



THE ACT FIVE RESIDENCY PROGRAM

2023-2024 Handbook

Welcome to Act Five 2023-2024

Greetings from Hamilton!

As the Act Five staff team, it is such a pleasure to be able to invite you to join us for a year (or more!) of living in community, learning about the Way of Jesus in Hamilton and journeying with us through a year of incredible opportunities that we believe will shape you and inspire you into whatever lies beyond this year. We are eager to get to know you over the course of our time together.

This document is designed to help prepare you for your time with Act Five - where you will...

- ... live with ~20 others in downtown Hamilton;
- ... wrestle with new ideas and experience new challenges;
- ... explore the story to which you belong within a mentoring community;
- ... grow in your relationship with God as a follower of Jesus.

Please read through this document carefully as we want to set you up as best as possible for an amazing year. Life in community, getting to know a new neighbourhood and all that this year will entail - it will shape you in significant ways, and we want to prepare you for this as best as we can.

We're excited that you have chosen to do this with us.

Sincerely,

The Act Five Team

Mission and Goals

All of what you find in this handbook is related to the following mission and goals of Act Five:

Act Five's Mission is to offer young adults a year of transformative experiences that shape their faith, learning, character and future pathways. Within this, participants will...

- Reflect on their story and grow deeper in their Christian faith
- Imagine the world around them with fresh eyes
- Practice justice in loving their neighbours
- Prepare for what lies ahead

The goal of the **Act Five Residency Program** is to provide a formative community living experience for young adults who are pursuing study or work in the city of Hamilton through shared participation in the Act Five learning community. This is embodied through meals, times of prayer, recreation, practicing hospitality and community rhythms, joining for program events & outings, and more.



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Program Expectations - Community Life and Policies

Remembering the mission and goals of Act Five and flowing out of our commitment as followers of Christ to

(a) love the Lord with all of our heart, mind, soul and strength and

(b) love our neighbours as ourselves,

we have laid out the following expectations:

MENTORSHIP & RULE OF LIFE

All residents part of the full year residency program are to be connected to a mentor upon move-in, whether in May or September. Residents will have monthly meetings with their mentor, as a place for reflection, encouragement, personal growth, and goal-setting. It is a space to work toward, reflect on, hold to, and adapt a Rule of Life within Act Five's shared rhythms and values. It is also a space for discerning future pathways, conflicts and relationships.

A Rule of Life is a prayerfully crafted commitment to live your life in a particular way, within the context of a community. It helps to foster intentionality and faithful living. With some guidance from staff, readings and resources, Residents are encouraged to consider how they might live authentically within the Act Five residency cohort, as well as how they might formulate an individual Rule of Life as they live intentionally within the Act Five community.

Act Five encourages existing mentoring relationships, so a person in the residency cohort may have their existing mentor fill the mentorship component of the Residency Program. Act Five can also pair a resident with a trusted mentor, if a participant does not already have one.

ON-CALL

Residents have the opportunity to spend one weekend per term (or more if desired) on-call for the Act Five Gap Year Program. This allows our Resident Leaders to take weekends off and gives the Residency Cohort opportunities to connect with gap year students, leading them in Saturday fun activities in the city and Sunday morning rhythms. They also act as the first response to needs within the home, alerting Act Five staff or emergency services if necessary.

If being on-call is something you are *not* interested in, please speak with the Programs Manager early in the year take your name off the list. All residents who participate in the on-call schedule will be trained appropriately.

WORSHIP

As a community, we are committed to regular times of prayer and worship. On Sunday evenings, Act Five holds a small prayer time in the home called 'Evensong' that involves song, prayer, scripture and reflection. Residents are expected to attend Evensong weekly on Sundays at 8pm. On Long Weekends, it happens on Mondays.

Church: Residents are encouraged to commit to meaningful engagement in a local church congregation. Act Five is part of the True City Network in Hamilton and will readily help you get connected to a church within the network, or beyond it. Sunday mornings, the community eats breakfast together before church. The Resident on-call is in charge of encouraging community members to join for breakfast and attend church.

HOUSE RULES AND EXPECTATIONS

As part of setting expectations for Act Five, the Residency Cohort will together take part in forming a Community Covenant near the beginning of the year. This will involve commitments to how the cohort will seek to live and serve together well with each other, and alongside the gap year program.

Cooking, Cleaning, & Being Good Neighbours

As a community, we are committed to caring for the Act Five home. This includes making meals together, cleaning and maintaining the home and living as good neighbours on and around Blake St. Residents are expected to do their assigned chores daily to the best of their ability and cook meals for the community on their assigned cooking day.

Curfew

Good rhythms of sleep and rest are important for our own personal wellness and for the health of the Act Five community. Therefore, the house will be quiet by 11pm.

Guests

Act Five loves having guests visit! Given the unique discipleship opportunity that comes with living in community, there are times when having guests works best. The best times for guests to join for a meal is Spaghetti Wednesday and weekends. Residents in the basement suite or third floor may have guests outside these times, seeing that they inform their roommate.

