



Participant Information and
Registration Handbook 2018

Welcome

You have now undertaken the assessment, and the team has offered you a placement in one of our programs – and we're excited, and we hope you are too.

We're excited, because we know, as you or your child progresses through our program, you'll see positive changes that only beautiful steeds undertaking horse facilitated therapy can bring; social, emotional, and physical. The benefits of the activity will be varied, and the abilities that will develop will be greater than you would possibly anticipate.

Our team at Pegasus, passionate staff and volunteers, will glow in the smile of you or your child, and I, as a parent of a couple of disabled children myself, will draw great empathy; hearing your stories and understanding your journey as you see, feel and understand the role our horses have – developing abilities.

Pegasus is a community – a family, and we encourage you and your family; siblings, parents, and friend, to get to know us and the work we do. Feel free to drop in anytime – the gate is always open!

About Pegasus

Established in 1973, Riding for the Disabled ACT Inc. (Pegasus) is an iconic charitable organisation serving the ACT and local NSW region.

Pegasus provides horse-facilitated therapeutic programs and activities aimed at developing abilities for people living with a disability. We offer mounted, unmounted, school holiday programs and specialised therapeutic riding ('Hippotherapy'), which is delivered with the assistance of a qualified physiotherapist.

Apart from being fun, horse riding exercises the whole body, improving muscle strength and flexibility, coordination and balance. Working with horses encourages responsible and caring attitudes, and helps to build confidence, self-esteem, communication skills, leadership and trust. All participants are able to enjoy equestrian activities appropriate to their abilities; delivered in a supportive and socially-integrated setting.

This information

This handbook is designed to familiarise new participants to Pegasus. It contains information about:

- Pegasus; operating times, contacts
- Pegasus programs and activities
 - Pegasus – developing abilities
 - relationship with the horse
 - matching participants and horses
- Participating at Pegasus
 - forms
 - service agreement terms and conditions
 - payment of fees
 - attending sessions
 - exiting Pegasus programs
- 2018 Term Dates
- health, safety, and risk management
- emergency procedures

Location

Pegasus operates out of 'Pegasus Farm' – a 100 acre property located at 119 Drake Brockman Drive in Holt. Parents are always welcome to watch sessions from the comfort of our viewing gallery.

Operating times

Pegasus operates from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Saturday during the school term. Sessions also run on weekdays during most school holidays.

Contacts

Pegasus is contactable on 02 6254 9190 or by emailing: admin@pegasusact.com.au

Position	Name	Email address
Chief Executive Officer	Jane Thompson	jane.thompson@pegasusact.com.au
Executive Officer	Matt Watson	matt.watson@pegasusact.com.au
Program Manager	Andrew Kelly	andrew.kelly@pegasusact.com.au
Administration Officer	Chai Jaiyai	admin@pegasusact.com.au

Our Programs

Apart from being fun, the interaction between people and horses provides many powerful and varied benefits. The horse's walk stimulates movement in the rider which aids muscle development and joint mobility; enhances self-esteem and confidence, and improves concentration and communications skills. Other benefits may also include:

- balance and coordination
- agility and fitness
- physical awareness and trust
- leadership and learning skills
- emotional wellbeing

Our emphasis is on assessing the abilities and needs of each participant – through consultation with participants, teachers, occupational and speech therapists, parents and carers – and developing individualised programs to enhance each participant’s abilities. Pegasus tailors the program goals and objectives to the individual. Our programs encompass more than developing equestrian skills, and may also focus on areas such as behaviour, communication, physical development, self-esteem and wellbeing.

Pegasus offers a range of mounted riding and unmounted programs, conducted in small groups or with individuals. These programs are available on a long term, ongoing basis, or for introductory sessions during school holidays. For young adults with mild to intermediate disabilities, we have a Cottage Program operating for five hours on a Monday only. This program utilizes the farm and the horse to learn new skills, provide confidence and self esteem.

Pegasus also offers Hippotherapy for children with movement disabilities. A qualified Physiotherapist positions the rider on the horse, directs the movement of the horse, analyses the child’s responses and adjusts the treatment accordingly.

As with all sports, people progress at different rates depending on their individual abilities and aptitudes. Horse riding is an activity that is best learnt through regular practice. As most participants only participate once a week, their progress may not be as quick as someone who rides more regularly. Parents and participants are able discuss their progress with their Coach at any time and a formal end-of-year report is provided in December.

Pegasus - Developing Abilities

Pegasus Coaches are qualified under Riding for the Disabled Association’s (RDAA) National Coaching Accreditation Scheme. They have knowledge and skills in disabilities, safety, first aid, coaching, horse mastership, and the selection and training of horses.

