

Dearest Members of the Greater Washington Jewish Community:

As we grapple with the developments surrounding the COVID-19 Pandemic, which are changing at a breathtaking pace, we struggle to find the appropriate balance between taking responsible precautionary measures and continuing with our daily religious, social and professional routines.

- Every member of the Greater Washington Jewish Community has a sacred responsibility to safeguard one's own health as well as that of his/her neighbors. Therefore, it is imperative that someone who is feeling "under the weather" especially with flu like symptoms, such as fever, coughing, etc refrain from coming to shul or attending any other public event without first consulting with his/her doctor. Please be advised that this virus has an asymptomatic incubation period. Therefore, it is strongly advised that elderly, immunocompromised individuals, or those with underlying medical conditions also avoid public gatherings as a precautionary measure. In addition, everyone must observe the hygienic precautions and guidance put forth by the following organizations:
 - Center for Disease Control:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
 - Maryland Department of Health
<https://health.maryland.gov/pages/home.aspx>
 - Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services
<https://montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS/RightNav/Coronavirus.html>
 - Virginia Dept. of Health
[Virginia:http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/surveillance-and-investigation/novel-coronavirus/](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/surveillance-and-investigation/novel-coronavirus/)
 - DC Dept. of Health
<https://dchealth.dc.gov/release/dc-health-department-updates-coronavirus-testing-guidance>
- In compliance with Governor Hogan's directive, no public gatherings of 250 people or more are permitted until further notice. This, of course, includes synagogue services. For gatherings less than 250 people, it will be left to the discretion and judgement of the Rabbinic and lay leadership of individual synagogues to determine whether regular weekday and/or Shabbos services should be sustained.
- Further, it will be left to the discretion and judgement of the Rabbinic and lay leadership of individual synagogues to determine whether regular and/or special kiddushim should be supported. If synagogue leadership determines to go forward with kiddushim, all relevant hygienic precautions should be taken.
- The mikvah will remain open. Women under mandatory quarantine or who are experiencing symptoms of illness may not use the mikvah without first consulting their doctor. Please consult your Rav for further clarification or for specific questions.
- Chesed and compassion are of paramount importance:
 - Telecommuting is not an option for many people who may be constrained to stay home because of their own illness or because they need to care for their children. This circumstance may represent a financial hardship for many people, and thus necessities our proactively inquiring to their welfare.

- People who are quarantined or self-quarantined, either because of their own illness or concern of exposure to illness, are by definition isolated.
It behooves us a community to make sure they receive phone calls, messages, and the like so that they know they are cared for.
- We strongly encourage all members of our community to come together as a unified community and beseech our Father in Heaven to have mercy on His people. Please participate by reciting five chapters of tehillim of your choice between the hours of 10am – 12 Noon, Sunday March 15, along with the following tefillah (below) composed by the Chief Sephardic Rabbi of Israel.
- Please note that this a rapidly evolving situation and the aforementioned directives are subject to change.

With Love and Respect,

Rabbi Nissan Antine	Rabbi Ahron Lopiansky
Rabbi Shlomo Beitsh	Rabbi Yitzchok Merkin
Rabbi Mendel Bluming	Rabbi Shia Milikowsky
Rabbi Yitzchak Charner	Rabbi Shneur Zalman Minkowitz
Rabbi Mendel Deitsch	Rabbi Mordechai Newman
Rabbi Sholom Deitsch	Rabbi Sholom Raichik
Rabbi Leibl Fajnland	Rabbi Eliyahu Reingold
Rabbi Michoel Frank	Rabbi Mordechai Rhine
Rabbi Baruch Frankel	Rabbi Dovid Rosenbaum
Rabbi Sender Geisinsky	Rabbi Hyim Shafner
Rabbi Shmuel Herzfeld	Rabbi Levi Shemtov
Rabbi Amram Hes	Rabbi Yehoshua Singer
Rabbi Mendel Kaplan	Rabbi Yosef Singer
Rabbi Yossi Kastan	Rabbi Bentzy Stolik
Rabbi Zev Katz	Rabbi Rabbi Zvi Teitlebaum
Rabbi Moishe Kavka	Rabbi Uri Topolosky
Rabbi Eliezer Kreiser	Rabbi Moshe Walter
Rabbi Shmuel Leigh	Rabbi Brahm Weinberg
Rabbi Shmuel Lichtenstein	Rabbi Menachem Winter
	Rabbi Berel Wolvovsky

יהי רצון מלפניך הא-ל הנאמן אב הרחמים, הרופא לכל תחלואי עמו ישראל, אתה רופא נאמן, תשלח מרפא וארוכה ותעלה ברוב חסד וחנינה וחמלה לכל החולים שנדבקו במחלה הזאת,

אנא אד-ני הושיעה נא, יהמו נא רחמך על כל יושבי תבל, ועל כל עמך ישראל, עמוד נא מכסא הדין ושב על כסא הרחמים, ותכנס לפנים משורת הדין, ותבטל מעלינו כל גזרות קשות ורעות, "וַיַּעַמַד פְּנִיָּס וַיַּפְלֵל וַתַּעֲצֵר הַמַּגָּפָה", וגזור עלינו גזירות טובות ישועות ונחמות למען רחמך, ותקרע רוע גזר דיננו, וייקראו לפניך זכיותינו, קומה עזרתה לנו ופדינו למען חסדיך, ונאמר אמן.