

FULL MOON FARM
“The Area’s Finest Horse Facility”
fullmoonfarm.com



STUDENT HANDBOOK

Updated 4/20/2023

FULL MOON FARM, family-owned and operated, is a full-care horse boarding and lesson facility in the heart of Carroll County’s beautiful farmland. We are conveniently located near Westminster, Eldersburg, Reisterstown, and Ellicott City. The farm (which dates back circa 1836) comprises approximately 80 acres of land, located directly across the Liberty Watershed conservation area. This ideal location provides us with endless opportunities for riding.

This handbook includes:

- Services and Facilities (page 1)
- Directions to FMF (page 2)
- Riding Instruction (page 3)
- Cancellations, Rescheduling, Vacations, and Medical Leave (page 4)
- Weather Policy, Late Policy, and Holiday Policy (page 5)
- Farm Etiquette and Safety Policies (pages 6-8)

SERVICES:

English Riding Program

- Private & Group Lessons
- Boarding & Leasing

Competitions

- Equitation Teams
- Recognized Horse Trials
- Unrecognized Horse Trials
- Hunter/Jumper Shows

Educational Programs

- Summer Camps
- Day Camps
- Horsemanship Program
- Library Visits
- School Field Trips
- Scout Groups
- Clinics

FACILITIES:

Three barn locations

- Over 50 stalls
- Over 20 turnout fields
- Eight quarantine stalls
- Two grooming barns
- Wash stall with hot & cold water
- Three private boarder tack rooms

Three lighted riding arenas

- Indoor Arena
- Little Outdoor Arena
- Big Outdoor Arena

Two cross-country courses

- Enclosed Starter Course
- Intro thru Prelim Course

DIRECTIONS TO FULL MOON FARM

We are located at:
4326 Louisville Road
Finksburg, MD 21048

FROM WESTMINSTER AND POINTS NORTH:

Take Route 140 East from Westminster or West from Reisterstown to Route 91 South (Gamber Road) toward Gamber. At the first light (Deer Park Road) go left. Drive 1 mile and turn right onto Louisville Road; continue for 1 mile. On your right, you will see a white board fence and the large **Full Moon Farm** sign. Turn right onto the driveway and drive up to the parking area.

FROM ROUTE 70 AND POINTS SOUTH:

Take Route 70 East from Frederick or West from Baltimore to Route 32 North (Sykesville Road). Drive approximately 8 miles north on Route 32 until you cross the intersection of Routes 32 & 26 in Eldersburg. Stay on Route 32 North; continue approximately 3.5 miles. You will cross over the Liberty Reservoir and continue up a long hill. Turn right onto Bollinger Mill Road. (This sharp turn comes up quicker than you'd expect.) Drive ~50 feet and turn immediately left onto Louisville Road. Continue 0.8 miles. On your left, you will see the large **Full Moon Farm** sign and a white board fence. Turn left onto the driveway and drive up to the parking area.

FROM ROUTE 795 FROM BALTIMORE:

Take 795 North to Exit 7B (Franklin Blvd West). Go to the first stoplight (at Nicodemus Road) and turn right. Stay on Nicodemus Road through the stop sign at Berryman's Lane, and continue through the stop sign at Ivy Mill Road. (Nicodemus Road then becomes Deer Park Road.) Cross over the bridge at the Liberty Reservoir. Drive about another 3 miles and make a left onto Louisville Road; continue for 1 mile. On your right, you will see a white board fence and the large **Full Moon Farm** sign. Turn right onto the driveway and drive up to the parking area.

RIDING INSTRUCTION

With more than 45 years of combined equine teaching experience, Karen and Stephen Fulton center their riding instruction around the “English Balanced Seat” philosophy. This method allows the student to form an excellent foundation on which to build a base for a variety of equine endeavors.

