

Arbor House, Inc. Policies

Conditions of Occupancy

You have chosen to join the Arbor House community because you feel that what is offered through this program will provide an opportunity for your growth.

Requirements for Residency:

In order for Arbor House, Inc. to access program funding from Florida state or federal grants, membership in the Alachua County Coalition for the Homeless and Hungry (ACCHH) is mandatory. In order to be a member of ACCHH, **participation in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is mandatory. The following information will be entered into the HMIS database: resident and child(ren)'s name, social security number, and date of birth.** Any participating agency will have access to the information, but will not know which agency entered the information. This information will remain in the HMIS database even after a resident leaves Arbor House.

Daily Life:

Upon entering either New Beginnings or Mom's Place, the resident will begin the Arbor House program consisting of classes, work in Cottage Industry, and other activities. This will usually require placement of children into a daycare situation. Classes are from 9:15 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday and Friday 9:15 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. At various times additional classes may be required. Residents are expected to be employed in the cottage industry at Arbor House; work hours are 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday and Wednesday 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. There may be scheduled exercise and cultural events. As much as possible, residents are asked to schedule outside appointments on Wednesday afternoons, Fridays and weekends.

Residents must be willing to complete routine household tasks required of all residents and to keep their own living area clean. No heavy lifting or physical labor that would be a health hazard will be required at any time.

- Residents are expected to be up and beds made by at least 7:30 a.m. in order to eat breakfast, complete journaling, feed child and/or transport child to daycare.
- A weekly chore chart is posted in the kitchen or dining room. Residents must complete assigned chores in a timely manner. Residents are responsible for notifying the Resident Assistant of any problem they have with task completion.
- Be considerate with regard to time spent in the bathroom. Personal items must be stored after use to avoid clutter and "borrowing" from other residents. The bathroom must be left clean and orderly after each use.
- Residents are required to keep bedroom windows locked at all times, *unless permission is obtained from staff.*
- Residents are required to attend all **mandatory** meetings and events.

<p>No Food in Bedrooms.</p>
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Immediate Responsibilities

Education

- Residents who have not completed high school are required to work toward obtaining their GED. Mom's Place is an educationally focused program. All residents will participate in a Community Building program with classes in parenting, critical thinking, substance abuse issues, and other life skills. When staff determines a resident has graduated from the Community Building program, residents are required to enroll in an academic or career training program that, upon completion, will enable them to earn a living wage. **Class and meeting attendance is mandatory.** *Absences must be authorized by staff ahead of time.*

Employment/Benefits

- In order to acquire income and avoid extensive state requirements, all residents are required to work in the cottage industry at Arbor House. Hours will be adjusted, as needed, once a resident is enrolled in school or a training program. If residents are already enrolled in cash assistance when entering Mom's Place, they will be required to immediately take steps to opt out of cash. Arbor House has funds for payment of daycare, though residents will be required to pay 10% of the fee.
- Regular savings at 9% of gross income and a tax savings at 15% (IRS Form 1099 will be issued as required by law) will be removed automatically from the cottage industry paycheck and held on behalf of the resident. When the resident leaves Arbor House, all money in savings will be issued to resident as long as the unit is left in the same condition as it was when the resident moved in; otherwise, a *\$25.00 cleaning fee* will be deducted from the accumulated savings.
- Residents who are not already enrolled in Medicaid, Food Stamps, and WIC are required to apply immediately.
- As with any employment, residents are expected to work when scheduled, arrive on time, and perform their duties to the best of their ability. Absences must be authorized by staff ahead of time.

Housing Applications (New Beginnings Program)

Once residents begin working in the Cottage Industry, they are required to immediately apply to at least three housing options (two of which should include Gainesville Housing Authority and Alachua County Housing Authority). Residents will need to provide proof of application. Please remember that a resident *must have alternate housing by the time the baby is 6 weeks old.* *Housing at Mom's Place may be appropriate.*

Daily Life at Arbor House

Mandatory Growth Opportunities

Residents are required to participate in a Community Building program. This will consist of daily classes, group activities, outreach activities, mandatory study times and employment in the cottage industry. As much as in their control, residents are to make outside appointments after 1:30 p.m. on Wednesdays or after 3:00 p.m. on Fridays. If residents miss an excessive (to be determined by staff) number of classes or activities, the orientation period may be extended. If a resident has a

legitimate reason to miss a scheduled activity, she must notify staff; notification should be given at least a day in advance. Children will attend daycare Monday through Friday, except on holidays.