Pegasus Coaches will conduct an assessment with the participant and their family or carer prior to placement in our program. This is aimed at determining the participant’s specific requirements and adjustments needed to ride safely; such as the number of support personnel required to assist the participant while on horseback.

Pegasus provides the adjustments needed to accommodate an individual's special needs and requirements. The adjustments include:

- Support Personnel: Pegasus volunteers are trained under the RDAA Volunteer Training Program, in assisting people with disabilities. We provide up to three volunteers per participant to assist them with riding; a 'leader' and up to two 'side walkers'.
- Pegasus horses are specially selected for temperament and conformation, and specifically trained to work with people who have disabilities. Each horse undergoes nine to 12 months training before they are ready for people with disabilities to ride them. Each horse continues weekly training during their working life. In the same way that not all dogs are suitable to be guide dogs for the visually impaired, not every horse is considered appropriate to work with people with disabilities.
- Pegasus tailors the program goals and objectives to the individual, and works with parents, carers, allied health professionals and school teachers in developing the program. Goals in our programs encompass more than basic equestrian skills, and may also include goals around behavioural, communication, physical development, self-esteem and wellbeing objectives.
- Pegasus Coaches and some volunteers are experienced in using different visual communication aides such as PECS, AAC or sign language if it is appropriate to the individual in our classes.

Relationship with the horse

The enjoyment of building a relationship with a horse, and the responsibility of caring for it, is an integral part of our programs. Most classes involve basic instruction in horse management as well as riding instruction. This encourages participants to respect and be considerate of other beings, and motivates them to participate. It is also possible that a participant may be offered a program that concentrates solely on unmounted activities with our horses.

Matching participant and horse

The care and wellbeing of participants and horses is paramount at Pegasus. We strive to provide great care for our horses. One aspect of this care is the consideration we give to the amount of weight we ask our horses to carry. No hard and fast rule can apply, and it is always best to judge this conservatively in order to maintain a safety margin. It is not just the weight of an individual participant that we take into account, but other factors such as the

age, fitness, soundness, and conformation¹ of the horse. Factors including whether a rider has unsteady balance, sits crookedly, or has low muscle tone must be taken into account, as all these things can cause a rider to be harder for the horse to carry.

Coaches continually monitor the suitability of a horse and participant combination, and there may come a time when a participant must cease riding a particular horse. We will endeavour to find a suitable replacement but, unfortunately we can't guarantee it as there are many issues involved with selecting a suitable horse for individual participants. Where a suitable horse cannot be found, a participant may be required to exit our riding program.

Participating at Pegasus

Participant forms

All participants must complete new forms in each calendar year before they can ride at Pegasus. A parent or guardian must sign these forms if the participant is under 18 years or unable to give informed consent. Necessary forms are:

- Pegasus Service Agreement
- RDAA Consent to Participate Form
- RDAA Medical Consent Forms.

Pegasus has a central database, and all information is stored securely with access by authorised persons only.

Pegasus Service Agreement

All participants and guardians are required to complete a Service Agreement. The Service Agreement details the Schedule of Supports: program details and the agreed invoicing and payment schedule.

Media

Pegasus is privileged to have a strong presence in the community. This is due to many volunteers, families, and supporters who have, since our inception, understood how valuable our programs are, and how critical our need is for funds derived from community support. Without a robust and constant flow of media, we would struggle to meet the financial demands necessary to continue our operations. Hence, your support to assist Pegasus by

¹ A horse's "conformation" relates to its bone structure, musculature and general body proportions.
Annexure 2.

permitting media is valued. Pegasus is mindful of your privacy, and that of your child, and takes it very seriously. Even with media permission (details below under Media Permission), Pegasus makes personal contact with families, participants, or volunteers when media opportunities arise that may go external to explain how and to what extent the media may be used.

Media Permission

By ticking the Media Consent box in your Service Agreement, you;

- a). consent to and release Riding for the Disabled ACT Inc. (Pegasus) to use and publish all media (including, but not limited to, photographic images, audiovisual recordings, video/film footage) referred to in this document as 'The Media Material', of my child/ren (program participant) for informational, promotional and communication purposes without need for further approval or remuneration;
- b). acknowledge that 'The Media Material' is the property of Pegasus and release Pegasus from any infringement of any personal or property rights arising from the use of 'The Media Material' by Pegasus or third parties;
- c). acknowledge that Pegasus will store my child's(ren's) details with the 'The Media Material' (in the appropriately secure files within the organisation) and may identify my child's(ren's) name in conjunction with use of 'The Media Material';
- d). acknowledge that Pegasus will not use 'The Media Material' in a manner that may be deemed adverse or defamatory to my child(ren).

