

Clergy Parking – Houston Hospitals

Once upon a time, Houston clergy could get a parking card (first free and then for a nominal cost) with access to all the garages in the Medical Center. Some clergy abused the privilege, the cards were cancelled, and Texas Medical Center (TMC) Parking washed its hands of clergy parking privileges. After much lobbying and discussion, the chaplaincy offices in each of the major hospitals stepped up to cover costs for clergy parking. That is the important piece to understand about getting clergy parking benefits – the chaplaincy offices are generously and kindly covering the costs of clergy parking. Each chaplaincy operation, in each hospital, has its own procedure. If in doubt, inquire at the chaplaincy office.

The TMC parking garages all use SmartChips. You get a SmartChip as you enter a garage and take it with you into the hospital; the SmartChip needs to be validated – as outlined below or at a payment machine – in order to leave the garage.

Methodist – Medical Center

Methodist does not validate SmartChip for clergy parking in TMC garages. Instead, the Spiritual Care and Education Office (next to the chapel) validates for parking only in Smith and Scurlock Towers areas (across the street on Fannin). Validation is limited to pre-approved clergy. To get on the approved roster, you must visit the office (8:00-4:30, M-F) and present a business card. Pre-approved persons can receive validation after business hours at the security desk in Scurlock Tower, 2nd floor.

St. Luke's – Medical Center

Garage 2 is generally the easiest to use, although Garage 1 is easy to use too via the tunnel. To validate the SmartChip, one goes to the chaplaincy office which is located on the first floor in the Cooley Building, not too far from the green elevators. You must get to the office before it closes at 4:30 pm. They will have you sign in and indicate the room(s) you visited, and then the attendant will have you validate your chip with the equipment on the counter. If you need validation after office hours, go to the B2 level and follow the signs to the security office, where your SmartChip can be validated.

M.D. Anderson – Medical Center

Garage 2 or 10 are easiest. To validate the chip, one goes to the chaplaincy office which is located on the first floor near the chapel during office hours. You must register, including the name of the patient, and someone in the office will validate your SmartChip.

Texas Children's – Medical Center

Garage 1 or 2 are easiest. Please present a clergy or business card at the lobby desk on the first floor of the West Tower, and they will validate your parking. You no longer have to go the Auxiliary Office or Chaplain's Office near the red elevators in the Abercrombie building.

Memorial Hermann – Medical Center

Memorial Hermann is the most complicated hospital for clergy parking in the Medical Center. First, one needs to go to the Chaplaincy Services offices on the 6th floor of the Cullen Pavilion to be added to the official clergy list. Then, when visiting in the future, you park in valet parking between the Heart & Vascular Institute and the Cullen Pavilion. Before getting into your car again, you'll need to go to the Chaplaincy Services office to have your valet receipt validated.

Memorial Hermann Southwest – On Beechnut by US-59

Memorial Hermann Southwest has a parking card for clergy. Obtain one at the Parking Office on the 1st floor of the Professional Building next to the parking garage on the north side (by the elevator). The best way to get into Memorial Hermann SW is via the tunnel on the "C" level which goes directly (underground) from the garage to the elevators.

Woman's Hospital of Texas – On Fannin

At Woman's, park in the lot and have your ticket stamped at the information window in the main lobby.

St. Joseph Medical Center - Downtown

Park in their parking garage, entering from Crawford Street (one-way northbound), between St. Joseph and Jefferson, and pull a ticket. It's a narrow entrance, but wind your way up and find a spot to park. Enter the hospital complex from the door on the 3rd level of the parking garage; this will put you on the 2nd level of the complex with walkway access to all buildings.

To have your ticket validated as a clergy person, take the elevator in the George Strake building to the ground (G) level and go to the Security Office. If you utilize the elevator on the right, it will drop you off right at the door of the Security Office. You can take the elevator back to the 2nd level for easy access back to the garage.

Note: If you park in the wrong garage, the validated ticket will not be accepted, and you will not have easy access to the St. Joseph buildings.