

2026 Holly Hill Farm Summer Programs Family Handbook



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Brief History & Current Mission

The farm has been in the White family for six generations. In 1998, Frank and Jean White started an organic farm on approximately 5 acres of their property adjacent to Jerusalem Rd. In 2002 they established the non-profit Friends of Holly Hill Farm which now oversees the farm operation and runs a variety of educational and community activities. Jean White (pictured) remains a daily fixture on the farm, as do other members of the family who you may also happen to see.

Certified organic since the year 2000, we also follow regenerative farming practices for growing and harvesting. Respect for the land is of the utmost importance to us while we deliver fresh vegetables, herbs, flowers and honey to our farm stand, select local restaurants, and the Cohasset Farmers' Markets. Our farm intern programs help train the next generation about sustainable farming.

The *Friends of Holly Hill Farm (FHFF)* is a nonprofit organization established in 2002 to use the resources of the farm for education purposes.

FHFF Mission

The Friends of Holly Hill Farm strives to provide healthy, organically grown food for the local community, and to foster good stewardship of the land by educating all ages about the practices of conservation and sustainable farming in a welcoming environment.

FHFF Education Mission

The FHFF education programs, teachers, and staff strive to cultivate and foster a sense of community and belonging for all ages, backgrounds, and perspectives to find a strong and meaningful connection to and deeper appreciation for the earth, the food we eat, and each other through responsible, daily practices of sustainability, hands-on organic and regenerative agricultural and environmental learning, and open conversations that shift viewpoints and practices, create positive memories, and move us into a healthier and more equitable future for all.

Overview of Summer Programs Policies & Procedures

Staff & Volunteers

Criminal Background Check: In addition to the background check requirements detailed below, all-day program employees and volunteers are subject to the Friends' criminal background check policy (a copy of which is attached). The Friends' criminal background check policy requires all staff and volunteers to self-report any felony conviction and to undergo a criminal offender record information ("CORI") review by the Massachusetts Criminal History Systems Board, and a sex offender record information ("SORI") review by the Massachusetts Sex Offender Registry Board. For additional information please see the Friends' criminal background check policy on the next page.

Work History:

- The Friends will obtain prior work history for the previous five (5) years, including the name, address and phone number of a contact person at each place of employment (or volunteer service).
- The Friends will obtain three (3) positive reference checks from individuals not related to the staff person.
- All staff must complete a standard job application, which requires reporting of any criminal conviction including misdemeanors.

Child Abuse & Neglect

Reporting: Any Friends employee or volunteer who (1) learns that a child has experienced any form of abuse or neglect, or (2) has reason to suspect that a child has experienced any form of abuse or neglect, **must** make a report to the onsite coordinator and education director or the Massachusetts Department of Social Services ("DSS") immediately. Upon receiving a report of actual or suspected abuse or neglect, the education director shall immediately make a report to DSS. Any time a report of actual or suspected abuse or neglect is made to DSS, the education director shall also notify the Holly Hill Farm Executive Director.

Education Director's Written Report: Following any report of actual or suspected abuse or neglect, the Program Director shall submit a written report to DSS within 48 hours in compliance with M.G.L. c. 119, § 51A. The education director's report shall contain the child's age, gender, the names and addresses of the child and his/her parents or guardians, and all information regarding any injuries, abuse, maltreatment or neglect, including evidence of prior injuries, abuse, maltreatment or neglect. The report also shall include the circumstances under which the education director or other reporting employee or volunteer first became aware of the abuse or neglect, what action, if any, was taken to treat or protect the child, and the name of the

person(s) making the report. The education director's report shall also include any other relevant information that may be helpful to DSS.

Abuse or Neglect by Staff or Volunteer: The education director shall notify the board of health when any report made pursuant to M.G.L. c. 119, § 51A involves abuse or neglect of a child occurring while in the care of the Friends programs or during a Friends program. The education director shall ensure that any employee or volunteer being investigated for possible abuse or neglect of a child does not work with any child until a DSS investigation is complete.

Safety and Health Plan

All children must have an updated immunization record (within the last 18 months) uploaded to MyRec before they are allowed to attend a program.

Communication: For non-urgent calls, please contact the education line at **781-383-1455**. If the call is urgent, please contact:

- Grayce Rose (onsite coordinator) at **339-364-5602**
- Kendra Dean (lead educator) at **585-298-3358**
- Wendy Prentiss (education director) at **339-793-3271**
- If unavailable, please call Executive Director, Meredith Laban, at 617-784-7064.

