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# Guidelines for Gatherings

Building our community in the time of COVID

Updated August 4, 2020

# Introduction

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Over the past few months, our world has changed in ways that would previously have been difficult to imagine. As we begin to think about what comes next, perhaps the biggest shift we need to make is to accept that we are not able to create a reliable timeline for when specific types of in-person gatherings might be possible again. A major challenge in dealing with Covid-19 is the rapidly changing information on the virus and continuously evolving guidelines for prevention of transmission. This will not be a linear process, and the way it unfolds will depend on a lot of interacting factors.

While these guidelines are based on the best available scientific knowledge today, we must expect that guidance will continually evolve based on our changing local public health metrics and our understanding of the virus.

The reality is, we cannot tell you whether you will be able to safely have 100 people at a wedding next spring, or 50 at a bnai mitzvah ceremony this winter; nobody can. All we can do is listen to our scientists and medical officials, do our best to plan prudently based on the current situation, and build flexibility into every plan we make.

The document that follows - a document that will evolve, to be sure - explains CDT's most recent guidance, grounded in our congregational values and based on our local public health guidelines, and the guidance of the medical and public health experts we are fortunate to have within our congregation. While we must always adhere to state and local guidelines, we may also decide at times to implement CDT guidelines that are more stringent than official recommendations. We will ask attendees at our events to follow the guidelines in this document.

Beyond the guidelines issued here, we recognize that individuals will need to weigh their specific situation and their risk tolerance to decide if attending any given event in person is right for them. To that end, we encourage a focus on creating an inclusive community, and ask that we treat each other with kindness when our personal calculations lead us to different choices.

These guidelines are very much a living document. We will continue to re-evaluate and adjust as the situation changes. We recognize that the absence of a timeline or of certainty can be unsettling and distressing. Rabbi Toba is available for support to anyone in our community, and can be reached at [rabbi@dorsheitzedek.org](mailto:rabbi@dorsheitzedek.org). We look forward to the day when we are reasonably and scientifically assured that resuming all of our 'usual' in-person gatherings is appropriate. Until then, we will continue to do our best to build community in the forms that are safely available to us.

# Timing

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*As of August 4, 2020:*

While we write these guidelines with the anticipation that we will again be able to worship together in person, we also recognize that it is not yet safe to do so.

We will continue to hold all indoor ritual activities, including High Holydays Services, virtually until the local public health metrics indicate that it is safe to do otherwise.

We are sharing these guidelines now to provide insight into what we anticipate future in-person gatherings could look like, and to help us prepare to adapt as the situation continues to evolve.

# Core Values

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Each of CDT's core values guided us in developing this document



## **Kehillah Community**

We are committed to the ongoing building of our community



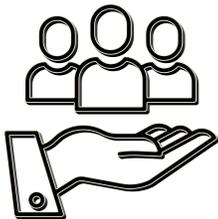
## **Chesed Lovingkindness**

We will treat one another with lovingkindness



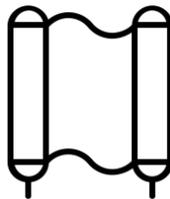
## **B'tzelem Elohim Inclusion & Dignity**

We hold universal accessibility as a sacred responsibility



## **Kavanah Sacred Intention**

We will act thoughtfully and with integrity



## **Talmud Torah Jewish Learning**

We are committed to maintaining opportunities to learn



## **Machloket L'shem Shamayim Debate for the Sake of Heaven**

We are committed to respectful discourse and the honoring of individual decisions



## **Mitzvah Ethical Practice**

We are guided by the mitzvah *pikuah nefesh*/saving a life



## **Spirituality**

We are committed to maintaining opportunities for spiritual growth



## **Tikkun Olam Repair of the World**

We strive to create an environment that is just and kind

# Special Note: Singing and Chanting

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While we are all anxious to join together in chanting prayers and in song, we must be mindful of the particular risks of singing.

While research is ongoing and there is much more to learn, several studies have demonstrated that the aerosolized particles released when we sing are significantly more than when we talk, and cannot be safely contained with a cloth mask.

