



**Pine Brook Jewish Center**  
*Chevra Agudas Achim Anshy Pine Brook*  
*Established in 1896*

# **COVID-19 OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**VERSION 2**  
**March 3, 2021**

**PBJC COVID-19 Task Force**

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## Section 1: Overview

The purpose of this document is to outline the general daily procedures and guidelines that the Pine Brook Jewish Center will follow when it is open in any capacity during the COVID-19 Pandemic. These guidelines apply to all in-person services, the Nursery School, the Religious School, as well as synagogue events and programming. Separate, specific guidelines and procedures have also been established for weekly Shabbat services, High Holy Day services, the Nursery School, and Religious School and should be used in conjunction with the general guidelines outlined here. Creating a safe environment is a collaborative effort that will require us to commit to adhering to the protocols outlined in this document.

The PBJC COVID-19 Task Force worked to ensure our building and its operation are as safe as possible for our community. To that end, the following was done in the spring and summer of 2020

- Consultations and discussions with medical experts, health and government officials, other synagogues, USCJ, and Federation as well as attendance at numerous virtual workshops and seminars and the review of suggested protocols relevant to our operations.
- Establishment of PBJC Zoom accounts for the synagogue, Nursery School, and Religious School with upgraded accounts to provided us with the functionality needed to conduct services, our schools, Bar and Bat Mitzvahs and programming remotely.
- Procurement and set-up of the equipment necessary to enable us to provide quality audio and video live-streaming of our services from the sanctuary.
- Purchase of extensive PPE and cleaning supplies for the synagogue and for our schools.
- Purchase and installation of hand sanitizer dispensers in all classrooms and in various places throughout the building.
- Purchase of new and updated technology to enable our staff, administration, and teachers to operate more effectively in a remote and virtual environment.
- A certified, deep cleaning of the entire building which took place during the last week of July. This initiative was generously funded by the PBJC Sisterhood.
- Application to the Jewish Federation of Greater MetroWest NJ for their ECC COVID-19 Emergency Grant. We received the maximum grant of \$12,000 and have committed to raising at 50% match amount of \$6,000. All of these funds will be used towards materials, supplies, cleaning and staffing to allow for the PBJC Nursery School to open and operate safely during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Please note that Pine Brook Jewish Center leadership and administration will constantly monitor the fluid circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. We will follow the advice and guidelines put forth by the various departments of the State of NJ as well as the Center for Disease Control. These policies and protocols

will be reviewed regularly and revised as necessary to stay up to date with the latest guidance and understanding of COVID-19 and how it is spread.

We are prepared to operate in a full virtual manner with the building closed at any point during the pandemic should it be deemed necessary. We are also all looking forward to the day when we may fully resume our regular, in-person operations at PBJC. We will communicate to you any time there are changes to our current operations.

We appreciate your assistance in helping to ensure the health and safety of our entire community. Please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Task Force with any questions or concerns.

Michelle Zuckerman, Executive Director and Committee Chairperson  
Rabbi Mark Finkel  
Cantor Menachem Toren  
Mary Sheydwasser, Educational Director  
Lisa Lerman, Nursery School Co-Director  
Jill Buckler, Nursery School Co-Director  
Evan Zuckerman, President  
Glenn Fox  
Barry Marks  
Alan Rothberg  
Fran Simmons  
Barry Weinreb  
Michael Weinstein

## Section 2: General Guidelines

Everyone entering the PBJC building must:

- Have their temperature checked and logged upon entry into the building. Anyone with a temperature over 100° F will not be permitted to enter.
- Answer the following questions relating to their health upon entering the building:
  - Have you or anyone in your household had any of the following symptoms in the last 10 days: sore throat, cough, chills, body aches for unknown reasons, shortness of breath for unknown reasons, loss of smell, loss of taste, fever at or greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit?
  - Have you or anyone in your household cared for an individual who is in quarantine or is a presumptive positive or has tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 10 days?
  - Do you have any reason to believe you or anyone in your household has been exposed to or acquired COVID-19 in the past 10 days?
  - To the best of your knowledge have you been in close proximity to any individual who tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 10 days?
- Use judgement to not enter the building if you are exhibiting any symptoms of COVID-19 or have been potentially exposed to someone with COVID-19.
- Sign-in and/or provide their name and contact information to be recorded by the security guard. All people must sign in and out of the building for contact tracing purposes.

