

## **Five Towns Community COVID-19 Practical Guidelines**

**Dear Community Members,**

**We are sharing with you a set of directives which we think is in everyone's best interest. Some of these ideas may seem harsh. But the Coronavirus is much harsher. We are trying to prevent it from spiraling out of control in our community. Our interest is your interest. We have consulted with responsible physicians who also understand the reality of an Orthodox Jewish Community. We look forward to the time when Hashem will nullify this decree and bring a cure to all those who suffer.**

**Minyanim outside in the streets/House minyanim**

- Our members should not be having minyanim in their homes, on their blocks, or outside. We should be davening alone in our own homes. This is based on explicit medical and Halachic guidance.**
- We should try to daven together even while we are davening alone:**
  - There is a preference for people to daven Shacharis Shemona Esrei at Sunrise (e.g. March 15th 7:05am). If that is not practical, we recommend davening at the time that our regular minyanim would have met so that we can be davening with some sort of unity.**
  - We recommend Mincha being said at 2:00PM, 4:00PM, 6:00PM or at 10 minutes before shkiah. Again, the goal here is that we can daven together even while we are davening alone.**
  - Maariv should be said either after shkiah, or at 8:00PM, 9:00PM, or 10:00PM.**

**Aveilim/Yahrtzeit**

- Anyone who is an Avel saying Kaddish or who is observing a Yahrtzeit should not be going to find a minyan. Instead, it is best to find someone who is in a safe area which still has**

**minyanim to say Kaddish on your behalf. As a community service, Congregation Beth Joseph in Greater Phoenix is offering a Kaddish service**

**at [http://www.phoenixbethjoseph.org/?page\\_id=387](http://www.phoenixbethjoseph.org/?page_id=387)**

- **In observance of the yahrtzeit, light a candle, recite a Kel Maleh Rachamim, say Tehillim 16 and learn Mishnayos.**

#### **Changes to Tefilla**

- **We should all add Avinu Malkeinu at both Shachris and Mincha from now until further notice.**
  - **It should not be added on Friday afternoons or on a day when Tachanun is not said.**

#### **Shabbos/Pesach/Simcha Preparations**

- **As social distancing continues, we should plan to have our Shabbos, Yom Tov, and Seder meals alone with our families. We should not be inviting guests.**
- **Smachos, when necessary, should be limited to the minimum number of guests following these guidelines:**
  - **Weddings should be limited to immediate family (only siblings of the Chassan and Kallah), with additional people to comprise an exact Minyan if needed, two acceptable witnesses, and one Rabbi to be Mesader Kiddushin. The Kiddushin should be done outdoors, weather permitting, and a festive meal can be made at a later point in time. We recommend that elderly grandparents should not be at the wedding.**
  - **Sheva Brachos: Sheva Brachos should not be taking place at all.**
  - **Shalom Zachor: Shalom Zachors should not be taking place at all.**
  - **Bris: A Bris should be made in the house with only the immediate family living in that house present. Additional guests should not be invited to the Bris. If desired, technology can be used for others to join virtually.**

- **Naming Girls:** Girls may be named privately; please reach out to your Rabbi for the nusach that should be used to do this properly. After naming a girl, the baby's name should be publicized using electronic communications.
- **Bar/Bat Mitzvah:** Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebrations should not take place at this point. For a Bar Mitzvah boy who prepared for a whole year there are a couple of options dependent on each Rav. There may be options for making up the Krias HaTorah at a future date when the epidemic passes and for making a celebratory party then as well. Alternatively it may be allowed with a small minyan of only immediate family for the Krias HaTorah, outdoors weather permitting, and the party will be at a later date.
- **Funerals:** Funerals should only be graveside with only immediate family and an exact Minyan. Shul emails will not be announcing the burial before the burial. If the family does not comprise a minyan, please contact your Rabbi to help facilitate a minyan at the graveside.
- **Shiva:** Shiva visits should be made by phone and video and should not be made in person.

**Disclaimer.** Even when family members are included, elderly people and those who are most vulnerable should not be present as part of the Minyan or Simcha. This includes: Chronic or recent lung or heart disease, diabetes, a pregnant woman, a person with an auto-immune disease, a person taking any drug which impacts your immune system (please consult with your doctor), a person with cancer, whether in treatment or not.

**Guidelines for seeking medical care for people with respiratory symptoms:**

- People without any symptoms who have been exposed to a COVID-19 patient should not at this time seek medical attention or try and get tested. They should self quarantine.
- Call your doctor if you start to have symptoms (increased congestion, coughing or fevers).
- Seek emergency medical treatment if you have difficulty breathing, but please do not go to the emergency room if you do not need emergency care.
- Call ahead if possible and advise health care workers of possible exposure to COVID-19.
- Ask for a facemask as you enter the facility. These steps will help the healthcare provider's office to keep other people in the office or waiting room from getting infected or exposed.
- If possible, put on a facemask before emergency medical services arrive.

