

---

---

**MEMORANDUM**

---

---

**TO:** TEMPLE SINAI EMPLOYEES, STAFF AND MEMBERS

**FROM:** CINDI CRUTCHFIELD, PRESIDENT, AND AMY GOODMAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**SUBJECT:** COVID-19 PREPARATIONS AND RESPONSE PLAN UPDATE

**DATE:** MARCH 10, 2020

**CC:** RABBI MESZLER, CANTOR KITRICK AND BETH NELSON

---

As previously provided in February, here is an update on our understanding of the current situation regarding COVID-19 and how we are addressing it at Temple Sinai. For clarity, COVID-19 is the respiratory disease caused by SARS-CoV-2 (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome- Coronavirus-2).

COVID-19 continues to spread in countries outside of China, and the hardest hit countries still include; South Korea, Italy and Iran, which have the highest travel alert category (Level 3). Japan is rated as a Level 2 with regard to travel. On a slightly more positive note, it appears that the infections in China have stabilized and the total active infections will likely decrease in the coming weeks.

The total confirmed cases to date exceed 114,000 globally, although nearly 64,000 have recovered (JHU Coronavirus Dashboard). Fortunately, for most healthy individuals, COVID-19 is not a serious illness. The symptoms, when and if they manifest, mimic the flu. By comparison, influenza infected over 45 million Americans, hospitalized nearly 610,000 and caused 61,000 deaths when the flu season ended in 2019, one year ago. In the United States, under 600 people have been infected so far with SARs-COV-2, the underlying virus that causes corona virus disease. However, for a small, vulnerable segment of our population COVID-19 can be much more serious, and in some cases, lethal as we have seen in the case of nursing home residents in the Life Care Center in Kirkland, Washington. It is for this reason we all need to work together to contain the spread of the SARs-COV-2 virus by observing the commonsense recommendations provided by the CDC, the lead public health agency for the United States. In this way, we can protect those who are more vulnerable.

Closer to home, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MA DPH) reports that the number of COVID-19 cases reported grew to 41. Almost all of the new cases reported Sunday and Monday were tied to a late February meeting of top managers of biotech giant Biogen held at the Boston Marriott Long Wharf hotel, which drew about 175 participants, according to a statement from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. We are tracking all updates in different regions of the country from multiple outlets and diligently working together to understand potential vulnerabilities to Temple Sinai staff and members on-campus and offsite, in case additional precautionary measures need to be implemented.

Even closer to home, on Monday, March 9, 2020, the Sharon Health Department and Sharon Public Schools have announced that an individual in Sharon has been tested and is presumed to have contracted COVID-19 subject to confirmation by CDC testing. We do not have any confirmed cases among our staff and to the best of our knowledge, none in our building. We are staying in communications with the Health Department to monitor this situation and will let you know of any developments. We are also reviewing our space cleaning and hygiene program to determine if there are additional measures that should be employed to enhance sanitization efforts per CDC guidance. As previously noted, hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes and tissues are provided for cough/sneeze hygiene for staff, members and guests.

Regarding travel, the CDC has only limited travel to four countries as noted above; China, South Korea, Italy and Iran. No travel restrictions have been implemented in the United States and localities have not implemented more aggressive quarantining efforts like other countries have implemented, such as parts of northern Italy. For ease of reference, we are including a brief descriptor of the CDC travel alert levels and recommended actions:

**Warning Level 3:** CDC recommends travelers *avoid all nonessential travel to destinations with level 3 travel notices* because of the risk of getting COVID-19. **Currently, China, Iran, South Korea and Italy.**

**Alert Level 2:** Because COVID-19 can be more serious in older adults and those with chronic medical conditions, *people in these groups should talk to a healthcare provider and consider postponing travel* to destinations with level 2 travel notices. **Currently, Japan.**

**Watch Level 1:** *CDC does not recommend canceling or postponing travel to destinations with level 1 travel notices* because the risk of COVID-19 is thought to be low. **Currently, Hong Kong.**

The CDC has also not recommended limiting air travel to countries without a Level 2 or 3 alert.

We are suggesting to follow the CDC and MA DPH guidelines with regard to travel on Temple business, and as such, not limiting travel within the United States at this time. Again, there are no watches or warnings in the United States, therefore, preemptive cancellation of travel plans is not necessary. If you have concerns about any traveling that you will be doing for Temple business, please speak to Amy Goodman. Please be sure to check with the CDC website on any travel alerts or warnings outside the U.S. prior to any personal travel to foreign countries. This is a dynamic situation and you do not want to be restricted on re-entering the U.S. if an alert is issued.

We will be staying in contact with the Sharon Health Department regarding recommendations for upcoming events and the steps to safeguard the health of members and guests. If there is an impact to their events or our Temple events, we will inform all as soon as possible.

If you are concerned for your personal health, please speak with your physician. Lastly, we are providing information on COVID-19 from CDC for our staff and members for general awareness. We will continue to provide updates as the situation continues to unfold.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact Amy Goodman and Cindi Crutchfield, if you have any questions or concerns.