



Seafarers International House

Seafarers International House
Full-Time Port Chaplain (ordained) or Ship Visitor (lay) for the Port of New
York/Newark, NJ

POSITION DESCRIPTION September 2026

Overview

Seafarers & International House (SIH) is a Lutheran mission to seafarers and sojourners, offering pastoral care, hospitality, social assistance, advocacy, personal shopping, and prayer. The Port Chaplain performs these mission services primarily through visitation of seafarers aboard merchant ships in the port of Newark, NJ but also through electronic means of communication. www.sihnyc.org

Essential requirements and qualifications:

- A valid, clean driver's license, A TWIC card (which requires a Homeland Security background check that SIH will help you obtain), willingness to be certified as a Ship Visitor through NAMMA on-line and in-person training
- Being a rostered lay or clergy person of the ELCA or from a denomination with which we are in communion is preferred. Clinical Pastoral Education, military, maritime, or hospital chaplaincy experience is helpful, as is work in the maritime industry
- A deep respect for ecumenical expressions of various faiths as well as an understanding and respect of various cultures.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Greet the seafarers, and after an introduction to the officer in charge, to welcome them to the local port
- Interact with the seafarers, listen to their concerns, share hospitality, and provide a ministry of presence
- Facilitate the seafarers' international calls home by the distribution of approved phone cards and the use of SIH cell phones, and Wi-Fis
- Distribute newspapers and magazines to keep them informed about current events and special avocations and interests, as well as devotionals as appropriate

- Facilitate approved money transfers and mail posting
- Be alert to indications of seafarers' ill health, health risks, substandard conditions aboard ship and to respond accordingly,
- Facilitate transportation for seafarers to shopping malls, sight-seeing tours, and, when asked by agents, to go to health clinics, when shore leave is available. When shore leave is not available, personal shopping for seafarers may be indicated.
- Pray for the seafarers' next voyage and for speedy reunion with their families
- A great deal of flexibility is necessary with regard to the timing of visits – evenings and weekends may be the best time to visit some ships
- Abide by the ICMA Code of Conduct especially with regard to proselytizing and cooperating with other maritime organizations that work collaboratively for seafarers' welfare
- Keep all relevant documentation up to date and ensure regular maintenance of a van that may be provided

This position reports to the Executive Director of SIH. The position has no supervisory responsibilities. The position requires being present in the port of New Jersey (Newark).

Physical Demands

- The physical demands here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to perform the essential duties of the job.
- While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to embark and disembark ships in various weather conditions and lift and carry packages up to 50 lbs.

This is a Full-Time position. SIH offers competitive salary, paid leave, proportional health insurance and pension (if more than 30 hours per week are worked). The position is exempt if hired as clergy. If non-clergy, the position is non-exempt.

The ability speak conversational German is preferred.

Qualified candidates should contact SIH's Executive Director at drege@sihnyc.org.