Because singing in particular is a high risk activity, we will need to be extra cautious in making plans to have our traditional services and activities in our sanctuary and other indoor spaces. This includes singing/chanting an aliyah, as well as the many beautiful songs that are a core part of our services at CDT.

Those planning events will need to discern when we should gather in person and refrain from singing/chanting, and when we should gather online, where we can hear individual leaders sing and each sing in our own homes.

We are closely watching for updated guidelines and scientific knowledge on this front, and will continue to work to use our creative energies to find new possibilities within safe boundaries.

We lean into *savlanut*, patience, to help us bear the burden of this time, and look forward to a future when we can again join together in song.

# Guidelines For Event Organizers

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These guidelines are for **all** types of events, including life-cycle events.

Please select the **largest space** with the **most ventilation** possible for your gathering. Outside is best when feasible.

- Offer an online option whenever possible
- Open doors and windows when inside to improve ventilation
- Do not serve food, or invite attendees to bring food
- Sanitize surfaces before and after the event
- Use hard seating (wood or plastic chairs) and avoid soft seating (couches) when possible
- Encourage attendees to help clean/sanitize 'their space' when arriving and leaving

**Limit attendance** based on the guidelines for your specific space

- Everyone in attendance should meet the attendee guidelines (see next page)
- All participants should wash or sanitize hands when entering and leaving the space
- Observe social distancing of 6+ feet at all times between household clusters
- Masks should be worn by all attendees at all times

Please aim to support a **culture of respect** that allows for attendees to support each other in following guidelines, such as polite requests to maintain distance, wear masks properly, or wash hands.

# Guidelines For Event Attendees

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Please review the following guidelines to help determine if attending an in-person gathering is appropriate for you.

Please stay home if ANY of these are true for you:

- You are experiencing any symptoms of illness, including but not limited to a fever or cough
- You have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for Covid-19 in the past 14 days (or 7 days from the time of exposure with a negative test)
- You have been exposed to someone who had contact with someone who is suspected to have Covid-19 in the past 14 days (or 7 days from the time of exposure with a negative test)
- You have been exposed to communities outside the Boston area in the past 14 days (or 7 days from the time of exposure with a negative test)
- You have attended a large gathering in the last 14 days (or 7 days from the time of exposure with a negative test)

Please also consider your own risk factors when deciding whether to attend in person:

- You are over age 60\* or have other underlying medical conditions that increase your risk of complications
- Your level of exposure from other activities, or the risk to others in your family or broader communities, such as work or school

If you do attend, please adhere to these guidelines:

- Wash your hands with soap for 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer upon arrival
- Maintain social distancing and wear a mask throughout the gathering
- Avoid touching your face

Please note that in-person attendees may be asked to provide their name and contact information. This information may be shared with the local health department or their partners for contact tracing purposes if needed.

Please be aware that for the health of everyone in attendance, and in the spirit of *pikuah nefesh*, anyone not adhering to these guidelines will be asked to leave the gathering.

\*some guidelines recommend 65+

# Our Spaces

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CDT has access to a variety of spaces. Please use these guidelines to help you determine appropriate space(s) for your gathering. If your gathering is larger than any of our spaces can accommodate, or if it includes singing, or if it otherwise cannot adhere to the guidelines, please hold your event online. As of August 4, 2020, all indoor spaces are currently capped at 10 attendees.

Space	Capacity	Dimensions
Sanctuary (2nd Church)	10	62' 2" x 29' 2"
Living Room (2nd Church)	5	27' 9" x 25' 5"
Fellowship Hall (2nd Church)	10	61' 8" x 36'
Library (2nd Church)	Not available	
Room 111 (2nd Church)	Not available	
Head Start Room (FUSN)	8	55' x 21' 6"
Alliance Room (FUSN)	5	43' x 17'
Upstairs Kitchen (FUSN)	3	24' x 20'

# Space Detail: Sanctuary

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The sanctuary has a maximum capacity of 10. There should be a minimum of 6 feet between households.





# Space Detail: Living Room

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The living room has a maximum capacity of 5. There should be a minimum of 6 feet between people or household groupings.