All educators have cell phones and contact numbers of supervisors and family contact information on them at all times. In addition, lead teachers have a long-range walkie-talkie when away from the barnyard for backup.

For other urgent and emergency communication, see the safety and health plan. In some cases, emergency services will be contacted before any other contacts are made.

First Aid: As previously mentioned, there is always a supervisor who has been certified in Adult/Child/Infant CPR and First Aid. In addition, program staff carry emergency first aid kits containing the following: non-perfumed soap, sterile gauze squares, compresses, adhesive tape, bandage scissors, triangular and rolled bandages, CPR mask, tweezers, cold pack, and gloves. The program staff also carry copies of each child's health record and emergency contact information with them at all times.

Hospital: Routinely, if it is determined that a child should be taken to the hospital, they will be taken to South Shore Hospital, 55 Fogg Road, Weymouth, MA 02190 (781) 340-8000.

The only prescription medication our program educators are permitted to administer are EpiPens.

For Epi-pens: Be sure to complete and return the *Authorization to Administer Medication to a Child* form to: Friends of Holly Hill Farm, 236 Jerusalem Rd., Cohasset, MA 02025, at least two weeks prior to the start of programs. Your child may not participate in programs without submitting the completed form. The form may also be scanned and uploaded to your child's MyRec account.

Over-the-Counter Medication: No over-the-counter medication will be administered during programs.

Sunscreen and Bug Spray: Program staff **will not** administer sunscreen or bug spray to children. It is the caregivers' responsibility to prepare their child for programs each day. **Though we don't apply sunscreen and insect repellent, if families provide it, we will have reapplication reminders for children after snack and lunch.**

Care of Mildly Ill Children: Parents are required to notify our on-site supervisor in the case that the child has a mild illness and may need special care that day. Again, parents are asked to keep children with conditions that could impair their program experience or be contagious to other children at home. In the event that a child becomes mildly ill during the programs, the parent/emergency contact will be notified and asked to pick up their child.

We expect parents and caregivers to send healthy children to programs! If a child has any of the following symptoms, please keep them at home.

- Fever
- Persistent cough
- Flu-like symptoms

Follow the direction of educators for additional guidelines that may follow.

Handwashing is an important part of our daily routine, especially after handling animals, before eating meals, and after using the bathroom.

Bathroom

- **All children should be toilet-trained. This means no diapers or pull-ups.**
- There are two porta-potties across from the Main Barn.
- Staff and volunteers cannot assist children in the bathroom.
- Everyone must wash their hands.

Other Safety Protocols

Fire (building or brush): The summer programs are outdoor programs, geared towards being indoors as little as possible. However, the Friends of Holly Hill Farm strongly believes that the best protection is preparation. There are fire extinguishers clearly marked in every building.

In the event of a fire in the Tomato Barn, children and staff are expected to do the following:

1. As soon as someone sees or smells smoke or flames, exit the barn.
2. Everyone in the room shall proceed out of the barn across the drive and into the upper open lot. This is an open space blocking the children from oncoming emergency vehicles, away from the main entrance.
3. One counselor shall call 911 and alert other staff at Holly Hill Farm.
4. Educators and children will then wait for further instructions from emergency personnel.
5. If we need to evacuate the area, we will move the children to the Ice Pond Meadow and wait there for further instructions.

In the event of a nearby brush fire (fields or forest), children and staff are expected to do the following:

1. As soon as someone sees or smells smoke or flames, exit the immediate area.
2. Everyone shall proceed to the nearest road or protected area. This space should keep children from oncoming emergency vehicles.
3. One counselor shall call 911 and alert other staff at Holly Hill Farm.
4. Educators and children will then wait for further instructions from emergency personnel.
5. If we need to evacuate the area, we will move the children to Bow Street.

Weather: Due to the outdoor nature of the summer programs, all efforts are made to track the weather and plan accordingly. Please refer to the contingency plan for dealing with predicted weather events. See also Safe Places below.