Here at Full Moon Farm, we welcome beginning, intermediate, advanced, seasoned, experienced, and pleasure riders (both children and adults). We focus on teaching riding as a fun activity. However, we emphasize that every student must be able to listen carefully, follow directions, and act responsibly and respectfully. Our first priority is the safety of both rider and horse. We stress horsemanship— effective communication with and care of the animal.

We prefer to start all riders with a one-time 30-minute private **evaluation lesson**, regardless of prior riding experience. This allows the rider to determine whether FMF is a good fit for them, and allows the FMF instructors to determine what lesson path is appropriate for the rider. For anyone that has never been on a horse before (or hasn’t in a long time), we highly recommend an evaluation lesson to determine whether they enjoy riding.

Many people love horses, but don’t love riding them! It’s better to find that out during the evaluation lesson, instead of committing to multiple private lessons. We do not offer refunds for riders that forego the evaluation and then decide they do not wish to continue lessons.

Private Lessons

Thirty-minute private lessons are intended for riders who are not yet ready to join group lessons, as well as for riders who are working on specific skills with their own horse. Private lessons are generally required for all children 5-7 years old.

Group Lessons

The basic requirements for group lessons are: walking, trotting, stopping, and steering at the walk & trot. A rider must be able to do these tasks on their own (without a leadline or an instructor next to them) before joining a group. We aim to keep group lessons small— between 3 to 7 students per lesson— in order to maximize the amount of attention per student. Groups are formed based primarily on ability, then by age.

Group lessons are 50 minutes long. The 50 minutes is the actual time spent on our well-trained horses. We require all students to arrive at least 30 minutes prior to their lessons, so they learn proper grooming and tacking-up methods. Students are also expected to spend time (at least 10 minutes) after their lesson to cool down their horse, untack, re-groom, and put the horse away (with the help of Working Students, if necessary).

CANCELLATIONS

If you need to miss a **lesson**, you must let us know by canceling online via Hopoti **no later than 24 hours** prior to the start of the lesson. If you cancel within that 24-hour period or if you “no-show” (i.e., do not show up to) your lesson, you will be charged for that lesson. No make-up lesson will be given. Even if you will not be able to make up the lesson, we ask that you still cancel in the system, so we can plan accordingly.

RESCHEDULING

It is the rider’s/parent’s responsibility to schedule make-up lessons. If you do not reschedule your missed lesson prior to the Stablecard credit’s expiration, you will not receive a make-up, and we will not “roll forward” your lesson count (i.e., “tack on” the missed lesson to the end of your set). **We rely on you to reach out if you need guidance with rescheduling.** It is unlikely we will reach out to you if you miss a lesson without notifying us (unless it becomes a pattern). Scheduling make-ups is best done ASAP, so you do not forget and miss out.

For riders eligible for group lessons: A private lesson may be made up as a group lesson if your schedule conflicts with the private openings we have available. There will be no credit for the price difference if you choose to ride in a group in lieu of losing the private lesson.

For riders in group lessons: A group lesson may be made up as a private lesson if you wish to have a one-on-one lesson with an instructor. An additional “upcharge” cost will be invoiced.

VACATIONS

If you will be on an extended vacation, please cancel your lessons in advance, so that other riders can use your lesson spot. If you want to reserve your lesson spot for when you return, you will need to pre-book those lessons. We will not roll forward your lesson count (i.e., place your set on hold or “tack on” any missed lessons to the end of your set).

MEDICAL LEAVE

If you need to miss lessons for 4 or more consecutive weeks due to illness, injury, surgery, and/or pregnancy, please cancel your lessons via Hopoti and notify us of your situation ASAP. Once you know your return date, please let us know. We will do our best to allow you to return to your desired lesson spot when you return, but cannot make any guarantees.

