



Rabbi Yaakov Hopfer
President

18 Sivan 5780
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To Our Beloved Baltimore Kehilla,

We hope this letter finds you well. The last few months have been challenging and difficult and we thank you for your strength and resilience. With the State of Maryland moving into Stage 2 of the reopening process we want to take the opportunity to update the guidelines and guidance to the community. B"H we have come to the point where we would like to begin easing restrictions. We hope with the Ribbono Shel Olam's help that this progression continues and as time goes by, we will open the community even further. However, we ask of you to please continue to be vigilant with the restrictions which are remaining in place. If we throw caution to the wind, we run the risk of compromising the safety of our greater Kehilla.

Cleaning help:

We recognize that many individuals have refrained, with much mesiras nefesh, from having cleaning help during the past few months. Please read the following suggestions as you re-introduce cleaning help back into your home.

- As with everyone, hired help can become exposed to the virus without knowing it, and spread it to others.
- Cleaning help must wash hands when entering the home and wear a mask over the nose and mouth at all times while in your home to reduce the risk of spreading COVID (cloth mask or disposable surgical mask are sufficient).
- Keep windows open and use fans while the cleaning help is in the house to increase ventilation.
- Keep children and other family members away from rooms while they are being cleaned.
- Please do not allow the cleaning help to work in your home if they are sick with COVID, have been recently exposed to COVID, or refuse to wear a mask at all times within the home.
- If the cleaning help (or any member of your home) gets sick with COVID, you and your family must quarantine inside your home until you can get tested and cleared by your doctor.

Outdoor Minyanim

- Minyan size can increase to 25.
- Individuals can participate in different minyanim
- All of the previous standards concerning social distancing, use of masks and minyan logistics remain in place. It is of utmost importance that these standards be upheld to ensure the continuation of Tefilah B'Tzibbur.



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Outdoor classes/shiurim

- Maintain 6 feet distance in all directions between talmidim and rebbe/teacher
- Masks are highly recommended
- An open-air tent for the entire class or wide umbrellas for each student is recommended to provide necessary shade from heat, rain, and sunlight.
- Conduct in a legal and safe fashion

Chavrusas

Wherever possible the safer and preferred method is outdoors.

- Maintain a safe distance in all directions between chavrusas
- *For indoor chavrusas when outdoors is impossible, masks must be worn over the nose and mouth by both people at all times and physical distancing must be maintained.*
- Use hand sanitizer after touching any surfaces
- Seforim should not be passed back and forth between chavrusas
- If someone needs to use the bathroom, they should wipe down touched surfaces with sanitizing wipe.
- Of course, no chavrusa learning if feeling sick, tested positive for COVID, or recently exposed to COVID.

Out of Town Guests/Going Out of Town

We know many families have not seen their parents, children, siblings, and grandchildren for many months. Undoubtedly, as we begin allowing out town guests into our homes this will bring much simcha to the mishpochos of our community. Please bear in mind the following recommendations.

- Have no current symptoms of COVID-19, including fever, cough, shortness of breath, diarrhea, loss of smell/taste.
- Have had no known exposure to a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case in the last 14 days.
- Outdoor interactions with social distancing have much lower risk than indoor interactions and should always be arranged when possible.



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- The following people are at higher risk of catching COVID-19 and having serious complications.
 - Age ≥ 60 years
 - Having any of the following conditions:
 - Obesity
 - Uncontrolled high blood pressure
 - Diabetes
 - Lung disease, including asthma and COPD
 - Cancer
 - Weakened immune system from disease or medication

People who meet any of these criteria are recommended not to host out of town guests.
- People who live with or have close contact with the elderly/ill should be extra careful when considering hosting out of town company.
- Members of our community leaving town (e.g., for Shabbos or out of town simchos) should bear in mind the above precautions as well.
- If you have any questions, please consult the JCovid Doctor group at medical@jccovid.com

Day Camps

- We encourage our local day camps to find a way to open in a legal and safe fashion.

Indoor Shul Services

- Each Rav must work with the leadership of his Shul to provide a safe plan for resumption of davening indoors. Careful attention must be given to the timing and logistical details of this move indoors.

Keilim Mikvah

- Is now open
- All utensils that were rendered useable through "hefker" should now be toiveled. "Reacquire" them by picking them up and then toivel them (with a bracha, if required).

Indoor Shiurim

- Up to 10 individuals with social distancing and use of protective masks



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Weddings

- Based on changes in local and state law that allow larger gatherings, the wedding guidelines have been updated and are available by emailing weddings@jccovid.com for updated wedding guidelines.

Testing, Contact Tracing, and Informing Close Contacts

As we reopen the community, and there is greater interaction, the virus can spread rapidly if we are not careful. These three things are extremely important at this time to prevent unnecessary spread.

- **Testing** - Get tested for COVID-19 if you are feeling sick.
- **Contact Tracing** - Answer the call from public health contact tracers and respond honestly to their questions. This will help stop the spread of COVID-19 in our community.
- **Informing Close Contacts** - If you find out you have COVID-19, tell your close contacts. It is best to do this as soon as you find out that you have the virus.

We hope that BE”H our community will continue to thrive, grow and remain healthy. We thank you for your continued vigilance and hope that our path to normalcy will IY”H continue in the days and weeks ahead.

Rabbi Yaakov Hopfer on behalf of the Vaad HaRabbonim