Travel Policy During COVID-19
Updated 9/23/2020

OCA has developed the following policy based on the guidelines of the State of Maryland Department of Health and in consultation with the Baltimore City Health Department regarding travel for the upcoming chagim.

CHAGIM/TRAVEL
Chag is customarily a time to spend with family and friends, near and far. We strongly value *hachnasat orchim*. However, **we recommend that this year you refrain from traveling.** In order to be able to open school safely and on time after Simchat Torah, we must make decisions that prioritize safety and limit the potential for spread of infection.

The CDC warns that travel increases your chance of getting and spreading COVID-19. For that reason, many states restrict travelers visiting from states they consider to be at high risk.

Staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.

- You can get COVID-19 during your travels.
- You may feel well and not have any symptoms, but you can still spread COVID-19 to others.
- You and your travel companions (including children) may spread COVID-19 to other people including your family, friends, and community for 14 days after you were exposed to the virus.

If you must travel for essential purposes:

- Avoid close contact (less than 6 ft) with others who don't live with you.
- Avoid close contact with sick people and those who are at risk (e.g., over age 65, those who are immunocompromised or medically at risk)
- Don't travel with someone who is sick or if you are sick or if you have been around someone with COVID-19 in the past 14 days.
- Avoid air travel if you are at increased risk for serious illness
- Strictly adhere to masking, hand hygiene protocols, physical distancing (at least 6 ft)

Here are **examples of activities and situations that increase your risk** of exposure to COVID-19. Please click on the links to get up to date country and state-specific information.

- Being in an area that is experiencing high levels of COVID-19, including destinations with a Level 3 Travel Health Notice.
    - You can check the **Travel Health Notices** for recommendations for places you have traveled, including Israel (**foreign countries and U.S. territories**).
    - You can also check **states, counties, and cities** to determine if these areas are experiencing high levels of COVID-19
- Going to a large social gathering like a wedding, funeral, or party
- Attending a mass gathering like a sporting event, concert, or parade
- Being in crowds (e.g., restaurants, airports, bus and train stations, movie theaters)
- Traveling on a cruise ship or river boat

Any persons traveling from a high-risk (10% positivity rate or higher) COVID-19 state (e.g., New York (Brooklyn, Queens), Florida, Virginia, Arizona) **or country** (e.g., Israel) **are required to self-quarantine for period of 14 days. Elementary and Middle School students will need to learn virtually (Zoom) during the two-week quarantine.**

The following websites provide reference information about the COVID-19 rates in each state https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#testing_testsperformed and country https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/map-and-travel-notices.html.

Per State of Maryland guidelines, after returning from out-of-state travel, **individuals should get tested for COVID-19 72 hours after their arrival in Maryland**. **Students who are awaiting COVID-19 test results may not come to school. Elementary and Middle School students will need to learn virtually (Zoom) during that time.**

Out-of-state visitors are expected to be tested within 72 hours prior to arrival and to cancel travel if they receive a positive result. Visitors waiting for their test results should stay at home between the time of their test and their arrival in Maryland or to self-quarantine at their hotel.

Students whose families host visitors from high-risk states or countries may need to self-quarantine for two weeks before returning to school.

Based on the guidance of the State of Maryland Department of Health
https://phpa.health.maryland.gov/Documents/coronavirus_FAQ.pdf (Updated September 10, 2020)