WEATHER POLICY

Because we have an indoor arena, we do not cancel lessons just because of rain, wind, or snow. If local schools are closed due to weather (i.e., snow or ice) or there are thunderstorms, our lessons **might** be canceled for that day. Before you leave for lessons, please check your email for any notifications regarding lessons. You can also see if there are any changes to lessons by checking at our Facebook page and/or calling the farm line extension 5 (Lesson Status/Weather Line). If there is nothing emailed, posted, or the weather line message is old, you should assume that lessons are on as planned. If you feel uncomfortable driving in the current/predicted conditions, please cancel your lesson via Hopoti and then email us at ridewithfmf2@gmail.com ASAP to request a make-up credit. As long as you do your part to let us know you’re not coming in a timely manner, we can be flexible!

If lessons are canceled last-minute (usually due to sudden thunderstorms), we reserve the right to have one unmounted lesson in each 9-week period. These lessons generally focus on horsemanship skills that aren’t generally covered during mounted lessons. If you skip the unmounted lesson, you are ineligible for a make-up.

LATE POLICY

All students are expected to arrive to the barn and to the lesson ring on-time. In order to keep all lessons on schedule, your lesson time is fixed. It is not fair to your instructor or the other riders in your lesson to have to wait around for you.

For example: If your 30-minute private lesson starts at 2:00pm and you arrive to the ring at 2:10pm, your lesson still ends at 2:30pm. If you show up late for grooming and tacking, you still have a responsibility to your horse– you must groom and tack them properly. If you are late to your lesson because you arrived late or got distracted, that's on you.

If you are on-time, but lessons are running behind due to other circumstances (e.g., a loose horse, rider fall, or other emergency), the timing of your lesson may be adjusted.

HOLIDAY POLICY

Lessons and shows will not be held on the following 5 holidays:

New Year's Day, Easter Sunday, 4th of July, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.

We do not hold evening lessons on Christmas Eve or New Year's Eve, but morning and afternoon lessons are generally kept the same. We often host clinics or other events on these days.

If your lesson falls on one of the above holidays, we ask that you cancel your lesson and schedule a make-up. If needed, the holiday lesson can be added to the end of the lesson set without penalty to the rider, but you'll need to notify us ahead of time that this is your wish.

FARM ETIQUETTE

**Help us protect our animals, riders, visitors, & property:
Please review the following information and discuss it with your rider, family, and any
visitors you may bring to the farm.**

PARKING AND DRIVING

When driving on the property, please remember the following rules:

1. READ all signs thoroughly.
2. HORSES and PEDESTRIANS have the PRIMARY right of way.
 - a. TRACTORS and TRUCKS with TRAILERS also have right of way.
3. Drive SLOWLY (Speed Limit is 5 mph).
4. NEVER drive on/pull off onto the grass.
5. NEVER try to pass another car or a horse.
6. LOCATE the pullover spots along the driveway before you need them.
7. PARK carefully and DO NOT run into the FENCE. If parking spaces are full, drive very slowly along the driveway and park in the designated area behind the Indoor arena.
8. NEVER drop off, turn around, or wait at the STOP sign at the top of the hill past the main parking lot.
 - a. All riders must be dropped off in the main parking lot or behind the Indoor.
 - b. Again, NEVER turn around or drop off past that point! It is extremely dangerous to any pedestrians, horses, dogs, and cats!

DROP-OFF & PICK-UP POLICY

Riders should be dropped off **no more than** 40 minutes prior to their scheduled lesson and must be picked up **no later than** 30 minutes after their lesson has finished.

RESPECT OUR PROPERTY

- DO NOT RUN unless there is an emergency.
- KEEP AN EYE on your children at all times.
- TRASH must be placed in trash cans or the dumpster.
- DO NOT CLIMB trees or fences.
- DO NOT PET, FEED, CHASE, or HARASS our barn cats or dogs.
- NO PETS are allowed on the property during regular lessons.