Everyone in the building must:

- Wear a face mask at all times. Note: Double masking is **strongly encouraged**, per recent CDC guidelines. Cloth masks alone are not considered to be as effective.
- Thoroughly wash hands (for at least 20 seconds with warm, soapy water) and/or use hand sanitizer frequently.
- Maintain a physical distance of at least six feet from others.
- Obey any signs throughout the building regarding temperature checks, washing hands, social distancing, not congregating in certain areas, etc.

We also ask that all members and their guests follow the CDC and State of New Jersey's travel guidelines that are in place at the time of your visit to PBJC. We ask that each person respect our congregants and guests. If you feel you have been exposed to COVID during your travel, please refrain from attending services or events in the building. This policy **does not** extend to the PBJC Nursery School and Day Camp as quarantine is mandatory after travel per school policy and guidelines.

### **Section 3: COVID-19 Emergency Communications and Operations Plan**

In the event that an individual who spent time in the PBJC building tests positive or is presumed positive for COVID-19, the following steps will be taken by the PBJC administration and leadership:

- The Executive Director, the Nursery School Directors, or the Religious School Director must be notified immediately.
- The Montville Township Board of Health will be notified of the situation by the Executive Director. We will work with the Department of Health to trace all contacts of the infected individual.
- The building or designated areas of the building will be closed for the recommended time period.
- The building will be cleaned per the recommended CDC cleaning procedures and protocols.
- The PBJC community will be notified via email as well as via telephone robo-calls. Individual names will not be provided but the circumstances will be explained.
- The Nursery School Directors and Religious School Director will provide the same notification to all members of their respective schools.

In the event that an individual who is in the PBJC building begins to exhibit symptoms of COVID-19, the following steps will be taken by the PBJC and/or school administration:

- The individual will be asked to immediately leave the building. If it is a student/minor, parents/guardians will be called immediately and that child will be quarantined in a separate room (under the supervision of a teacher or staff member) until they are picked-up. The quarantine/sick room will be located in the PBJC Library during this time. The Library will not be used for other purposes during this time.
- The building may be closed for a time period to be determined based on doctor's evaluation of the person in question. If that person is determined to be positive for COVID-19, then the above procedures will be followed.

## **Section 4: Building Cleaning Procedures**

It is acknowledged that COVID-19 can be spread person to person, primarily through airborne transmission. As such, PBJC installed upgraded filters on our HVAC systems during the summer of 2020. We have also developed a daily cleaning protocol to be followed by both our professional cleaning service and our caretakers to provide for increased routine cleaning and disinfection of high-touch surfaces throughout the building as well as daily deeper cleaning of the building. High-touch surfaces include desks and chairs, door handles and push plates, handrails, bathrooms, light switches, sink and faucet handles.

A detailed schedule for increased cleaning and disinfection was developed. Our cleaning service cleans the building five times a week. Our caretaker staff performs cleaning of high-touch areas throughout the day, including daily cleaning of the gym and playground. Our caretaker staff also follows strict cleaning protocols of the areas used for services (the atrium, main bathrooms, and sanctuary) on Friday evening and Saturday morning.

We have purchased recommended cleaning products, sprays and equipment to help mitigate exposure of those in the building to contaminants, such as the COVID-19 virus. These products will work in conjunction with the cleaning and disinfecting protocols to provide protection. However, they cannot eliminate all risks as they are confined by practical constraints. As previously stated, PBJC takes the safety of all who enter our building very seriously and is implementing many processes to ensure that safety as much as possible.

## Section 5: Office Operations

The COVID-19 outbreak resulted in the need for our office staff to work remotely. All of our daily office operations are currently fully operational in a remote capacity. Once the stay-at-home order was lifted in New Jersey, staff members began working in the office periodically during the week. All staff members will not be in the office at the same time. This method of operations will continue until further notice. We will communicate to the congregation, times when staff will be in the building. You may make appointments with a member of the office staff to take care of business in the office as needed.