Occasionally, Pegasus holds events or functions, such as our Annual Open Day, when media has been invited. Alerts are issued, however, as a public event, and as with any other public event, it is not viable for Pegasus to monitor who may be captured (mostly a photo) for media use – media permission or not!

RDAA Participant to Consent: annual participant registration

All participants must be registered with Pegasus and our national body – RDAA.

The participant/participant's guardian **must** complete the 'RDAA Consent to Participate' form and pay the annual fee of \$100. This fee is pro rata for those participants that start after the first Semester and for those who participate in our School Holiday Program. This registers the participant from when they begin in the calendar year to 31 December each year and covers personal accident insurance for participants. The registration fee will be invoiced at the commencement of a participant's program and is non-refundable.

This form includes a standard legal waiver of liability.

RDAA Medical Consent Form

Participants are unable to commence riding without a current Medical Consent form on record.

Medical Consent forms are generally valid for **three years** and are completed by your medical practitioner or doctor. Your Coach will inform you if we require a new Medical Consent form to be completed by your doctor.

Service agreement term and conditions

All participants and guardians are required to complete a Service Agreement. By signing the service agreement participants and their representatives are agreeing that they have read and understood the following terms and conditions.

Responsibilities of Pegasus

Pegasus agrees to:

- provide a thorough assessment of the participant's needs and goals in the development of their personalised program
- consult the participant on decisions about their program goals and objectives
- provide qualified program supports in a safe and supportive environment
- review the provision of supports at least bi-annually for ongoing programs, and at the end of each program for School Holiday programs with the participant
- communicate openly and honestly in a timely manner
- treat the participant with courtesy and respect
- listen to the participant's feedback and resolve problems quickly
- give the participant information about managing any complaints or disagreements and details of Pegasus' cancellation policy
- provide a program that meets the participant's agreed goals and needs at the time scheduled; give the participant as much notice as possible if Pegasus has to change a scheduled appointment to provide supports or cancel a planned session; please note:

- if Pegasus is unable to provide the required qualified instructors and support personnel for a safe and effective program on that day, the session will be cancelled
 - if Pegasus cancels a session, the participant will not be charged or billed for that session
- give the participant the required notice if Pegasus needs to end the Service Agreement (see '[Ending this Service Agreement](#)' below for more information)
 - protect the participant's privacy and confidential information; please refer to Pegasus published privacy policy <http://www.pegasusact.com.au/privacy.html>
 - provide supports in a manner consistent with all relevant laws
 - keep accurate records on the supports provided to the participant, and
 - issue invoices and/or statements of the supports delivered to the participant under Pegasus Riding for the Disabled Payment Policy.

Responsibilities of Participant / Participant's representative

The *Participant / Participant's representative* agrees to:

- communicate to Pegasus about the participant's goals and objectives and reasons why they wish to attend Pegasus
- notify Pegasus staff of any participant health concerns or issues and keep Pegasus informed of any changes to contact details, in particular emergency contacts
- wear appropriate clothing such as long comfortable pants, a shirt that protects the shoulders and neck from the sun
- treat Pegasus staff, volunteers and horses with courtesy and respect
- understand and follow the direction of the coach during emergency procedures
- talk to Pegasus if the participant has any concerns about their program and ask for help where necessary
- give Pegasus the required notice if the participant needs to end the Service Agreement (see '[Ending this Service Agreement](#)' below for more information)

Cancellations

On days of Total Fire Ban, or on days of inclement weather, (weather unsuitable for activity) the session may be cancelled; at no charge to the participant.

Both Pegasus and the participant's nominated carers are able to organise cancellations due to inclement weather; notification of cancellations will ideally be provided via telephone or email preferably 24 hours prior to the scheduled session.

Pegasus requires a minimum 24 hours notification in writing if the participant cannot make a scheduled session due to reasons other than total fire ban or inclement weather; and if the notice is not provided within that time they will not be refunded.

Sessions that are cancelled at any time on behalf of Pegasus will not be charged to the participant.

Changes to the Service Agreement

If changes to the supports or their delivery are required, both Pegasus and the participant will discuss and review the Service Agreement. If both Parties agree, then any changes to the Service Agreement will be in writing, signed, and dated by both Parties.

Ending the Service Agreement

Should either Party wish to end the Service Agreement they must give one month's notice; however shorter time periods may be acceptable if the participant or carer is experiencing unforeseen circumstances.

