

# HR25 - Flexible Working Policy

|  |                |  |   |
|--|----------------|--|---|
| <b>Policy Reference:</b>   |                | HR25   |   |
| <b>Effective date:</b>   | February 2025  | <b>Review date:</b>  | February 2030                               |
| <b>Approved by P&amp;PRG:</b>  | January 2025   |  |   |
| <b>Owner:</b>  | Michael Catlin | <b>Job Title:</b>  | Head of People & Organisational Development |
| <b>To be issued to:</b>  |                |  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Board of Management<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All Staff<br><input type="checkbox"/> ET/LT<br><input type="checkbox"/> Head Office Managers<br><input type="checkbox"/> Head Office Staff<br><input type="checkbox"/> Finance<br><input type="checkbox"/> Housing<br><input type="checkbox"/> Asset<br><input type="checkbox"/> ICT |                | <input type="checkbox"/> OD<br><input type="checkbox"/> Compliance<br><input type="checkbox"/> All Care & Support<br><input type="checkbox"/> C&S Managers (RM, OM, CSM)<br><input type="checkbox"/> C&S Staff<br><input type="checkbox"/> Contractors<br><input type="checkbox"/> Agency Staff<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unite the Union<br><input type="checkbox"/> Employee Voices Group<br><input type="checkbox"/> Other:  |   |
| <b>Method of Delivery:</b>   |                |  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Learn Pro<br><input type="checkbox"/> Board Portal<br><input type="checkbox"/> Line Manager to Share (eg. Agencies)   |                | <input type="checkbox"/> Policy Owner to Notify (eg. Contractors)<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: Handbook Update  |   |
| <b>Stakeholder Consultation Completed:</b>   |                |  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Board of Management<br><input type="checkbox"/> All Staff<br><input type="checkbox"/> ET/SLT<br><input type="checkbox"/> Head Office Managers<br><input type="checkbox"/> Head Office Staff<br><input type="checkbox"/> Finance<br><input type="checkbox"/> Housing<br><input type="checkbox"/> Asset<br><input type="checkbox"/> ICT           |                | <input type="checkbox"/> OD<br><input type="checkbox"/> Compliance<br><input type="checkbox"/> All Care & Support<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C&S Managers (RM, OM, CSM)<br><input type="checkbox"/> C&S Staff<br><input type="checkbox"/> Contractors<br><input type="checkbox"/> Agency Staff<br><input type="checkbox"/> Unite the Union<br><input type="checkbox"/> Employee Voices Group<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: Policy & Procedure Review Group |   |

## Version Control

| Date     | Owner          | Version | Reason for Change                                   |
|----------|----------------|---------|---|
| Jan 2025 | Michael Catlin | 2       | Cyclical policy review and updating to new guidance |

## Summary of Changes

| Section | Change  |
|---------|---|
| All     | Policy reviewed and updated to new guidance. Minor changes regarding the number of requests change and eligibility. |
| 6.1     | Removed board.  |
| 7.2     | Updated flexible working options.   |
| 7.3     | Aligned ACAS guidance.  |
| 7.4     | Aligned with guidance around discrimination.  |

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## 1.0 Arks Values

Arks values are true to the core purpose of the organisation and the services we deliver. They determine our behaviours towards one another and what we should expect in our relationships with one another. Working within the following values will guide and help us deliver our vision and mission of Ark being an organisation where everyone is equal:

### Trust

We have confidence in our people to deliver excellent services and trust in them to do so. We will develop trusting and honest relationships and our customers will feel assured that they can rely on us to deliver.

### Respect

We treat everyone fairly and we listen. We are respectful of each person with whom we come into contact and expect our people to respond professionally and treat others as they would wish to be treated.

### Understanding

We will operate with empathy and compassion and approach each situation with an open mind. We will question and challenge to ensure we achieve the right outcomes for customers and our people.

### Equality

We believe everyone is equal and expect our people to create positive experiences where everyone feels valued and included.

