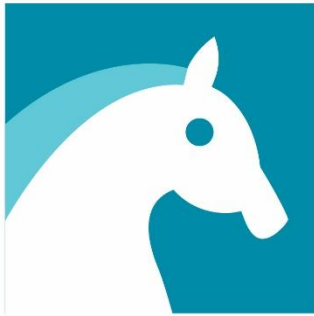


HOSPITAL FOR SPECIAL CARE



# Manes & Motions Therapeutic Riding Center

## ***PARTICIPANT AND PARENT HANDBOOK***

Manes & Motions Therapeutic Riding Center, Inc.  
874 Millbrook Road, Middletown, CT 06457  
860-685-0008 | [www.hfsc.org](http://www.hfsc.org)

## **Welcome to Manes & Motions Therapeutic Riding Center!**

The Participant and Parent Handbook is designed to introduce you to our community and provide you with information about participating in our Program. No handbook can answer all the questions you might have about our policies and programs. We encourage you to talk with the staff if you have questions about the content of this handbook or your program participation at Manes & Motions.

Manes & Motions reserves the right to modify the policies in this handbook without prior notice. The policies described in this handbook replace all prior policies and handbooks provided.

Please read through this handbook carefully and sign and return the last page acknowledging your receipt. Please contact the Center if you have any questions.

### **MISSION**

Founded in 1999, Manes & Motions is a not-for-profit organization and a wholly owned subsidiary of Hospital for Special Care. Its mission is to provide benefits in the areas of education, sports and recreation, through the use of equine-assisted services for the purpose of contributing positively to the well-being of individuals living with physical, emotional and/or cognitive disabilities.

As a Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH Intl.) fully accredited operating center, we follow PATH Intl. standards that exist to provide consistent safety provisions for participants, highly-regarded facility and program management processes and humane treatment for working with equines.

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS**

**Adaptive Horseback Riding:** A mounted program designed to teach individuals with physical, cognitive or emotional challenges the skills necessary to ride a horse. Sessions may include exercises, horsemanship skill development, trail riding and games on horseback. An unmounted learning session is typically included each semester to incorporate horse care.

**Unmounted Horsemanship:** Sessions focus on skills related to horse communication, safe horse handling and the basics of good care including grooming, first aid, feeding, etc. This program allows participants to form a unique bond with the horse by learning how to communicate and work with the horse on the ground.

**Equine-Assisted Learning:** The nature of horses and how they interact with humans provides us with valuable life lessons. The focus of EAL is promoting self-awareness, developing life skills and building confidence, which is accomplished through experiential learning activities with our horses and professional staff. Each session carries a theme such as reading non-verbal language, developing empathy, trusting relationships, and critical thinking skills. Sessions are customized to meet identified goals of participants and range from 30 minute private weekly sessions to half day group programs.

**Horse Adventure! Summer Program:** Designed to bring children with special needs together to promote acceptance of self and others, provide team building experiences, and encourage self-expression while having fun learning to ride and care for horses. Previous riding experience is not required.

**Horses for Heroes:** A horsemanship program designed specifically for Veterans which builds upon the horse-human bond and its effects on healing, building trust and improving relationships.

Veterans of any age can participate, and prior experience with horses is not required.

**Horse Show Days:** Held each spring, participants will have an opportunity to showcase their skills for family and friends, celebrating their successes and receiving a ribbon!

**Field Trips:** Open to school groups and community organizations from 1-2 hours in length.

## **DELIVERY OF SERVICE**

Manes & Motions operates on a year-round schedule to provide consistent programming and support for all participants.

During the winter, spring, and fall seasons, sessions are held Tuesday through Saturday. In the summer, sessions are offered Monday through Friday.

The program is divided into four semesters each year. Semester lengths vary to accommodate seasonal programming needs and range from 7 to 14 weeks.

Manes & Motions is closed for scheduled breaks and for the following holidays:

Memorial Day - Independence Day - Labor Day - Thanksgiving Day - Christmas Day - New Year's Day

Manes & Motions considers the characteristics, age, riding level, and goals of all participants and will make recommendations on whether participants will be in a group or private lesson when scheduling. Private lessons are 30 minutes in length and semi-private and group lessons are 45 minutes in length. The lesson includes time allotted for mounting and dismounting for those that ride.

Lessons are conducted by PATH Intl. certified instructors. Instructional staff develop individualized horsemanship and supporting skills, goals and objectives that are created collaboratively with each participant and their family. Progress is noted quarterly and shared with families at least twice per year.

