Shalom,

We are writing to share updates and new precautions to continue to protect the health and safety of all of our community. We are closely monitoring and following the news and information coming from the Federal, State and local officials. With the spread of the COVID Omicron variant, our medical advisory committee has recommended we reinstate stricter protocols for all those who enter the Temple Israel building. We are committed to providing a COVID-safe setting for prayer and synagogue activities.

Effective on Friday, December 24, 2021, everyone who comes into the building needs to be fully boosted (which means that you are two weeks post-booster) if eligible.

We are optimistic that with more community members of all ages being vaccinated and everyone getting their boosters, we can look ahead optimistically to a time when we are back in the building with less restrictions.

All changes below will go into effect on Friday, December 24, 2021.

Only fully vaccinated people two weeks past their booster (if eligible) are allowed to enter the building.

- Primary vaccination is available and required for anyone ages 5 and above
- For children ages 5-11, we will require full vaccination (you have received all required shots per the vaccine manufacturer and are 14 days past when the last shot was administered) by March 1, 2022. This means the 2nd dose in the primary vaccine series needs to be administered by February 15, 2022.
- Once your child turns 5, we ask that you have them vaccinated within 90 days of their birthday
- You are eligible for a booster shot if you are age 16 and above and are at least 6 months after completing your primary COVID-19 vaccine series (for Pfizer and Moderna) or 2 months after completing your primary vaccine series with J&J
- All TI staff have been required to receive their boosters and are asked to come back to work in person, 2 weeks after receiving their booster shot.
- Per the Town of Sharon, masks continue to be required for anyone (over the age of 2) while in the building. Additionally, we are requiring that you use hospital grade masks (available at the front door), as cloth masks do not provide enough protection. You will
be asked to change your mask or place a hospital grade mask over your cloth mask when you enter the building.

Religious School and Hertz Guidelines

In an effort to reduce the number of people in the building, and to reduce crowding, we are returning to many of the policies which kept us safe last year. Drop-off and pick-up will take place at the front and side doors, rather than the side door. Classes will spread out across the building, taking advantage of more space for social distancing. Hertz families will receive more detailed instructions separately.

Shabbat Services & Daily Minyan

With the added booster and high-quality mask requirement, our services remain of modest risk. That said, we have a few strategic changes to lower the risk even further. Gabbaim will now stand off of the bimah; masks will stay on, even if the speaker / prayer leader is the only person on the bimah; we will limit the number of people on the bimah; and we will limit the number of honors that are distributed.

We will continue to offer Kiddush as it’s been, individually packaged and eaten outside.

While it pains us to do so, we will temporarily halt the combination of the TI daily evening minyan with home-based shiva minyanim. We will continue to have daily minyan in the Sanctuary and accessible by zoom.

Thank you so much for helping us keep those around us healthy and safe!

Temple Israel Community