

Magnolia Meadow Farms Employee Handbook



YOU are the face of Magnolia Meadow Farms. Your interactions with our guests have a powerful impact on their experience here. If you are upbeat, smiling, welcoming, and friendly, you help them have a better day. These guidelines are designed to help you as a representative of our farm.

COMMITMENT

- We have a short, 6-week season in the fall, which is one of the few times we are open to the public during the year.
- We go through tremendous effort and expense to put on the Fall Festival and train employees.
- For this reason, we ask employees to make a commitment to be as available as possible through the end of the season.
- Employees who show commitment and enthusiasm will be invited back year after year and may be eligible for growth within the business and other employment opportunities with our sister companies.

WORK ETHIC

- We value employees who:
 - Have flexibility and availability throughout our 7-week season,
 - Arrive on time ready to work,
 - Can work quickly and efficiently,
 - Think for themselves about what needs to be done,
 - Show respect for their fellow employees, equipment, and our customers.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

At the bare minimum, we expect to offer our guests:

- Friendly and prompt service,
- Attractions that are safe and functioning properly,
- Fresh food & drink from a clean environment in a timely manner.

Tasks such as picking up trash around your station, smiling, and greeting customers is the minimum expectation when it comes to customer service.

It is our goal for you to meet or exceed these expectations and go above and beyond for our customers.

DRESS CODE

Dress for the Conditions!

- We often joke that you will experience all 4 seasons during a single fall season on the farm. The start of the season is typically very hot, and the end of the season, especially in the evenings, gets very chilly. It is your responsibility to take care of yourself.
- When it's hot, wear a hat, bring sunscreen, and plenty of water. When it's cold, layer up and wear gloves. When it's wet, wear appropriate shoes.
- Make sure you wear comfortable, closed-toe shoes. Flip-flops/sandals are not permitted.
- We prefer that your Magnolia Meadow Farms t-shirt is always the outermost layer.

Name Tags

- When you are on the clock, we expect you to wear your name tag at ALL times. Please do not personalize it or alter it in any way.
- If your name tag is broken, please see a manager to have it repaired.
- If your name tag is lost, you will need to pay \$5.00 to have it replaced.
- All name tags must be turned in by Closing Day of the season or on your final day of work so that they can be reused/updated for the next year.
- Your final paycheck will have a deduction of \$5.00 if you do not return your name tag.

T-Shirts

- Each new team member will be issued a Magnolia Meadow Farms t-shirt at no cost.
- Certain positions may require long sleeved shirts which will be provided.
- Additional t-shirts and long sleeved shirts can be purchased.

Pants & Shorts

- Pants and/or shorts are to be clean, properly fitting, and not torn. Torn, fraying, distressed, discolored, or extremely loose or tight-fitting clothes are not acceptable.
- Shorts must be at least fingertip length.
- Yoga pants and leggings as outerwear are not acceptable.
- Please be modest. Nobody wants to see your underwear!

GENERAL CONDUCT

Behavior When You Are Scheduled to Work...

- Arriving early is expected, but you need to be respectful of employees who are already on the clock.
- The same rule applies at the end of your shift. If you need to wait for a ride, do not distract other employees who are working.
- Employees are not permitted to bring friends with them on days when they are working.

When You Come Here to Have Fun "Off the Clock"...

- Act like a customer.
- You are not permitted to be in any areas that are off limits to customers.
- Do not distract employees who are working or hang out in front of the food stands or other areas.

- You may NOT wear your employee t-shirt when visiting as customers will assume that you are an employee who is on the clock.
- If you are staying after your shift, please bring a sweatshirt or jacket to put over your shirt, or change your shirt.

Profanity

- Never use profanity in front of guests or other employees. We all have bad days and bad experiences, but profane language is **never acceptable** in front of our guests.

Smoking/Tobacco Product Use

- Smoking and use of tobacco products is only allowed during breaks. If you use tobacco, please do so in the designated areas in the parking lot and dispose properly.

