

Event Planning Guide FAQs

B'nai Israel Congregation
Rockville, MD

Table of Contents

Room Rentals, Contracts & Fees	3
How do I reserve a room for my event?.....	3
Do I need a contract to rent at B'nai Israel?	3
What happens if I have to cancel my signed contract?.....	3
Does B'nai Israel rent to non-members?	3
May non-members rent the Sanctuary or Chapels for a bar or bat mitzvah ceremony?.....	3
Is there a priority for social room rentals?.....	3
Can the outdoor areas of B'nai Israel be rented also? What happens if my event has to move indoors?	4
What are the financial obligations related to renting at B'nai Israel?	4
When I rent at B'nai Israel, are there additional charges for the kitchen?	4
What are the security charges and security guard requirements?	4
What is B'nai Israel's liability during my event?	4
Why do I pay a damage deposit with my contract?	4
Can my guests smoke outside during my event?	5
Clergy, Shabbat & Jewish Ritual Objects	5
What branch of Judaism is B'nai Israel?.....	5
Do I need both rabbis officiating at my wedding at B'nai Israel?	5
Can a non-B'nai rabbi officiate at my wedding at B'nai Israel?.....	5
When is Shabbat considered over?	5
What time does the service start on Shabbat morning?	5
How do I get <i>Kipot</i> for my <i>simcha</i> ?	5
I'm getting married soon. Do I need to provide my own huppah? (Wedding Canopy).....	5
Do I have to request a ritual hand washing station?	6
B'nai Mitzvah	6
What is the b'nai mitzvah timetable?.....	6
When do b'nai mitzvah charges appear on my synagogue bill?.....	6
How do I get <i>Kipot</i> for my <i>simcha</i> ?	6
Are there easels available for posters or sign-in boards?	6
What is the B'nai Israel address that should appear on my invitations?	6
Weddings	7
I'm getting married soon. Do I need to provide my own huppah? (Wedding Canopy).....	7
Are there easels available for posters or sign-in boards?	7
How do I get <i>Kipot</i> for my <i>simcha</i> ?	7
What is the B'nai Israel address that should appear on my invitations?	7
What branch of Judaism is B'nai Israel?.....	7

Food & Catering	7
How can I contribute to the Congregation Kiddush?	7
How do my vendors make arrangements for my event?.....	8
Which caterers are allowed at B'nai Israel?	8
When is a <i>Mashgiach</i> (kashrut supervisor) needed in the kitchen?	8
Are there times when food or beverage service is not allowed?	8
When I rent at B'nai Israel, are there additional charges for the kitchen?	8
Do I have to request a ritual hand washing station?	8
Do I need kosher wine for my event?.....	8
Can I bring my own soft drinks for my event?	8
May I include candy in my table decorations?	9
Can my caterer prepare food on Saturday afternoon?	9
When are food deliveries accepted?.....	9
Can I have a cocktail hour with food and drinks before my wedding ceremony in the Sanctuary?	9
My caterer suggests providing bathroom hospitality items. Is this ok?	9
Can I take the leftover food with me after my event?	9
Photography & Music.....	9
How do my vendors make arrangements for my event?.....	9
How do I make arrangements to take photographs at the Synagogue?.....	9
Can we take photographs before my Saturday evening event?.....	10
Can we play music and take pictures during our cocktail hour?	10
Can my photographer take pictures during my wedding ceremony?	10
Can we have the Ark open for our b'nai mitzvah photo session in the Sanctuary?	10
Is there a Torah available to hold for our photos?	10
What if my DJ needs electrical information?	10
Is there a stage for my musicians or DJ?	10
Lighting, Flowers & Decorating.....	10
How do my vendors make arrangements for my event?.....	10
Are there special rules regarding the use of candles?	10
Can we have lit candles next to the pews along the aisle for our wedding?	11
Can my decorator put up pin spot lighting?	11
May I choose the bima flowers for my child's b'nai mitzvah or my aufruf celebration?	11
Can my florist attach flowers on the pews along the aisle for my wedding?.....	11
Can I use tape to secure my decorations?	11
My decorator is suggesting a theme for our party. Are there rules about how the room can be decorated?.....	11
Are there special guidelines regarding using balloons in the synagogue?	11
Are there easels available for posters or sign-in boards?	12
Tables, Chairs & Dishes	12
How do my vendors make arrangements for my event?.....	12
What tables does the synagogue have?.....	12
Do you have linens available for my tables?	12
Do I need to rent chairs?.....	12
Can I have guest tables or a buffet set up in Margolius Atrium?.....	12
Does B'nai Israel have china, glassware and cutlery to rent for my event?	12
Are disposable plates, cups, cutlery paper tablecloths included in my room rental?.....	12
Do I have to request a ritual hand washing station?	12