Please note the following regarding current PBJC office operations:

- Availability – During work hours, staff members will be available and responsive via phone or e-mail in a timely manner. Arrangements can be made to conduct in-person administrative operations as necessary (including dropping off or picking up materials, purchasing Sisterhood scrip or items from the gift shop, etc.). Congregants are asked to schedule any visits in advance with an appointment.
- Confidentiality – Staff members will work in such a way as to protect the privacy and confidentiality of our members, including telephone conversations, documentation, etc. This includes maintaining the appropriate workspace at home, proper maintenance of records, etc.
- Safety – All staff must adhere to all of the PBJC COVID-19 safety protocols when at PBJC. We understand that following safety protocols is not only about ensuring your own safety, but about minimizing risk for others who you are in contact with. Staff members will: stay home if they are sick, keep physical distance (at least 6 feet), wear a face covering over their mouth and nose, keep their hands clean (by washing for at least 20 seconds with soap and warm water or by using hand sanitizer), and follow the same general guidelines from Section 2 of this document that apply to all those who enter the PBJC building.
- Flexibility – All staff members understand that these are unprecedented times. We pledge to be understanding of and flexible to the circumstances and needs of our congregation. Please do not hesitate to reach out to a staff member with any questions or concerns you may have.



## Section 6: Weekly Shabbat Service Guidelines

### Overview

Effective March 5, 2021, the number of in-person attendees allowed for Shabbat morning services will increase to 36 people. To attend services, members must sign-up in advance *B'nai Mitzvah* families must also provide a list of names so that we will be able to competently maintain the safeguards of gathering indoors and comply with contact tracing protocols.

There will be, among other safety precautions: temperature checks upon entering the building; screening questions; and the maintenance of the list of attendees for contact tracing purposes.

Priority will be given to the *B'nai Mitzvah* families for up to 28 people. The remaining slots will be prioritized for those observing *yahrzeits* and life cycle occasions, and we will continue to maintain a balance between “first-come, first-served” and a rotation among PBJC members.

Note that an additional 14 attendees, who can provide documentation that they have received a COVID-19 vaccination, will be permitted to attend services, bringing the maximum allowed attendance to 50 people.

We will continue to utilize our combined Zoom and live-streaming capabilities, so that no PBJC member nor any guest at *B'nai Mitzvah* and other life cycle functions will be excluded from services in some form as long as the COVID-19 pandemic continues.

### Shabbat Service Guidelines (for Friday evenings and Saturday mornings)

- Anyone entering the building for Shabbat services must follow the general guidelines as outlined in Section 2 of this document (temperature checks, masks, answering COVID-19 questions, etc.).
- Priority will be given to the *B'nai Mitzvah* families for up to 28 people, including the family itself. Some additional attendees, who can provide documentation that they have received a COVID-19 vaccination, will be permitted to attend services, bringing the maximum allowed attendance to 50 people.
- The remaining slots will be for PBJC members. Attendees are strongly encouraged to bring their own *kippot*/head coverings and *tallesim*.
- Pre-registration will be required. Walk-ins will be accepted on a space available basis. People will not be permitted to enter once we have reached the maximum capacity of 50 people.

- Prayer books and *Chumashim* will be placed on a table outside the sanctuary entrance. No books will be available in pews. All books should be returned to the table at end of service. Prayer books will be rotated on a three-week cycle.
- Attendees are strongly encouraged to provide their own *kippot*/head coverings and *tallesim*. A limited number of these items will be available next to the book table. Items should be returned to the same location. These items will also be rotated on a three-week cycle.
- Seating will be clearly marked to allow for social distancing. Markers WILL NOT be moved or removed. Masks will be worn throughout the service. Those not observing social distancing and mandatory mask use will be asked to leave. Family units who reside in the same household will be permitted to sit together in the sanctuary.
- B'nai Mitzvah children will be permitted to remove their mask during the chanting of their *Haftarah*. This will take place on the bimah, behind the plexiglass shields. Families may still choose to have their child keep their mask on during chanting of the *Haftarah*. Any guests or congregants in attendance should be aware that this may occur during a B'nai Mitzvah service.
- Due to these requirements, no one under the age of 10 will be allowed to attend services. Exceptions may be made for *B'nai Mitzvah* families. Any exceptions require approval from the PBJC Ritual Committee.
- It is the responsibility of the B'nai Mitzvah family to provide these protocols to their allowed guests. We will regretfully need to turn away any guests not in compliance with our COVID-19 operational policies and procedures.

## **Section 7: Holiday Service Guidelines**

The situation with the COVID-19 pandemic is fluid and guidelines and circumstances change frequently. PBJC leadership, clergy, and staff will work to develop protocols for the High Holy Day services which will take place in September of 2021. As always, this will be communicated to the congregation in a timely manner.

