



LiftMeUp!

COVID-19 and LiftMeUp!

UPDATED: NOVEMBER 2020

Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic is giving all of us at LiftMeUp! an unprecedented opportunity to live and breathe what we believe to be of utmost importance: safety and well-being of our clients, staff, volunteers, and of course, our equine friends.

In keeping up with the on-going and ever-changing environment, LiftMeUp! is making the recommendations outlined in the following policy and adopting it immediately. These recommendations are intended to be preventative measures as we do not currently have any known cases or exposures to the virus.

To protect the well-being and safety of our clients, volunteers, staff, and horses, we had suspended services and closed the barn and facilities through May 2020. We reopened in a phased approach in early June and continue to offer services in a limited capacity. We are continuing to monitor things closely and are adapting as needed. We also recognize the potential for a longer-term response and are planning for such scenarios in case they become necessary.

For anyone who misses lessons due to this necessary limitation, it is our intention to find a way to make up those lessons for, whether it be to carry over missed lessons into subsequent sessions once we can fully reopen again or find another way.

We are currently operating under [VA state Phase II COVID regulations](#). For our purposes, Phase II limits us to serve ONLY riders who are able to mount and dismount either independently or with minimal assistance from a specially-trained family member, and riders who are able to ride with minimal assistance provided by a parent, caretaker, or other responsible adult who cohabitates with the rider. All volunteer paperwork must be on file for any person assisting with lessons.

Additionally, **all riders are required to have their own helmets**. We have temporarily suspended our helmet loaning program for the safety of all of our riders and staff members. Riders can be more secure in knowing that their helmet has not been exposed to potential germs if it is their own. Helmets should be ASTM/SEI approved, (most helmets are) and can be ordered online from www.Amazon.com, www.doversaddlery.com or www.statelinetack.com to name a few sources. These retailers will give you directions on how to measure for proper fit. A good schooling helmet should run about \$50.

Gloves are not required. Instead, we require the washing of hands prior to any activity taking place on LiftMeUp! premises. We realize that as the weather turns cooler, riders and others involved may wish to wear gloves, but this DOES NOT replace the need for hand washing. Gloves are vectors for viral spread and the virus can live several days on fabric. We all often wipe our nose on our riding gloves or sleeves. Be conscious and try to avoid this, carry Kleenex or take off your gloves after you ride, hand wash again, and wash the gloves at home.

On the following page, please find additional barn rules that MUST be followed during this time. These rules are IN ADDITION to the regular barn rules that are in place for LiftMeUp!

ADDITIONAL COVID-19 LMU! BARN RULES

Upon arrival each person MUST WASH THEIR HANDS with soap and running water for 20 seconds before touching anything.

- If you or someone in your household has had a fever or cough or a known COVID-19 exposure, DO NOT come to the barn until you have self-quarantined for at least 14 days or tested negative and been released by a medical professional. The CDC has reduced quarantine to 10 days unless there is an increased risk, and because some of our riders, volunteers and instructors are in a higher-risk category we still ask for a 14 day quarantine if you do not have a negative test.
- Visits should be limited to riders, immediate family who will be assisting with the lesson, and staff only. Farriers and veterinarians are allowed as needed, provided they meet the requirements of the point above, but any other visits should be cleared first by your barn management.
- Upon entering the facility, **DO NOT TOUCH ANYTHING** until you have washed your hands with soap and running water for 20 seconds. This is the best prevention, perhaps better than alcohol-based hand gel. Any doorknobs, faucet knobs and gate latches should be wiped daily at minimum.
- Respect the 6-foot distance to other people. Please note that we are capping the maximum number of human/horse teams in the arena at any given time to 4. Please do not ride if there are already 4 human/horse teams riding in the arena. We will do our best to schedule riding times to avoid overcrowding.
- Plan to be efficient while at the barn and not linger.
- Please only use brushes and grooming tools in the bins identifies as “clean” and respect the system set in place to avoid cross-contamination.
- If you develop symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g., fever, shortness of breath, cough, lethargy, loss of smell or taste, etc.) or find out about a known exposure, YOU MUST notify LMU! staff immediately so appropriate steps can be taken to reduce the risk to our barn community.
- All shared tack (e.g., lead ropes, reins, bridle, saddle pads, and saddle) must be wiped and treated with saddle soap (for leather items) or sprayed with a disinfectant spray (for non-leather items) after each use. Please see the LiftMeUp! instructor or staff member on site for instructions on how to best clean the tack so as not to cause any damage.

At LiftMeUp! we will be taking the following steps to help mitigate the spread of the virus:

- We will wipe down all commonly touched sites with an anti-viral solution. These sites include doorknobs of tack rooms, port-a-potty door and light switch, all gate latches, light switches, pitchfork/broom/shovel handles, and wheelbarrows.

Please consider your personal risk level and whether coming to a communal place is an appropriate risk for you.

While all [Fairfax County schools](#) continue to offer virtual learning to most students, we are hopeful that we may be able to return to full service soon and will continue to monitor the situation and will be making decisions based on the larger picture.

For more factual information on COVID-19, please visit the [CDC website on the Corona Virus](#) and [Virginia's Corona Virus information hub](#) for information on public health and safety.

Thank you everyone for your understanding. Please know that we are staying vigilant and are doing our part slow the spread of the virus so that none of our LMU! family becomes ill.