Pre-Event Set Up 13

I'd like to set up my event the day before. Is this possible?	13
Are there rules for setting up my Saturday evening event at B'nai Israel?	13
When can deliveries be made to B'nai Israel?	13
When are food deliveries accepted?	13
Can I use tape to secure my decorations?	13

Accessibility 13

Is B'nai Israel Handicapped Accessible?	13
Are there wheelchairs available?	13

Room Rentals, Contracts & Fees

How do I reserve a room for my event?

Please contact the Associate Executive Director to reserve rooms for meetings or social functions at B'nai Israel. The availability of the room(s) you wish to rent will be confirmed and a contract will be issued and sent to you for your signature. Contracts are issued for all non-synagogue-sponsored functions held at B'nai Israel. All unsigned contracts are valid to hold your room(s) for thirty days from the date of issuance. Your deposit check, accompanied by the signed contract, must be received within the thirty day period to confirm your reservation. If the signed contract and check are not received in that time, the rooms will no longer be reserved.

Do I need a contract to rent at B'nai Israel?

Contracts are issued for all private functions held at B'nai Israel. To obtain a contract, please contact the Associate Executive Director in the synagogue office. The availability of the room(s) you wish to rent will be confirmed and a contract will be issued and mailed to you for your signature. All unsigned contracts are valid to hold your room(s) for thirty days from the date of issuance. Your deposit check, accompanied by the signed contract, must be received within the thirty day period to confirm your reservation. If the signed contract and check are not received in that time, the rooms will no longer be held.

What happens if I have to cancel my signed contract?

When a contracted private function at B'nai Israel is cancelled, a refund will be given if the facility is rebooked for the same date and general time, less a \$150 administrative fee. If the facility is not rebooked, a cancellation fee of 50% of the deposit will be retained.

Does B'nai Israel rent to non-members?

Yes. Non-members are welcome to inquire about the availability of the synagogue for hosting their bat/bar mitzvah, naming, brit or wedding celebrations. The date for non-member functions may not be confirmed until nine (9) months in advance of the event date, with the exception of non-member weddings which may be confirmed one year in advance of the event date.

Non-members should call the Associate Executive Director to discuss availability and pricing.

May non-members rent the Sanctuary or Chapels for a bar or bat mitzvah ceremony?

No. For non-members, B'nai Israel may only be considered as the location for the bar or bat mitzvah celebration, not the ceremony itself.

Is there a priority for social room rentals?

B'nai Mitzvah families have first priority of sixty (60) days from the date of their Bar/Bat Mitzvah meeting to reserve rooms for their events. After this date, facility rental for that particular weekend is available to any congregant in good standing.

Use of facilities by outside public and community groups is subject to approval of the Executive Director and will be accepted up to nine (9) months in advance of the event date.

Can the outdoor areas of B'nai Israel be rented also? What happens if my event has to move indoors?

B'nai Israel has beautiful outdoor areas that are available for rental. If you choose to host your function in one of these spaces, the following will apply:

A contract must be signed and a deposit must be given to B'nai Israel to reserve the outdoor area. During the contract discussions, an alternative indoor space will also be selected and held in case of weather related issues.

Up to two days prior to your function you may contact B'nai Israel to relocate your function to the pre-selected indoor space due to weather considerations.

What are the financial obligations related to renting at B'nai Israel?

Your deposit check for a minimum of 50% of the rental plus your damage deposit must accompany your signed contract and be received within thirty days after the contract was sent to you. No fewer than 90 days prior to the date of your function you must pay any balances due on your rental. Additionally, B'nai Israel members must be current in their financial obligations to the synagogue.

When I rent at B'nai Israel, are there additional charges for the kitchen?

Kitchen charges for the day of your function are noted in the room charges in your contract. If your caterer needs to occupy the B'nai Israel kitchen for any additional days, there will be a daily kitchen rental charge to the caterer. All kitchen occupancy must be arranged in advance with the Associate Executive Director.

What are the security charges and security guard requirements?