Alcohol

- Employees are NOT permitted, under ANY circumstances, to consume alcoholic beverages while on the clock.
- Employees who are 21 and older may choose to consume alcoholic beverages purchased from the farm while visiting off-the-clock. In this case, employees should NOT, under ANY circumstances, wear anything that would identify them as an employee, including your name tag, employee t-shirt, walkie talkie, etc. Employees who have consumed alcohol off-the-clock may NOT punch back in to assist or even “volunteer” in any way.

Food & Food Handling

- Please refrain from eating and drinking while working, and especially not in front of customers. Save eating and drinking for your break time. Bottled water is permitted.
- All employees working in food preparation areas must wear a hat or have your hair pulled back. Food preparation areas include Concessions, Lemonade, Sweet Shack, and Kettle Corn.

Cell Phones & Electronics

- Cell phones should not be used for any reason during working hours.
- You may be on your phone during breaks or after your shift has ended.
- You should not be making personal calls, texts, or be on any apps while on the clock.
- Continued use of your cell phone while on the clock is grounds for dismissal.
- If you have a special situation that requires use of your phone, please discuss your specific reasons and needs with a supervisor. Approval for cell phone use can only be given on a daily, individual basis. If someone needs to get in contact with you, important messages can be relayed through the farm phone at (301) 606-4086.
- The iPads and other electronic devices at work stations are to be used for work-related purposes ONLY. Downloading apps, playing games, browsing the internet, and any forms of social media are strictly prohibited.

SCHEDULING POLICIES

- Scheduling is done online using Homebase and the Homebase mobile app.
- Employees must create usernames and passwords to be able to check schedules and request time off in Homebase.
- For detailed instructions on how to use Homebase, please refer to the Homebase instructions on the employee webpage.
- Employees are responsible for keeping their contact information in Homebase up-to-date.
- Any employee who does not have internet access will need to make other scheduling arrangements with a manager.

Time Off Requests

- We prefer to know about your conflicts as soon as possible, before the start of the season.
- Employees must enter time off requests for ALL days they need off from September through October, including days in school or working at another job.
- Any additional time off requests must be entered in Homebase by the Monday two weeks prior to the date(s) needed off.
- You will get a notice from Homebase when your request is approved or denied.
- Failure to comply with scheduling policies will result in a disciplinary action.

Trading or Dropping Scheduled Shifts

- You may trade your shift in Homebase for other employees who are trained in that area to take it over.
- If the shift is not picked up or traded, you are still responsible for working the shift.
- Trading or dropping shifts does not take the place of requesting time off.
- If an employee continually drops and trades shifts, it is grounds for disciplinary action, including dismissal.

Check Your Schedule

- Sometimes the schedule needs to be altered unexpectedly, so it is a good idea to always sign in to Homebase and check your schedule before coming to work.
- If we are anticipating a slow day due to wet or hot weather, we may cancel your shift.
- If you have a cell phone, you can also have text messages sent to your phone if your schedule is changed or if a message is sent from Homebase. You can also set up email alerts.

Rain Out

- If the weather is questionable, always check Homebase before leaving your house.
- We will send a message if we are closing and you do not need to come in. We aim to make the call about closures at least 2 hours before opening.
- If you do not have internet, a manager will call you if we are closed. However, if you are driving a distance to get here, you may want to call us to double check.

Timeliness

- ARRIVE ON TIME.
- If you're scheduled to start work at 10:00am, you should be ready to start working at 10:00am sharp. You should be at your station and ready to serve customers by the time your shift starts. Pulling into the parking lot at the start of your shift doesn't count.

Illness & Emergency

- If you are unable to work due to illness or emergency, please notify Ally ASAP.
- If you are unable to reach Ally, reach out to another supervisor in your scheduled area. All supervisor's cell phone numbers are available in Homebase.
- We appreciate as much advance notice as possible. Don't wait to call off the morning of your shift when you've been sick for several days.
- Frequent call offs are ground for disciplinary action, which may include dismissal.
- If you do not alert us that you are not coming in to work, it is considered a no-show and will result in disciplinary action.

