

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FAMILY SHOMRIM COORDINATOR

A shomer is a person who watches (“guards”) the deceased. A shomer may be a family member or friend of the deceased and should be post bar or bat mitzvah. Either you, or the family, may know persons willing to perform shmira. You will want to collect the names and telephone numbers from the family. The Adas Israel Shomrim Committee may be able to supplement your list.

While it is considered a mitzvah to perform shmira, some people might find it uncomfortable. For them, there are other ways that non-mourning family members and friends can be of support to the family, such as assisting in the meal of consolation or attending a minyan at the shiva house. What follows are instructions for those willing and able to serve.

Adas Israel uses the facilities of the Hines-Rinaldi Funeral Home at 11800 New Hampshire Avenue, Silver Spring, Maryland. The facility has a telephone and restrooms. Shomrim enter through a door on the right side of the building toward the rear. A large parking lot is available, as well as a driveway where shomrim may park close to the door. The door is locked, but can be opened by pressing the combination: 5412.

Typically, coverage is needed for an 18-30 hour period while the deceased is at the funeral home. The Adas Israel Shomrim Coordinator will know approximately when the deceased will arrive at the funeral home and when the funeral will take place. This information will assist you in determining the length of coverage. A scheduling sheet is attached for your convenience.

A shomer does not need to sit in the same room as the deceased. An adjacent sitting room is provided for shomrim. Prior to Taharah (preparation of the body) the deceased will be in the prep room wrapped in sheeting. Once Taharah has been performed, the deceased will be casketed and will remain in the prep room. The sitting room and prep room are connected by a door which can remain open. However, during Taharah the door will be closed and the observation window will be curtained.

It is traditional for a shomer to read psalms during the watch period. Appropriate reading material will be available in the sitting room. Usually a shomer is scheduled for two hours and leaves when the next shomer arrives, however, for those persons working in pairs, or through the night, longer time periods may be more convenient.

While it is preferable to have continuous scheduling with each shomer waiting for his/her replacement before leaving, it is not always possible. When breaks in the schedule occur, it is important to alert a shomer who follows such a break that he/she may be coming to an empty building. **IT IS IMPORTANT THAT EACH SHOMER, REGARDLESS OF PLACEMENT ON THE SCHEDULE, KNOWS THE LOCK COMBINATION AND BUILDING DIRECTIONS.**

Please note that if family, friends, and the Adas volunteers cannot fill the entire time period, a paid shomer is available (\$10/hr). The Adas Shomrim Coordinator will make these arrangements.

When contacting a potential shomer:

1. explain what being a shomer entails:
 - 1) arriving on time
 - 2) sitting in an adjacent room
 - 3) reading psalms or other appropriate material
 - 4) remaining until the next shomer arrives
 - 5) must be post bar/bat mitzvah age
2. ask what time or times he/she would be available
3. provide directions to Hines-Rinaldi Funeral Home, 11800 New Hampshire Avenue, Silver Spring, Maryland [Beltway to north on New Hampshire Avenue, approximately 1/4 mile past Colesville Road (Route 29) on the left] and the number for the combination lock: 5412.
4. inform the shomer who he/she will be replacing, and who will be replacing him/her
5. make sure the individual has your phone number should he/she need to reach you to change times, or notify you of a delay.

SCHEDULE

Day 1

	Name	Telephone #
Midnight - 2 am	_____	_____
2 am - 4 am	_____	_____
4 am - 6 am	_____	_____
6 am - 8 am	_____	_____
8 am - 10 am	_____	_____
10 am - Noon	_____	_____
Noon - 2 pm	_____	_____

2 pm - 4 pm _____

4 pm - 6 pm _____

6 pm - 8 pm _____

8 pm - 10 pm _____

10 pm - Midnight _____

Day 2

Midnight - 2 am _____

2 am - 4 am _____

4 am - 6 am _____

6 am - 8 am _____

8 am - 10 am _____

10 am - Noon _____

Noon - 2 pm _____

2 pm - 4 pm _____

4 pm - 6 pm _____

6 pm - 8 pm _____

8 pm - 10 pm _____

10 pm - Midnight _____

Dated February 17, 2004; Revised August 14, 2012