Security charges are additional and are billed after your event based on the actual hours worked and charged to B'nai Israel by our security firm. The minimum security guard requirements are one (1) guard during vendor set up of your function, and then one (1) guard beginning one (1) hour before the start time of your function. Security continues until all parties involved in your function have vacated the building. Events with many children, i.e. B'nai Mitzvah, require a minimum of one guard per fifty (50) children. It's been our experience that most events require one or two, possibly three guards.

If you have questions, your specific security arrangements should be discussed with the Executive Director.

All security arrangements are provided exclusively through B'nai Israel. The current hourly charge for security will be listed on your contract. Security guards from outside agencies are not allowed for any reason during a private rental.

What is B'nai Israel's liability during my event?

The synagogue is not responsible for loss of or damage to gifts or personal belongings left anywhere on the premises. If you wish to have attendants for the coatroom, your gift table, etc., this must be arranged through your caterer or party planner.

You and your vendors must comply with all police, sanctuary, building, insurance and fire rules and regulations relating to or affecting the use of the premises. Any damage to B'nai Israel premises occurring because of negligence, misuse or unseemly conduct, or by violation of the synagogue rules shall be paid in full by the person or persons who signed the contract.

Why do I pay a damage deposit with my contract?

All contracts for room reservations at B'nai Israel include a damage deposit which is credited to your synagogue account (reimbursed to non-members) after your event has occurred. An inspection will be made of the occupied rooms shortly after your function to determine if any of the deposit will be withheld to pay for damage to the premises. You will be contacted if any of your deposit is withheld.

Can my guests smoke outside during my event?

B'nai Israel is a No Smoking facility. There is no smoking allowed anywhere within the building or on the grounds, gardens, landscaped areas or pond area.

Clergy, Shabbat & Jewish Ritual Objects

What branch of Judaism is B'nai Israel?

B'nai Israel abides by the laws and practices of Conservative Judaism. We are members of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism.

Do I need both rabbis officiating at my wedding at B'nai Israel?

It is the policy at B'nai Israel that if a member wedding is to take place in the Dweck Sanctuary, both a B'nai Israel rabbi and a B'nai Israel cantor must officiate; if a member wedding is to take place in either of the B'nai Israel chapels, either a B'nai Israel rabbi or cantor must officiate.

Can a non-B'nai rabbi officiate at my wedding at B'nai Israel?

B'nai Israel Congregation permits outside clergy to officiate at life cycle events being held at B'nai Israel. The visiting rabbi must contact our senior rabbi, Rabbi Jonathan Schnitzer. The visiting Hazzan or cantor must contact our cantor, Cantor Josh Perlman.

We will gladly extend this courtesy, subject to coordination prior to the ceremony and under the following conditions:

- The rabbi or hazzan must be a member of a recognized national rabbinical or cantorial organization affiliated with the Conservative, Orthodox, Reconstructionist or Reform movements.
- If the rabbi or hazzan is not a member of a national rabbinical or cantorial organization, he or she must be a full time employee of a synagogue that is a member of a national congregational body affiliated with the Conservative, Orthodox, Reconstructionist or Reform movements.
- A retired rabbi or hazzan, or one who is a member of the family celebrating the *simcha*, and who is not professionally active, must be eligible for affiliation with a national organization affiliated with the Conservative, Orthodox, Reconstructionist or Reform movements.
- In every case, the rabbi or hazzan cannot be a person who officiates or co-officiates at intermarriages.

When is Shabbat considered over?

B'nai Israel considers Shabbat to be over one-half hour after sunset. This time should be verified with the synagogue office. If you have a caterer on premises, the mashgiach for the caterer will determine the end of Shabbat.

What time does the service start on Shabbat morning?

Shabbat morning services begin at 9:00 a.m. The morning service concludes with the rabbi making Kiddush and Hamotzei, followed by *Adon Olam*, usually around noon. Mincha (afternoon) service, begins at 12:30 p.m. The start time for your Bar or Bat Mitzvah service should be confirmed with the cantor.

How do I get *Kipot* for my *simcha*?

Personalized *kipot*, or yarmulkes, are available by special order from the Sisterhood Judaica Shop. Your *kipot* (typically arranged in a basket by you) may be brought to the synagogue office before 3:00 p.m. on the Friday before your *simcha*. We will place your basket of *kipot* out for your guests at the appropriate time.