However, in the case of an unforeseen severe weather event (such as a lightning storm), the following protocol is to be followed:

1. All program staff will proceed with program groups to the Main Barn or the Tomato Barn to be identified. If groups are unable to proceed to the barns, they should gather in a safe area and communicate with the onsite coordinator.
2. Once all children and staff have been safely situated, parents shall be notified to come and collect their children. Directions shall be given to have the parents meet a staff member at the regular drop-off point.
3. As cars pull up next to the barn, program staff will accompany the children out to the parents' cars.
4. **During certain conditions, it may be safer to keep children in place until the conditions have passed. In those cases, parents will be asked not to come to the farm.**

Animals: At all times, children are expected to keep a safe distance from wild animals that could become aggressive due to protection, territory, nearby young, etc. Not only does this protect the child, but it also protects the animal. For the rare case of an animal that does appear aggressive, children will be expected to follow the directions of the educator, who will remove them from the situation and return to the barnyard. The educator will also immediately communicate with the director and other educators to warn them of the situation. If it is an emergency, they will call 911. Otherwise, the director will then contact animal control and wait for further directions from the animal control officer.

Other: Any other situations that present themselves as dangerous to the children and the educator will follow similar guidelines as detailed above.

Safe Places During Lightning Storm: If lightning is expected, move all groups to either the Tomato Barn or the Main Barn. However, during unexpected lightning storms, follow these guidelines from the CDC.

- Immediately get off elevated areas such as hills, mountain ridges, or peaks.
- Never lie flat on the ground. Crouch down in a ball-like position with your head tucked and hands over your ears so that you are down low with minimal contact with the ground.
- Never shelter under an isolated tree.
- Never use a cliff or rocky overhang for shelter.
- Immediately get out of and away from ponds, lakes, and other bodies of water.
- Stay away from objects that conduct electricity (barbed wire fences, power lines, windmills, etc.).

Other Safe Places: If a severe wind storm (ie, tornado) were to occur, move groups to the basement of the Tomato Barn or into the closet area. When these are not available, stay low to the ground.

Clothing: Since we will be outside for all or most of each day, wearing the proper clothing during programs is key to a child's health and safety. Please be aware of daily weather reports and the upcoming activities of your child at programs. Consider how they should dress in hot weather and in rainy conditions, as well as in muddy and grassy areas. We will not have replacement clothing or be able to change our program.

- Hat for sun protection
- Light clothing
- Layers for cool days
- Raincoats
- Boots if leaving the barnyard
- No open-toed shoes
- Long pants and sleeves for grassy and wooded areas (ticks)
- Extra shorts and socks can be helpful as the farm has plenty of puddles, streams, etc.

Lost Child Policy: One of the first rules of behavior for all children is that we stay with our group at all times. Holly Hill Farm is a very large place with many barns, sheds, and pastures. All efforts are made to prevent a child from ever becoming lost. The Friends of Holly Hill Farm maintains a minimum ratio of **1:5 for ages 3-6** and **1:10 for ages 7 and up** to staff to allow for adequate supervision. All staff carry phones and are provided with the phone numbers for the Friends of Holly Hill Farm office and the Cohasset Police.

It is important that counselors are aware of where all children are at all times. This is ensured by performing frequent head counts throughout the program and by never allowing children to

leave the counselors' line of sight. If a child is unable to follow the rules of behavior, counselors shall refer to the Discipline Policy.

If at any time a child is believed to be lost, counselors shall enact the following policy:

1. Gather all children together to be identified. Determine who is missing.
2. Question children & staff about when and where the child was last seen.
3. At this time:
 - a. One counselor shall calmly lead the children to the Main Barn and distract them with a quiet game or activity.
 - b. The other counselor shall immediately summon the Friends of Holly Hill Farm Office/on-site staff supervisor and inform them that a child is missing. The on-site supervisor will dispatch all on-site work crews to sweep the property for the missing child, both on foot and using FHHF vehicles.
 - c. The other counselor shall then contact the child's parent/guardian and inform them that the child is lost and that a search party has been activated.
4. The counselor shall then contact the Cohasset Police Department.
5. Upon arrival of the Cohasset Police, the search party shall yield to the directions of the Cohasset Police Department.
6. When the child is safely found, the parent/guardian shall be notified and the search called off. When parents and guardians arrive to pick up their children, counselors shall brief them as to what happened and ask that they reiterate the importance of following directions and staying with the group to their children.

Food & Water

Nut-Free: All food brought to the farm needs to be nut-free.

Snacks: We will provide a snack time for each program. However, we will not be providing snacks. Please pack a healthy snack for your child. If possible, please use as little packaging as possible to cut down on non-recyclables. All snack and lunch trash, recycling, and compost will be placed back in the child's lunch container to bring home.

Children will also not be allowed to share food.

Water: A reusable water bottle is crucial to summer programs. It is very important to keep every child hydrated. We also have fresh water in case the bottles need to be refilled.