TIME CLOCK PROCEDURES

- An employee ID number will be given to you. It will be needed for you to clock in and out.
- Do not clock in more than 5 minutes before your shift begins unless you have your supervisor's permission. Staying later than your scheduled shift must also be approved by management.
- Remember to clock out at the end of your shift!

BREAKS & MEALS

You get one paid 15 minute break for every 5 hours or more that you work. If you work less than 5 hours at a stretch, you don't get a break. Otherwise, when you are on the clock, we expect you to be here to work. Socializing, taking frequent breaks, or taking longer breaks are not acceptable. There is always work to be done!

Your station supervisor will communicate to you when you should take your break and will coordinate it with other employees.

- Your break is a pause from your work. A chance to sit down, stretch, eat something, get a drink, use the bathroom.
- You will observe that some employees do not take a regular break. This is their style and prerogative.
- Breaks are not cumulative or creditable.
- Do not arrive late from your break.

Meals

- You are welcome to bring your own food with you, or you may purchase food at Concessions.
- Employees get a 50% discount on food.
- Do not waste time waiting in line for food while other employees are waiting for you to return. Instead, go to the back and place your order directly by filling out an Employee Ticket.
- All Employee Tickets will be gathered after the weekend, and a payment link will be sent out for you to pay your balance.
- Any unpaid balances left by the end of the season will be deducted from your final paycheck.

END OF SHIFT

When your Shift Replacement is late...

If you know that you need to leave immediately at the end of your shift, please let a supervisor know ahead of time. You must remain at your station until another employee arrives to replace you. If a replacement does not show up at the end of your shift, please notify a supervisor immediately. At this point, your supervisor will check to see if you are able/willing to stay at your station until a replacement can be found. NEVER leave your station unattended without permission.

EMPLOYEE PARKING

Employees may park in the main parking field in front of the Market/Ticket Building or in the gravel lot in front of the 3 big turkey barns, which will be marked as an employee-only entrance. The gate at the employee-only entrance must remain shut at ALL times. If you come through this entrance, please make sure that the gate is latched behind you. Customers are never allowed to enter this parking area.

UTILITY VEHICLE POLICY

Utility vehicles are only to be driven with permission from a manager. Utility vehicles should stay on designated paths and should only be driven through common areas where the public is if absolutely necessary.

ITEMS OF PERSONAL VALUE

We do not recommend bringing items of personal value to work. Magnolia Meadow Farms takes **no responsibility** for items brought to the farm. If you must bring items of value to work, you may keep them in the back of the Ticket Building or at your station.

EMPLOYEE DISCOUNTS

- Employees are entitled to a 50% discount on food and 25% discount on retail items.
- Employees can also visit the farm when not scheduled to work for FREE.
- You cannot run a tab at any station, except for ordering food at Concessions with an Employee Ticket. Employee Tickets are gathered after each weekend, and a payment link will be sent out for you to pay your balance. Any unpaid balances left by the end of the season will be deducted from your final paycheck.
- Please remember: this generous discount is extended to you, the employee, only. Not family members, friends, or others. If it is abused, it will be discontinued.

RADIO PROCEDURES

Radios are stored at the back of the Ticket Building. Each station is to have (1) radio at all times, even if multiple employees are at a station. We have a limited number of radios, so not every employee is able to have one.

To use a radio...

Turn the top left dial all the way on. Make sure you are on Channel 1 for most positions (Channel 2 for Hayride).

To call...

Simply hold down the large, center button and speak into the radio. Do not let go of the button until you have finished your message.

- Radio chatter should only concern the business. Personal discussions and banter should not be on the radio.
- You must return your radio to the Ticket Building at the end of your shift, turn it off, and place it on a charging station.

FOOD HANDLING GUIDELINES

When handling food, it is important to keep certain basic food safety principles in mind:

- Wash hands frequently.
- No bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods (i.e. wear gloves!)
- No eating or drinking while working, and especially not in food prep areas.
- Wear clean clothes.
- Wear hair restraints - hat or keep long hair pulled back and away from the face.
- Beard nets may be required for those that are not clean-shaven.
- Earrings should be no larger than a nickel and not dangly.
- Use proper food rotation.
- Only use cleaned and sanitized equipment & utensils.
- Keep your station clean.

