



Windrush Farm Client Manual

Fall 2023

Our Mission

To promote confidence, independence, and well-being in children and adults with physical, cognitive, or emotional challenges through therapeutic riding and horse-related programs.

Windrush Farm
479 Lacy Street
North Andover, MA 01845
p: 978.682.7855
f: 888.642.4907
w: windrushfarm.org
e: programs@windrushfarm.org

Welcome to Windrush Farm!

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 yourself with our policies and procedures and join us in our efforts to continuously evolve as a premier therapeutic riding facility. We greatly appreciate your interest and time. We could not do it without you!

All our best,

The Windrush Farm Staff

Our History

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 clients 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 Farm 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 ensure 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 clients 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, approximately 500 invaluable volunteers invest tens of thousands of hours of their time in the Windrush Farm programs. Thanks to them, each year we can continue to provide services to hundreds of individuals, including children and adults with disabilities, veterans and military-connected families, clients living with dementia, clients recovering from addiction, and underserved youth.

Our Horses

The Windrush Farm horses are invaluable educators and partners. Therapeutic horse activities have long been shown to be beneficial to the educational, physical, emotional, and social activities of humans. A horse does not care what we look like, 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 their posture, to correct their balance, and 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, and 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 and other equine assisted services. 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 Farm offers weekly mounted and unmounted lesson programs during the school year. Most classes are held Monday through Friday, 8:30am-6:30pm, 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. We welcome new programming ideas and invite creative one day special event suggestions.

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.

Cancellations and Weather Closings

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

If you are unable to attend your class, notification must be made by calling the Windrush Farm office at 978.682.7855. Sufficient notice of at least two hours 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 three or more times, Windrush Farm 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 Farm 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 Farm 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 Farm cannot offer refunds or make-up classes for lessons missed due to incomplete paperwork, vacation, illness, or scheduling conflicts on the part of clients. (Lesson fees help to cover operating expenses).

**Refunds will be offered only for a client cancellation due to a serious medical condition, which is accompanied by a doctor's note.*

Windrush Farm Class Closings

Below is a list of the holidays in which Windrush Farm does not hold classes:

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

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 averages 14 weeks for fall, 7 weeks for winter and 14 weeks for spring. The tuition for each session is due by September 1 for fall, December 1 for winter, and February 1 for spring. For any session, you may request a payment plan through an individual arrangement with our business office. A \$75 fee will be added to each invoice not paid by the due date or if a payment plan extending beyond the due date is utilized.

You will be notified via e-mail when registration is open for the next session. To secure a spot in your desired lesson, payment is required. Placement in lessons is on a first come, first served basis. Payment in full or a deposit of at least \$250 with an agreed upon payment plan is required to secure a spot.

Any deposit payment will be applied to the tuition due for the session. If for any reason Windrush Farm is unable to provide a spot at the agreed upon day and time, the deposit will be refunded in full.

Payment in full or a deposit with an agreed upon payment plan is required prior to the first lesson for all individual clients.

**Windrush Farm reserves the right to remove any client from the schedule who has a balance that is past due.*

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.

Therapeutic Mounted and Unmounted Equine Assisted Activities

(for clients with a diagnosis and completed physician's statement)

Group Lesson <i>(one hour)</i>	.....	\$70
Semi-Private <i>(one hour)</i>	.....	\$80
Private <i>(half hour)</i>	.....	\$80
Private <i>(one hour)</i>	.....	\$100

Recreational Mounted and Unmounted Equine Assisted Activities

(for clients without a diagnosis)

Group Lesson <i>(one hour)</i>	.....	\$80
Semi-Private <i>(one hour)</i>	.....	\$90
Private <i>(half hour)</i>	.....	\$90
Private <i>(one hour)</i>	.....	\$100

Length of Lesson Changes

Normally, group lessons are for one hour. 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 Changes

Windrush Farm offers group lessons as our programming model. Exceptions are occasionally made for special circumstances. Our group lesson pricing is based on 3 or more clients per class, referred to as a Group Lesson. In the event the number of clients falls below 3 at any point during the session, or if we start a class with less than 3, Windrush Farm 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 Farm 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, or
2. Reassign the client to another group lesson, or
3. Cancel the lesson and refund any unused future lesson fees, or
4. Cancel the lesson and place client on the waitlist, utilizing the unused funds as a deposit for future lessons.

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

Policies and Procedures

Non-discrimination Policy

Windrush Farm provides programs to all people regardless of race, ethnicity, nationality, color, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, economic class, or age.

Age and Weight Policy

The minimum age for riding at Windrush Farm is 6 years old. There is no maximum age. The only requirement is that the person can physically and safely perform the activities required in the 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 health and/or safety of the clients, volunteers, staff, horses, or for other reasons.

Riding Helmets

Windrush Farm suggests that all clients bring their own horseback riding helmet to every lesson. The helmet must be ASTM/SEI certified and must be five years or newer from the date of manufacture. (The date of manufacture can be found under the soft padding inside the helmet). When purchasing a riding helmet, please ask for help to ensure proper fit. Helmets should fit snugly around the head, not so tight to cause discomfort, and should stay in place on the forehead with quick head movement. The chin strap should fit snugly under the chin and the side adjustments should be directly under the ears. If you are unsure of the fit, an instructor will be happy to look at it for you. Windrush Farm does have some riding helmets to share with clients who are unable to bring their own.

Dress Code

Please wear appropriate footwear and clothing. Long pants and boots with a small heel are ideal, but any closed-toed shoes with a flat sole or small heel are appropriate. Be prepared to be inside or outside in any weather. During winter, think layers, hand-warmers, and good gloves. During warmer weather, use sunscreen, bug spray, and bring water. Do not wear dangling jewelry.

Smoking and Alcohol Policy

Windrush Farm is a smoke-free environment. There is no smoking outside or inside on any part of our property. There is a no-tolerance policy regarding alcohol and other controlled substances. Staff reserves the right to require an individual to leave the premises if they appear to be impaired.

Cell Phone Policy

We ask that you do not use your cell phone while you are in class with us at Windrush Farm. We encourage our staff, clients, and volunteers to be fully present and in the moment, giving your horse your full attention. If you have an emergency that may need your attention, please discuss this with your instructor before the start of class.

Dog Policy

We are all animal lovers here at Windrush Farm, but we ask that you do not bring your dog to the farm. If you have an extenuating circumstance, please call the office to discuss.

Conduct, Behavior, and Dismissal

Windrush Farm reserves the right to discharge a client from the program for any conduct, 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. Please inform staff immediately of any concerns regarding the behavior of the horses such as biting, kicking, etc. Please respect the instructor at all times and follow all directions given.

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. Windrush Farm supports the idea of life-long learning and welcomes your thoughts and ideas.

Important Guidelines for Clients

- Approach a horse at his shoulder so as not to surprise him. Speak softly to him when approaching. Never run, make sudden movements, or shout/scream around horses, as this can scare them.
- 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 do not want that.
- 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 do not want to accidentally harm their mouths with undue pressure. At Windrush Farm, we put the halter over the bridle so horses can be secured by the halter instead of the bit.
- Never kneel 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.
- Never wrap the lead rope or reins around your hand, wrist, or any body part. If the horse gets scared, we do not want you to be trapped or potentially hurt.
- 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.
- Please do not hand feed the Windrush Farm 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.
- Please refrain from entering areas marked "staff only" unless directed to do so by authorized personnel.
- Always ask when in doubt about anything. No question is unimportant or mundane.

Thank you for choosing Windrush Farm!
For more information, contact us at any time:



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