

## Volunteer Role Description

Role Title: *Shomer/Shomeret*

Date: September 2018

**Purpose:** The *shomer/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:

<b><i>Met</i></b>	Male deceased
<b><i>Metah</i></b>	Female deceased
<b><i>Shomer</i></b>	Male sitting <i>shmira</i>
<b><i>Shomeret</i></b>	Female sitting <i>shmira</i>
<b><i>Shomrim</i></b>	Multiple males or multiple females sitting <i>shmira</i>
<b><i>Shomrot</i></b>	Multiple females sitting <i>shmira</i>
<b><i>Shmira</i></b>	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.

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

**Length of Appointment:** The *shomer/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 *shomrim* to volunteer each year, with a cadre of volunteers taking turns as *Shomer/Shomeret* over the course of the year. Each episode as *shomer/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 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