

Boundaries Cheat Sheet

Oaks Ministry Collaborative

Purpose

We want to offer genuine, compassionate relationships that help people engage their healing with God and others. We do that not by making ourselves endlessly available or taking responsibility for outcomes, but by showing up faithfully within our role, establishing clear expectations, collaborating when needed, and helping people grow toward greater ownership of their healing.

That is not less compassionate. It is compassion practiced with integrity.

The Five Boundaries to Reinforce in a Support Connection

Boundary	Core principle	Practical application
Purpose	We accompany people; we do not fix them.	Stay within the scope of your Oaks role and encourage ownership of the healing process.
Availability	We are not on call for crisis.	Establish meeting and communication expectations, and follow the crisis-response policy when needed.
Confidentiality	We protect trust through appropriate discretion and consultation.	Explain confidentiality limits, use designated Oaks channels, and follow applicable reporting and privacy requirements.
Expectations and goals	Clarity supports trust and accountability.	Establish a mutually agreed-upon connection agreement early and revisit it regularly.
Growth and closure	Our goal is growth, not indefinite dependence.	Assess whether the relationship continues to serve its purpose, seek consultation, and follow the closure process when appropriate.



Support Boundaries Principles:

1. Boundaries apply to friendships, too.

Oaks volunteers are not being asked to become detached or impersonal. Friendship and genuine care can coexist with limits.

All relationships have boundaries, whether those boundaries are intentional and communicated or simply assumed. When expectations remain unspoken, people can end up hurt or confused because they understood the relationship differently.

An Oaks connection benefits from additional clarity because it has an identified ministry purpose.

2. We establish relational connections, not anonymous appointment slots.

One of the distinctive features of Oaks is the opportunity for someone to develop a consistent relationship with a particular advocate or support person.

The goal is not simply to give someone a time slot with whichever volunteer happens to be available. The relationship itself is part of the support.

That makes boundaries particularly important. The more meaningful a relationship becomes, the more important it is to clarify its purpose, expectations, and limits.

We want people to experience relational connection while also growing in their capacity to engage other relationships and resources within their church community.

3. Boundaries protect both people in the relationship.

Boundaries aren't only about protecting the volunteer from burnout.

They also protect the care receiver from confusion, unmet expectations, overdependence, and the experience of having a volunteer suddenly withdraw after overextending themselves.

Clear expectations, consistent follow-through, appropriate consultation, and intentional closure help create relationships that are trustworthy and sustainable.

