

VA'AD HARABANIM RABBINICAL COUNCIL OF BERGEN COUNTY, INC

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Thursday, March 26, 2020
ראש חודש ניסן, תש"פ

Dear Friends,

We are writing to share a number of updates regarding Pesach preparations and religious life during this unusual time:

1. Social Distancing: We urge everyone to continue to follow the guidance of the CDC and the medical community and to continue to be vigilant about social distancing, including during Pesach. Everyone should stay home with immediate family and should not travel to other homes or invite others into our homes. Similarly, there should be no playdates for children or adults. This continues to be critically important despite the profound challenges that it poses.

2. Tefilah: Please continue to focus your tefilos on all of the people who are struggling at this time, including patients with COVID-19, health care workers, families of patients, the elderly and isolated, etc. We should not underestimate the power of prayer and the importance of empathy and connectivity with each other.

3. Hoarding: Please do not partake in the phenomenon of hoarding any supplies. This is truly an expression of selfishness that is creating strains on our society. In addition, this practice is based on highly speculative predictions. Please purchase what you need and be considerate of others. This includes foods, medications and all other supplies.

4. Mikva: We are extremely grateful to the many people who have given countless time and effort to upholding the safety and cleanliness of the mikvaot for women and for keilim. Some of the Bergen County mikvaot are able to continue to remain operational and some are not. Please consult with your mikva to determine its status. If there are people who have extenuating circumstances and cannot use the mikvaot in the usual way, please consult with your rabbi for individual guidance.

5. Food and Pesach Preparation: a number of the local restaurants and caterers are offering specials for chametz and Pesach food or other Pesach needs. Please see our website where many of these are posted:

<https://www.rcbcvaad.org/important-updates/local-food-specials>

<https://www.rcbcvaad.org/important-updates/pesach-in-a-box>

6. Kashering Homes: The Kof-K and RCBC have worked together to prepare simple video instructions of how to kasher a home for Pesach. Please see them on our website here:

<https://www.rcbcvaad.org/rcbc-kosher/kashering-videos>

7. Community Educational Events: There are quite a few community educational events that are being held virtually, including Torah learning and mental health education. Please see our website where many of these events are posted:

<https://www.rcbcvaad.org/important-updates/local-online-events>

8. RCBC Website: If anyone would like to post anything on our website that fits into the categories listed above, please contact Rabbi Kenny Schiowitz at schiowitzk@gmail.com.