Lunch: All programs now include a time for lunch. We ask you to follow all of the above guidelines. **Again, we will not have food available for them. Though some emergency snacks will be in the refrigerator.**

Discipline

General Rules: The following are the basic rules for the farm and surrounding areas.

1. Respect all living things, which includes handling and interaction.

2. Remember that every action has multiple consequences for both humans and the natural world.
3. Treat every person kindly and with respect.
4. Walking in the barnyard is for everyone's safety. Also, walk in all areas outside of the barnyard, unless permitted by an educator.
5. Keep voices at an "indoor voice" level while near the animals. The animal's ears are much more sensitive to loud noises than our own. Also, be aware of others on the farm and how loud voices can affect what they are doing.
6. Children must stay off structures, including fences, gates, garden boxes, etc.
7. Respect all farm equipment.
8. Stay with the group at all times.
9. As a rule, we "keep our hands to ourselves."
10. No weapons, real or play, are allowed.

Steps to Take When Rules Are Not Followed:

1. Verbal reminder or cue of expected behavior
2. If behavior continues, give another verbal reminder or cue. If the behavior was one that was potentially harmful to another, there is no second reminder.
3. When a series of reminders does not work, it may be necessary for the child to sit out of an activity for no more than 5 minutes. In addition, the child could be given another task to redirect attention.
4. If the behavior still continues, the child will need to sit out again.
5. If, after reminders and time-outs, the behavior does not change, it will be necessary to notify the caregiver and discuss possible strategies or unknowns.
6. Once this discussion happens, the onsite coordinator and/or education director will also be notified.

When a counselor is disciplining a child, they must remember to keep an even tone at all times. Physical punishment is not allowed under any circumstances. A counselor should only be handling a child if there is imminent danger (for example, the child tries to run into the street). Also, verbally abusing any child is not permitted, and appropriate language should be used at all times (even when talking with other staff).

If a child continues to have behavior issues that persist during multiple days of the program, or if at any time it becomes apparent that a child poses a significant risk to his/herself, we ask that the counselor who has dealt with this behavior meet with the onsite coordinator and/or education director. After careful consideration, the course of action to be taken shall be at the discretion of the onsite coordinator and/or education director, and this may impact the child's ability to continue for the duration of the current program or future programs.

Transportation

The farm is a busy space with many moving vehicles and people, not to mention our generous neighbors. We need to be conscious of everyone's safety when driving into and out of the farm.

Staff Parking: All staff parking is located in the lot below the Farmhouse, the lot between the pillars, and the upper Cord Lot.

Family Parking: Sometimes it is necessary for caregivers to park their cars in order to help with transition. We do ask families to do this only when it is absolutely necessary. Family Parking is between the Tomato Barn and the Main Barn. Make sure all cars pull completely into designated spaces. Any cars parked in non-designated spaces should be asked to move.

Name Plates: Please print your child's full name and session name in large letters on a nameplate on the driver's side front dash or window to help with pick-up and drop-off.



Drop-Off & Pick-Up: Please have your child completely ready to go before arriving. This will allow for quicker and smoother transitions and less traffic. **Please see the attached map depicting the traffic pattern, as well as the sequence for drop-off and pick-up.**

We also ask that those wanting to remain to visit or walk the farm that you leave during these high traffic times and return after drop-off. Thank you.

Finally, we will only allow children to be picked up by authorized caregivers. Please let us know ahead of time if there is a change in pick-up.

Drop-off and Pick-up times will be staggered to ensure a better flow.

- **Garden Goats** should start arriving at **8:45**.
- **Monarchs** should start arriving at **8:55**.
- **Children not in the above groups** (without younger siblings) **should start arriving at 9:05**.

- **Garden Goat** pick-up will start at **12:45 (half-day)** or **2:45 (full-day)**.
- **Monarch** pick-up will start at **12:55 (half-day)** or **2:55 (full-day)**.
- **All other groups** will start at **1:05 (half-day)** or **3:05 (full-day)**.