### Integrity

We will do the right thing and take responsibility for our actions. We will work together to uphold the highest standards of behaviour and practice.

## 2.0 Purpose

This policy aims to encourage staff to consider flexible working arrangements. Ark recognises that a better work-life balance can improve employee motivation, performance and productivity, and reduce stress. Therefore, Ark wants to support its employees to achieve a better balance between work and their other priorities, such as caring responsibilities, leisure activities, further learning and other interests.

## 3.0 Policy Statement

Ark is committed to agreeing any flexible working arrangements, provided that the needs and objectives of both the organisation and the employee can be met in order to provide a consistent and quality service.

## 4.0 Scope

This policy applies to all staff.

## 5.0 Legal/Regulatory Framework

The relevant legislation relating to flexible working is:

- Employment Rights Act 1996;
- Equality Act 2010;
- Employment Relations (Flexible Working) Act 2023;
- ACAS Guidance.

## 6.0 Responsibilities

### 6.1 Executive Team

Ark's Executive Team is responsible for ensuring that this policy is reviewed in accordance with Ark's schedule for review of policies.

### 6.2 Leadership Team

Ark's Leadership Team is responsible for review of the policy, and for ensuring that relevant measures are put in place in order to implement its requirements.

### 6.3 Managers

Ark Managers will be responsible for the effective implementation of this policy. They must also ensure that each member of their staff, through the employee handbook, is made aware of this policy.

### 6.4 All Staff

All Ark employees are required to familiarise themselves with this policy.

## 7.0 Principles of Flexible working process

### 7.1 What is flexible working?

Flexible working is any type of working arrangements that gives some degree of flexibility on how long, where and when an employee works. Ark encourages open discussion with employees.

Ark is committed to providing a range of appropriate working patterns. However, employees and management need to be realistic and to recognise that not all flexible working options will be appropriate for all roles.

## 7.2 Flexible Working Options

The following flexible working options are considered to be the typical arrangements that employees will request but Ark recognises that there may be alternatives or a combination of options which are suitable to both the organisation and the employee. This can be in the form of and is not limited to:

- Job Sharing;
- Remote Working;
- Working From Home;
- Part Time;
- Compressed Hours;
- Flexitime;
- Staggered Hours.

## 7.3 Flexible Working Considerations

By law, as an employer, we can only reject a request if it's for one or more of the following business reasons:

- It will cost Ark too much;
- We cannot reorganise the work among other staff;
- We cannot recruit more staff;
- There will be a negative effect on quality of work;
- There will be a negative effect on the business's ability to meet customer demand;
- There will be a negative effect on performance;
- There's not enough work for the employee to do when they've requested to work;
- There are planned changes to the business, for example, intending to reorganise or change the business and think the request will not fit with these plans.

## 7.4 Discrimination

Under discrimination law (Equality Act 2010), Ark must not disadvantage someone because of any of the following protected characteristics:

- Age;
- Disability;
- Gender Reassignment;
- Marriage and Civil Partnership;
- Pregnancy And Maternity;

- Race;
- Religion or Belief;
- Sex;
- Sexual Orientation.

This applies to flexible working requests, including:

- The way the request is handled;
- The decision Ark make;
- How Ark handle any information an employee shares.

## 8.0 Learning & Development Requirements

No learning & development requirements have been identified in relation to this policy.

## 9.0 Related Policies & Procedures

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

|       |                            |
|-------|----------------------------|
| HR25a | Flexible Working Procedure |
| HR13  | Agile Working Policy       |
| HR13a | Agile Working Procedure    |

## 10.0 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed in relation to the development of this policy.

## 11.0 Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)

No potential data protection issues have been identified in relation to the development of this policy, and consequently an DPIA has not been completed.

## 12.0 Monitoring and Review

### 12.1 Monitoring

Ark's Leadership Team will monitor implementation of this policy on an ongoing basis.

### 12.2 Review

This policy will be reviewed within 5 years from the date of approval, in accordance with Ark's policy review framework.