Parents, guardians, or caregivers must remain on the premises during lessons if the participant is under the age of 16, or if the participant is under the care or supervision of a parent, guardian or caregiver. There are designated indoor and outdoor observation areas available.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

Manes & Motions engages volunteers to support individuals in their horsemanship experience, to care for our facility, and assist with events/fundraising/development. Volunteers may use techniques prescribed by the instructor to ensure safety and promote skill development. Volunteers are carefully screened by staff and submit to a background check. They attend a General Orientation and receive specific training for their assigned role(s).

## **PARTICIPATION CRITERIA**

Services are open to individuals living with special needs. Eligibility for participation is based upon an individual's ability to participate meaningfully and safely, provided the necessary resources are available including: an instructor, horse, volunteers and class availability which meets individuals' needs.

As a fully accredited PATH Intl. operating center, Manes & Motions fully ascribes to the Precautions and Contraindications as recommended by the Medical Committee of PATH Intl. Therefore, our professional staff provides initial and ongoing evaluations for all prospective and active participants.

To abide by our commitment to provide services in the safest manner possible and to determine if therapeutic riding is appropriate, the program staff will evaluate all participants in accordance with our program guidelines.

### **Mounted Program**

- Physically able to mount and dismount safely with assistance
- Physically able to sit symmetrically with torso upright and legs astride the horse during dynamic movement
- Physically able to maintain head and neck position independently
- Weigh less than 200lbs. Height and weight will be measure on-site at the time of assessment.
- Able to tolerate wearing a riding safety helmet
- Ability to accommodate the movement of the horse without pain

## All Programs

- Minimum age of 4 years or older living with special needs
- Complete an intake assessment where trained staff evaluate eligibility
- Does not exhibit physical or behavioral conditions that are contraindicated by PATH Intl. (see Medical Form)
- Actively engage in a positive manner that is safe for self, the horses and others.
- Have current signed and dated paperwork – including Registration and Release Form, Medical History Form, and Annual Update Form
- Benefit physically, emotionally, socially and/or cognitively from services provided at Manes & Motions
- Ability to express pain or discomfort

## DENIAL OR DISMISSAL FROM PROGRAM

Due to the nature of adaptive riding and other equine-assisted services, some individuals may not be eligible for participation in Manes & Motions programs. During the evaluation process, it may be determined that a program is contraindicated or otherwise not appropriate. Participation may also be discontinued if it is deemed unsafe or unsuitable. These decisions are made with the safety of the participant, horses, volunteers, and staff in mind, and in accordance with PATH International Operating Center Guidelines.

Participants may be denied or dismissed from program for a variety of reasons including but not limited to:

- Participant exceeds the weight limit (may be eligible for unmounted activities)
- Safety concerns due to medical conditions, recent surgery or injury, seizure disorders, significant pain or fatigue, allergies, or the use of medications that could impair balance, cognition, or behavior.
- Uncontrolled, unsafe, or inappropriate behavior toward self, others, or horses, including disruptive actions, threatening or bullying behavior, or use of profanity or abusive language.
- The program does not have an appropriate equine to meet the needs of the participant
- Changes in the participant's medical, physical, cognitive, emotional or behavioral condition or development of a contraindicated condition
- Unwillingness or inability to follow instruction or program guidelines
- Inability to wear required safety equipment (e.g., helmet, proper footwear)
- Use of or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs while on the property
- Violation of program policies, procedures, or legal requirements, including breach of confidentiality/HIPAA violations, failure to update paperwork annually, excessive tardiness or absences, or failure to submit payment as agreed.

## EQUINE CODE OF ETHICS

Manes & Motions horses provide a special service and in return receive the quality care and consideration from us they deserve. Each horse is screened carefully. Only a small percentage of horses qualify to be a therapy horse due to the level of patience, tolerance and training required. As their advocates, we consider their physical abilities and other needs when scheduling activities. Prior to serving in program, each horse is assessed for signs of injury, illness or discomfort and would not be asked to work when they are uncomfortable or unfit. Each horse has an established carrying weight limit, which is followed. Alternative activities to riding such as Unmounted Horsemanship and Equine Assisted Learning may be offered based on horse availability and limitations. We appreciate your understanding as we try to serve our participants within the limits of our herd.

## HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

Participants are required to submit the Application paperwork and have his/her physician complete and sign the Participant's Medical History and Physician's Statement prior to receiving services.

Should the physical health or emotional wellness of a participant change at any time - this includes, but is not limited to changes in medication, weight, diagnoses, and surgeries- staff must be notified immediately and an updated Physician's Statement must be completed.

Participants are required to complete an Update Form annually and a Medical History and Physician's Statement at least every two years. It is the participant's responsibility to ensure paperwork is current. Failure to comply may result in a temporary suspension from the program until updated paperwork is received.

For individuals with Downs Syndrome, an initial negative x-ray report and annual medical clearance from a licensed physician that includes a neurological exam that specifically denies any symptoms consistent with atlanto-axial instability is required.