Other upcoming holiday services will follow the same guidelines and protocols that are currently in place for weekly Shabbat services. Thus, for 2021 Passover services, a maximum of 36 people may attend services in person, with an additional 14 allowed provide they can provide proof that they have received a COVID-19 vaccination. Congregants must register in-advance to attend holiday services in-person.

We will be considering in-person, outdoor service options, as well, and this will be communicated to the congregation as applicable.

## Section 8: Nursery School Guidelines

The current plan is for the PBJC Nursery School to remain open with full-time, in-person instruction through the end of the school year. Our Nursery School Directors invested much time learning from the past year and planning and implementing the necessary changes for the challenges and complexities of the school year. In addition to serving on the PBJC Task Force Committee, they also attended several workshops, which covered virtual education, curriculum, as well as how to best deal with the emotional and social learning in today's COVID-19 world.

When we opened our Nursery School on Wednesday, September 9th, we were committed to following the guidelines of the CDC, DCF (Department of Children and Families), Montville Board of Health, and the State of New Jersey. As always, our first priority is the health and safety of our children, teachers, administrators, and staff. Our position remains the same. Below is a summary of the Nursery School operations for the 2020-2021 school year:

- Everyone who enters the building including students, teachers, security personnel etc. will have their temperature checked and recorded daily. An automatic no - contact thermometer will be used. Anyone with a temperature of 100 degrees or higher will not be able to enter or stay in the building. If a child or staff member becomes ill during school, they will be isolated in a designated area. If a child shows any symptoms of illness, including a headache, sore throat, coughing, chills, congestion, runny nose, stomach and digestive issues, body aches, fatigue, loss of taste or smell or other symptoms, please DO NOT SEND him/her to school. \*\*Since some of these symptoms can occur if your child has allergies, we will be requesting a doctor's note to keep in their file.
- Parents are not permitted to come into the building. At this point in time, drop-off starts at 9:00 a.m. and ends at 9:30 a.m. Two cars will pull up to the parking lot steps where we will take and log your child's temperature. Please stay in your car until we determine that your child is able to attend school that day. We will then walk your child into the building. Our Giggle Zone students will follow the same protocol. Security personnel or a Nursery School staff member will take your child's temperature while you remain in the car. Once your child's temperature is logged in, security personnel or a Nursery School staff member will walk your child to the Giggle Zone.
- Procedures are in place for pick-up at the end of the school day. The two's class is dismissed at 12:15 p.m. Dismissal for the three's class and the four's class is at 2:15 p.m. We ask that two cars line up at a time (at the parking lot steps) and the teacher and/or assistant will walk your child to your car. The children who attend Giggle Zone will be walked outside by the security guard on duty (usually Leo).
- At this time, parents and/or guardians are not permitted in the building. If a child has to leave early, the parent will email us at [pbjnursery@pbjc.org](mailto:pbjnursery@pbjc.org) and the child will be brought out to the car.

- Enhanced cleaning protocols are being put in place with frequent disinfecting of high touch areas (toys, door knobs, toys on the playground, toys in the riding room, toilets) and shared spaces.
- Tables, all surfaces, playground equipment, toys, and all building areas including bathrooms are cleaned extensively before the students enter PBJC Nursery school every day. High-grade cleaning products sanctioned/recommended by the licensing department are used.
- Children wash their hands upon arrival at school and classroom teachers maintain frequently scheduled hand washing breaks at specific times for the children and themselves throughout the day. Hand sanitizing stations will be in each classroom as well as spread out throughout the building.
- Traditional 3-ply masks and fabric masks are worn by teachers and everyone inside the building. (We keep a supply of extra masks in the building.) Children 2 years and older will be encouraged to wear a mask. The masks can be removed during mealtimes, outside play and periods of rest. Please have your child wear their favorite mask at home, so they are comfortable with it on their face. We have plenty of masks in the classroom if needed.
- We continue to offer hot lunch meals but parents will not be allowed to come into the school to serve lunch as we have done in past years.
- We provide snacks and water during the day using paper goods. Due to the pandemic, snacks brought from home for birthday celebrations are not permitted.

The teachers are the heart and soul of our school. They are experts in the field of Early Childhood Education and they are the backbone of our program. Our goal is to maintain our strong faculty, continue to keep the children engaged and to deliver top notch teachable moments. We know each of you chose to send your child to PBJC Nursery for different reasons, but we are committed to providing your children with the best possible education, to prepare them for kindergarten and the world beyond. We will continue to communicate throughout the remainder of the school year since the situation with COVID-19 is fluid. As always our door is open if you would like to speak with us. We continue to embrace this school year where we have come together to play, grow and learn.

