

2020 Role Description for Chaplain Interns

Lifeline Chaplaincy Houston Fort Worth Austin

Lifeline Chaplaincy is a non-profit organization that is an outreach of the Churches of Christ. Lifeline has served the 13 hospitals of the Texas Medical Center in Houston since 1983. In recent years we have expanded our ministry to selected hospitals in other cities, including Fort Worth and Austin. Our mission statement reads:

Dedicated to providing compassionate support to the seriously ill, their families and caregivers, and to being an educational resource for crisis ministry.

Lifeline's pastoral care ministry is provided by board certified professional chaplains, as well as trained volunteers and chaplain interns working under their supervision.

The chaplain intern program began in 1986 as an opportunity for ministry students from Christian universities to experience firsthand the world of hospital patients and their families. It has grown to incorporate students from other disciplines (e.g. nursing, social work, pre-med, psychology) in which the students express a desire for ministry-related experience along with their chosen vocation.

We have utilized university interns from Church of Christ affiliated universities including Abilene Christian, Pepperdine, Lubbock Christian, Oklahoma Christian, Harding, and York, and we welcome applicants from all universities. Some interns are ministry/religion majors, along with other majors who wish to increase their skills in a crisis-oriented ministry setting. Interns are housed with families in the local area during their 3-month stay. Internships are primarily aimed towards a summer stay, but other 12-week internships will be considered.

The basic assumption of this internship is that it is a hands-on learning environment. The bedside and clinic become a "living laboratory" of immense proportions. Chaplain interns are expected to interact with patients, families, and medical staff, representing themselves as ones committed to serve, to minister, and to learn. As an intern, you will meet people from all walks of life, from all parts of the world, each dealing with serious illness.

The role expectations for an intern's time with Lifeline Chaplaincy are:

- Pastoral care visitation of patients and families in assigned hospitals
- Didactic studies of topics pertaining to theology and suffering
- Camp counselor for Camp Star Trails for pediatric cancer patients
- Supervision of visits through verbatim and group feedback
- Personal theological reflections triggered by your encounters



A certain amount of flexibility is required to function in this position, which means some days and events are structured, and some are more determined by the needs and opportunities of the moment. This reflects what patients and families in crisis must deal with and can be a source of frustration and/or new ways to perceive disruptive events. It also reflects what happens to those who feel called to minister to persons in crisis, demanding openness to the unexpected and finding God's presence there. It is a real privilege to be asked to join in someone else's sacred journey of suffering and loss.

Because the chaplain intern is representing the Lord and his or her community in a crisis-centered, high-tech facility, certain qualities of spiritual, social and emotional maturity and adaptability are expected. This is an environment where one who ministers doesn't always have nice, tidy answers to the complex dilemmas some people are encountering. It is also an open-ended opportunity to learn new appreciation for others, even when they are different from us, and to learn new ways of perceiving God and his role in our lives.

Not everything is solemn and heavy-hearted. The intern group usually finds much to celebrate and enjoy as a group and as individuals. Houston, Fort Worth, and Austin are all marvelous, vibrant places to explore, with numerous cultural opportunities, museums, theaters, restaurants, and more. It is helpful to have access to a car, but public transportation is also available.

We ask you to prayerfully consider being a part of our chaplain intern program, either this summer or at some point in the future. The number of interns per summer is limited, so please submit a cover letter, resume, and references early. We will then contact you for an interview by phone or in person. If you are accepted into the program, we pay a stipend, and we work closely with you to arrange good housing. The first day of the 2020 summer internship is Friday, May 15; the last day is Friday, August 7.

Additional information:

1. In general, half the day is spent in classroom activities and half the day is devoted to patient visitation in assigned hospitals. Each intern will receive a clinical assignment in a specific hospital.
2. Interns will join Clinical Pastoral Education students and supervisors from local hospitals for some didactic sessions and other events.
3. Each intern will write at least 3 verbatim. A verbatim is a clinical learning tool in which the chaplain reproduces in writing a pastoral visit and then reflects on that visit according to a prescribed format. The verbatim is then discussed in a group meeting with supervisors and peers.
4. Interns will read several books and articles pertaining to pastoral care and will discuss those works with supervisors and peers.
5. Interns are expected to attend the following evening / weekend events:
 - Weekend Workshop, "Ministry in Times of Illness and Loss, Part 1" (Saturday, May 16)
 - Open house in their honor (Thursday, May 21, 6-8 p.m.)
 - Camp Star Trails (Saturday, June 13 – Friday, June 19)
6. Personal appearance standards: For Women -- Dress suit / pants suit / jacket and slacks with dress blouse / sweater or professional dress. For Men -- Suit / sport coat and slacks / dress shirt and tie. These guidelines are consistent with personal appearance standards in pastoral care departments in most major hospitals. Please note that hospital regulations prohibit the wearing of open-toed shoes.

Supervisors

Paul Riddle, D.Min., BCC – Houston
David Martin, D.Min., BCC – Ft. Worth
Tom Nuckels, D.Min. – Austin

Application Deadline: Tuesday, November 5, 2019

To apply, submit your resume, a letter describing your interest in the internship, and three references. Electronic submissions are preferred. Send materials to Paul Riddle at priddle@lifelinechaplaincy.org.

Check out our website @ www.lifelinechaplaincy.org, or call toll-free 888-767-6363
Email: priddle@lifelinechaplaincy.org.