#### **Where to get a COVID-19 test?**

Enter your zip code to find out the nearest COVID-19 test site.  
(from US [HRSA.gov](https://findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov/) website)

<https://findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov/>

**1. Go to clinics instead of crowded large facilities. (Testing and Treatments are free.)**

#### **Work/Socialization/Children's Playdates**

- We recommend no socializing at this point. This includes children's playdates.
- One may play in the yard and go for a run but it should not be with friends or with children of friends.
- We encourage people to go outside, but to stay distanced from other people even when outdoors.
- We are strongly recommending that people work from home. Any social interaction that can be avoided should be avoided.

- Visits even among families should also be limited.  
Communication with parents and grandparents who are not living in your home should be virtual whenever possible.

#### **Restaurants**

- Our members should only order out from restaurants, noting that eating in the confined spaces of restaurants can lead to greater transmission.

#### **Supermarkets**

- Only one person per household should go to the Supermarket. Children should not come to the store and people should not be socializing while in the store.
- We are not expecting any food shortages and we encourage people not to panic buy.
- We are working with the supermarkets to see if there are possibilities to expand hours, have Purell available at the entrance and exit, and ensure that customers will all be able to do their Pesach shopping.

#### **Caring for homebound individuals (food, medicine etc)**

- Each Shul will be working to collect information about members who are homebound and gather volunteers who can pick up food, medicine, etc. for them.
- Once we have gathered this information and have a better understanding of what the needs are, we can organize together to best deliver the services.

#### **Support for Children and Adults**

- Please note at these trying times that there are services available to those in need. OHEL has created a special email address just for this issue. [CopingwithCOVID19@ohelfamily.org](mailto:CopingwithCOVID19@ohelfamily.org)
- In addition, Achiezer is preparing staff to help parents deal with anxiety in children. They will also be offering services for those who need help getting food. They will also have medical professionals available. Their hotline will be manned 24/7 (516-791-4444).

- **The Marion & Aaron Gural JCC Food Pantry S.H.O.P. will remain open for those in need. For elderly in need of help, please reach out to Stacey at [stacey.feldman@guraljcc.org](mailto:stacey.feldman@guraljcc.org) Other services will be available to those in need shortly.**

**We pray that these measures will only have to be short-lived and that we will soon merit salvation. As we head towards the month of Nissan, we pray that Hashem bring us to future Holidays and Festivals in peace, happy in the rebuilding of Yerushalayim, and joyous in the service of Hashem.**

Rabbi Shalom Axelrod, Young Israel of Woodmere

Rabbi Hershel Billet, Young Israel of Woodmere

Rabbi Dovid Cohen, Ohr Torah

Rabbi Aaron Feigenbaum, Irving Place Minyan

Rabbi Yaakov Feitman, Kehillas Bais Yehuda Tzvi

Rabbi Aryeh Zev Ginzberg, Chofetz Chaim Torah Center

Rabbi Dr. Aaron Glatt, Young Israel of Woodmere

Rabbi Kenneth Hain, Congregation Beth Sholom

Rabbi Simcha Hopkowitz, Young Israel of Hewlett

Rabbi Yudi Jeger, Chofetz Chaim Torah Center

Rabbi Aryeh Lebowitz, Beis HaKnesses of North Woodmere

Rabbi Simcha Lefkowitz, Congregation Anshei Chesed

Rabbi Avi Miller, Congregation Beth Sholom

Rabbi Jonathan Muskat, Young Israel of Oceanside

Rabbi Ephraim Polakoff, Bais Tefillah of Woodmere

Rabbi Isaac Rice, Congregation Anshei Chesed

Rabbi Shay Schachter, Young Israel of Woodmere

Rabbi Yehuda Septimus, Young Israel of North Woodmere

Rabbi Moshe Teitelbaum, Young Israel of Lawrence Cedarhurst

Rabbi Ya'akov Trump, Young Israel of Lawrence Cedarhurst

Rabbi Akiva Willig, Beis Medrash of Woodmere

Rabbi Eliyahu Wolf, Young Israel of Woodmere  
Rabbi Mordechai Yaffe, Kehilla Ateres Yaakov

Rabbi Dovid M. Cohen

Congregation Ohr Torah  
410 Hungry Harbor Rd  
North Woodmere, NY 11581  
516-791-2130