



## The Oaks Ministry Housing Program

**The Purpose:** To provide transitional housing and Christian-based support services for women who would be actively working towards financial stability and other related activities.

**The Mission:** The mission of the Oaks Ministry is to provide hope, healing, and restoration in a Christ-centered residential environment for women in need.

**The Vision:** We believe every woman can be changed by the knowledge of and a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. The Oaks Ministry strives to show the love of Christ to women who are facing difficult times and are in a transitional state of life. Through sharing Christ's love, we support women through Christian counseling, guidance, and support services so they can become financially stable and responsible members of the community.

**Program Application and Acceptance:** Women that desire to be accepted into The Oaks Ministry Housing Program must complete an application and submit it to The Oaks Ministry, 290 Bethel Road, Oxford, Pa 19363. The application will be reviewed by the Board of Directors of The Oaks Ministry.

After reviewing your application, if the Board determines that you are a possible candidate for the program they will contact you and set up an interview. If, after the interview, The Oaks Board determines that the program would be of benefit to you, you will be required to complete all the necessary paperwork and submit to a drug test prior to moving into the program house.

If you are in an emergency situation and in need of immediate housing, the Board may make a decision to waive the application process and allow you to move into the property immediately if there is housing space. If you are allowed to move in without going through the application process, you will be required to complete the application within 48 hours. If you do not complete the application and are not willing and/or able to sit for an interview within 48 hours of being allowed temporary access to the property you will be required to vacate the property immediately upon verbal notice from the Resident House Manager.

Evaluation criteria will include program success potential, spiritual growth and commitment, disciplinary issues, church and program involvement, ability to get along with others, attitudes, goal, employability, and passing the drug test, etc. All Board of Directors decisions will be considered final.

## Expectations and Responsibilities of Residents

**Program Service Agreement & Waiver of Liability and Hold Harmless Agreement:** Upon being accepted into the program and prior to moving into the house, you will be required to sign The Oaks Ministry Housing Program Service Agreement Acknowledgement Form and a Waiver of Liability and Hold Harmless Agreement. The Oaks Ministry Housing Program Service Agreement is not a lease or rental agreement. The Program Service Agreement is your acceptance and agreement to abide by the programs policies and procedures and fulfill all financial obligations of the program. The Oaks Ministry Board of Directors reserves the right to revise the Policy and Procedures and/or the Program Service Agreement at any time without prior notice. **The Oaks Ministry Board also reserves the right, at their sole discretion, to adjust any part of the program as needed to assure the success of any participant in the program.**

**Minor Children:** The Oaks Ministry Housing Program is for adult women only. No children will be allowed to reside in the house.

**Mentor and Accountability:** You are required to have an Oaks Ministry approved mentor and will be assigned one from our Ministry Team. Team members reserve the right to discuss your progress in the program with the Resident House Manager or a member of the Board of Directors or another team member to insure that you have the best support possible to successfully complete the program.

**Teaching, Training and Counseling:** Your ministry team will meet with you concerning your progress spiritually, relationally, educationally and financially. During this meeting, the team will make recommendations to each resident regarding suggested/required Biblical training and counseling services for marriage, family, financial, addiction recovery, goal setting, career assessment, being a woman of God, etc. This will be done with sensitivity and great care in an effort for each resident to be restored to a balanced and healthy Christian lifestyle.

Formal team meetings to evaluate the resident's progress in the program will be approximately every thirty (30) days while the resident is participating in the program.

**Financial Management:** Part of successful independent living requires the ability to responsibly manage one's personal finances and to make timely payments of one's financial obligations. Financial integrity is a necessary and important life skill. To be adequately prepared for the future, you will need to build a solid foundation in finances. You will be assigned a financial advisor to assist you with your financial management. You may be required to provide a credit report and criminal background check at the time of application to the program and to construct a budget within 30 days of acceptance into the program that will meet all legal and financial obligations. Together with your financial advisor you will discuss debt reduction and saving goals and participate in financial planning training meetings.