Please consult the Residence Manager regarding guests outside suggested visiting hours and anytime a guest stays overnight, as a courtesy to all residents.

When the gap year cohort is away, residents have freedom to invite guests outside of suggested hours.

TECHNOLOGY

While we are grateful for the advances of modern technology, we believe that Act Five's goals are more impactful by carefully choosing how and when we use our personal devices and other technologies.

Specifically, we believe our decisions around technology use impact our ability to

- a) form deep relationships
- b) learn to communicate and listen well to others
- c) learn to rest, be creative and listen to God's voice in our life.

This policy aims to provide guidelines that might create an environment where technology is approached with mindfulness, promoting human flourishing and connection between self, others, creation, and God.

In light of this, the expectations for Residents include:

1. Residents will participate with gap year students in Tech-Free Wednesdays, with exceptions made for work or school that requires use of a computer. If computer use is required, the expectation is that the individual will use these devices in resident-only spaces (3rd floor, basement apartment, or bedrooms).
2. Meal times, and all trips and retreats that residents participate in will be fully tech-free.
3. Internet in the home will be turned off from 11pm to 6am each night.
4. Residents are encouraged to periodically assess their screen time and tech habits and reflect on their impact on personal well-being, relationships, and the overall community

* **"Tech"** in Act Five refers to all electronic devices with screens (i.e. cell phones, apple watches, laptops, tablets, tv, video games, etc.) and does not include technology that does not have a screen (mp3 players, walkman, home phone, walkie talkie, toasters, bicycles, etc.)

RELATIONSHIPS

Act Five acknowledges that romantic relationships can be beautiful and have an important place within Christian community. Act Five also acknowledges that the Gap Year and Residency Programs are intensive experiences require a high level of commitment and engagement. Therefore, romantic relationships between two residents of Act Five are discouraged in order to avoid distractions and prioritize the communal experience.

A Resident engaged in a romantic relationship outside of the home is encouraged to bring their partner into the fold of the Act Five community where possible. These residents must also maintain clear and respectful boundaries within the community to avoid creating discomfort for others. Residents should prioritize their commitment to the Community Covenant, ensuring that their relationship does not negatively interfere with their responsibilities to and participation in Act Five.

If a relationship forms between two residents, one person will be asked to move out at the next term interval (April, August, or December). Romantic relationships between residents and students are

prohibited under all circumstances.

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS

All residential and leadership staff at Act Five are equipped with mental health first aid training. This ensures that our staff members have knowledge and skills to provide initial support to residents experiencing mental health challenges.

While Act Five is committed to supporting students and residents, it is not unusual for young adults to benefit from further professional support along the way. Act Five will refer residents to confidential and professional counseling services (either in-person or virtual) through Shalem Mental Health Network.

Shalem Mental Health Network.

To set up counselling appointments in Hamilton, contact Shalem:

- By phone at 905.528.0353 or 1.866.347.0041
- By email at office@shalemnetwork.org
- By text (to initiate the process) at 289.335.3543

A collection of health resources is accessible to all in the Act Five home, in a binder titled "Act Five Health Resources. Residents will be informed of the location of this binder upon move-in.

SUBSTANCE USE

The Act Five home and all program events will be free of all alcohol during the duration of the Gap Year Program. The Act Five home and all program events will be free of all drugs at any time. Off-use prescription drugs are also unacceptable. Smoking or vaping of tobacco or cannabis is prohibited during the entirety of the Act Five program. This includes cigarettes, cigars, pipes, electronic cigarettes, and any other smoking or vaping devices.

Residents, as members of the Act Five community, are encouraged to consider their conduct and act responsibly during their time away from the home.

Note: Act Five does not treat substance use, abuse, or addiction as a moral issue, and does not expect perfection. Act Five recognizes that individuals may face challenges and struggles related to substance use. Residents using any of the aforementioned substances who desire support are welcome to reach out to an Act Five staff member who can walk with the individual towards wholeness and well-being. Act Five strives to create a space where students and residents feel safe to seek support in addressing substance-related concerns.

DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

In the spirit of respect and care for each individual, discrimination and harassment of any form are not tolerated. A resident who feels they may have experienced discrimination or harassment within the Act Five community is encouraged to speak with any member of the Act Five staff team so that

appropriate actions may be taken.

CONSEQUENCES FOR FAILING TO ADHERE TO EXPECTATIONS

We hold high expectations for shared life at Act Five. Our staff respond as a team when a student or resident fails to adhere to community expectations. We operate under a progressive discipline model whereby we:

1. Clearly articulate the expectations and identify the breach
2. Work together with the individual to find restoration
3. Schedule regular follow up check-in's and create a plan to move forward

In the event that an issue persists, and in certain, rare circumstances where it is no longer in the best interest of a resident or the community to remain in Act Five, they may be asked to move-out at the end of the term.