I'm getting married soon. Do I need to provide my own huppah? (Wedding Canopy)

B'nai Israel has two huppah available for weddings being held at B'nai. There is no obligation to use either one of these huppah for your ceremony:

- Stationary huppah with cover (metal poles, gold-colored velvet cover)

- Fine Arts Huppah. Fits only on the center bima of Dweck Sanctuary.

There are many other huppah resources available. You could consult your florist, wedding planner, decorator, or check out sources on the internet for example.

We do not lend out our huppah for weddings at other locations. Please call the Associate Executive Director for an appointment to view the B'nai huppah.

Do I have to request a ritual hand washing station?

If your caterer is responsible for the set up of your event, he/she is also responsible for setting up ritual hand washing areas. If you are having platters delivered to B'nai Israel for your meal, we are happy to provide hand washing stations upon request. Hand washing stations are always provided at the congregational Kiddush on Shabbat and for any B'nai Israel sponsored meal function.

B'nai Mitzvah

What is the b'nai mitzvah timetable?

Around January, two years prior to the bar/bat mitzvah year – bar/bat mitzvah dates are assigned.

Sixty days after the bar/bat mitzvah information meeting, the first priority status for room reservation requests expires. Rooms are now available for rental to any congregant in good standing on a first-come, first-served basis.

Approximately one year prior to the date of the simcha begin, your child begins bar/bat mitzvah Tutoring.

Eight weeks prior to the date of your simcha, you will be contacted to schedule rehearsals with the Cantor, you should be sending your vendor list to synagogue office if you are renting at B'nai Israel, you can reserve the sanctuary for your photography session and you might want to start thinking about what you want to include in the Congregation Kiddush.

Two weeks prior to the date of your simcha, you need to confirm the room set-up arrangements for you event rental and confirm the delivery and arrival schedules of your vendors with the synagogue office. At this time you should confirm any Kiddush arrangements with the office, too.

When do b'nai mitzvah charges appear on my synagogue bill?

The charge for tutoring is billed one year from the date of your child's bar/bat mitzvah date. In the event you have multiples (twins, triplets, etc.) there is a tutoring charge for each child.

The Kiddush obligation is billed to you six months prior to your child's bar/bat mitzvah date.

The flowers for the bima are billed to you one month before your child's bar/bat mitzvah date.

How do I get Kipot for my simcha?

Personalized *kipot*, or yarmulkes, are available by special order from the Sisterhood Judaica Shop. Your *kipot* (typically arranged in a basket by you) may be brought to the synagogue office before 3:00 p.m. on the Friday before your *simcha*. We will place your basket of kipot out for your guests at the appropriate time.

Are there easels available for posters or sign-in boards?

Wood easels are available with your room rental at no additional charge. You'll need to arrange for the use of easels with the synagogue office. Note that heavily framed pieces cannot be accommodated on our easels.

What is the B'nai Israel address that should appear on my invitations?

The full name and address of the synagogue is:

B'nai Israel Congregation
6301 Montrose Road
Rockville MD 20852

Weddings

I'm getting married soon. Do I need to provide my own huppah? (Wedding Canopy)

B'nai Israel has two huppah available for weddings being held at B'nai. There is no obligation to use either one of these huppah for your ceremony:

- Stationary huppah with cover (metal poles, gold-colored velvet cover)
- Fine Arts Huppah. Fits only on the center bima of Dweck Sanctuary.

There are many other huppah resources available. You could consult your florist, wedding planner, decorator, or check out sources on the internet for example.

We do not lend out our huppah for weddings at other locations. Please call the Associate Executive Director for an appointment to view the B'nai huppah.

Are there easels available for posters or sign-in boards?

Wood easels are available with your room rental at no additional charge. You'll need to arrange for the use of easels with the synagogue office. Note that heavily framed pieces cannot be accommodated on our easels.

How do I get *Kipot* for my *simcha*?

Personalized *kipot*, or yarmulkes, are available by special order from the Sisterhood Judaica Shop. Your *kipot* (typically arranged in a basket by you) may be brought to the synagogue office before 3:00 p.m. on the Friday before your *simcha*. We will place your basket of *kipot* out for your guests at the appropriate time.

What is the B'nai Israel address that should appear on my invitations?

The full name and address of the synagogue is:

B'nai Israel Congregation
6301 Montrose Road
Rockville MD 20852

What branch of Judaism is B'nai Israel?

B'nai Israel abides by the laws and practices of Conservative Judaism. We are members of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism.

Food & Catering

How can I contribute to the Congregation Kiddush?