All program participants will be required to open their own checking account at a financial institution of their choice. Your financial advisor will monitor the resident's accounts to verify proper handling of finances and payment of financial obligations. The resident will provide her financial advisor with copies of pay stubs, bank receipts, bank statements and proof of payment of any and all debts and financial obligations of the resident. Lending or borrowing of money between residents is not allowed.

Each resident is strongly encouraged to align their life with the Biblical teaching (Malachi 3:10) regarding tithing (a tithe is 10 percent) on their gross income to their local ministry/church. Financial accountability is a prominent feature of this program.

### **Employment:**

- All residents are to be employed or actively seeking employment, upon being accepted as a Resident of The Oaks Ministry House.
- All residents are to be employed on or before the 60th day of residency.
- Residents receiving SSI benefits are also expected to work. At a minimum, residents receiving SSI benefits are to have a part-time job to subsidize their SSI benefits.
- All employment must be legitimate in nature, meaning taxes are withheld, and a payroll check is issued. Jobs where payment is made "under the table" are not considered legitimate jobs.
- The Oaks Ministry Board reserves the right to verify the resident's employment and job performance with the employer.
- The Oaks Ministry Team may assist in finding employment opportunities, but the responsibility of finding, and maintaining, employment remains with the resident.
- In the event a resident becomes non-employable for personal or medical reasons, the Oaks Ministry Board will determine their ongoing eligibility for residency.
- Any resident who refuses to work, or does not proactively seek employment will be asked to leave the program.

### **Program Fees:**

A program fee of \$5.00 per day is payable to The Oak Ministry by each resident. Each resident must submit the program fee to the Resident House Manager based on employment payroll schedule and is due upon receipt of paycheck.

- Weekly - \$35.00
- Bi-Weekly - \$70.00
- Monthly – Payment in full monthly program (\$150 or \$155 depended on number of days)

All payments received later than (7) days past the date due, will be subject to an additional \$2 per day late fee. This late fee will be applicable for all the days the resident has been part of the program and late paying the applicable fees.

If a resident is late paying the program fee:

1. The first time the payment is late the Resident House Manager and/or the resident's financial advisor will personally meet with the resident to work out the problem if deemed necessary.
2. If the resident is negligent in following the Resident House Manager and/or the resident's financial advisor recommendations and situation is not resolved, the individual will be dismissed from the program.

***Dismissal from the program for late or unpaid program fees does not in any way release the resident's obligation from any unpaid program fees or other financial obligations due to The Oaks Residential Program.***

Fees paid in advance will be forfeited if a resident is dismissed from the program for any reason or the resident voluntarily leaves the program.

**The Program Fee covers:**

- Use of personal and shared areas of the property
- Electricity, water and sewage
- Use of shared kitchen with refrigerator, stove and microwave, table and chairs
- Furniture in shared areas
- One bed with one set of sheets, pillowcase and blanket (shared rooms may be bunk beds)
- Possibly Local phone service
- Heating and possibly AC
- General maintenance to building

***Failure of any of the mechanical or utility systems or personal property owned by The Oaks Ministry does not constitute a release from the resident's responsibility for payment of the monthly program fee.***

**The Program Fee does not cover:**

- Personal Clothing
- Personal Transportation
- Damages or loss to The Oaks Ministry property
- Personal Hygiene supplies/Laundry detergent

**The Matthew 18 Principle:** This program adheres to the Matthew 18 Principle regarding differences and or disputes between program participants and/or Resident House Manager or Team Members. If a difference arises, the person should immediately go to the other person to seek a resolution. If this does not resolve the issue, then the person should take another person with them, i.e. an Oaks Ministry Team member, in an effort to resolve the difference. If this does not resolve the difference, the person should request to have the differences heard by The Oaks Board or Ministry Team as a

whole. Such requests should be in writing and submitted within five (5) days of the incident. Residents agree to abide by any decision made by The Oaks Ministry Team/Board in the resolution of differences and/or disputes including but not limited to dismissal from the program.