Hands MUST Be Washed...

- With soap & warm water.
- Before you start your shift or return from a break.
- Before working with food, with clean equipment, or with clean utensils.
- After coughing, sneezing, or using a tissue.
- After using the restroom.
- After eating or drinking.
- After touching any area of the body, such as nose, eyes, mouth, and hair.

The Frederick County Health Department regularly inspects food handling locations.

While it is extremely important for food service providers to follow these guidelines, it is also important for ALL staff to follow basic cleanliness guidelines. All staff members must make an effort to stay clean through the day and must wash their hands after using the restroom.

HANDLING GUEST COMPLAINTS

We know that sometimes, no matter how hard we try, someone will have a complaint. We want to do our best to ensure that each guest has a positive experience at our farm and build relationships with our customers that last.

Always handle this situation in the following manner:

- Show genuine concern for and acknowledge what the guest has to say. Don't interrupt.
- It's hard to apologize, especially if something isn't your fault and/or the guest is being rude. But you can say, "I'm sorry about that. Let me see what I can do to make it right."
- Do what you can to "make it right" if an immediate solution can be given. If a solution cannot be found right away, show your concern, and if it is beyond your abilities, call a supervisor immediately.
- Thank the guest for bringing the problem to our attention and for giving us the opportunity to make it right. We appreciate feedback from our customers, even if it isn't always positive.
- If at any point you feel like a complaint is beyond your ability or you find yourself getting defensive, distressed, overwhelmed, or angry, you should call a supervisor immediately.
- Call over the radio, "I have a guest who needs to speak with you. Are you available to come over now?"
- **Hold to policy.** You need to be empathetic and show genuine concern, but if it's against our policy, kindly stand your ground.

Customer Complaint Forms

Customer Complaint Forms can be found in your station binder and are to be filled out when a customer has a complaint. These forms allow us to track complaints and look for patterns. They should be filled out completely (NOT in front of the guest, unless you need to get their name and contact information) by the end of the day and put in your (or the nearest) money bag to be turned in. If your shift ends mid-day, make sure you fill it out and put it in a money bag before you leave!

If repeating incidents occur in one day (for example, we ran out of Kettle Corn or the ground was muddy), you only need to fill out one form, but please indicate how many times the complaint was given.

EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE

The policies and procedures listed in this handbook are designed to help you perform your job in a way that best serves our customers. Occasionally we observe situations where employees are not following the guidelines we have established. Depending on the severity of the situation, a supervisor may decide to take disciplinary action.

Discipline will be carried out according to the severity of the infraction of the rules listed here in this handbook.

Disciplinary action could include:

- a verbal warning,
- a written warning,
- suspension,
- termination.

You will always know when you have received a write up, suspension, or termination. If necessary, your manager will meet with you to discuss the infraction.

The following is a partial list of actions that are grounds for disciplinary action:

- Arriving to work late or leaving early
- Repeatedly calling off and/or dropping/swapping shifts
- Coming to work under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Theft from the business, guests, or other employees
- Dishonesty or an attempt to defraud the business
- Falsifying timesheets for yourself or another person
- Recklessness or gross negligence leading to a serious or potential accident
- Willingly, knowingly, or purposefully damaging equipment
- Insubordination or disregard for your managers and/or assignments
- Discourteous or inconsiderate treatment of customers, fellow employees, and/or employers
- Fighting or provoking a fight
- Violation of our social media policy

Disciplinary actions are designed to resolve whatever problem the employee has caused and make the employee aware of the importance of following the policies established by Magnolia Meadow Farms. If your behavior interferes with the efficient operation of the farm, disciplinary action may result.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Remember that anything you post on social media can ultimately be seen as a reflection on our business. We expect all of our employees to be professional and adhere to our Code of Conduct while online, ESPECIALLY if you list our business as your workplace, you tag our business, reference our business, or post photos/videos of our property or merchandise on any of your personal social media platforms. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

