



Temple Israel
Portsmouth, New Hampshire

Reopening FAQ

Why are we having indoor events at all? Isn't it safer to stay home and keep running all events virtually?

Our recent survey showed that while many congregants feel safest staying home and attending events virtually, many others are ready and hoping to gather in small groups in the building. The Re-imagining Committee is trying to balance risk and safety, enabling a variety of activities:

- Virtually
- Outdoors, with safety protocols in place (and a virtual option for those who feel safer at home)
- Indoors, with safety protocols in place and availability based on environmental metrics for our state, following “best practices” for preventing the spread of disease. A virtual component is included for those who feel safest at home.

What metrics are you using? How do you know it's safe to gather?

We are tying our stages of activity and access to the building to the color-coded risk levels published for NH on the website “CovidActNow.org.”

We are also paying close attention to our local and state government recommendations, along with guidance from the CDC, United Synagogue, and other Jewish organizations. While New Hampshire has sanctioned indoor worship for many weeks, we have been working on a protocol specific for TIP. We are also reviewing guidelines published in Massachusetts and other nearby states. We have been attending webinars to learn from other synagogues in New England, New York and elsewhere.

What measures are being taken at Temple Israel to keep congregants safe?

We are taking a number of precautions to limit personal contact and follow physical distancing guidelines:

- Limiting the number of members at events and services
- Using RSVP systems to collect contact information from all attendees
- Providing distance and traffic markers
- Requiring employees and congregants to wear masks
- Routing traffic flow to ensure one-way passage through the temple

Please help us keep our community safe by:

- Staying home if you're experiencing symptoms of any illness
- Wearing a mask while attending a temple event.
- Washing or sanitizing your hands frequently; please take advantage of sanitizing stations around the temple.
- Maintaining at least six feet of distance from other congregants outside of your household
- Respecting physical distancing guidelines

Is there a limit on the number of attendees allowed in the temple?

Yes. We are being extremely conservative with our distancing guidelines, and for now, we have limited the number of people to 40 plus helpers for outdoor events, and 20 in the Sanctuary and the Levenson Social Hall for inside events. We appreciate everyone's patience and understanding with this restriction. Wait lists are maintained so that if someone cannot attend, their spot can be filled.

What if I don't feel comfortable entering the building? Should I attend if I am at higher risk?

We will make every effort to use our new technology to livestream and/or Zoom events taking place within the building. We plan to balance occasional "in person" events and services with services on Zoom. We encourage members over sixty and/or with immunocompromising health conditions to attend events and services virtually.

What if someone attends an inside event and then tests positive for COVID-19?

This event would trigger a "stage red" closure. The building will close down and for at least the next 14 days, all in-person events will be canceled. We will then communicate to all attendees of the event that they should self-monitor for at least ten days. Since we are requiring RSVPs and taking attendance at all indoor events, we will know exactly who should be notified.

How can I support the temple during this time?

Please reach out with any questions or suggestions. Please know that our primary goal is the safety and wellness of our community. Our secondary goal is to continue to find ways to bring our community together.

I tested positive with a very mild case of COVID-19. How long after that am I able to attend a temple event?

Most people who test positive and have a relatively mild illness will need to stay in self-isolation for at least 10 days. People who test positive can resume public activities after 10 days and once they have:

- a. gone for 3 days without a fever

- b. experienced improvement in other symptoms (for example, their cough has gotten much better); and
- c. received clearance from the NH Board of Public Health (which will provide an “end of isolation” letter upon completion of a patient’s self-isolation period).

What is the Statement of Responsibilities?

The Statement of Responsibilities is the temple’s way of summarizing the risk mitigation steps being taken while acknowledging the health risks involved with attending an indoor event during this pandemic. Though we believe it is extremely **unlikely**, based on all of the policies and protections we are putting in place, it is **possible** that you could catch COVID-19 in the building. Temple Israel as an organization and its individual congregants, staff, and visitors, have critical roles to play in maintaining a safe and healthy atmosphere for all.

I have a common cold. Can I attend a temple event?

The single most important thing to do if any of the following symptoms are present is to **STAY HOME**. Our collective health relies, in part, on individual attention and responsibility. Note that some symptoms of COVID-19 are the same as the flu or a bad cold; please do not assume it is another condition. When in doubt, stay home.

Please STAY HOME if you have any of the symptoms listed.

Below is the full list of symptoms for which we must monitor:

- Fever (100.4° Fahrenheit or higher), chills, or shaking chills
- Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Headache *when in combination with other symptoms*
- Muscle aches or body aches
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Fatigue, when in combination with other symptoms
- Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies) *when in combination with other symptoms*

I have another question!

Please contact the temple office. As new questions and answers emerge, this document will be updated. (Date of most recent revision is: 8-7-2020.)