**Personal Hygiene:** Good personal hygiene is important for the prevention of disease and illness and it is required to be a part of the program. Residents are expected to shower often.

**Personal Property:** The Oaks Ministry Housing is not responsible for the security of any resident's personal property left in, on or about the house or property. Personal property must be kept in the residents' personal area. **The Resident House Manager or Board Member reserves the right to inspect any resident's personal property at any time.** Any departing resident is personally responsible for removing all personal property from the house and property. If such items are not removed within three (3) days after departure or dismissal of resident, the unclaimed property will be disposed of or sent to a local charity as a donation, unless other arrangements have been made and the departing or dismissed resident has received written approval from the Resident House Manager or Board Member.

**Personal Dress and Behavior:** Each resident is held responsible for their behavior, dress and conduct. Residents must wear appropriate attire at all times. Shirts should always cover the midriff, whether bending or reaching up. Bra must be worn at all times except for bedtime. Necklines should be modest with no cleavage showing at any time. Fingertips should touch edge of shorts or skirt. All clothing must be clean and neat. If you are a smoker, you will be asked to keep all your clothing in a plastic bag until they are washed. Perfumes and other fragrances should be very minimal. Hair should be clean and neatly groomed. Residents may not display offensive language or images on any clothing at any time while a resident of the program. The following behaviors will result in immediate dismissal from the program: Assault and violence, threats of violence, theft, vandalism, possession or use of illegal or unauthorized drugs on or off the premises. Behaviors that offend the dignity of anyone may result in your dismissal from the program. Included but not limited to in this prohibited behavior are ethnic, sexist or racial slurs, physical advances or intimidation, abusive or foul language, disruptive behavior, disrespect for others and the possession or viewing of pornographic material. Each resident must conduct themselves in a way that is considerate of another's need for peace, quiet, privacy confidentiality and safety.

**Length of stay:** The Oaks Ministry Housing Program is a One (1) year, live in program. The Oaks Ministry Team will attempt to help the resident secure permanent housing while they are a resident in the program. At the end of the period, residents are expected to move from the house into their own personal residence unless other arrangements have been made or a program extension has been granted by The Oaks Ministry Board of Directors. Residents wanting to extend their stay must have a valid reason to do so. Residents must submit such request in writing to The Oaks Ministry Board thirty (30) days prior to the expiration date of the Program Service Agreement.

The Oaks Ministry Board reserves the sole right to grant or not to grant any extension to the program. Length of extensions granted will be determined by The Oaks Ministry Board in cooperation with the resident. Decisions by the Oaks Ministry Board will be considered final.

**Responsibilities to Serve:** Each resident will be expected to volunteer time and services to help others at an Oaks Ministry Team approved ministry or agency. Residents must adhere to all applicable rules and regulations while on or about any property of any other ministry or agency.

**House Meetings, Devotions and Required Program Services/Meetings:** House meetings will be held at the request of the Residential House Manager and residents are required to attend. The meeting day and time will be established by the Residential House Manager to coincide with the working schedules of the residents in the house. All residents are required to attend Sunday morning services/ministry/training at a local church that is agreed upon by the Oaks Ministry Team and the resident. Residents must attend a Celebrate Recovery Program weekly. Residents are required to attend Bible Study at Oaks House. Residents are required to spend a daily time of personal devotion and prayer. A group devotional will be led by residents of the program on a rotating basis or by a person assigned by the Resident House Manager as part of The Oaks Ministry Housing Program along with other in-house training sessions. All residents are required to participate in all programs including a weekly sewing class, unless work schedule prohibits participation.

Not being actively connected to a church will result in termination of the program. Residents must submit proof of meetings and church attendance to the Residential House Manager. The Resident House Manager or The Oaks Ministry Team reserve the right to verify the resident's participation and attendance at meetings and church services. Be on time for all appointments and commitments.

