

Updated COVID Reopening Plan

It has been a long and exhausting 15 months since we closed our doors to most community activities. We are all excited to return to in-person activities as soon as possible. Now that our community infection numbers are falling, and vaccines are more widely available, we are excited to accelerate the reopening process we provided in April!

Before we explain the changes, please consider this important context:

As we have explained before, we prioritize *pikuach nefesh* (human health and safety). The below plans have been created with the wisdom and insight of our team of scientific and medical experts. We believe we can safely accelerate our plans to reopen Temple Beth Am.

While Covid-19 vaccines are now widely available to those 12 and over, they are not available to younger members of the community (of which we have many hundreds, including young children in our SEED Early Childhood School). Additionally, the vaccines may not be effective for immunocompromised members of our community.

Accordingly, while we are excited to accelerate our reopening, we are keenly aware that we must balance the needs of constituencies who are protected from Covid, and those who are not. Of course, as our community infection numbers change and vaccines become available to a wider age range, we will revisit and update these plans.

With this context in mind, starting June 18, 2021, Temple Beth Am plans to change its prior phased plan approach to the following plan until further notice:

JUNE 18th REOPENING - To accommodate community members who do not feel safe attending in-person or who prefer to attend services from home, we will also live stream services on YouTube:

Friday Night Shabbat Services (indoors): 100 members by online RSVP*

Friday Night Our Shabbat Tables (once a month, outdoors): 100 members by online RSVP*. We are excited to have monthly Our Shabbat Tables in-person (in our courtyard) this summer. We are planning to return to interactive streamed Shabbat tables in the fall (after the High Holy Days).

Saturday Morning B'nai Mitzvah Services (indoors): 40 guests per student, 20 members by online RSVP*

Saturday Morning Minyan Services (indoors): 100 members by online RSVP*

Saturday Morning Torah Study: To be announced in in early June.

Classes, Committee Meetings, Hearth Groups, Social and Lifecycle Gatherings (indoors and outdoors): There will be some limited in person availability both indoors and in the courtyard. Furthermore, we encourage congregants who feel comfortable to gather outdoors and offsite for Temple Beth Am-sponsored gatherings. Temple Zoom rooms will remain available for all meetings, classes, and groups. Previously scheduled Wednesday Adult Learning Classes scheduled through June will remain online.

High Holy Days: More information will be announced separately.

The Gan: We intend to operate in-person with virtual options for the 2021/22 – 5782 year.

Additional Information:

- Vaccines required. Vaccines are required for all guests 12 and older but we will not be asking you to show proof of vaccination. We are following the honor system because the Talmud teaches *kol yisrael arevim zeh bazeh* (BTal *Shevuot* 39a), meaning all of Israel (or our sacred community) are responsible for each other. Given this, we trust that our congregation understands our communal obligations, and will only enter if they are vaccinated. For guests under age 12 or non-vaccinated adults, we will require a negative Covid test emailed to the Executive Director 48 hours prior to entering the building.
- Caring for others. Regardless of a negative test or vaccine, if you are not feeling well or you are experiencing unusual symptoms, please do not come into the building.
- Masks required. Masks will be required at all times for all staff and guests while on Temple grounds. This is important to protect our immunocompromised community members.
- No food. Due to the operation of SEED Early Childhood School, no food will currently be allowed at Temple Beth Am. We will change this policy as soon as it is safe and prudent to do so.
- No singing. Communal singing is still not recommended by health authorities. We will ask that you sway or hum along with the music at services.
- Closed Sundays. To give the staff time to clean, the Temple building will be closed on Sundays.
- No Zoom Services. Due to the technological difficulty of having Zoom services from the sanctuary with 100 guests, all services will only be live streamed on our Youtube channel: Temple Beth Am Seattle. This will still allow you to watch live services from home and chat with others on Youtube, however it will not allow others to see or hear you at home on your home computer.

Caveats: Of course, this revised set of restrictions is based on what we know today about Covid-19. Any unexpected changes in how vaccinations react to variants, major changes in community infection numbers or hospitalizations numbers, or recommendations from state or local authorities will supersede this reopening plan. Note that all rules follow at a minimum King

County guidelines for Faith Based Organizations: <https://kingcounty.gov/depts/health/covid-19/community-faith-organizations/FAQ.aspx>

**RSVP will open on Monday at 9am for the upcoming week's services. If you have a special occasion or yahrzeit and hope to attend services on a particular date please reach out to Sam Rosen at Sam@templebetham.org. We will do our best to accommodate all special requests. RSVP's will also take into account members that have not had an opportunity to attend services in person. If demand exceeds availability, a lottery system may be put into place for members that have not had a chance to attend in person services.*