



Welcome to Community Music School! Please read these Policies and Procedures before signing the Registration Form.

Individual Lessons

- A. Each student must either own or be renting their own instrument before starting lessons at Community Music School. CMS has some instruments available for rent for a monthly fee of \$20. Please ask about your specific instrument.
- B. Each student is responsible for buying their own books or sheet music as requested by the instructor. Unless express written permission is obtained, photocopying of copyrighted music is illegal.
- C. For student absences, contact the CMS office (716-884-4887) or (info@cms-buffalo.org). Students should **NOT** **contact** their teacher. Notification must be received at least **four hours** before the scheduled lesson (or by 9:15 a.m. for morning lessons).
- D. All CMS students will be invited to attend a 90-minute "Studio Makeup Day" twice per year - once in the Winter and once in the Spring. **This will serve as makeup time for any student's or teacher's absence.** Students will be notified about their teacher's winter makeup date in early fall, and the spring makeup in early winter. These sessions will allow students to meet and learn with the other students from their own teacher's studio or departments.

Current students whose first lesson occurs before the winter makeup session are eligible for their teacher's winter Studio Makeup Day. Any student who is enrolled before the spring makeup session is eligible for their teacher's spring Studio Makeup Day. Even if a student has not missed any lessons, they will still be invited to attend the Studio Makeup Days.

Any student whose first lesson occurs after the spring makeup session, or during the summer, will not be entitled to a makeup lesson.

If any instructor has more than two personal absences within the school year, they'll be expected to provide an individual makeup.

Refunds or credits will not be given in place of absences or missed Studio Makeup Days.

If a student is absent from a Studio Makeup Day or scheduled individual makeup lesson, *with or without* notification, the makeup is forfeited. The student may still attend the second studio day, if applicable.

- E. All lessons must be given at the CMS main location or a CMS satellite location unless the executive director gives written approval in advance.
- F. Any student who misses two consecutive lessons without notifying the School will be disenrolled. In this situation, **any outstanding makeups as well as any tuition which has already been paid, will be forfeited.**
- G. A student may receive credit for a lesson that falls on a religious holiday by contacting the office at least one business day in advance.
- H. **If a student expects to be absent for two to three consecutive weeks due to a prolonged illness, performance obligation, travel or other unusual circumstance, they may request a leave of absence. In order for CMS to pay**

(H. con't.) the teacher for the missed instructional time, the student will be charged half price for these weeks. This must be arranged with Paul Waara or Rachael Bouquard. Not the teacher. A return date for lessons will be included in the arrangement. **A student planning to return from a LOA must notify the office one business day in advance.**

Only one leave of absence will be granted per school year. A lesson time cannot be held or guaranteed for more than three weeks.

In the case of an extenuating circumstance, and additional weeks are needed for a leave of absence, the student must communicate this in advance with director of operations, Paul Waara. The student will be charged the full lesson price for any leave of absence beyond three weeks, and their spot will be held on their teacher's schedule.

Students who don't return from a leave of absence will be automatically discontinued and will be sent a final adjusted bill. The student is welcome to re-register, paying an additional \$30 administrative fee, and return to CMS at any time. In that event, the student may select from any lesson times that are available.

- I. If a student needs to discontinue study at CMS before the end of the year, they must notify director of operations, Paul Waara, by phone or in writing. **Notice to the teacher or front desk staff is not sufficient.** The office must receive this official notification at least one business day before the next scheduled lesson or the student will be charged for that lesson. A student is responsible for the payment of lessons scheduled between the start date and discontinuation date. **Studio Makeup Days or individual makeup lessons not completed before early discontinuation will be forfeited.**
- J. **If CMS discontinues a student for any reason, any outstanding makeups will be forfeited.**
- K. If a teacher leaves CMS before the end of the year, another teacher will be assigned to each student as soon as possible. Lessons missed in the interim will be credited or made up.
- L. **A CMS student may not approach a CMS teacher for private study outside the School until at least one year has passed from the student's disenrollment from CMS, unless the executive director gives advance approval.**
- M. Each student is expected to participate in recitals and year-end skills showcase. Exceptions are made upon recommendation by the teacher to the director of operations.
- N. **All communication must go through the CMS office and not the teacher.** Each faculty member is assigned a CMS email address, and they may communicate with students/parents via those emails where it pertains specifically to lesson, class or ensemble information only. **Scheduling or other questions and communications must be directed to the CMS Office.** Students and teachers are not permitted to communicate via personal devices.
- O. Parents are invited to consult with their child's teacher at any time or to request a meeting that includes the department chair, director of operations and/or the executive director.
- P. A student may request a change of teacher by speaking to the director of operations or the executive director.
- Q. Parents/Guardians are welcome to sit in on the student's first (and if necessary, the second) lesson, but are asked to wait in one of the designated waiting areas for the remainder of the lessons.

Classes and Ensembles

- A. Most CMS classes and ensembles require a minimum of 4 students. CMS reserves the right to discontinue any class or ensemble because of low enrollment. In this case, any tuition already paid will be refunded to the student.
- B. Classes and ensembles are offered for a specified number of weeks. Each student enrolls for the **entire session** and is responsible for the total class tuition whether or not they attend every meeting. **No credit or refund will be given to a student who withdraws before the end of the session.**
- C. A makeup class will be scheduled for any class session that is canceled because of teacher absence, or due to the closing of the School for weather or other emergency.
- D. **No refunds are given for student absences from any regularly scheduled class or ensemble.**

- E. Parents/Guardians are asked to wait in one of the designated waiting areas for any class or ensemble session.