Following Shabbat morning services, the congregation gathers for Kiddush. Bar and Bat Mitzvah families are required to contribute to the sponsorship of the congregational Kiddush. Families and individuals celebrating simchot and/or commemorating special anniversaries are also encouraged to contribute to or sponsor the congregational Kiddush.

Bar and Bat Mitzvah families, as well as contributors of \$236 or more, are recognized in the Shabbat program. Contributions to the Kiddush fund may be arranged with the Associate Executive Director.

Additional food items for the Kiddush, and/or increased quantities of the standard Kiddush food selection may be arranged by contacting the Associate Executive Director at least two weeks prior to the Shabbat of your celebration or commemoration.

So that we may acknowledge your participation in the printed Shabbat program, a Kiddush sponsor form will be sent to contributors to the Kiddush fund and those who add food to the standard Kiddush. Bar and Bat Mitzvah families are sent the Kiddush sponsor form two months prior to their simcha.

How do my vendors make arrangements for my event?

A complete list of all the vendors who will be working for you must be given to the Associate Executive Director no later than two weeks prior to your function (e-mail is preferred). The list should include contact information for every person or company who is working on your event or delivering items that you will be using.

All vendor deliveries, floor plans and set up information must be relayed to the Associate Executive Director and confirmed in advance.

Which caterers are allowed at B'nai Israel?

Caterers sanctioned by the Baltimore Va'ad and DC Metro K are permitted at B'nai Israel. All caterers are subject to approval of the Executive Director.

Caterers may be chosen from the approved list. B'nai Israel staff will not recommend any particular caterer. We suggest you contact your friends and acquaintances whose tastes are similar to yours to obtain catering recommendations.

When is a *Mashgiach* (kashrut supervisor) needed in the kitchen?

The delivery of food from firms that must do all preparations at B'nai Israel must be checked in by a *mashgiach* (kashrut supervisor). Food will not be permitted into the synagogue without approval.

Generally, if food is being cleaned, prepared, plated or cooked, a *mashgiach* is required to maintain the *kashrut* of the kitchen and your food. All caterers must arrange for a *mashgiach* in advance of their occupancy of the B'nai Israel kitchens.

A *mashgiach* is not required in the B'nai Israel kitchens if you have certified Kosher, prepared platters that are delivered sealed and are placed on tables, still sealed, until shortly before your function begins.

Are there times when food or beverage service is not allowed?

Prior to the end of Shabbat, hard liquor is not permitted to be served at a celebration. Cocktails and food service are not permitted prior to wedding ceremonies except by prior arrangement with the rabbi officiating. No one under the age of 21 shall be served alcoholic beverages at any time.

No bar set-ups/food tables are permitted on the marble floor of the Uberman Memorial Alcove.

When I rent at B'nai Israel, are there additional charges for the kitchen?

Kitchen charges for the day of your function are noted in the room charges in your contract. If your caterer needs to occupy the B'nai Israel kitchen for any additional days, there will be a daily kitchen rental charge to the caterer. All kitchen occupancy must be arranged in advance with the Associate Executive Director.

Do I have to request a ritual hand washing station?

If your caterer is responsible for the set up of your event, he/she is also responsible for setting up ritual hand washing areas. If you are having platters delivered to B'nai Israel for your meal, we are happy to provide hand washing stations upon request. Hand washing stations are always provided at the congregational Kiddush on Shabbat and for any B'nai Israel sponsored meal function.

Do I need kosher wine for my event?

Only certified kosher wines can be used at any function taking place at B'nai Israel Congregation. Domestic beer, most imported beer and liqueurs are also acceptable. Please confirm your selection with your caterer if you have a caterer on premises or the synagogue office.

Can I bring my own soft drinks for my event?

Unopened, nationally-known name brand soft drinks, in cans or bottles, may be brought in to the synagogue for your event. If you are having a caterer on premises, please check with your caterer as their *mashgiach* may need to approve of your selection.

May I include candy in my table decorations?

Any centerpiece or decoration containing food that will be consumed during your event must be approved by the Executive Director or, if you have a caterer on premises, by the mashgiach who has been hired to oversee the function. (This does not apply to canned or packaged goods that are being collected for donation to a charitable organization after your event.)

Can my caterer prepare food on Saturday afternoon?

Any food for consumption after Shabbat may not be heated or cooked until one-half hour after sunset. Cooking may only begin after Shabbat has ended. Food preparation and times must be verified with your caterer and their mashgiach.

When are food deliveries accepted?

