Volunteer Role Description

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| Role Title: | *Shomer/Shomeret* |
| Date: | January 2020 |

**Purpose:** The s*homer/shomeret* sits *shmira* when an Adath congregant passes away and receives the services of the Chevra Kavod Hamet.

*Shmira* is conducted from the time the *met/metah* arrives at the funeral home until it is time to leave for the funeral.

**Glossary:**

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| ***Met*** | Male deceased |
| ***Metah*** | Female deceased |
| ***Shomer*** | Male sitting *shmira* |
| ***Shomeret*** | Female sitting *shmira* |
| ***Shomrim*** | Multiple males or multiple males and females sitting *shmira* |
| ***Shomrot*** | Multiple females sitting *shmira* |
| ***Shmira*** | Guarding or watching |

**Location:** *Shmira* is conducted in the lower level of the funeral home in a room dedicated for that purpose.

Washburn-McReavy Funeral Chapel

Edina Chapel

5000 West 50th St.

Edina, MN 55436

**Accessibility:** The funeral home and *shmira* space are accessible for people using walkers, canes, or wheelchairs, or who have difficulty managing stairs.

**Key Responsibilities:**

* Responds to a phone call and/or email requesting volunteers to sit *shmira*.
* Schedules a *shmira* shift(s) with the *Shmira* Arranger.
* Sits *shmira* at the funeral home according to the *Shomrim* Instructions.
* Experienced shomrim may accompany and instruct novice *shomrim* on their role.
* Maintain confidentiality and anonymity.

**Reports to:** Chevra Kavod Hamet leadership team.

**Confidentiality:** To protect the privacy of the deceased and the family, the *Shomer/Shomeret* does not discuss the identity of scheduled *shomrim*, when, how many volunteers have sat *shmira* or any other related information to anyone other than *Chevra* leadership.

**Anonymity:** Consistent with the tradition that the *shomrim* do not expect or request thanks for performing the *mitzvah* of sitting *shmira*, the *Shomer/Shomeret* does not reveal to the family of the deceased the identify of volunteers who sat *shmira* for their loved one.

**Length of Appointment:** The s*homer/shomeret* serves as frequently and for as many months or years as he/she is willing and available.

**Time Commitment:** There are approximately 15-17 opportunities for s*homrim* to volunteer each year, with a cadre of volunteers taking turns as *Shomer/Shomeret* over the course of the year. Each episode as s*homer/shomeret* usually involves sitting a two-hour shift, although some *shomrim* only sit for one hour, some sit multiple shifts, and some sit overnight. The shifts can occur any time of day or night, as the *shomer/shomeret* is willing and available.

**Qualifications:** Commitment and passion to the mission and work of the Chevra, patience, and dependability.

**Support:** Written instructions and verbal review of instructions for this position are provided. In addition, the Chevra leadership team members and the *Shmira* Arranger are available to answer questions and provide assistance.

**Age Requirement:** Adult or older teenager. Teenagers under age 18 may accompany an adult sitting *shmira*.

**Dress Code:** Casual attire is acceptable. Some people come dressed for work if coming directly from or going directly to work.

**Development Opportunities:** The *shomer/shomeret* may serve in other volunteer positions within the Chevra as desired, concurrently with or before or after becoming a *shomer/shomeret*.

**Role Requirements:**

* Must be able to spend dedicated time sitting a shift(s) at the funeral home.
* While sitting *shmira*, must conduct himself/herself in a manner befitting the role of *shomer/shomeret*, according to the *Shomer/Shomeret* Instructions.

**Role Challenges:** No advance notice of need, must refrain from using electronic devices and social media while sitting *shmira*.

**Role Benefits:** Sense of satisfaction in the knowledge that you comfort the family and honor the deceased by helping to ensure that *shomrim* are sitting with the deceased at the funeral home, the honor of being present in the final journey of the deceased, development of a greater respect for *matan chaim* (the gift of life), and a deeper sense of the spirituality that Judaism attaches to death and the preparation for burial.

**Related Documents:**

*Shomrim* Handbook