Telephone Calls

- Must be limited to 15 minutes.
- The ringer must never be turned off.
- No calls should be made or received **before 7 a.m. or after 10:00 p.m.** Residents are to be respectful of the need for quiet time to study **Sunday -Thursday beginning 9pm.**
- Residents are responsible for checking telephone voice mail.
- The office phone is not for residents' use.

Internet Usage/Television Viewing/Personal Music:

- Computers are provided for *school* purposes. Internet will not be available in bedrooms until a resident is enrolled in school or training. Residents may not password protect their computer.
- **Staff reserves the right to inspect bedrooms and computers** for any inappropriate materials. Inappropriate material such as pornography, the occult, profanity or violence will result in a written warning. If staff has reason to believe that email, instant messaging or any world wide web activities are being misused, staff may terminate internet connection.
- Staff will approve videos.
- Personal music is allowed as long as lyrics are appropriate.
- Quiet by 9:00 p.m. on school nights and 11:00 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. Residents are to be respectful of need for quiet time for study. Children should be in bed by 8:30 p.m. and women should be in bed by 10:30 p.m., Sunday through Thursday.

Washer/Dryer and Dishwasher

- Residents are responsible for washing their own personal laundry including bedding and towels.
- Residents are responsible for proper use of the appliances--instructions for use will be given as needed.

Vehicles

Ownership of a vehicle must be discussed with staff prior to obtaining a vehicle. Resident must be able to clearly demonstrate they have attained the ability to appropriately budget finances and must have \$500.00 in savings. Vehicle must be insured. No major repair work to be done on the property.

Resident contribution to the ministry is \$100.00 a month.
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Additional Activities

Residents are encouraged to attend a **church** of their choice on Sundays. They can go with other residents, staff, walk to a neighborhood church, or arrange pick-up from churches that provide transportation.

Safety Rules

Confidentiality

- Residency at Arbor House is confidential. Without prior staff approval, residents are **not** to disclose the program name (Arbor House, Mom's Place, New Beginnings), approximate location, and the fact that it is located in Gainesville. Additionally, the identification of other residents may not be disclosed or acknowledged.
- A Post Office Box address is available for the residents' use and is usually checked daily Monday through Friday. P.O. Box 12363, Gainesville, FL 32604
- **The street address may not be given out without first getting staff approval.**
- Arbor House staff and volunteers observe confidentiality.

Sign In/Sign Out

All residents are required to use a "sign-in/sign-out" book whenever they are away from the house. Absences must be approved by staff ahead of time.

Curfew

Curfew is 8:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday and 11:00 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. When there is a need, curfew will be determined individually.

Visitors

- Residents must clear first-time visitors with staff.
- Family and female friends may visit until 6:00 pm Sunday through Thursday and until 9:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday.
- Male visitors are:
 1. Allowed to 6:00 p.m. when it does not interfere with classes or work and **only** if a staff member is present.
 2. Not allowed in the bedrooms. If a male visitor is allowed into the bedroom area, the resident who allowed him in and any other resident in the home who is aware of this behavior may be immediately dismissed from our home.
 3. If a staff member is not present, visitation is canceled.

Overnight Visitation

Overnight visitation will not be allowed in the first month of residence at Arbor House. After the first month, decisions will be made on an individual basis.

- Female friends and family may spend the night with a resident. A request must be made 48 hours in advance and be approved by staff. This will be limited to once a month. Residents are responsible for making sure their guest follows the rules and respects the privacy of other residents. If a guest's behavior is a problem they may be asked to leave and may not be allowed to return.
- Residents are allowed to stay over night with family or a female friend only. It will be permitted once a month, subject to the Program Coordinator's discretion and approval. A "Request for Overnight Visitation" form must be filled out 48 hours in advance and residents must be reachable by telephone at the address they designate.

Sexual Conduct

- Residents are expected to abstain from sexual activity during residency.

Aggressive Behavior

- No profanity or vulgar language.
- No screaming, yelling, gossiping or aggressive confrontation.
- Weapons are not allowed on the premises.
- Staff reserves the right to search personal belongings.
- Violence will not be tolerated and will result in immediate expulsion.

Illegal Drugs

- Use of illegal drugs, abuse of prescription drugs and consumption of alcoholic beverages are prohibited on the premises during residence at Arbor House.
- Random drug screening may be required and **any** use of illegal drugs will result in immediate expulsion. If staff suspects a resident is using drugs or alcohol, staff may desire a test be done to determine usage. If this occurs, the resident will be required to pay fees associated with testing.

Smoking

For health and safety reasons, smoking of cigarettes is allowed on the premises *only* at the designated smoking area. Residents must follow the Smoking Management Guidelines. New Beginnings residents are **not** permitted to smoke and required to attend a smoking cessation class at the Alachua County Health Department.