We will withhold from your paycheck any amounts required by law. For U.S. citizens that will be: Federal and State income tax and Social Security tax.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Radio

Should a farm-wide emergency arise (i.e. lost child, fire, severe weather, etc.) the emergency radio procedure will be set in motion by a manager. The initiator will send out an emergency call to all channels. After the instructions and/or information for the emergency has been given, staff will set about performing the predetermined procedures. For some, this may be continuing normal operations. Once the emergency has been resolved, the initiator will let staff know. **EVERYONE WILL REMAIN ON THE RADIO, BUT THERE SHOULD BE ABSOLUTELY NO CHATTER UNLESS:**

- You are actively involved in the situation.
- You need a repeat of instructions.
- Your supervisor directs you to respond.
- There is another emergency.

Lost Child

If the Parents are looking for the child...

If you come across a parent that has lost their child, immediately contact your supervisor. We want to reassure the parent that we will do everything possible to find their child.

The supervisor will talk with the parents to get a description of the child. The supervisor will follow the emergency radio procedure and give a description of the child. For example, the supervisor will say “Please be on the lookout for a young girl, age 7, wearing a pink sundress & white flip flops. She has blonde hair in a ponytail.”

Employees working in the Ticket Building and Market should be especially alert in case the child attempts to leave the property. **The description of the child is NOT to be announced over the PA system.** We don’t want to risk a person with bad intentions finding the child before we do.

If you find a Child who is looking for their parents...

Sometimes the lost child will approach you and ask for help. But sometimes, a lost child will be wandering around not knowing what to do and will be visibly afraid or upset. If you see a child and suspect that they are lost, observe for a moment to see if the parents are in the general area.

If you don’t see the parents with the child, gently approach the child and ask if the child knows where their mom or dad are. You’ll want to speak calmly, and it may help to kneel down so that you are on the child’s level. If the child answers “No,” say “I’m sure they’re around somewhere. I’ll help you find them.”

Immediately radio a supervisor for further instruction. You must stay with the child at all times until the supervisor takes over. Sometimes if the child is upset, they may try to run away. You need to stay with the child and calm them down as best as you can. Do not let the child out of your sight.

The supervisor will take the child and ask the Farm Host to make an announcement for the parents to meet their child at the Ticket Building. If the parents can properly identify the child, then the child will be brought to them.

Injury Procedure

The safety of our guests and employees is of the utmost importance to us. Here are some general guidelines for addressing safety issues:

You see an Immediate or Potential Safety Risk...

Please inform a supervisor immediately. For example, something is broken or in need of repair. We appreciate your insight into areas that are functioning properly but could be improved with added safety measures.

Please let us know if you are First Aid or CPR certified.

A Guest is Injured...

If you witness an accident, please address the situation. First and foremost, remain calm. First Aid Certified supervisors or a supervisor and First Aid Certified employee must handle these types of incidents.

Approach the customer and assess the situation. Address their concerns and then notify a supervisor as soon as possible. Be sure not to come in contact with any blood or other bodily fluids.

First Aid Kits

If needed, First Aid Kits are available at the:

- Ticket Building
- Patch
- Concessions
- Utility Room in the Barn

The employees at these stations should be familiar with the procedures and the items in each kit. We can provide the first aid supplies, but the injured person or their parent or chaperone should be the ones to apply the first aid. If the assistance of one of our First Aid Certified employees is needed, gloves must be worn.

Incident Reports

Whenever there is an injury on the farm, or something that requires the use of First Aid, an Incident Report **MUST** be completed for our insurance purposes. Please turn it in at the end of the night or the end of your shift.

Incident Report can be found in each station's binder.

If you injure yourself while at work, you need to report it immediately to your supervisor and also complete an Incident Report. This helps us document potential hazards in the workplace.