**Mental Health Evaluation:** Upon admittance to The Oaks Ministry Program, a Mental Health Evaluation Intake is required within the first thirty (30) days. Once that is done, a schedule will be set up for regular counselling sessions with a professional Counsellor. These sessions will be mandatory and if not adhered to, may be grounds for dismissal. The counselling sessions will be paid for by The Oaks Ministry, unless the resident has insurance that will provide coverage.

If a resident is already being counselled by a qualified professional outside of The Oaks Ministry, this **may be** considered for approval in place of what is required by the program. This will be looked at on an individual basis and if it is determined that counselling by [Safe Harbor](#) is still required, the resident must adhere to this policy or may be dismissed from the program.

**Legal Obligations:** As a condition of the program, all residents are required to continue to meet any and all the requirements regarding any outstanding or continuing legal issues, including court dates, the payment of child support, garnishments, restitution, pending charges, etc. The resident is required to show proof of payment to a member of

the Oaks Ministry Team including her financial advisor on all legal and financial issues. Not fulfilling legal and financial requirements is grounds for the resident's immediate dismissal from the program.

**Curfew:** The following curfew applies to all residents. Adjustments can be requested to accommodate special work, educational schedules and/or other circumstances. All curfew adjustments must be by written request to and approved by the Residential House Manager a minimum of three (3) days in advance. If a resident is going to be late for an unforeseen reason, residents must call the Residential House Manager before the time required for resident to return to the house.

**Curfew Times:**

Sunday through Thursday – 10 PM

Friday and Saturday – 11 PM

Weekend passes may be requested by a minimum of three (3) days advance written request to the Residential House Manager. Residents will be considered for one weekend pass per calendar month to be used from Friday, 5:00 P.M. through Sunday, 10:00 P.M. The Residential House Manager reserves the right to cancel any and all passes in the event that any or all residents do not keep up with the housekeeping duties or other responsibilities.

**Log Book:** Residents must “personally” sign in and out in the house designated log book upon entering and leaving the property. The time and destination must be specific along with a phone number where you may be reached. This information will be used for resident's accountability and to locate the resident in the event of an emergency.

**Housekeeping Responsibilities:** All residents are expected to do their part and/or assignments to maintain a clean, safe, and orderly environment. The Oaks Ministry Board of Directors will make periodic visits to the property inspecting the cleaning and upkeep of the house and property. All common areas (kitchen, bathrooms, living room, etc.) must always be kept clean and clutter free. The Residential House Manager or Board of Directors reserves the right to inspect any and all areas including the residents' personal area of the house and/or personal property at any time.

**Visitors:** Because the Oaks Ministry Housing Program is a transitional program and is made available on a temporary emergency basis, there will be no outside visitors allowed on the property. This policy is for the best interest of the residents in order to avoid any conflict during their stay. In the event that there is an emergency situation that necessitates visitation, the resident must request special permission for the Residential House Manager. The Manager will determine whether or not this exception should be granted. The Oaks Team Members, Volunteers or the Board of Directors are not considered visitors.

## **Living Area Expectations:**

Each resident is expected to:

- Keep their assigned bedroom area vacuumed, dusted and clutter-free at all times. Beds must be made daily.
- No food or drink of any kind (other than water) is to be stored or consumed in the bedroom areas.
- Share the responsibility by doing their part of keeping all shared areas of the house and property clean, vacuumed, dusted and clutter-free at all times.
- Be considerate of others who share house space
- All furniture and household items that are the property of The Oaks Ministry may not be removed from the property for any purpose.
- Any Oaks Ministry property taken, damaged, or destroyed must be repaired or replaced by the individual(s) responsible for the loss or damage.
- No pets are allowed in or on the property at any time.

**Vehicles and Transportation:** Residents may have their own private vehicle. Residents agree to release The Oaks Ministry Housing Team and/or Board of Directors, and/or Resident House Manager, and/or any other ministry or agency affiliated or in a relationship with The Oaks Ministry from any and all liability in the event of an accident or personal injury to anyone in said vehicle or in the process of a resident being transported in another's resident's vehicle. Each vehicle owned by a resident must be properly tagged, titled, insured and maintained in accordance with the prevailing Pennsylvania State/County/City vehicular laws/standard/codes and regulations.