At least two weeks prior to your function you or your caterer must confirm any delivery arrangements you have made with the Associate Executive Director.

All food, including platters, must be delivered by your kosher caterer no later than 3:00 p.m. on Friday for a Saturday function or 8:00 a.m. or later on Sunday for a Sunday function. All arrangements for food are to be made directly by you with the kosher caterer you have selected (from our list or with the approval of the Executive Director).

Can I have a cocktail hour with food and drinks before my wedding ceremony in the Sanctuary?

Cocktails and food service are not permitted prior to the start of a wedding ceremony. If you are planning a *Kabbalat Panim*, modest food service without any alcoholic beverages is permitted. Foods or drinks may not be carried into the sanctuary or chapels. Please call the office for further details.

My caterer suggests providing bathroom hospitality items. Is this ok?

Some hosts supply hospitality baskets in the washrooms at B'nai. While we appreciate your wanting to anticipate all the needs of your guests, please know that *absolutely no medications, over the counter or otherwise, are allowed to be placed in these baskets*. You are responsible for removing such baskets at the close of your event. B'nai Israel is not responsible for any items left on the premises.

Can I take the leftover food with me after my event?

Leftover food from your private event rental is not permitted to be taken from the building during Shabbat. Arrangements should be made with the synagogue staff to pick up any leftovers the following day. Refreshments that are left over from the Congregation Kiddush remains with B'nai Israel.

Photography & Music

How do my vendors make arrangements for my event?

A complete list of all the vendors who will be working for you must be given to the Associate Executive Director no later than two weeks prior to your function (e-mail is preferred). The list should include contact information for every person or company who is working on your event or delivering items that you will be using.

All vendor deliveries, floor plans and set up information must be relayed to the Associate Executive Director and confirmed in advance.

How do I make arrangements to take photographs at the Synagogue?

All time in the sanctuary or chapels for photography and video sessions must be reserved in advance with the Synagogue office. Please call the Associate Executive Director or the Assistant to the Cantors to reserve your time.

Can we take photographs before my Saturday evening event?

No photography is allowed in any B'nai Israel building or on its grounds after 1:00 p.m. on Friday and during Shabbat. Photography for any function occurring on B'nai Israel property will be allowed only after one half-hour after sunset on Saturday (or after Havdalah).

Can we play music and take pictures during our cocktail hour?

On Saturdays, instrumental or recorded music may only begin after Shabbat has ended. Photography may also not begin until that time.

Can my photographer take pictures during my wedding ceremony?

Flash photography is permitted at the signing of the Ketubah. No flash photography is permitted under the huppah for member weddings. The photographer may take pictures from a fixed position during the ceremony.

Can we have the Ark open for our b'nai mitzvah photo session in the Sanctuary?

To provide security for our Torahs, the Ark is alarmed. If your photography involves using the Ark or the Torahs, prior to your designated time, B'nai Israel staff will turn off the alarm on the Ark in Dweck Sanctuary for your photography session. Photos may be taken on the bima, with the Ark open. No Torahs may be taken from the Ark.

Is there a Torah available to hold for our photos?

For B'nai Mitzvah photos, prior to your designated time, a *Navi* scroll (Haftarah scroll) will be set out for your use on the reading table of the middle bima of Dweck Sanctuary.

What if my DJ needs electrical information?

If your DJ, caterer, decorator or any of your vendors is using electrical equipment they should be in touch with the Facilities Director to make sure everything works smoothly during your event.

Is there a stage for my musicians or DJ?

Yes, we have a stage (riser) available for contracted events for an additional fee for your band or DJ. It consists of nine (9) carpeted sections, each measuring 4' x 8' x 16" high. Optional skirting is available for the riser, as are steps and a handrail – for no additional fee once the riser fee has been paid.

Lighting, Flowers & Decorating

How do my vendors make arrangements for my event?

A complete list of all the vendors who will be working for you must be given to the Associate Executive Director no later than two weeks prior to your function (e-mail is preferred). The list should include contact information for every person or company who is working on your event or delivering items that you will be using.

All vendor deliveries, floor plans and set up information must be relayed to the Associate Executive Director and confirmed in advance.

Are there special rules regarding the use of candles?

Lighted candles are forbidden in the Sanctuary or Chapel except for religious practice.

If used in the reception halls, candles must be properly enclosed and protected in accordance with Montgomery County fire code. All flames must be enclosed in a hurricane glass, chaser, or the candle must be recessed below the flame level in glass. Lit candles of any kind are not allowed to be suspended in any way above tables. Open candles are not allowed.

