



Maryland Therapeutic Riding, Inc.

RIDER MANUAL

Please read this 7 page Rider Manual and then sign and return the Receipt of Rider Manual form with your Rider Application Packet.



P. O. Box 6477, Annapolis, MD 21401
410-923-1187 (phone) 410-923-1432 (fax)
www.horsethatheal.org



Receipt of Rider Manual

Maryland Therapeutic Riding, Inc. operates under guidelines established by the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH Intl). These guidelines allow us to provide quality riding experiences while ensuring safety for all participants. Please read this manual thoroughly and sign and return this page, acknowledging your receipt. Please contact us at (410) 923-1187 if you have any questions. Thank you for your cooperation.

Rider's Name: _____
(please print)

I have read, understand and agree to comply to the rules and policies in Maryland Therapeutic Riding, Inc.'s Rider Manual. I acknowledge that failure to comply with MTR's policies may result in dismissal from the program.

Signature of Rider, Parent, Guardian, or Caregiver

Date

Program Descriptions

MTR offers two different types of programs as outlined below.

Therapeutic Riding

The Therapeutic Riding program is designed to teach individuals with physical and/or mental challenges the skills necessary to ride a horse, as well as the skills necessary to appropriately groom and tack a horse in preparation for riding. Skills taught will vary depending on the rider. Therapeutic Riding lessons are offered during all sessions and are taught by PATH INTL. Certified therapeutic riding instructors. A minimum of one barn lesson will be conducted per session. Refunds will not be provided for those who choose not to attend their barn lesson.

Although Maryland Therapeutic Riding strives to provide all clients with individual, 45 minute lessons, limited scheduling may require that MTR schedules group lessons on certain days and times. In the event a group lesson is necessary, the lesson time will be extended from 45 minutes to 1 hour. These lessons will be organized to group riders according to age, type of disability and level of riding skill. The maximum class size is three riders.

Hippotherapy

The Hippotherapy Program offers private occupational, physical, and speech therapy sessions with trained and licensed therapists. In this unique form of rehabilitation, therapists utilize the horse and the horse's movement in conjunction with traditional therapy techniques to improve functional outcomes. The horse is a wonderful motivator, and clients are usually very responsive in this type of treatment setting.

Occupational Therapy is designed for:

- Individuals who wish to improve motor control, balance, and attention to task, problem solving skills, cognition, and sensory processing.

Physical Therapy is designed for:

- Individuals who wish to increase their balance, strength, endurance, and flexibility, and improve their gross motor and mobility skills.

Speech Therapy is designed for:

- Individuals who wish to improve speech and language communication through augmentative communication, sign language and verbal modalities.

Program Policies and Procedures

Weather Cancellation Policy

Winter Weather:

On the day of lessons, please check the forecasted high for the day for Crownsville, Maryland. If the high temperature or wind chill for the day is 25 degrees or lower, lessons will be cancelled. A member of staff will call either the day before or the morning of lessons IF LESSONS ARE CANCELLED.

Summer Weather:

On the day of lessons, please check the forecasted high for the day for Crownsville, Maryland. If the high temperature or heat index for the day is 95 degrees or higher, lessons will be cancelled. A member of staff will call either the day before or the morning of lessons IF LESSONS ARE CANCELLED

Cancellations due to weather will also be made if MTR staff determines that the following conditions exist one hour prior to class:

- ~ Winds exceeding 25 MPH.
- ~ Tornado warnings, severe rain, hail, snow or thunderstorms.
- ~ Hazardous driving conditions - Anne Arundel County Schools are closed

MTR reserves the right to cancel lessons based on the availability of instructors, volunteers, and/or horses. Further, any factor or situation considered by MTR staff to be a threat to the safety of students, volunteers, staff, or horses is reason for cancellation.

Age and Weight Requirements

Individuals must be at least 2 years old before they can participate in Hippotherapy, and four years old for Therapeutic Riding. There is no maximum age limit. Participants involved in mounted activities may not exceed 200 lbs. as we do not currently have horses that can safely carry more than that.

Safety Requirements

Individuals may not be allowed to participate in the program if any of the following situations occur:

- Participant's condition is in any way exacerbated by riding
- An appropriate horse is no longer available for the participant
- The participant's behavior poses safety concerns (at the discretion of instructor)
- The available staff does not feel capable to safely conduct a lesson or session with the participant
- Any other situation that may have a negative impact on the program in general (at the discretion of the instructor and/or Program Director)

Annual Update of Paperwork

It is a requirement of both PATH INTL. and MTR that ALL riders submit a new Rider Application Packet on January 1 (or stated deadline) of each new calendar year (or the first session of the New Year). This standard is regardless of how often an individual has ridden at MTR during the previous year.