Pegasus may end the Service Agreement with minimal notice under the circumstances where:

- the participant no longer meets the criteria for a place at Pegasus; including no longer meeting the 60kg weight bearing limit for Pegasus' Riding (mounted) program or being unable to maintain a regular commitment to their lesson times
- Pegasus becomes unable to provide a safe and effective program due to lack of available resources. For example, a horse or staff member becomes unavailable due to illness or injury
- the participant does not meet the fee payments as detailed in their payment schedule and aligned to Pegasus' Payment Policy.

If either Party seriously breaches this Service Agreement the requirement of notice will be waived.

Feedback, complaints and disputes

If the participant wishes to give Pegasus feedback, the participant can talk to the Program Manager Andrew Kelly on andrew.kelly@pegasusact.com.au or 02 62549190.

If the participant is not satisfied or does not want to talk to this person, the participant can contact the Executive Officer, Matt Watson, on 02 6254 9190 or matt.watson@pegasusact.com.au

Payment of Fees

Fees for programs vary depending on the type of program a participant is placed in and the number of weeks in that term. Please refer to Pegasus' Planning Guide. Fees and payment schedule for participants' programs are outlined in their "quote".

For participants that are paying for supports through NDIS funding, Pegasus will invoice these funds as per the nominated payment method on the first page of their Service Agreement. All prices are GST inclusive (if applicable) and include the cost of providing the supports.

Additional expenses are not included in the cost of the supports. These may include and are not limited to;

- entrance fees, event tickets, meals etc
- personal hygiene care eg. toileting etc. If a participant usually requires support for personal care, then a parent, carer or disability support worker must attend with the participant to provide these supports.
- clothing; with the exception of boots and helmets which are loaned to participants for the duration of a riding lesson; all Pegasus equipment remains on Pegasus premises.

Payment terms

Pegasus requests that payment of fees be received **within 14 days** from the invoice date. An email reminder will be sent out to participants, parents or guardians if payment has not been received at the end of the 14 day period. A friendly follow-up phone call will be made for all outstanding fees that have not been received after 21 days of the invoice date.

Please note: A participant's place in the Pegasus programs will be put at risk if fees are not **paid in full** after 21 days of the invoice date.

Annexure 2.

The schedule of payments is outlined in the Service Agreement. Payments for ongoing programs can be scheduled as follows:

- debited monthly on the 15th day of the month (or next business day) **or**
- one invoice per term.

School holiday programs

School Holiday programs are three or four consecutive day programs held during school holidays. Pegasus will issue invoices **14 days** prior to the commencement of the program. Pegasus requests that payment of fees be received **within 7 days** from the invoice date. A friendly follow-up phone call will be made for all outstanding fees that have not been received after 7 days of the invoice date.

Please note: Pegasus requests that participants' families provide payment **in full** one week before the school holiday program commences. If the booking is made closer to the start date, then payment must be made at the time of booking. If payment is unable to be met prior to the program commencing, then the placement in the program will be offered to the next participant on the waiting list.

In the event of the participant failing to attend the school holiday program, or cancelling the program within 7 days of the start date, 50% of the fee for the program will still be payable. The remaining 50% of the fee will be refunded to the participant.

Payment methods

Monthly direct debits can be made on the 15th day of each month (or the next business day). Please fill out the direct debit form and provide the details to Pegasus administration.

Electronic transfer payments can be paid directly into our bank account. Details are:

Bank: Westpac – Belconnen Mall Branch
Account Name: Pegasus
BSB: 032 712
Account Number: 11 22 18
Reference: Participant's full name and invoice number.

Credit card payments can also be made over the phone by calling 02 6254 9190.

Cash payments can be made at the Pegasus office during working hours: 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

Cheques should be made out to 'Pegasus' and can be posted to us at 119 Drake Brockman Drive, Holt ACT 2615 or dropped into the office during working hours.

Riding scholarships

Thanks to the support of generous donors, Pegasus has a number of Riding Scholarships available. Applications open in mid-November, and close end-January. These scholarships support people with a disability who aspire to develop their potential through horse-related activities and associated therapy, through either a Riding (mounted program) or Horsemanship (unmounted program) scholarship.

Application forms for Riding Scholarships can be obtained by contacting administration on 02 6254 9190; visiting our offices or website <http://www.pegasusact.com.au/>

Attending lessons

Pegasus requires participants to arrive 15 minutes prior to the start time for the lesson, so that they have time to put their helmets and boots on, hear the briefing for the session and be ready to start at the scheduled time. This helps the participant transition calmly and safely to the session, which makes for a better outcome for all involved.

Please read the sections in this book under 'health, safety and risk management' and 'emergency procedures' so that you are aware of Pegasus and your responsibilities in these matters.

