



THE ARK

RENOVATION AND FACILITY EXPANSION FOR NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION PROVIDING SOCIAL SERVICES

CLIENT The ARK | **LOCATION** Chicago, Illinois (West Ridge) | **SIZE** 36,829 sf total; 13,304 sf expansion; 12,736 sf / 31-parking space lot

PROJECT SCOPE

The ARK is a nonprofit organization providing medical, legal, and social services to more than 4,000 Jewish families in the Chicagoland area. Founded in 1971, The ARK recently celebrated its 50th anniversary. In preparation for “the next 50 years,” The ARK retained Eckenhoff Saunders to provide architecture, planning, and interior design efforts to enhance and expand The ARK’s facilities.

The design’s 2-story massing reflects The ARK’s role as a community beacon. It is critical to The ARK’s mission that they provide clients with a welcoming setting that affords them privacy and dignity. Some of the design’s most distinctive features are in the public spaces of the new addition. These include natural daylight streaming deep into the building through laminated frosted or fritted glazing and custom millwork invoking the wood construction of Noah’s Ark.

Entries into the food pantry, community room, and main conference are on axis with main circulation routes for straightforward navigability. And a palette of earth and sky tones with select bold hues establishes a warm feel that carries through the renovation. The renovation of the existing structure between 1954 and 1967 is extensive. It required reorganization for accessibility and life safety code compliance, and the new design added a new elevator, egress stair, and sprinklers throughout the facility. The renovation also rethinks the spaces and adjacencies of The ARK’s departments and services.