Heat Stress

Excessive heat from activity or hot weather causes stress on the body. On extremely hot days, it is important to stay hydrated and be aware of the signs of heat stress. While working in the heat, you must frequently replenish lost bodily fluids. You may have a water bottle at your workstation. We also provide umbrellas at each station and encourage you to step in the shade when you can.

Please encourage our guests to stay hydrated by purchasing beverages. Keep an eye out for guests and other employees who may be experiencing heat exhaustion or stress. Symptoms include **muscle cramps, dizziness, nausea, weakness, fainting, rapid breathing, clammy skin, paleness, or if perspiration stops.**

If you see a guest exhibiting these symptoms, please politely address the situation. Ask the guest how they are feeling and ask if they would like assistance. Use your best judgment to assess the severity of the situation. If needed, call a supervisor for help. You may need to have someone meet you with a golf cart to get the guest to a cooler place until they feel better.

Fire Extinguishers

The risk of fire is something that should not be taken lightly. Fire extinguishers are located at the Ticket Building, Market, Concessions, and the Utility Room in the Barn.

Emergency Evacuation

In the event that we need to evacuate all staff and guests, please carry out the following procedures in a **CALM** and **COLLECTED** manner. It is crucial that we be able to instruct our guests to evacuate in a safe manner without causing widespread panic. Also be attentive to additional instructions from your supervisor. Farm Host will read the Emergency Announcement. **NEVER** should the terms "emergency" or "fire" be used as this will cause a panic.

Dangerous Weather Conditions:

If the area is issued a severe thunderstorm warning or a tornado watch/warning, the farm will close immediately and guests will be directed to their cars.

Only a manager will decide when announcements are to be made about weather conditions.

Severe Weather Evacuation Procedure:

A weather emergency may arise before we can safely get all of our guests and employees off the property. In the event that a severe weather condition is headed in our direction and will be arriving within minutes, we want to direct our guests and employees to one of the following places:

- **Market/Ticket Building (direct people here first)**
- **Concessions**
- **Utility Room (by the farm animal area)**
- **Farm Work Room/Shop (around the back of the three barns next to hay storage)**

In the event that you or people around you are still trying to get to a safe location when the severe weather hits, you should find the closest building and take cover (avoid open areas). Get low to the ground and put your hands over your head to protect your face. Help guests and other employees around you as much as possible.

Fire Evacuation Procedure:

In the event of a fire, guests and employees should be directed to the closest open space AWAY from the fire. **We would prefer that people be evacuated to the parking lot if possible.**

Employee Emergency Weather Policy:

On occasions when the National Weather Service issues warnings for severe thunderstorms, tornadoes, or hail for our area and employees do not have adequate time to get home before the storm hits, employees may be taken to the Market to wait out the storm.

Parents may call the Farm Line at (301) 606-4086 if they have questions about where to pick up their child.

Employees who have their license are responsible to make a decision on whether they'd like to wait out the storm or attempt to drive home. Student drivers should talk to their parents before making a decision. Severe thunderstorms can approach quickly and make driving dangerous.

For rain showers and minor storms, employees will still wait for their ride at the Market.

Magnolia Meadow Farms

CODE OF CONDUCT

- **Be considerate.**
 - Think of others before yourself.
 - Treat customers and fellow employees with kindness and respect.
 - You never know what someone else is going through!
- **Be a team player.**
 - Encourage one another and build each other up.
 - Be a positive influence.
 - If you can't say something nice about someone, say nothing.
 - Everyone's job is equally important to the success of Magnolia Meadow Farms, including managers, supervisors, seasoned employees, and new employees. Everyone will be treated with the same respect.
- **Be professional.**
 - Conduct yourself in a businesslike manner.
 - Swearing, fighting, gossiping, bullying, drinking, drug use, and similar unprofessional behavior is strictly prohibited.
- **Have integrity.**
 - Build open and honest relationships through clear communication.
 - Be willing to admit when you are wrong or make a mistake.
 - Be true to your word: if you tell someone you're going to do something... Do it!
- **Keep things loose and have fun!**

Please sign and acknowledge that you have read and understand the expectations listed in this handbook:

Signature

Date