

Back to BTBJ Protocols

The following protocols are designed to keep our entire community safe during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

- These protocols were developed with feedback from our community, and in conjunction with other area synagogues and guidelines provided by the Governor of Pennsylvania, the CDC and Pennsylvania's Department of Health.
- These protocols are relevant when Montgomery County is in the Green Phase as defined by Governor Wolf.
- These protocols are subject to change at any time and will be communicated to the community as conditions develop and change.

We are in this together. We are all responsible to keep each other safe. Please, if you are experiencing any Covid-19 symptoms, stay home. If you or a loved one are in a high-risk category, stay home. We will always be here for you, virtually or in person when you are well.

What to Expect When You Come Back to BTBJ

We ask that you thoroughly read and comply with all our new processes and protocols.

Mandatory entry procedures for all events inside or outside at BTBJ.

- **Health screening.** Temperature checks with a non-contact scanning thermometer will be conducted on everyone who enters our building, including staff, children, parents, and guests. Anyone with a temperature over 100.4 will not be admitted into our shul. This may either be a self-check or if there is a scheduled event, there will a volunteer to take and record temperatures.
- **Recording.** Anyone entering our building is required to record their name, their temperature and to complete a brief questionnaire. This will help us keep track of who has been at BTBJ.
- **Masks.** Until further notice, all those attending any BTBJ are required to bring their own masks and wear them. We will maintain a small inventory of disposable masks. Those unwilling to wear masks will be required to leave. The only exceptions to this policy are:
 - Employees in their individual offices alone, with the doors closed or slightly ajar.
 - Children less than 2 years old, individuals not able to remove a mask on their own, and others medically unable to wear a mask
- **Consent documentation.** Anyone attending an event at BTBJ is required to complete our consent documentation. If your family has not completed the consent documentation, you will not be allowed to enter the building. Copies of this document will be available at the entrance and in advance to guests.

Building Entry. Entering our building will only be through the main lobby doors. The blue awning door will only be utilized by the Early Childhood Center (ECC) and the Religious School (RS). The door between the classrooms and the sanctuary and office space will be kept closed. Our focus is to keep the children and staff in the ECC and the RS physically separated from the rest of the building.

Social Distancing. Six feet physical distancing beyond your family unit is required at all events to the greatest extent possible. BTBJ will set up chairs (or ask you to bring your own), tables, or floor markers to indicate the proper distancing. At some events, assigned seating will be done in advance with signage on your seating or designated area. We ask that you do not adjust any seating or table arrangements without permission from the event coordinator.

Proper hygiene. For your convenience, hand sanitizing stations have been installed in our facility. You may also utilize the restroom sink to properly wash your hands. Please follow recommended CDC hygiene guidelines.

Restrooms. The restrooms off the main lobby are now single use. There will be signage on the outside of the door for you to indicate that the restroom is currently occupied. The only exception to single use is for family members.

Cleaning. Our building has been cleaned and sanitized thoroughly. Our custodial staff is cleaning, disinfecting, and sanitizing our building adhering to and going beyond CDC guidelines on a daily and as-need basis.

Building Systems. Our building systems, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) and our plumbing systems have been maintained, cleaned, and properly prepared for occupants. Purifiers have been placed in all classrooms and the synagogue office as an enhancement.

Security. Security is still a top priority at BTBJ. We will continue to have security guards for in person services.

Building signage. We have added signage at our main entrance and in critical areas throughout our facility as a reminder of the proper protocols that are now in place.

Office staff. The office will be staffed, but not at full capacity at any given time. Staff will alternate working remotely. All staff and clergy entering our building will follow the mandatory entry procedures.

Technology. We are thrilled to announce the installation of new video and audio equipment in our sanctuary and social hall that will allow us to stream services and provide programs virtually to our congregation. This technology and our ability to stay connected was generously made possible by the generous contributions made by congregants, friends, and family to the William Hurwitz Fund.