## **REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT**

An assessment is required for all new participants, as well as for returning riders who have not participated in the program for one (1) year or more or who have experienced a change in their health status. A fee of \$60 will be due at the time of the assessment. If the participant is immediately placed on the lesson schedule, the assessment fee may be applied to the first session payment.

Session dates and fee schedules are outlined in the annual calendar, which is posted on the website and available at the front desk.

Registration for upcoming sessions opens six (6) weeks prior to the start of each session. Registration forms are available in the program office and will be distributed via email once registration opens.

Payment for each session is due by the date indicated on the registration form. Enrollment will be placed on hold until all required paperwork and fees have been received.

To secure a spot in the program, completed registration materials and payment must be submitted by the stated due date. If materials are not received on time, the participant's scheduled slot may be offered to individuals on the waitlist.

Payments may be made by cash, check, or credit card. Participants with an outstanding balance from a previous session will not be scheduled until the balance is paid in full.

## **ATTENDANCE AND CANCELLATION POLICY**

**Participant Cancellations:** Once enrolled in a session, participants are expected to make every effort to attend their scheduled lessons. Due to the complexity of coordinating riders, horses, staff, and volunteers, refunds or make-up lessons are not provided for participant absences.

Exceptions may be considered on a case-by-case basis for extended illness or surgery with appropriate medical documentation.

- If a participant is unable to attend a lesson, the Center must be notified as soon as the absence is anticipated, but no less than four (4) hours prior to the scheduled lesson time.
- To report an absence, please call 860-685-0008 and select option 4. **Please do not email staff.**
- If a participant must withdraw from the program mid-session, staff should be notified as soon as possible. Any credits will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

**Cancelation by Manes & Motions:** There may be times when Manes & Motions must cancel lessons due to unavoidable circumstances such as equine health concerns, unsafe weather conditions, or staffing limitations.

- When Manes & Motions cancels a lesson, a credit will be issued and applied toward future services.
- If a participant chooses to cancel due to weather while Manes & Motions remains open, no credit will be provided.

**Returning to Program After an Injury or Illness:** Any participant returning after an extended illness (defined as four or more consecutive missed lessons) or following an injury requiring medical intervention must submit a doctor's note clearing the participant to return and outlining any physical limitations or restrictions.

When necessary, the Program Coordinator or designee will review the physician's note in consultation with the Employee Health nurse to determine whether the participant can safely return with the identified restrictions.

Participants may return to the program with restrictions only when approved by Manes & Motions.

**Late Arrivals:** Participants are expected to arrive on time and prepared for their scheduled lesson. Lessons require coordinated scheduling of horses, instructors, staff and volunteers to ensure safety and program effectiveness.

- If a participant arrives more than 10 minutes late, the lesson may be shortened or forfeited at the instructor's discretion to ensure safety and program flow.
- If a participant arrives 15 minutes late or more, the lesson is forfeited, regardless of whether prior notice was given.
- Late arrivals are not eligible for refunds, credits or make-up lessons.

**No Shows:** A no-show is defined as a participant who does not attend a scheduled lesson and fails to provide advance notification (more than 4 hours) within the required timeframe.

- No shows are not eligible for refunds, credits or make-up lessons.
- Two or more no-shows may result in loss of the participant's scheduled lesson time.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

It is understood that any information discussed, heard, or seen related to any Manes & Motions participant may be private and will not be released to any other person or entity except in accordance with requirements of applicable law, professional obligations and/or by the participant's or the participant's parent or legal guardian's authorization. Any and all information with respect to Manes & Motions participants is confidential and will not be shared with anyone without the written consent of the participant or their parent/legal guardian in the case of a minor. It is understood that any person that shares any private participant information with an unauthorized party, may be asked to leave the Manes & Motions property and may be discharged from any or all activities on Manes & Motions premises for sharing any private participant information with an unauthorized party. For purposes of this Confidentiality Statement, the term "private participant information" shall mean any Manes & Motions participant's name, diagnosis, health status and/or the fact that they are participating in services at Manes & Motions.

## **ATTIRE**

Participants are required to wear appropriate attire for all sessions. Participants may be turned away if proper attire is not worn.

**Riding Helmet** - All participants must purchase and wear an ASTM/SEI approved riding helmet with the chin harness secured when riding or working with horses on the ground. Due to material breakdown it is required that helmets worn in lessons be replaced every five years from date of manufacture. Any helmet involved in a fall should be replaced immediately.

**Long pants** - such as jeans, heavy cotton pants or riding breeches are required for riding (even during summer months). Nylon pants, shorts and leggings are not permitted as they are too slippery against the saddle and can cause discomfort.