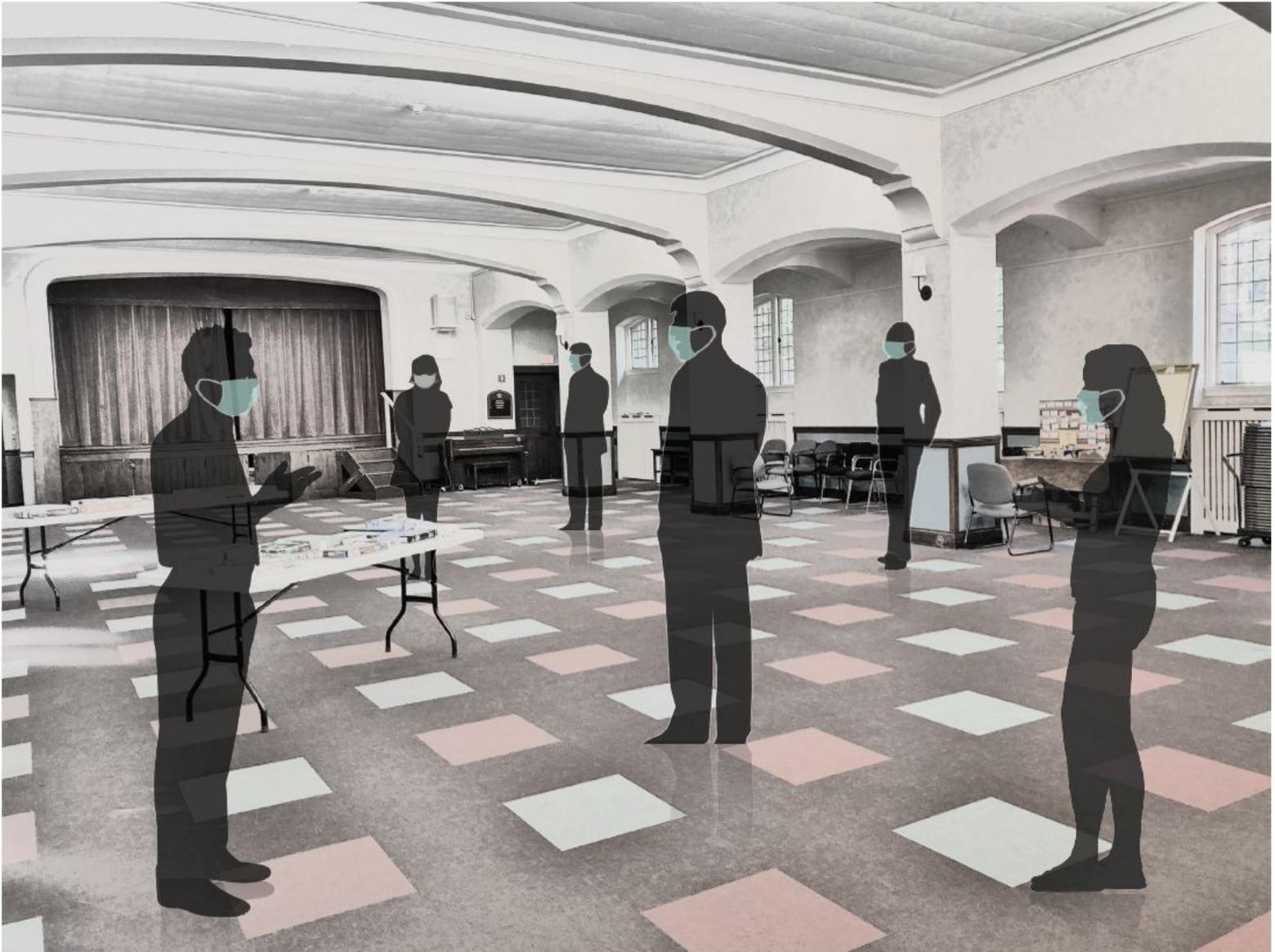




# Space Detail: Fellowship Hall

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The Fellowship Hall has a maximum capacity of 10. There should be a minimum of 6 feet between households.



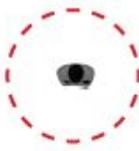




# Space Detail: Outdoor Spaces

For those considering an event in a private backyard or public space such as a park, please use these examples to help determine the safe capacity of your space.



 = 1 person with 6' social distancing perimeter

