

CHICAGO RABBINICAL COUNCIL

2701 W. Howard Street · Chicago, IL 60645-1303 · (773) 465-3900

www.crcweb.org

Fax · (773) 465-6632



HOME OF THE  YOUR GUARANTEE OF KOSHER!

בס"ד

Chicago, Illinois

ח' סיון תש"פ - 5.31.2020

SHUL REOPENING GUIDELINES

With both trepidation and gratitude, we offer the following guidelines for the initial re-opening of our shuls. **As indicated in our previous letter, based on the recent decrease in the spread of COVID-19 and the OU/RCA recommended 14-day delay in opening our shuls, we anticipate the guidelines can be implemented beginning the week of June 14, 2020.** These guidelines were developed in consultation with public health and medical experts and are founded on the safety of our community (*pikuach nefesh*). However, we recognize that each shul is unique. We urge every shul to establish a committee of professionals to work alongside their Rav to create the safest approach to re-opening.

At this time, shuls will be open only for minyan. If there is sufficient room for adequate social distancing, minyanim may include up to 15 people. Each shul needs to evaluate the ideal location for minyanim, whether indoors or outdoors. Both have challenges and advantages, and the setting which provides the best opportunity for control and distancing, should be chosen. There will be no on-site classes, study, food service, or playgroups. Bathrooms may be open, but only one person at a time may use the bathroom.

People over 65 who are in good health and wish to attend a minyan must present to the Rav a note from their doctor attesting that they are not at a higher risk of infection and that it is safe for them to attend the minyan.

Every minyan participant must:

1. wear a face mask over their nose and mouth.
2. wash their hands with water and soap, or use hand sanitizer as soon as entering the shul.
3. be assigned a davening location that is at least eight feet away from anyone else's davening location.
4. bring their own siddur and chumash or have an assigned siddur and chumash that will not be used by anyone else.
5. affirm that they are symptom-free, that they will abide by the rules of distancing and hygiene, and if G-d forbid, they develop any symptoms, they will immediately contact the Rav of the shul who will then inform the other members of that minyan.

Every minyan should:

1. be pre-assigned through a sign-up system. Ideally, the same people should be part of the same minyan throughout the week.
2. have one person responsible to ensure that only those people assigned to the minyan are present and that all hygiene and distancing requirements are strictly observed.

The length of minyanim should be kept to a minimum. Unnecessary gathering should be avoided, and entry and exit should be done quickly and maintaining social distance. All minyanim will be without singing, and all participants will be asked to maintain a quieter tone and not to project their voices. The Shaliach Tzibur and Ba'al Keriah will perform their functions in a low-key voice.

We encourage shuls to create simulcasting of their minyanim to allow people to remotely participate, which according to a number of eminent poskim would count for them at least as a partial fulfillment of Tefillah b'Tzibur.

Additional halachic guidelines will be provided to shul rabbis to address ways to further limit contact (i.e., length of *davening*, such as starting at *Yishtabach*), procedures for Torah reading (e.g., having the ba'al keriah receive all the aliyos, or having the oleh stand at a distance), and other items.

We pray that as we re-enter our shuls that we be guided by Hashem to appreciate these sacred places of מעטש in our midst, and that we merit a *refuah shlaima* for all whom have been afflicted. May we be blessed with a complete ישיעה בקרוב

President

RABBI SHAANAN GELMAN

Vice-Presidents

RABBI ELISHA PRERO

RABBI AARON LEIBTAG

RABBI AKIVA MALES

Secretary

RABBI YOCHANAN POSNER

Treasurer

RABBI MICAH GREENLAND

Executive Director

RABBI LEVI MOSTOFSKY

Rosh Beth Din

שליט"א RABBI GEDALIA DOV SCHWARTZ

Av Beth Din

שליט"א RABBI YONA REISS

Kashruth Administrator

RABBI SOLEM FISHBANE