**Substance Abuse and Testing:** All residents are strictly required to abstain from all use of illegal drugs and/or alcohol while a resident in the program. The Oaks Ministry Residential House Manager and/or Board members have the right to randomly drug test residents at their discretion. Refusal to take any test as requested by above mentioned authorized person will be considered a positive test result. There is no required number of hours or days between the tests randomly or intentionally given or requested by The Oaks Ministry Team and/or Board members. If a resident has been found in violation of this policy, they will be immediately dismissed from the program and be required to immediately vacate the property.

If a resident feels that the test is a false-positive, they may request to immediately submit to another administered test. They must also immediately vacate the property. The cost for the additional test will be the resident's responsibility. If the 2nd lab test also shows positive, the dismissal from the program will stand. If the 2nd lab test shows that the first test was a false-positive, The Oaks Ministry will reimburse the resident for the cost of the second test and the resident may re-enter the program.

All forms of tobacco products are prohibited on The Oaks Ministry property. This policy must be strictly adhered to.



**Medication:** The use of drugs in the Oaks Housing Program is strictly forbidden. The only modification to this policy will be those medications prescribed by the resident's physician. All medications prescribed and over-the-counter must be accounted for at all times. Medications both prescribed and over-the-counter, must be kept in resident's room and door locked at all times when unoccupied.

**Forms of Entertainment:** It is the desire of The Oaks Housing Ministry that each resident maintain the highest of Christian moral values. Music must be listened to through headphones to avoid disturbing all others living within the house. All reading materials should be of apposite nature. No movies or videos rated higher than PG-13 may be viewed in or on The Oaks Ministry Residential property. If the property has cable service, no pay per view movies may be purchased over the cable network. ***The Oaks Residential House Manager or a member of the Board reserves the right to remove anything seen as unwholesome from any areas including but not limited to the residents' personal area or personal property.***

**Dating:** You have chosen "The Oaks Housing Program" so that you can grow into the person that the Lord intends. With this in mind, we ask that you not date while at the house. Let the Lord use this time to help and renew you. The Lord must be FIRST in your life. If a resident is married prior to entering the program, they may "date" their husband but must always abide by the **no** visitor policy and all other applicable parts of this policy and procedures.

**Computers:** A resident that desires to use a computer while a participant in the program will agree to be monitored by any member of the Oaks Ministry Team. If a resident's use of a computer is deemed to be inappropriate by any member of the Oaks Ministry Team may result in the loss of resident's use of the same and/or dismissal from the program.

**Cell Phones:** Residents that have their own cell phone may use them while a part of the program. Residents must work with their program assigned financial advisor to assist them with the resident's financial management of the cost associated with cell phone ownership and related rate plans. They must be considerate of other residents while using their phone, both in volume and their selection of ring tones and ring tone volumes. A resident's use of a cell phone that is deemed to be inappropriate by any member of the Oaks Ministry Team may result in the loss of resident's use of the same and/or dismissal from the program.

## **PRIVILEGES AND SERVICES**

**Clothing and Food:** Residents are eligible for limited amounts of free clothing from local Clothes Closets or organizations that help dress women for success. Meals are also provided by The Oaks Ministry. Part of the assigned in-house chores may be to help with food preparation and clean up.

**Telephone Use:** A restricted telephone that is shared by all residents may be provided in the house and is to be used for local phone calls only. No 411 calls, long distance calls, or any other additional services are to be charged to phone bill. Maximum usage of the phone is restricted to thirty (30) minutes per day per resident. Consideration must always be given to other residents of the program regarding phone usage. Any deviation may result in the termination of your residency.