Programming. All programming that occurs inside or outside at BTBJ will follow recommended physical distancing guidelines. We have created new capacity guidelines which will require pre-registration for all events. With our new technology in place, it is our goal that any programs occurring inside will also be accessible online to our community. We are also fortunate to have several wonderful outside spaces on our property. Our hope is to utilize outside space for services and programming for as long as the weather will cooperate. In addition, we have several tents to provide covering.

We have created a separate detailed document of the processes and protocols to which all programs and ritual events are expected to adhere. We have provided these guidelines to all program coordinators to ensure the safety of our community.

Services. Minyan and Shabbat Services will be introduced slowly back at BTBJ. Providing our congregants with both in person and virtual opportunities to come together and worship.

- Seating will be set up with proper physical distancing, allowing ample space from the clergy on the bimah and from each other. Chairs will also be set up to allow families to sit together.
- Siddurs will be set out on individual chairs and will be collected after services are complete.
- Please bring your own kippah and tallit.
- Singing is a big part of our services. We will keep singing but we will encourage a softer toner.
- Aliyot and congregational participation will occur at a microphoned table in the sanctuary and not on the bimah.
- Clergy on the Bimah will have and utilize a variety of protective equipment and will maintain proper social distances to the greatest extent possible.
- Separate detailed guidelines have been developed for B'nai Mitzvah and other life cycle events. Please contact the BTBJ office for more information.

Food. We will be allowing food to be served in the building with restrictions and limitations (in accordance with Governor Wolf's indoor capacity orders). Food can also be served for outside events also with certain restrictions. These details have been provided to those who plan and prepare programs at BTBJ.

Drinking Fountains. Drinking fountains have been turned off and small water bottles will be available. We also encourage members and staff to bring their own water bottles when coming to BTBJ.

Mezuzah. Kissing or physically touching the mezuzot on and within the building is not recommended. A symbolic gesture in that direction is encouraged instead.

Compliance and Enforcement. It is essential to everyone's health that the above procedures be followed consistently while at BTBJ. Our staff as well as volunteers will be monitoring compliance and will politely remind anyone who fails to comply. Ushers and other volunteers during services will understand the specifics of the policies and procedures and will be assigned responsibilities for monitoring key locations while the building is open for events and services, including entry/exit corridors, wearing of masks, seating, and the safe use of our restrooms. For the health and safety of our community, pikuach nefesh needs to take priority over anyone's personal preferences and anyone who is not willing to comply with the protocols while in our building will not be permitted to enter or to remain.

COVID-19 Exposure and Confirmed Illness Protocol. To ensure the safety of our entire community, please do not enter the building if you have had any of the recognized COVID-19 symptoms within the previous 10 days, including fever, a dry cough, shortness of breath or loss of taste or smell. Members, guests, staff and our employees may not enter the building if they have tested positive or been presumed positive for COVID-19 in the previous 14 days, or who have had close contact (*defined as within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes*) within the previous 14 days with someone who has tested positive or presumed positive for COVID-19. We have identified a room at BTBJ for anyone who feels sick while at our shul.

Please inform BTBJ administration if you tested positive and had attended an event at BTBJ within the prior 2 weeks so that proper reporting and deep cleaning and disinfecting of our facility can be initiated.

If Sick, Stay Home Anyone who is feeling sick is asked to stay home from our shul. If you have symptoms of acute respiratory illness or any other COVID-19 symptoms, you should immediately seek medical attention and follow the guidance of a health care provider. Our staff and employees fully understand the importance of the preventative measures, policies and procedures which have been put in place and have been provided with Staff COVID-19 policies and protocols which are being strictly enforced for the benefit of our entire community.

Patience. Please bring patience and understanding with you when you come back to BTBJ. We know it is hard, we know it is different and we know we may need to adjust or try something new. We want your feedback, we want your ideas, but most importantly we want our community to be safe.

BTBJ is where we belong. It is up to all us to keep our community safe so that we can be together, wherever that may be.