



# Stephen Minister Job Description

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Stephen Ministers are selected, trained, and commissioned to provide one-to-one lay caring ministry to people in crisis or with other needs for care. They participate in 50 hours of training initially and attend Supervision Group twice a month. They initially commit to serve for two years.

## ➤ What Stephen Ministers Do

A Stephen Minister's role includes:

### **Prayer**

Stephen Ministers pray daily for their care receivers and strive to worship God always in work and deed. They reveal the love of God to those who need it most.

### **Care for the Care Receiver**

Stephen Ministers are assigned to care receivers-people in crisis who need caring support. Stephen Ministers care for those in moderate difficulties. The Stephen Minister's care helps the care receiver resolve the difficulty and achieve growth.

Stephen Ministers meet once a week with their care receivers for an hour. They may also check in with the care receiver by phone, particularly when the care receiver is going through a difficult time.

Stephen ministers use a host of skills to care for their care receivers. Among the most important are the following:

*Listening.* Most care receivers need someone simply to listen-really listen- as they talk through their difficulties.

*Dealing with feelings.* Stephen Ministers reflect the care receiver's ideas and feelings and ask open-ended questions to help the care receiver recognize, express, and accept his or her feelings.

*Sharing distinctively Christian caring resources.*

Stephen Ministers may share a prayer, a Bible verse or story, or other caring gestures that the care receiver would welcome.

*Remaining process-oriented.* Stephen Ministers do not try to fix the care receiver or his or her problems; they focus on the process of care giving and rely on God to achieve results.

*Relating assertively.* Stephen Ministers respect both the needs of the care receiver and their own needs as well.

*Maintaining boundaries.* Stephen Ministers set appropriate boundaries in the caring relationship, helping the care receiver remain as independent as possible while being there for the care receiver as needed.

*Recommending professional care when necessary.* Stephen Ministers are not trained to care for those who are suicidal, severely depressed, abusive, or homicidal, or who are abusing drugs or alcohol. If Stephen Ministers recognize that their care receiver's needs exceed the care they are able to provide, they see that the care receiver receives professional care.

### **Maintain Confidentiality**

Stephen Ministers understand that confidentiality is crucial in any caring relationship. The care receiver needs to know that what he or she says to the Stephen Minister will remain in confidence. Stephen Ministers maintain confidentiality and encourage other Stephen Ministers to do the same.

### **Participate in Twice-Monthly Supervision and Continuing Education Sessions**

Stephen Ministers participate in Small Group Peer Supervision and continuing education, coming prepared to every supervision session unless illness or emergency makes attendance impossible. Supervision provides Stephen Ministers with support, guidance, and accountability for their caring relationships.

### **➤ How Crossroads Supports the Stephen Minister**

Crossroads supports the Stephen Minister in the following ways:

#### **Training**

Crossroads provides Stephen Ministers with 50 hours of training for this ministry before they are assigned a care receiver, and further provides continuing education twice monthly for as long as the Stephen Ministers serve. The comprehensive training helps Stephen Ministers feel confident in their skills for this ministry.

#### **Commissioning**

Stephen Ministers are formally commissioned after completing the 50 hours of training. The commissioning dinner allows new Stephen Ministers to be recognized for their efforts, affirmed and supported in their ministry, and prayed for as they begin their caring ministry.

### **Supervision**

Small Group Peer Supervision provides Stephen Ministers with support and encouragement and ensures that no Stephen Minister will ever have to carry the responsibility for his or her care receiver all alone.

### **Prayers**

Sometimes the going will be tough for both caregivers and their care receivers; the Stephen Ministers will need the additional support of knowing that Crossroads is lifting their needs as caregivers to God in prayer.

### **Stephen Leaders**

By accepting Stephen Ministry as part of its overall ministry, Crossroads agrees to supply the resources that allow for the training of Stephen Leaders. These Stephen Leaders in turn provide guidance for Stephen Ministers. They train them and ensure that the supervision and continuing education sessions progress smoothly. They are available to consult with Stephen Ministers when they have questions, face challenges, or suspect that the care receiver's needs exceed the care they are able to give. Stephen Leaders offer support, advice, and affirmation to the Stephen Ministers and ensure the smooth operation of Stephen Ministry.

#### **Overview of the Stephen Ministry Commitment:**

- Application & Interview Process
- 50 hours of training (1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of every month, Jan-Aug)
- Commissioning Dinner
- Meet with your care receiver once a week for an hour
- Continuing Education and Small Group Peer Supervision (2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Tues. of every month)
- Two year serving commitment