2018 term dates

Long Term/Ongoing Programs

2017	Start	Finish	Weeks
Term 1	Tuesday, 6 February	Saturday, 14 April	10
Term 2	Tuesday, 1 May	Saturday, 7 July	10
Term 3	Tuesday, 24 July	Saturday, 29 September	10
Term 4	Tuesday, 16 October	Saturday, 8 December	8

Short Term/School Holiday Programs

2017	Start	Finish	Days*
January	Tuesday, 23 January	Thursday, 25 January	3
	Tuesday, 30 January	Friday, 2 February	4
April	Tuesday, 17 April	Friday, 20 April	4
	Thursday, 26 April	Friday, 27 April	2
July	Tuesday, 10 July	Friday, 13 July	4
October	Tuesday, 2 October	Friday, 5 October	4
	Tuesday, 9 October	Friday, 12 October	4

*Please note the number of days offered varies depending on availability and excludes public holidays

Exiting Pegasus programs

Although Pegasus has a lengthy waiting list for our services, we do not currently have a policy that limits the time a participant can participate in our programs. Participants remain involved in lessons for as long as the Coach determines they are gaining benefit. These benefits may be physical, technical (i.e. riding skill development), emotional, recreational or social.

If the Coach is concerned that a participant is no longer gaining benefit from their program, the Coach will discuss and review the progress with the parent and participant. If, after this discussion, the Coach believes the participant is no longer gaining benefit, the participant will be withdrawn from our programs. If resources allow, and it is suitable for the participant, there may be alternative programs that Pegasus can offer, such as the unmounted program.

Participants and parents must also be aware that Pegasus may sometimes have to re-allocate Coaches, horses and volunteers, or in some instances withdraw services to participants if there are not enough appropriate and safe resources to offer them an effective program.

Due to the high demand for our services, participants are required to make a regular weekly commitment to their lesson and have a responsibility to notify us of absences at least 24 hours prior to their lesson, as per their Service Agreement. Participants who have excessive absences may lose their place in our program.

Now and again, Pegasus will have events for our participants to participate in, such as Ride for Pegasus, Games Day etc. This will form part of some participant's curriculum, and therefore, will replace the regular session the participant has.

Health, safety and risk management

Pegasus strives to provide a safe and supportive environment for participants, volunteers and staff. Safety and risk management is the responsibility of all participants. Participants have a responsibility to notify staff of any safety issues that come to their attention.

Signage: Please observe all signs and instructions whilst at Pegasus. They are there for your safety.

Horse safety: Participants and volunteers should only enter stables, yards and paddocks under the direction of the supervising Coach or staff. It is critical that the instructions of the Coaches and staff are observed when handling horses. Whilst our horses are well trained, they are living creatures and by nature can be unpredictable.

Accompanying children: All non-riding children must be supervised by an accompanying adult whilst on the property. Coaches are only able to supervise participants during their lesson.

Clothing: Whilst at Pegasus, participants should wear long comfortable pants, a shirt that protects the shoulders and neck from the sun, smooth-soled shoes (riding boots are available for loan at Pegasus) and sunscreen. Loose clothing and jewellery should be removed or fastened to avoid flapping.

Personal hygiene: Pegasus has a toilet and shower facilities that are accessible for people with disabilities. If a participant normally requires a carer, parent or support worker to assist with personal hygiene, it is required that such a person be present throughout the session to provide assistance if required. Pegasus staff and volunteers are not permitted to assist in this area. Participants should wash their hands thoroughly after handling and riding the horses.

Emergency procedures

RDAA policies and procedures have been adopted by Pegasus. All staff and volunteers receive training prior to involvement in classes and all coaches hold current first aid qualifications. In the case of an emergency, Pegasus will contact the emergency contact person provided in the Pegasus Service Agreement, and if necessary, arrange for appropriate medical assistance – the cost of which will be borne by the client/parent/guardian.

Fire danger: On days of total fire ban, all participants must have their transport remain at Pegasus for the duration of their involvement. All participants and visitors must sign in and out on our sign-in sheets in the Common Room.

In an emergency, such as a bush fire, Pegasus will be evacuated of all participants, volunteers and staff.

Emergency: A siren will sound if there is an emergency. This is the signal to move to the designated Assembly Point. The Assembly Point is the grassed area inside the front gate between the cottage and the driveway.

If an evacuation is required, people will be moved McDonalds Restaurant Kippax – 84 Hardwick Crescent (see map below) or if your transport is on site and accessible, please sign out of the sheet at the Assembly Point and leave the grounds immediately. Please ensure that you have signed out so that Pegasus staff know that you have safely left the grounds.