**Closed toe shoes** - Participants are required to wear hard soled shoes or boots with a heel no higher than ½ inch. Open toed shoes, sandals and slippers are not allowed in the barn, arena or when near horses.

Participants should dress appropriately for the weather (ex. gloves in the winter, breathable fabrics in summer).

## **PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

Manes & Motions is not responsible for lost or misplaced personal belongings. Participants are encouraged to keep valuables at home or secure them properly during sessions.

## **ASSUMPTION OF RISK**

### **Connecticut General Statutes**

**Sec. 52-557p. (Formerly Sec. 52-577p). Assumption of risk by person engaged in recreational equestrian activities.** Each person engaged in recreational equestrian activities shall assume the risk and legal responsibility for any injury to his person or property arising out of the hazards inherent in equestrian sports, unless the injury was proximately caused by the negligence of the person providing the horse or horses to the individual engaged in recreational equestrian activities or the failure to guard or warn against a dangerous condition, use, structure or activity by the person providing the horse or horses or his agents or employees.

## **VISITORS**

Manes & Motions welcomes visitors to our facility. We ask that you please call ahead to schedule a tour so we can ensure a staff member will be available to meet with you. Visitors are required to check in at the program office upon arrival to sign a general release of liability form. Visitors must be accompanied by a Manes & Motions employee or volunteer during their visit. Children under the age of 16 must be supervised at all times.

## **SPECTATOR CODE OF CONDUCT**

We have found that for both safety and the accomplishment of the riding lesson objectives, family involvement during the actual lesson time should be kept to a minimum. Parents and caregivers are welcome to watch the lessons from the identified seating areas. We ask that you remain quiet and refrain from distracting behavior such as calling the participant's name, waving, taking photos, coaching from the sidelines and loud conversations. These actions are detrimental to the safety of all participants and horses and are disruptive to the class.

## **CELLPHONES**

Please refrain from talking on your cellphone and set your phone to silent or vibrate while you are on property.

## **PICTURES/VIDEO**

Our program follows the guidelines set forth by HIPAA to protect each participant's privacy. No one is permitted to photograph or video the class/other participants. If you would like to take pictures, please notify the instructor to allow time.

## **PARKING**

Dedicated parking is provided at the top of the hill, in front of and just beyond the indoor arena. The speed limit on the farm is 5 mph. PLEASE DRIVE SLOWLY AND ALLOW THE HORSES, PARTICIPANTS AND STAFF THE RIGHT OF WAY.

## **SAFETY PROCEDURES**

During every program lesson, whether mounted or unmounted, the instructor is in charge. All instructors are certified in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), automated external defibrillation (AED) and First Aid and have been trained to handle a variety of situations in the most appropriate way.

In all emergencies, the instructor is responsible for incident management. In the event of a fire, accident or medical emergency, staff will indicate to all participants, volunteers and families what is to be done to provide for the safety of all. If needed, emergency services of Police and Fire/Rescue will be summoned by the Instructor or designee.

### **Additional Rules**

- Participants are only allowed on the premises during their scheduled lesson time.
- Treats must not be offered to the horses at any time.
- Participants are required to use gentle hands and feet while near or on any horse.
- No running or screaming in the barn, arena or around the horses.
- For safety reasons, several areas around the farm are posted “Authorized Personnel Only”. Please observe these signs during your visits.
- Pets are not allowed on the grounds or in the barn. Pets can startle our horses, triggering their flight instinct.
- Manes & Motions is a smoke-free and tobacco free environment. Smoking is not permitted on any part of the property, including any buildings, the grounds and parked cars. This includes the use of e-cigarettes, vaping and chewing tobacco.
- Solicitation for any reason on Center property is not allowed.
- Children must be supervised by an adult at all times.
- Report all accidents, injuries, or hazardous conditions to a staff member as soon as possible.



## Participant and Parent Handbook Acknowledgment Form

Manes & Motions Therapeutic Riding Center, Inc. operates under guidelines established by the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH Intl). These guidelines allow us to provide quality equine experiences while ensuring safety for all participants.

By signing this form, I acknowledge I have received a copy of the Manes & Motions Participant Handbook and:

- I certify that I have read the contents of the handbook and understand how the information applies to my participation at Manes & Motions Therapeutic Riding Center.
- I will act in accordance with the policies and procedures outlined in the Participant Handbook as a condition of my participation in the program. I acknowledge that failure to comply with these policies may result in dismissal from the program.
- I understand that the policies and procedures contained in the Participant Handbook may be changed at the sole discretion of the Center at any time.
- I understand that revisions to the Participant Handbook may occur and that revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies.
- If I have questions regarding the Participant Handbook, I will immediately bring them to the attention of my instructor or the program coordinator.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature  
(if participant is under 18 years or otherwise incapable of signing)