**Mail:** It is the responsibility of the resident to notify the US Postal Service of any change of address. Any resident of The Oaks Ministry Housing Program is entitled to receive mail at the address of the house in which they reside. Any mail received for a resident after the resident has left the house will be returned to the Local Post Office. The Residential House Manager, The Oaks Team members, or the Board of Directors reserves the right to require residents to open in their presence any and all mail upon request.

**Use of Utilities:** Each resident will be held responsible for the efficient use of all utilities. Residents must keep the thermostat set at 68 degrees in winter and 75 degrees in summer.

#### **Use of Oaks Ministry Vehicle: (Oaks Vehicle Policy)**

- Requests are to be made to your House Manager.
- Vehicle is only to be used for programs required by the Oaks Ministry, in addition to transportation to job interviews and work.
- Vehicle is not to be used for the following unless special permission is granted in advance by House Manager:
  - Church related events other than Saturday night and Sunday meetings
  - Personal errands and
  - Any other purpose not required by The Oaks Ministry, including medical visits. (Residents will be required to find their own means of transportation for these purposes).
- There will be a log book kept in the vehicle. You must keep track of the following:
  - Beginning mileage
  - Ending mileage
  - Destination
  - Driver of Vehicle
- Usage will be charged at .30 cents a mile and will be settled up at the time the resident receives her next paycheck.
- There will be no eating, drinking, or smoking in the vehicle.
- Car insurance is paid by The Oaks Ministry.
- The policy only covers trips within a 50-mile radius.
- Oaks Ministry Vehicle is only to be driven by Oaks Ministry approved residents and volunteers.
- No passengers are allowed except for Oaks Ministry residents and volunteers.

It must be mentioned that when both houses are filled there are six (6) resident ladies. Although the vehicle will be based at Oaks 1, because of parking allowances, it will be made available to any qualified Oaks resident at either of the houses. If the Oaks vehicle is being used to meet someone else with whom the resident intends to carpool, the Oaks vehicle must be returned to the Oaks house to be available to another resident who might need to use it. It also should be noted that any conflicts of vehicle usage, if not worked out by the residents, a decision will be determined by the House Manager.

**Letters of Residence and Program Verification:** Residents from time to time may need a letter verifying “The Oaks Ministry Housing Program” as their place of residence or proof of their participation in The Oaks Ministry Housing Program. Written requests for such letters may be submitted to the Residential House Manager five (5) days prior to the date needed.

**Solicitation Policy:** Solicitation to churches and other organizations, excluding the Neighborhood Services Center, is strictly forbidden. Any Oaks Ministry residents found to be doing this will immediately be expelled from the program.

## **UNREQUESTED DISMISSAL FROM THE PROGRAM**

### **Immediate Dismissal:**

The following constitutes grounds for immediate dismissal from the program:

- Physical Harm (striking someone) or a serious threat of doing physical harm to someone)
- Positive test or observed use of any substance not permitted within the program.
- Medication abuse
- Theft or willful destruction of property.
- Sexual indiscretions of any kind.
- Pornography use or viewing of any kind.
- Failure to meet legal or financial obligation.
- Lawful arrest for jail-able criminal charges or serious motor vehicle violations.
- Failure to adhere to curfew times or extended absences without prior approval.
- Continued inability to co-exist with other residents in a harmonious Christ-Like manner.
- Insubordination to the Resident House Manager, Team Member or the Board of Directors.
- Failure to meet or abide by any required responsibilities and/or obligations regarding the Oaks Ministries Residential Policy and Procedures.

### **SPECIAL NOTE:**

Failure or refusal of a resident and/or resident’s visitor to vacate the property immediately after being requested to do so by The Oaks Ministry Residential House Manager and/or Oaks Ministry Team Member and/or Board of Director for any reason may result in local police assistance, and resident and/or resident’s visitor will be considered in violation of trespassing laws.

My signature below means that I have read and reviewed the House Policies and Procedures Document and will abide by them.

Resident (Printed Name)
Resident (Signature)
Date

The Oaks Ministry Board Member (Printed Name)
The Oaks Ministry Board Member (Signature)
Date