Drop-Off:

- Make sure your child is completely ready to exit the car and that you put a nameplate in the driver-side window (print first and last name).
- Pull your car forward as far as possible. The drop-off line starts between the Tomato Barn and the Main Barn. Look for orange cones. We hope to have no cars unloading prior to the three car lengths in front of the tomato barn.
- An educator will greet you in your car and allow your child to exit on the passenger side once you have signed your child in. **Please do not get out of the car. Doing so will slow the drop-off process down.**
- Once your child has exited, proceed toward the Main Barn to turn around and exit the farm.
- If you know your child is going to have trouble with arrivals, please park in the area to the right of the entrance, before the farmhouse, or up by the Main Barn. Then you may walk your child to the Tomato Barn. **No cars can park between the farmhouse and the barns.**
- **PLEASE NO IDLING. Turn off engines while waiting to protect the living things around you as well as the general environment.**

Pick-Up:

- Make sure that there is a nameplate in the driver-side window (print first and last name).
- Pull your car forward as far as possible. The drop-off line starts between the Tomato Barn and the Main Barn and we will load up to three cars at a time directly in front of the barn. Look for orange cones.
- Make sure that any families carpooling have given prior permission to the education staff for the children to go with another family and that any other caregivers have been listed on the pick-up list.
- **An educator will help younger children buckle in.**
- Once your child is secured, please pull up to the main barn to turn around and exit the farm.

Drop-Off & Pick-Up Map



- Pull up as far as you can and turn off the engine. There will be a marked area for the first car to stop.
- Wait for an educator to check your child in or out, or wait to move your car further.
- Once checked in, your child will be helped to exit or enter the car.
- Make sure your child is buckled.
- When able, drive toward main barn to turn around and exit the farm.

Bike Rack: Children arriving by bicycle are asked to place their bike in the rack, located near the Tomato Barn.

No Transporting of Children: Children are not to be transported by any Friends of Holly Hill Farm staff or volunteers. We are not licensed or insured to do so.

Contingency

Tardy or absence: If your child or children are not attending programs on a scheduled day, please call the farm office (781-383-1455) to alert us to their absence. If a registered child does

not arrive at programs by 9:15 am, the on-site coordinator will contact the parent/guardian to see if or when the child will arrive. However, a child arriving after 9:15 may not be able to join the group if the group has already departed for a walk to more distant areas.

Not registered: If a child arrives at the program who is not registered and the program is full, the parent will be asked to find an alternative program. If there is room in the program, the parent will be directed to contact the Director to discuss the possibility of joining the group. Appropriate paperwork must be completed.

Unattended: A parent or caregiver must accompany children if they are under the age of 12. At no time is a child to be unaccompanied without written permission from both a parent and the FHHF staff. Children are not allowed to leave the farm unaccompanied without written authorization from their parent or guardian.

Weather: Our program is designed to foster an appreciation for the outdoors in all types of weather. Parents should outfit their children accordingly. Due to the outdoor nature of this program, all efforts are made to track the weather and plan ahead. If inclement weather is predicted, then the program's staff will prepare an indoor activity for the children to do in one of the barns.

In the case of a severe, unforeseen weather event, please refer to the Safety Plan.

Cellphones, Smart Watches, and Other Technology: We have found that when children bring phones, smartwatches, cameras, and other technology with them to the farm, the device detracts from their experience and can impact the group's agenda for the day. While at the farm, we all strive to be fully present, to connect with nature, and to connect with each other. If you have a specific reason that you would like your child to have a device, please speak with the education director before the program begins.

Cancellation & Refund Policy

Due to the high demand for programs and the complexities of registration administration, please select your program weeks carefully.

All cancellations must be made in writing.

- More than 3 weeks prior to the program start date, in writing, program fee refund less \$100 per child per week. (\$15 fee for CIT program only)
- Less than 3 weeks from the program start date, in writing, we are not able to provide a refund. If in the unlikely event we are able to fill your spot on short notice, we will refund camp fees, minus a \$100 administrative fee. (\$15 fee for CIT program only)
- Session change requests are subject to our cancellation policy above, since the family is canceling their child's session to register for a new session.

*Exception: requests to swap the same child into a different week's session made within 72 hours of original registration **and** by March 15, 2026, can be granted with a fee of \$50. Requests to switch after this date are subject to our full cancellation policy as stated above. Families will be required to read and accept our cancellation policy upon registration on our registration site.

Email us here to cancel: programs@hollyhillfarm.org

Weather or Special Cancellations Made by Friends of Holly Hill Farm

In the event that Friends of Holly Hill Farm cancels or adjusts the program hours due to **severe weather or circumstances beyond our control**, we will notify families as soon as possible via email and text alerts. We will also try to post changes to our website.

We encourage families to check their inboxes in the morning before heading to the farm. If two or more days are canceled due to weather in a one-week session, families will have the opportunity to have the additional days refunded, or the family can donate the amount to our nonprofit organization.