Respect

Residents will be treated with respect by Arbor House staff and volunteers. Residents are expected to respect the Arbor House mission, staff, volunteers and all of its participants. Stealing or repeated disrespect can result in immediate dismissal.

Windows

For the safety of all residents it is required that windows be kept locked at all times. Exceptions can be made during the day with the approval of staff. **In particular, the window sills are low and a toddler could easily push out the screen and fall. If windows are found to be unlocked this may be cause for dismissal from Arbor House.**

Locks

We require that New Beginnings resident's rooms not be locked at any time. If a resident feels threatened or fearful of others it should be discussed with staff. If residents have valuables for which extra protections is needed, arrangements can be made to have these locked up. No one, including staff, is to enter a resident's room without knocking and gaining permission. If the resident is not present the other residents are not allowed in the room. **Staff reserves the right to inspect bedrooms any time there is reasonable cause for concern.**

For safety purposes residents are responsible for ensuring that all the doors of either house are locked at all times.

Room Inspection

The Resident Assistant is required to make periodic room checks to ensure the safety of everyone in the home.

General Safety

- Anytime a resident hears what they believe to be a person prowling around outside the home they are to call the police at 911 and report the concern. After calling law enforcement, please notify staff.
- Do not let strangers into the home. They can wait briefly on the porch or immediately be asked to leave.

Disciplinary Procedures

When a resident chooses a behavior or pattern of behavior not in compliance with the *Conditions of Occupancy* there will be a natural consequence. The incident may be written up and the resident may be asked to sign a report indicating that she understands the situation and accepts the consequences of the behavior. If at any point a resident feels wronged, she may follow the Grievance Procedure (as listed on page 7 of this document).

Levels of Offenses

Level 3: The first offense is written up and could be followed with an immediate dismissal.

1. Males 13 years and older in resident bedroom without staff permission
2. Verbal or physical abuse of staff or other residents
3. Drug or alcohol abuse
4. Disrespectful attitude or behavior toward other residents, staff, volunteers or program
5. Weapons on the property
6. Failure to report to staff an awareness of weapons on the property, men in bedrooms, harmful or unsafe behavior of residents.
7. Staying out overnight without permission.
8. Stealing

Level 2: The first offense is written up and the resident will enter a probationary contract (which applies to all Arbor House policies). During probation a second write-up could result in immediate dismissal from the program.

1. Failure to work toward goals
2. Negative attitude or failure to follow staff instruction
3. Refusing to work as a team with staff
4. Lying, profanity, vulgar language or behavior, inappropriate internet conduct, gossiping
5. Repeated violation of curfew
6. Smoking on campus in a place other than the designated area. Smoking at inappropriate times. Violation of any part of the Smoking Management Guidelines.

Level 1: For the first and second offense the resident will be written up. The resident will enter a probationary contract (to include all Arbor House policies). The third offense could result in immediate dismissal from the program.

1. New Beginnings residents' failure to sign up for at least three subsidized housing opportunities within two weeks of obtaining income
2. Failure to be responsible in Cottage Industry work employment.

3. Repeated absence (without proper excuse) from program activities
4. Failure to keep room tidy, windows locked, bathroom clean, laundry completed
5. Failure to do chores or poor attitude about chores
6. Inappropriate music, movies, or television
7. Misuse of the phone including, but not limited to, not answering call waiting
8. Abusing visitation privilege
9. Failure to maintain 90% attendance at school activities—GED or college.

Our desire is that you become the best that you can be. We will continually work with you toward that goal. We also wish to protect you from situations that may be destructive to you or your child. Our goal is that you be given the opportunity to become a successful caring parent, a contributing citizen in your neighborhood, and choose security in Jesus Christ.

Grievance Procedure

If at any time you feel wronged by a staff member or another resident you must:

- 1) First share your concern with that individual (Matthew 18).
- 2) If the issue is still not resolved, a meeting will be called with you, the Executive Director and a Program Coordinator.
- 3) If the issue is not resolved at that point you may request, in writing, a meeting with a negotiating committee. The negotiating committee will consist of the Executive Director, a Board member, the Program Coordinator and you.

The decision of the negotiating committee is final.

I have read and discussed with staff the Conditions of Occupancy, Disciplinary Procedure and Grievance Procedure and clearly understand what is expected of me as a resident. I hereby completely and freely agree to all of the conditions stated in all of the above-stated documents. I also agree to have a positive attitude when correction is needed.

Print Name

Signature (do not sign until staff can witness signature) Date

Staff Signature Title

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