If your event takes place on a Saturday evening, candles may not be lit until your caterer's mashgiach permits. Unfortunately, melted candle wax is very labor intensive to remove, so please

understand that any maintenance to B'nai Israel property that results from the use of lit candles, including but not limited to, carpeting, chairs, or tables, will be deducted from your damage deposit.

Can we have lit candles next to the pews along the aisle for our wedding?

No. Lit candles are only allowed in the Sanctuary or Chapels during services for religious observance.

Can my decorator put up pin spot lighting?

Lighting in social areas cannot be altered except to adjust brightness from existing wall mounted controls. No light bulb substitutions may be made except for pin spots which are permitted only when installed by a licensed lighting company. Lighting in social rooms must be left in same working order as before the event. Any damage to the ceiling or lights will be billed on a cost basis and deducted from the damage deposit.

May I choose the bima flowers for my child's b'nai mitzvah or my aufruf celebration?

B'nai Israel makes every effort to assure that each family feels welcomed and comfortable within the Sanctuary. We strive to accomplish this is by assuring that the floral arrangements are generally the same size each week and that preferences are not given to color. The purchase of the flowers for the bima is coordinated through the Sisterhood. Each year, all Bar and Bat Mitzvah families are billed the same amount for the *bima* flowers.

Exceptions to the flower selection will be made if there are allergies for a particular type of flower. If this is the case, please contact the Associate Executive Director so that appropriate arrangements can be made for you.

Can my florist attach flowers on the pews along the aisle for my wedding?

Nothing is allowed to be attached to the pews or any furniture in the sanctuary or chapels. At no time is any tape allowed to be placed on the sanctuary or chapel pews. A limited supply of pew ropes is available for cordoning off areas of the sanctuary or chapel. Many people choose to drape ribbon on the ends of the pews as an alternative.

Can I use tape to secure my decorations?

The only types of tape allowed to be used on the *floor* are gaff tape, masking tape or painters tape. No tape is allowed on the furnishings, ceilings, walls, or windows inside or outside the building. A full explanation of the use of tape can be found on the second pages of your room rental contract.

My decorator is suggesting a theme for our party. Are there rules about how the room can be decorated?

There are many ways to decorate the B'nai Israel social halls, but no decorations are allowed to be attached to or suspended from the walls or ceiling of any room or area at B'nai Israel.

In the Sanctuary or chapels no changes may be made to the walls, Ark, furnishings, etc. The pulpit furniture may not be removed from the *bima*. No candles are allowed in the sanctuary or chapels except for religious observance.

No **metal** confetti or glitter of any kind may be used in any room for any type of celebration. Candles in social areas must comply with the fire department code.

The second page of your contract is the listing of "Indoor and Outdoor Facilities Rules." Your acceptance of our contract and your signature on the contract indicates your acceptance and compliance with our use rules and guidelines.

Are there special guidelines regarding using balloons in the synagogue?

Any balloons used to decorate may not be blown up on Shabbat. Balloons may be blown up by 3:00 p.m. Friday for a Shabbat function. For a Saturday evening function, balloons may be blown up after 3:00 p.m. on Saturday by non-Jewish personnel. All balloons must be removed from the building at the conclusion of your function and placed in the appropriate trash receptacles. If any alarm goes off in the building after your function due to a stray balloon, you and/or your caterer will be fined \$500.00.

Are there easels available for posters or sign-in boards?

Wood easels are available with your room rental at no additional charge. You'll need to arrange for the use of easels with the synagogue office. Note that heavily framed pieces cannot be accommodated on our easels.

Tables, Chairs & Dishes

How do my vendors make arrangements for my event?

A complete list of all the vendors who will be working for you must be given to the Associate Executive Director no later than two weeks prior to your function (e-mail is preferred). The list should include contact information for every person or company who is working on your event or delivering items that you will be using.

All vendor deliveries, floor plans and set up information must be relayed to the Associate Executive Director and confirmed in advance.

What tables does the synagogue have?

Tables (and chairs) are included in the room rental. Available tables are 6-foot and 8-foot rectangles, as well as 5-foot and 6-foot diameter round tables. A very limited number of 4-foot round tables are also available. B'nai Israel does not provide cocktail tables, serpentine or any other specialty tables.

Do you have linens available for my tables?