Weekly Schedule

Residents live their ordinary lives within the context of the Act Five rhythms. Residents are expected to attend the following:

Weekly Commitments:

- Evensong
 - *Sunday evenings at 8pm*
- Morning Prayer
 - *Weekdays, 8-8:15am*
- Three Evening Prayer times per week (pick the same three and stick to it)
 - *Weeknights at 9-9:15pm*
- Every weeknight dinner (with room for some exceptions)
 - *Weeknights at 5:30pm*
 - *Especially Wednesday's dinner - **Spaghetti Wednesday** is a weekly community meal held over dinner. It is open to members of the neighbourhood, family & friends, and anyone who might need a meal.*

Monthly Commitments (must attend each of the following 1x per month):

- House Meeting
 - *Tuesday evenings at 7:30pm*
- Storytelling Nights
 - *Thursday evenings at 7:30pm*
 - *Residents will receive the storytelling schedule ahead of time so they can choose which week they would like to attend based on their interest in the content.*

In addition to these things, Residents are free to participate in other community rhythms as able or interested, such as:

- Morning walk (a leisurely stroll around the block to start the day)
 - *Weekdays at 7:30am*
- Monday Coffee (announcements & current events)
 - *Mondays at 9am*
- Sunday morning breakfast
 - *Sundays at 8:30am*
- Body care (an hour devoted to movement & exercise)
 - *Weekdays at 4:30pm*
- Play & Pray nights (planned social activities or worship & arts time)
 - *Monday nights at 7:30pm*
- Saturday fun activities

IMPORTANT ORIENTATION DATES

Sept 4 7pm - Community Orientation and "Get To Know You"

Sept 7 7pm - Storytelling - *The Story of Act Five*

Sept 13 6pm - First Spaghetti Wednesday

Sept 15-17 Residency Cohort Canoe Trip - Massasauga Provincial Park.

** Not an experienced canoeist? Not to worry! This will be an easy trip for all skill levels. Cost: \$70 or pwyc.*

TRIPS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEARNING

Throughout the year, there are opportunities for Residents to join the Act Five Gap Year Program on various trips and learning activities at an added cost. More information on each trip will be provided throughout the year.

Oct 26-28	Trip to Ohio: Lessons @ Lamppost Farm
Nov 2 & 3	Enneagram Retreat (not overnight - 2 full days near Hamilton)
Nov 13-18	Trip to Manitoulin Island with DayStar Native Ministries
Nov 21 & 24	Day Trips to Six Nations for Indigenous Learning
Jan 6-26	Service Trip with World Renew Disaster Response Services to Texas or Louisiana. Exact dates TBD.
Feb 28-Mar 2	Winter Camping Trip
Apr 8-13	Appalachian Trail Backpacking Trip in Virginia



75 BLAKE ST - DETAILS FOR THE HOME

Use of Space

1. Physical space - The hope is that each cohort of residents will leave the Act Five home in better shape than when arriving. As part of the program deposit, residents pay a damage deposit of \$100. Should rooms or common spaces be damaged or unclean upon move out, part or all of this deposit will be withheld.
2. Personal space - With ~20 people living in one home, we will be committed to protecting times for residents to have their own personal space. This will be established through scheduling and setting up distinct rooms for quiet. There will also be significant chunks of time when the gap year cohort is away, leaving residents with substantial quiet space in the home.
3. Male/Female Accommodations - Male and female residents and students reside on different floors of the Act Five home, and residents are asked to honour each other by refraining from entering the residence space of someone of another gender.

FURNITURE AND DECORATIONS

The home is fully furnished with beds, desks, dressers, closet space, tables, chairs, couches, coffee tables, bookshelves, kitchenware and cleaning supplies.

Please do not bring additional furniture (couches, chairs, mattresses), pets, air conditioners, firearms/weapons of any kind, or candles/incense.

You may not nail or drill holes in the wall, or add room accessories with permanent hardware.

You may not change any permanent features of the home unless given consent from Act Five Resident Leaders.

RENTER'S INSURANCE

Renter's insurance covers your personal belongings in the event that they are stolen or damaged (each policy will state how and what they will cover). Act Five does not have insurance that covers the property of residents, and recommends that residents obtain their own.

OTHER INFO

Bikes - Act Five encourages the use of PRESTO cards (bus passes) or SoBi bikes for getting around Hamilton's urban centre. Act Five has storage space for personal bicycles.

Personal Vehicles - If you wish to bring your own vehicle, you are welcome to do so but must inform Act Five staff ahead of time. Some parking is available at the Act Five home, as well as limited street parking.

Laundry - There is easy access to coin-operated laundry machines in the Act Five house, as well as local laundromats.



Payment Information

Rent prices are standardized, and then negotiated with each tenant according to room size and number of roommates. Monthly rent payments can be made to *Act Five Initiatives* with online banking, Credit Card, Pre-Authorized Direct Debit (PAD), debit, or cheque. Payments must be made by the first of each month.

For all new residents, a \$100 damage deposit is required by August 1. This can be paid at <https://actfive.ca/tenants-deposit/> or by e-transfer to finance@actfive.ca with a note that says "Damage Deposit - Residency Program".

Residents will receive a lease agreement to be signed prior to move-in, as well as a monthly invoice for payment.

Questions regarding payments can be directed to finance@actfive.ca.

