

Ark Aid Street Mission Boundaries Policy

The Ark Aid Street Mission strives to be an welcoming safe place for people who may be vulnerable. Policies and practices are designed to facilitate achieving the Ark's objectives with excellence. Following is a list of boundaries that must be observed while working/volunteering at the Ark Aid Street Mission. Volunteers include all those who work here in a non-paid capacity, including students engaged in a course placement, those doing community service and those who approach the Ark on their own initiative.

1. Volunteers must keep in confidence any information they learn regarding clients, other volunteers and the Ark. Failure to do so will result in a warning, unless in the opinion of the Executive Director the breach causes serious harm in which case termination may occur. A second or subsequent breaches will result in termination. Information that may impact other people or the Ark may be shared with the Assistant Director or Executive Director but not more widely.
2. Volunteers must not take or use Ark resources, food, facilities, etc. at their own discretion. To do so constitutes theft. Should the volunteer have a need that the Ark may be in a position to address, permission must be sought from the Assistant Director or Executive Director, who will exercise their discretion for a balanced and fair result. In the rare case where these are not available, permission may be sought from other staff. Volunteers are not empowered to grant such permission. First offenses will result in a warning, unless the theft is significant enough to warrant calling the police, in which case termination will occur. A second offense will result in termination. Volunteers who grant others permission without having received such authority explicitly from the Assistant Director or Executive Director will also be subject to these sanctions.
3. Volunteers who are caught stealing from clients or other volunteers will be terminated. If confession and restitution are willingly forthcoming, the Executive Director will consider a probationary period. A second offense will result in permanent termination.
4. Volunteers who violate the Abuse Prevention Policy and/or the Violence and Harassment Policy will, at minimum be warned and placed on probation, only working in concert with a supervisor approved by the Executive Director. Failure to strictly follow the terms of the probation will result in immediate termination. Volunteers who are accused of violating the these policies such that they are investigated and/or charged by the police or CAS will be suspended from working in any way with clients and possibly, completely. Should charges be proved true, termination will occur.
5. Volunteers will not touch another person in any way that may cause offense, which in practice effectively means, no touching. Volunteers will take care in close spaces, such as behind the counters, not to carelessly brush or touch another person, particularly of the opposite sex. A brief hug may be accepted if initiated by a client but not initiated by a volunteer. Children over the age of 3 must not be picked up. Breach of these provisions will result in a warning at minimum. The sanctions relative to violating the Abuse Prevention Policy and the Violence and Harassment Policies will apply if the offense is of that nature.
6. Volunteers who are charged with a offense under the Criminal Code whether from activity at the Ark or elsewhere, must discuss it in confidence with the Executive Director who will determine a safe course of action for all concerned. Failure to do so will result in termination.
7. Volunteers who lie about a criminal past so that it cannot be properly determined how to safely use the volunteer will be terminated. Volunteers who lie about other aspects of their lives and activities will be warned and placed on probation, the terms of which must be fulfilled to avoid termination. Volunteers who lie about other people – clients, other volunteers, staff will be warned. As this kind of activity can severely damage the atmosphere and work of the Ark, a second offense will result in termination.
8. Volunteers must not develop relationships with clients outside of the Ark. This includes meeting them socially. Should a volunteer wish to take a client to church, or give a client a gift this must be agreed in advance by the Assistant Director or Executive Director. Volunteers should not accept a gift, except of the most minor nature, such as a card of thanks from a client. A warning will be given if such behaviour is noted and if the behaviour includes measures to obscure the relationship from the Ark staff, it will

result in a probationary period, the terms of which must be followed or termination will occur. If the relationship continues, or another relationship with another client develops, termination will occur.

9. Volunteers are cautioned about developing relationships with another volunteer. If such a relationship develops, the volunteer will discuss it with the Executive Director and will accept his counsel or withdraw and if this does not occur, the termination will occur.
10. Volunteers will use language appropriate to a professional environment. The following will result in a warning and termination if it continues: swearing, profane, suggestive or off-colour language, abusive language, shouting in anger.
11. Volunteers will intentionally contribute to a happy workplace and welcoming environment. Gossip and openly questioning the leadership, judgment or integrity of the Board, employees or other volunteers will not be tolerated. Legitimate complaints that cannot be resolved by the Executive Director can be referred to the Chairman of the Board. Failure to follow these guidelines will result in a warning and termination if continued.
12. Volunteers must be supportive of the Ark's Christian foundation and emphasis, at least to the extent of not undermining it. Volunteers are welcome at any time to explore what this means to them with the Assistant Director or Executive Director. Every effort will be made to find a place where a volunteer will be comfortable. If this is not possible, the volunteer will quietly withdraw.