A limited quantity and limited colors of table cloths are available for rental from B'nai Israel. Please call the Associate Executive Director for an appointment to see the cloths.

Do I need to rent chairs?

Chairs (and tables) are included in the room rental. Banquet chairs are available in dark brown upholstered fabric and light tan vinyl. There are also goldenrod-colored vinyl and beige upholstered chairs available. B'nai Israel does not have chiavari chairs.

Can I have guest tables or a buffet set up in Margolius Atrium?

Yes – but please remember that no bar set-ups or food service tables are permitted on the marble floor, behind or between the statues of the Uberman Memorial Alcove in Margolius Atrium.

Does B'nai Israel have china, glassware and cutlery to rent for my event?

China, cutlery, and glassware are not included with room rental. It is suggested that you consult your caterer, planner or decorator for available options.

Are disposable plates, cups, cutlery paper tablecloths included in my room rental?

Items included in your room rental are specified on your contract. Generally, individual room rentals (not package room rentals) include white disposable tablecloths, plates, cups, napkins and cutlery. If desired you may bring new, sealed packages of the same of your own choosing. All items are set out by the B'nai Israel staff or your contracted wait staff unless we receive other instruction.

Do I have to request a ritual hand washing station?

If your caterer is responsible for the set up of your event, he/she is also responsible for setting up ritual hand washing areas. If you are having platters delivered to B'nai Israel for your meal, we are happy to provide hand washing stations upon request. Hand washing stations are always provided at the congregational Kiddush on Shabbat and for any B'nai Israel sponsored meal function.

Pre-Event Set Up

I'd like to set up my event the day before. Is this possible?

Contracts are issued for rental of rooms for the day of the function only. If additional days are needed for the set-up of the room(s), a charge of one-half the room rate will be assessed for each additional day the room is occupied. Depending on the events going on in the building at the time of your event, your room may or may not be available to you. Please call the synagogue office to make or confirm any arrangements you want to make.

Are there rules for setting up my Saturday evening event at B'nai Israel?

On Saturdays, no earlier than 3:00 p.m., non-Jewish vendors may come in to work on the synagogue premises and previously cooked foods, for consumption before Shabbat ends (one-half hour after sunset), may be *heated*.

When can deliveries be made to B'nai Israel?

All delivery arrangements must be verified in advance with the synagogue office. For Friday evening or Saturday afternoon functions all vendor deliveries must be delivered by 3:00 p.m. on Friday.

For Saturday evening functions vendors may deliver equipment and goods by 3:00 p.m. on Fridays, provided that prior arrangements have been made with B'nai Israel. These same persons must remove all equipment by the end of the event or 10:00 a.m. the morning following the event unless prior arrangement has been made. B'nai Israel is not responsible for any rental equipment left after a celebration.

For Sunday functions vendors may deliver equipment and goods starting at 8:00 a.m. on Sundays.

Deliveries may be made in advance of these times only with prior arrangement with the synagogue office. We want to make sure we can accommodate your items before they are brought to the building.

When are food deliveries accepted?

At least two weeks prior to your function you or your caterer must confirm any delivery arrangements you have made with the Associate Executive Director.

All food, including platters, must be delivered by your kosher caterer no later than 3:00 p.m. on Friday for a Saturday function or 8:00 a.m. or later on Sunday for a Sunday function. All arrangements for food are to be made directly by you with the kosher caterer you have selected (from our list or with the approval of the Executive Director).

Can I use tape to secure my decorations?

The only types of tape allowed to be used on the *floor* are gaff tape, masking tape or painters tape. No tape is allowed on the furnishings, ceilings, walls, or windows inside or outside the building. A full explanation of the use of tape can be found on the second pages of your room rental contract.

Accessibility

Is B'nai Israel Handicapped Accessible?

Our Inclusion Committee works hard to make sure that everyone who wants to attend B'nai Israel encounters as few barriers as possible. There is handicap access parking, including van-access parking, located near the permanent ramp between the Lenkin Education and Activities Center and the Hayman Chapel entrances. The main bima in the Dweck Sanctuary has a power lift, and ramps are available for access to the center bima. All public rooms at B'nai Israel are accessible either directly or by elevator. A wheelchair is available in the event one is needed for short-term use within the building. Accommodation is also available for the vision and hearing impaired by arrangement. Please call the Executive Director if special accommodation is required for your event.

Are there wheelchairs available?

A wheelchair is available in the event one is needed for short-term use within the building.