It is the rider's responsibility to be sure paperwork is current. Failure to comply will result in a temporary riding suspension until paperwork is made current. All of the rider paperwork is available at MTR's website: www.horsethatheal.org.

The following forms must be completed on an **annual basis** and submitted to the MTR office **by the stated deadline** in order for individuals to participate in our programs.

- Participant's Application and Health History
- Participant's Medical History and Physician's Statement
- Participant's Consent for Release of Information
- Authorization for Emergency Medical Treatment
- Release of Liability
- Receipt of Rider Manual

Submission of other paperwork such as IEPs and therapy evaluations is encouraged, as these assessments are a beneficial part of lesson planning. Riders with outdated forms will not be allowed to participate.

Scholarships

MTR, Inc. is a non-profit organization. Rider fees are necessary to help defray the expenses of equine assisted therapy and cover only a small portion of the actual cost.

It is the policy of Maryland Therapeutic Riding (MTR) to provide financial assistance to MTR students in an objective, fair and responsible manner. MTR is committed to providing this type of financial assistance to students who **would not be able to participate** without this financial support. Prospective students and their families are expected to exhaust all other options of financial support prior to filing a scholarship application. (Please see list of outside funding sources) Scholarship applications received after the scholarship application deadline will not be considered. Students may not receive more than one semester of scholarship assistance per calendar year if a student receiving a scholarship misses more than 30% of their lessons, and they will not be eligible to re-apply for another scholarship during that calendar year. We ask that you contribute a share of the rider fee so that there will be enough scholarship funds available for all who need them. **Riders who receive funds from outside funding organizations do not qualify for an MTR scholarship.**

Please see our website www.horsethatheal.org to download the scholarship policy and application.

Please Note: If you are applying for an MTR Scholarship, your completed Financial Resource Packet must accompany your registration form. If you are awarded an MTR Scholarship, a person from the MTR Scholarship Committee will contact you. A letter will also be mailed to your for you to sign and return to MTR. This letter indicates your acceptance of the scholarship. For additional information on scholarships, please go to the RIDERS link on our website.

Outside Invoices: To request an invoice from MTR for outside funding, download the [Outside Funding Invoice Request Form \(OFIR\)](#). The billing department cannot make invoices without your OFIR form.

Scheduling Policy and Fees

Registration and session dates are available on the annual session calendar posted under the RIDERS link on our website. The current fee schedule is also attached. Registration forms for each session can be downloaded from our website at www.HorsesThatHeal.org. If you have any difficulty downloading the forms from the website, please contact the Program Department at 410-923-1187. Registration will not be considered if the annual paperwork and annual fee have not been received. Any rider with an outstanding balance from a previous session will also not be placed on the schedule until their balance is made current. Riders who receive payment for lessons through a community agency or outside funding must secure that payment as part of the registration process. **A letter or email must be sent to the billing department acknowledging intent to pay.** Riding days and times will be confirmed by phone and/or e-mail. If paperwork is received after the stated deadline you will be placed on a waiting list.

Attire

All riders must wear ASTM-SEI approved headgear while mounted. Helmets are available at the barn. Long pants are preferred; shorts are permitted, but not recommended, in warm weather. Nylon pants (such as warm-up pants or ski pants) are not permitted because they are too slippery against the saddle or pad. Hard soled shoes or boots with a heel are ideal for riding, but sneakers are acceptable. Sneakers are preferred for hippotherapy. Sandals or open toed shoes are not permitted. Jewelry should be kept to a minimum.

Riders should dress appropriately for the weather conditions so they can be comfortable during lessons. Remember to layer clothing during cold weather and to wear warm coats, heavy socks, long underwear or tights, gloves, and ear protection that will fit under the riding helmet.

In warm weather, please remember to wear light-colored clothing and apply sunscreen before riding. Riders may also want to bring their own water bottles.

Cancellation Policy and Make-ups

Every attempt will be made to avoid cancellations. However, there are situations that are unavoidable at times, such as, equine health related issues, dangerous weather, and staffing. We appreciate your understanding and support regarding our cancellation policy.