THE GROOMING BARN

All students must learn to put on tack (saddle, bridle, girth, martingale, etc.) alone. To reinforce this process, we request that ALL parents, siblings, visitors, etc. remain OUTSIDE the Grooming Barn while riders prepare the horses. Working Students are available during beginner lesson times to train and assist riders. DO NOT TACK UP FOR YOUR CHILD!

Please encourage your child to tack independently, while letting them know that help is readily available from the Working Students. Also, please do not block the entrance to the Grooming Barn—riders and horses are constantly coming in & out of the barn. For your own safety, wait at the picnic tables under the Pavilion, in the PCUs, or in your car.

DRESS

All riders must wear long pants and hard-soled shoes with a small heel.

- Shorts are not allowed, no matter how hot it may be (unless riding bareback).
- No sneakers, tennis shoes, or hiking boots are allowed when mounted.
 - All footwear must be able to slide easily out of the stirrups for safety reasons!
 - If you come with improper footwear, you will not be allowed to ride unless you are able to ride without stirrups.
- A helmet (ASTM-approved) is REQUIRED for all riders.
 - We can provide helmets for riders who do not yet have their own, but after 4 lessons, you must bring your own. Helmets should be replaced after a fall.
- We require that you bring your own helmet, crop, saddle pad, and grooming supplies after your first 4 lessons. If you are in doubt about what to buy/wear, ask your instructor!

VISITORS & SPECTATORS

Visitors under the age of 12 must remain with an adult chaperone at all times.

Parents, spouses, siblings, etc. are welcomed (and encouraged!) to stay and watch lessons. However, it is important that the students hear the instructor without interference from spectators. Please be mindful of the following distractions, which can also spook horses:

- Talking, crying, yelling, etc.
- Cell phones (videos, music, ringing, etc.)
- Walking around the arena/doors, running, throwing stones, etc.

Even if you think you are being quiet, the riders and horses can hear you!

NOTICE BOARDS

There are two important places to check for information: the Lesson Board (across from grooming barn stall #2) and the Events Board (across from grooming barn stall #8). Upon arrival, riders should immediately check the Lesson Board for important information, such as:

Instructor name, lesson time, horse assigned, where to tack up, and where to put the horse away after the lesson; necessary blanketing/fly apparel; names of Working Students & Staff

Check the Lesson Board before AND after your ride— the place your horse is going after the lesson may have changed!

The Tack Card List is to the left of the Lesson Board, and must be checked every time you ride. Tack changes over time. Never assume you know what the horse gets, no matter how many times you have ridden them.

HORSE TREATS

As long as a horse isn't on the "No Treats Club" list, you may give them a treat after your lesson— once your horse is untacked & groomed and all tack has been put away.

For your safety and to prevent horses from becoming pushy, please do NOT feed treats by hand; place them in your horse's stall feed bucket.

You are welcome to feed our horses healthy treats like apples and carrots and occasionally mints. Never feed horses whole apples or large chunks of carrots— these are choking hazards! Please limit treats— it is easy to overfeed a horse, and other people are probably giving them treats, too!

APPROACHING THE INDOOR ARENA

To prevent spooking horses and causing riders to fall off: **When within 30’ of either side of the Indoor Arena**, you must yell **“DOOR DOOR”** loudly at least 3 times as you approach/pass by. If walking past additional open doors of the arena, continue yelling “DOOR DOOR”.

Once a lesson has started, do not approach or hang around the Indoor Arena doors. If you would like to watch the lesson, please use the doors at the far ends of the arena to enter the viewing rooms, which we call PCUs (“Parent Containment Units” 😊).

Please open and close doors slowly and quietly– the noise and action may startle a horse.

FMF Handbook Acknowledgement Coupon

Turn this coupon in with your payment for \$10 off your next lesson!

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and understand the information in this handbook. I agree to abide by all policies and rules.

Name of Rider:

Date:

Signature of Responsible Party:

Clip, deduct, and attach this signed coupon to your next lesson payment.

Thank you for reading!

One use per family. Can be used toward lessons only.