the instructor to give permission before mounting or dismounting.
8. Please do not hand feed the Windrush horses, **ever!** Treats can be dropped off with the barn staff and will be given to the horse at dinner time. Horses have very sensitive digestive systems and we monitor their diets very closely. Thank you for your help in keeping our horses healthy and happy!
9. Please refrain from entering areas marked "staff only" unless directed to do so by authorized personnel.
10. **Always** ask when in doubt about anything. No question is unimportant or mundane.