

Email Subject: Updates to our in-person policies for Shir Tikvah activities

Dear Shir Tikvah community,

Given the rise of the highly contagious Delta variant, we are updating our guidelines for attending in-person events, to add in a vaccination requirement, in addition to our existing requirements.

- **Starting October 15, Temple Shir Tikvah will require vaccinations for indoor gatherings for anyone eligible for the vaccine.**
- **For b'nei mitzvah families**, we will allow individuals to attend who are eligible but not vaccinated up until November 1, but not beyond, to accommodate families who made plans according to the guidelines posted in July.
- **School-aged children** must be vaccinated by the time they are 12 years + 3 months to attend in-person classes.
- **Face coverings continue to be required at all indoor events, except when individuals are eating or drinking.**

In addition, starting immediately, we recommend that anyone at high risk* not attend any in-person or outdoor events on our grounds. This includes people who are eligible but unvaccinated or only partially vaccinated. We will continue to provide virtual options, to allow you to participate safely.

*High risk individuals include, for example, people with weaker immune systems, the elderly, cancer survivors, transplant recipients. If you are unsure if you are at "high risk" talk to your doctor.

Here are links to our guidelines, also found on our web site:

[Outdoor gatherings](#) (unchanged)

[Indoor gatherings](#)

[School building use](#)

Why we are making these changes

For some time, vaccines have been available for those 12 years of age and older and are medically cleared to receive them. The vaccination rate in Winchester is high for partially and fully vaccinated people. The Delta variant has taken hold primarily in the US unvaccinated population and has been shown to be more transmissible to the unvaccinated (especially children), and with more serious disease occurring, vaccination has been very effective against the variant and results in less serious infection and hospitalization and very few deaths. There

are, however, cases of “breakthrough” disease (people contracting COVID after full vaccinations). Recently, the CDC and White House are putting in place various vaccination requirements to reduce the spread of COVID.

Although cognizant of the CDC and State guidelines, it is Shir Tikvah’s responsibility to utilize our own health professional expertise to formulate guidelines that are customized for our community and protect our unvaccinated children and immunocompromised community members. Masks and vaccination are our best weapons against COVID.

At Shir Tikvah, in order of priority, our strategy has been to develop guidelines for:

1. outdoor activities,
2. indoor school activities,
3. indoor lifecycle and service-related events, and finally,
4. all other in-person building events (late Fall, 2021). (Please talk to Linda with specific requests.)

OUTDOOR GATHERINGS

Guidelines have not changed.

Currently, we have established guidelines for outdoor gatherings on our Shir Tikvah grounds. They are posted on our website. If you are interested in having an in-person group on our grounds, please read the guidelines and talk to our administrator, Linda Singer-Berk, if you have any questions or would like to schedule such a gathering.

2021 TST BUILDING USE AND ANY BUILDING USED FOR TST EVENTS (Beginning October 15)**

Our guidelines now include required vaccinations for anyone over the age of 12 (with a 3-month grace period to allow 12-year-olds time to get the vaccine). Vaccination status will be on the “honor system” although we will ask for attestation on our health screening checklist. Indoor requirements also include mask wearing for everyone (with no exceptions) attending ANY TST activity. Registration will be required as well as completion of the health screening checklist. There is a maximum capacity of 60 for the sanctuary and 30 for the Oneg room. Any rental building (such as Ambrose School) for TST activities will also be required to follow our TST guidelines (except where more stringent by the rental authority).

**For b’nei mitzvot families who may have already planned their events based on the July requirements, we are implementing these guidelines on November 1.

In summary, “opening up” is not a simple matter. This has been an evolution of data, information and knowledge and as part of our Shir Tikvah strategy, we will continually assess the latest guidance from CDC, the state, our locality and our own Re-opening Task Force health and safety professionals. ***During this period, we will continue to maintain some controls that may exceed CDC and/or our state’s requirements.*** If additional risks are recognized, we will change our policies and procedures accordingly.

Thank you for your patience and compliance.

Jerilyn Heinold, for the Shir Tikvah Re-opening Task Force, Amy Travis (President), the Board,
and our clergy and staff