



## POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

Welcome to Hilton Violin Studio! I am excited to work with you as you learn the play the violin - a beautiful instrument that has the ability to touch hearts. This experience will change your life in many ways, bringing you joy and satisfaction while allowing you to learn discipline, dedication and perseverance. This document outlines the policies and procedures for the Hilton Violin Studio. If you have any questions regarding any of these policies, please address them with me before your first lesson.

**COST:** Students pay a monthly fee to participate in the Hilton Violin Studio and make a commitment to the studio on a semester by semester basis. The three terms are: September-December, January-April and May-August. The monthly studio fee covers the cost of private lessons, recital venues, and accompanists, which is assessed based on the number of lessons planned for the given term.

**PAYMENT:** Payment is due within the first seven days of each month. Preferred forms of payment are Venmo, check, and cash. The Venmo ID is @MichaelEHilton, and checks should be made out to Michael Hilton.

**MISSED LESSONS:** Learning a musical instrument is difficult, and requires a significant investment of time and energy on part of both the student and the teacher. As such, it is crucial that the student be present for all lessons. No refunds will be offered for missed lessons on part of the student for any reason. If a lesson must be missed by the teacher, the fee of the following month will be reduced by the cost of the lesson(s). Due to the complexity of balancing a full schedule of students, make-up lessons are typically not available.

**LESSONS:** In order to make use of all the lesson time, please arrive a few minutes before the assigned lesson time. The door will be unlocked, so you may enter quietly and begin to unpack your instrument while the previous lesson is finishing up. A parent must accompany students under the age of 12 to all lessons, preferably the parent that is involved in supporting home practice. For students 12 and older, a parent is not required to be present at each lesson, however for purposes of safety or in case of emergency, it is highly encouraged that a responsible adult or older sibling accompany the student to every lesson. The student and parent must make every effort to prevent distractions from

disrupting the lesson by silencing cell phones. If a younger sibling is present, they are expected to behave so as not to disturb the lesson.

**PRACTICE COMMITMENT:** Success in learning the violin requires consistent, daily practice. 20-40 minutes per day will result in much greater progress than 2 hours on one day of the week. The amount of time students should practice each day depends on the student's age, playing level, and personal aspirations – this amount should be discussed between the teacher, parent, and student. Parents of young students should be present for all home practice sessions to maximize efficiency and learning. If a student or parent has difficulty meeting practice requirements for any reason, please feel free to consult with the teacher for guidance.

**COMMUNICATION:** It is important that there be effective communication between the teacher and students/parents. Please respond to messages within 24 hours via text or email. Feel free to contact the teacher for whatever reason – if there are questions or concerns of any kind that need to be resolved, please call or text to schedule a time to consult with the teacher outside of lesson time, so as not to lose time reserved for instruction.

**LISTENING:** An essential part of learning the violin is dedicating a significant amount of time to listening to current and future repertoire. This is especially crucial for young students taking their first steps to develop a musically sensitive ear. In some cases, the teacher will request that the parent aid in helping the students listen to assigned pieces every day. It is also encouraged that students regularly listen to and watch performances of great violinists for inspiration.

**RECITALS:** There will be a studio recital at the end of each semester, during which all students will perform selected repertoire they have learned. Learning to play for an audience is a specific skill that takes practice, and students will receive guidance on how to prepare for and conduct themselves in performances. As students progress, they will also be encouraged to prepare solo recitals at certain milestones, such as demonstrating the completion of a level of Suzuki repertoire, or at the end of a senior year of high school.

**ENSEMBLES:** One of the most enjoyable aspects of playing a string instrument is playing with others. There are many opportunities to play in orchestra, string quartets, and other groups that will help students' musical development and provide the chance to perform. It is highly encouraged that students play in ensembles offered by schools where available, and in extra-curricular programs and youth orchestras when possible. The teacher will advise students and parents on suitable programs to join.