1. ***Cancellations by Therapeutic Riders:*** Therapeutic riders are eligible for one **(1) make-up lesson per session**. Additional cancellations by the rider will not be eligible for make-ups. Make-up lessons will be scheduled at the rider's regular time slot during the make-up week(s). If you cannot attend your make-up class, the lesson will be forfeited.
2. ***Cancellations by MTR:*** You will be notified by phone at the number(s) provided on your registration form if lessons are cancelled. If you cannot attend your make-up class, the lesson will be forfeited. Credit will be given to riders for any lesson cancelled by MTR that is unable to be made up.
3. ***Cancellations by Hippotherapy Clients:*** For morning sessions, a cancellation call must be made by 7:00 AM, for the afternoon and evening sessions, a call must be made by 12:00 noon. Any cancellation that is made without 24 hour notice will incur a \$75.00 cancellation fee. In addition, cancellations of 2 or more weeks in succession **will** result in the loss of your appointment time and your slot will be offered to someone on our wait list.

Late Arrivals

Participants who arrive 15 minutes or later will have their lesson cancelled. Hippotherapy clients who are late will still be charged from the scheduled start time of their session.

After the fifteen (**15**) **minute** waiting period has passed, the volunteers will be instructed to return the horse to the barn and the lesson will be forfeited. Hippotherapy clients will be assessed a \$75.00 cancellation fee.

Parking

Dedicated rider parking is marked with signs and is available near the arenas and in the upper parking lot adjacent to the 2 small barns. Please note that the speed limit on the farm is 10 mph.

Designated Waiting Area and Observation Area

Upon arrival for lessons, riders and family members/caregivers should gather outside their assigned mounting area. Instructors will meet riders at this location to select helmets and prepare for the lesson. Family members/caregivers and guests should use the observation areas outside the arenas for observation of lessons. Children must be under the supervision of a parent/adult at all times.

The barn is a busy place during lesson times. For your safety and the safety of others, please do not congregate in the barn, in front of the barn, or in the pathway leading from the barn to the mounting area. This area needs to remain clear for the horses. Only staff and volunteers are permitted in the barn, paddocks, and arenas.

General Barn and Farm Rules

1. **Treats must not be offered to the horses by anyone at any time.** If you wish to donate carrots or apples, please bring them to the main office. No other types of treats will be accepted. It is important for the horse's health that these guidelines are followed. ***Volunteers, however, are allowed all forms of treats such as cookies, chips, etc. Donations of treats for our hardworking volunteers are always welcome and appreciated and may also be delivered to the main office.***
2. For safety reasons, several areas around the farm are posted "Authorized Personnel Only". Please observe these signs during your visits. **Only staff and volunteers are permitted in the barn.**
3. There is no smoking allowed on the property.
4. The speed limit on the farm is 10 mph. Please drive carefully.
5. Dogs are not permitted on the property, this includes your car.
6. Parents, guardians, or caregivers must remain on the premises during lessons if:
 - the participant is under the age of 16, or;
 - The participant is in the care of or under the supervision of a parent, guardian or caregiver.

7. **Please supervise children at all times to ensure that they do not enter any restricted areas.** No running or fence climbing is allowed. Please encourage quiet play in the designated waiting and observation areas. This is for the safety of the children and to ensure that no horses are startled during lessons.
8. Photography is permitted as long as it is not interfering with the lesson in any way or startling the horses.

2012 Fee Schedule

<u><i>Item</i></u>	<u><i>Fee</i></u>	<u><i>Payment Schedule</i></u>
Annual Registration Fee	\$50 per family	Due prior to first lessons/sessions in 2012
Therapeutic Riding (class length 45 minutes)	\$60 per class; total fee varies based on number of weeks in the session	Total fee due with registration (registration will not be processed without receipt of total fee)
Hippotherapy: Individual Occupational, Physical, and Speech Therapy Sessions	As recommended by therapist: \$62.50 for 30 min. \$93.75 for 45 min. \$125 for 60 min.	Due at the completion of each treatment

Sessions are either 8 weeks (8 lessons) or 4 weeks (4 lessons). When you enroll in a session, you commit to attending all lessons. One make-up will be allowed for a missed lesson.

Payment may be made via check or credit card. If you prefer not to pay the entire tuition by the first day of lessons, you may choose to pay half of your bill and the remainder will be due halfway through the session.

Scholarship applications are available for those participating in therapeutic riding. Scholarship applications must be updated on an annual basis. Please review our Scholarship Policy, as well as a list of funding resources found under the RIDERS link on our website. Many clients in our hippotherapy program are receiving reimbursement from their insurance companies for occupational, physical, and speech therapy sessions. The therapists will provide you with any paperwork necessary to facilitate the reimbursement process.