Dismissal

The School reserves the right to dismiss a student for lack of interest or progress; disruptive or disrespectful behavior; frequent absences; nonpayment; possession of guns or other weapons at CMS locations; or evidence of alcohol or drug use.

Financial Assistance

Students who are unable to pay the full fee for their studies at CMS are encouraged to apply for financial assistance.

To be considered, students must complete an application and include all sources of income for the family and provide proof of this income.

Students awarded financial assistance from CMS must attend their weekly lesson, practice regularly at home, and participate in CMS recitals and skills showcase. **Frequent absences or lack of participation in recitals and skills showcase (as well as reasons listed under “Dismissal”) will jeopardize a student’s continued financial aid.**

Monthly tuition payments must be paid in a timely fashion. Should a student have difficulty paying their monthly installment at any time during the year, they are to contact office manager Rachael Bouquard, before the bill becomes overdue to discuss a payment plan.

Students who are unable to meet these expectations will be placed on probation for 6 months, and receive a 25% reduction in financial assistance. A review will occur after the six months to determine whether full aid will be restored.

If any student faces hardship at any time throughout the school year, they are encouraged to apply for financial assistance.

We are here to help and believe that anyone who has the desire to learn music should have the opportunity to do so.

Tuition and Fees

- A. A non-refundable annual registration fee of \$30 is charged to each individual lesson student. This fee applies to the period from July 1 through June 30. A time slot cannot be reserved unless the registration fee is paid. It is non-refundable except as provided below under “Refunds.”
- B. Tuition payments may be made by cash, check, or any major credit card. Automatic credit card payments will be processed on the first business day of each month after submission of the auto-payment form. **This form or informed permission must be updated each fiscal year.** Students who sign up for auto payments will not receive a monthly statement, and may request one from the CMS office at any time. Post-dated checks cannot be accepted.
- C. A charge of \$30.00 will be applied to the student's account for a check returned from the bank or a chargeback from a credit card payment. The check will not be re-deposited, but must be replaced with good funds.
- D. For individual lessons, the total tuition for the year is divided into equal installments which are due on the first of each month from September (or the beginning of lessons) through June. Students are not charged for lessons or classes that fall on CMS holidays or scheduled closings. The first tuition installment– or for summer lessons, the total tuition – must be received at least two business days in advance of the first scheduled lesson, or the lesson will not occur.
- E. For classes and ensembles, the full tuition for the entire session is due in advance of the first meeting.
- F. A \$20.00 late charge will be automatically added to a student account on the 15th of the month if payment is not received. If payment is not received by the 1st of the next month, the student will be discontinued, and all makeup lessons will be forfeited. In extenuating circumstances, students may work with the office manager to make special payment arrangements.
- G. Account balances that have been overdue for more than 90 days will be handed over to a collection agency. Written notice of any such action will be provided. The collection agency reports delinquent accounts to the national credit bureaus TRW, TransUnion and CBI. **The collection agency fee (33.33 %) and any additional attorney fees will be added to the outstanding account balance when the account is turned over to the collection agency.**

- H. A student/family returning after an outstanding balance is sent to collection or discharged due to bankruptcy, who wishes to register at CMS, will be required to pay two full monthly installments in advance of the first lesson. If the student discontinues, any money paid in excess of lessons received (according to CMS policies) will be refunded.
- I. Schedule changes will be granted when possible. **A \$15 change fee will be assessed for each schedule change requested by the student.**
- J. **Students enrolling for Music Therapy will be charged a one-time consultation fee of \$35.**

Weather or Other Emergency Closings

CMS makes weather closing decisions independent of any school districts. In some cases, CMS may close one location but not others. Unless a disruption in power prevents it, a notice regarding closings will be posted on the website, social media and the School's voice mail system. To learn of any weather-related closings, please call the School at **716-884-4887**, check the website at **www.communitymusicbuffalo.org**, visit the School's Facebook page, listen to WBEN 930 or watch channels 2, 4 or 7 for information. Students are entitled to makeups of any lessons/classes missed due to the School's decision to close.

Nondiscrimination Policy

CMS does not discriminate on the basis of race, age, gender, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation or religious belief in the administration of its policies, admissions policies, financial aid programs or any other School-administered programs. Every student will be given access to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities which are made available to all other students at the School.

Refunds

Refunds are available upon request in accordance with the following guidelines:

For Private Lessons

1. The registration fee and all tuition paid will be refunded if CMS cannot provide the student with a mutually acceptable teacher and/or lesson time.
2. The registration fee will be refunded if a student requires financial aid to study and CMS is unable to provide it.
3. If a teacher leaves CMS or takes a leave of absence, any lessons missed while a replacement is being found will be made up, or the account will be credited.
4. No credits or refunds will be given in place of makeup lessons except as provided in # 3 above.
5. A student who discontinues lessons before the end of the school year, or who does not return from a leave of absence, forfeits makeup lessons not completed before the discontinuation or leave. They will be given a refund for remaining regular lessons paid for but not received, provided that the office has received the required 1 business day advance notice (see Item H under "Individual Lessons" above). All credits or adjustments will be rounded up to the nearest dollar amount.

Procedure for Refunds

1. After a student account has been adjusted, the student or parent will be sent a statement along with a notification for request for refund.
2. Payment of refunds will be made within 60 days of CMS's receipt of the request.
3. Refunds of \$10.00 or more will be sent to the student or parent. Refunds under \$10.00 must be claimed in person at 217 E. Delavan Avenue with advance notice.
4. Any refunds not requested within the academic/fiscal year in which the credit balance arose will revert to the CMS Scholarship Fund on June 30 of that school year.