### **PBJC Day Camp**

PBJC Day Camp will run on a full operational schedule for the summer of 2021 from June 28 through August 19. Registration information will be available by the end of March 2021. There will be a separate camp handbook with detailed guidelines for camp operations.

## **Section 9: Religious School Guidelines**

### Overview

Our mission is to provide students with a Jewish education that emphasizes and celebrates our heritage, culture, rituals, and language. We also, at the same time, want to ensure the health and safety of our entire school community during an unstable pandemic.

Due to the uncertainty of the public health situation, we will continue the 2020-2021 school year with virtual classes for all students. We have become proficient in utilizing Zoom and have even been able to work more closely with the children in some situations. Although it is not the same, we have celebrated holidays, conducted class services that have been well received, offered interactive projects and educational games, and continue to offer a quality Jewish education. We offer one-on-one Hebrew reading tutorials as well, and we are incredibly pleased with our students' accomplishments.

However, our goal is to have all of our students and teachers in the PBJC building and back in their classrooms for the 2021-2022 school year. We are committed to doing everything we possibly can to offer in-person learning with all of the necessary protocols in place. We want to be sure all health measures and social distancing guidelines will be enforced, and will certainly keep you informed as we get closer to September 2021. As always, we will accommodate everyone's needs, and will offer remote learning to any children who do not feel comfortable coming into the building.

Our priority is the health and safety of our children, educators, administrators, and staff.

### Attendance and Behavior

Our virtual classrooms will continue to be treated like our in-house sessions. Proper behavior, rules and guidelines must be followed, attendance will be taken, class participation will be encouraged, and homework assignments will be given.

### Junior Congregation

Junior Congregation services will continue to be held virtually, at this time, on Saturdays from 10:30 AM to 12:00 Noon for our Aleph through Dalet students (3rd-6th grades). Credits will be given for attendance at these fun and educational services as well as attendance at other services, including Friday, Saturday or class services, holidays, bar/bat mitzvahs, and special events.

It has been a unique year filled with new experiences and engagement! We are incredibly grateful to our families for their cooperation...whether picking up materials for projects, ensuring that our students are prepared with the proper materials and devices for class, and being very patient and cooperative with us and the ever-changing world around us.

## Section 10: Programming, Event, and Meeting Guidelines

In addition to our religious services and our schools, PBJC is proud of the many events and interesting and informative programs we offer to our members. For the past year we have offered an array of virtual programs including Adult Education with Rabbi Finkel, Cooking with Cantor Toren, Sisterhood, and Friendship Club programs and many other programs and events. We plan to continue with virtual programming at the present time. However, we hope to offer an in-person programming component once we feel it is safe to do so. Thus, please note the below guidelines relative to any event or programming taking place at PBJC during the upcoming year.

In addition, PBJC has many committees and organizations that enable us to operate fully and efficiently. Many of these committees have been meeting virtually over the past year and will continue to do so. However, should there be a desire or need to have in-person meetings, then the below guidelines must be followed:

- Anyone who enters the PBJC building must adhere to the general guidelines as set forth in Section 2 of this document.
- In-person attendance should be limited to a maximum of 25 people.
- The dates, times, and location of any in-person programs, events, or meetings must be cleared and scheduled through the Executive Director.
- Events, programs, and meetings may NOT take place whenever the Nursery School/Giggle Zone is in session (Monday through Friday from 7:30 AM to 6:00 PM or Religious School is in session in person (Tuesdays from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM and Sundays from 9:00 AM to 11:15 AM).
- PBJC has two camera options in place which enable services and programs to be live-streamed to the PBJC website. One camera is permanently mounted in the PBJC sanctuary and will be used to live stream services. The other is a portable camera on a tri-pod that can be used to live-stream other events and programs at various locations throughout the building. Please contact the Executive Director if you are interested in utilizing either of these cameras for programming purposes.
- RSVP/registration will be required for every event, program, and meeting. A full list of expected attendees must be submitted to the PBJC office at least 24 hours prior to the event, program, or meeting. Attendance must be tracked at the meeting and submitted to the PBJC office within 24 hours after the event, program, or meeting has ended.