

## **Agudas Achim Community Commitment FY 2022-2023 FAQS SHEET**

### **What is the Agudas Achim Community Commitment Model?**

The Agudas Achim Congregation (“AAC”) “Community Commitment” (“CC”) is a relationship-based model that has replaced the old dues model. It is focused on creating and sustaining our community with desired services, rather than solely on synagogue dues. This enables our members the ability to set their own contribution amount for supporting ongoing synagogue expenses and standard programming. This flexible approach also enables AAC to attract more members, increasing the financial support for services that AAC members want.

### **How have AAC members benefited from the Community Commitment (CC) model?**

The transition to the CC model has increased the number of member households at AAC over the past year by over 7.4%, drawing 37 new member units. In 2021, we achieved 95% participation by our member households, and we raised \$1.148 million of our 2021-2022 target goal of \$1.222 million to support AAC’s services and operations.

### **How does Community Commitment Work?**

Individuals and families demonstrate their intent to be AAC community members by submitting a Community Commitment form **by July 31, 2022**, and list their planned level of annual financial commitment to join or remain as members of the AAC community for the coming 2022-2023 year. Submission of the completed form on paper or online is required in order to secure High Holiday tickets. Current AAC members who have not submitted a form before the High Holidays will receive a letter reminding them of the Community Commitment obligation, with a suggested pledge amount based on their prior years’ contributions (dues or commitment). The link to complete online is: <https://www.agudasachim-va.org/payment.php>.

### **With your AAC Community Commitment, you help support operational costs for essential community services, including:**

- Salaries for clergy and staff
- Assuring security and safety
- Providing weekly Kiddush food and staffing for our congregation
- Infrastructure and support services for Religious School and Preschool operations
- Maintenance of buildings and grounds
- Our Broad Range of Community activities
- Ongoing Insurance, accounting, and other operational services.

**What Community Commitment does not cover includes:**

- Religious School and Preschool tuition and b'nei mitzvah fees
- Special fund contributions (e.g, Yizkor, concerts, Zoom services, etc.)
- Capital costs (e.g., building improvements)
- Simcha kiddush costs
- Capital Campaign and other special fundraising efforts.

**How does AAC set the overall Community Commitment target goal?**

- The AAC budget committee made recommendations to the Board regarding the basic set of essential services and operations for the coming year, and the most cost-effective way to support those services and operations.
- The Board has evaluated those recommendations, and all possible cost savings, in areas such as security, kiddush, payroll, accounting, COVID-related health and safety needs, and other services.
- The Board has taken into account the current economic environment, such as high inflation and rising costs for all services, and the end of government funds available for non-profits during the pandemic.
- The total amount needed to support services and operations is based on all factors considered.

**Why is AAC's FY 2022-2023 target Community Commitment goal \$1.5 million?**

- The target community commitment goal increased 23% from last year to reflect meeting Community expectations in light of rising costs.
  - Rising costs have affected Agudas Achim greatly. We have seen a dramatic increase in costs for the following services through 2021 and early 2022:
    - 66% increase for sheriff's deputies to provide security
    - 10%-15% increase for insurance and other employee benefit related costs
    - 15%-25% increase in the cost of food and kitchen supplies
    - 15% increase for transportation, insurance, lodging, and utilities for the schlichah
    - 7.5% increase for basic lawn care and landscaping services
- This financial increase maintains our current level of services and continues our growth trajectory as amplified in our strategic plan.
- Reaching our target goal enables AAC to pay for items our community wants to see the Board add, continue, or bring back to pre-Covid levels.

**How should members determine their Community Commitment contribution amount?**

Members are asked to pledge as generously as their financial ability permits. We ask members to consider contributing ***an amount equal to, or greater than total annual contributions for dues, Kol Nidre and other contributions they have made in the past.***

### **Why do these FAQs matter for every member?**

- Each member's Community Commitment contribution matters to supporting the services, programming, and spiritual support that AAC members want.
- These FAQs intend to clarify any confusion by members who last year contributed less than they had contributed in dues and other donations in prior years before 2021-2022.
- Community Commitment contributions are the only source of funds to sustain AAC's services, programming and operations.
- ***We ask every member to increase their contribution to assure that our entire AAC Community continues to enjoy our full services and hospitality.***

### **Have more questions about the Community Commitment?**

General Questions: Larry Altenburg ([laltenburg@agudasachim-va.org](mailto:laltenburg@agudasachim-va.org)), Arden Levy ([alevy@agudasachim-va.org](mailto:alevy@agudasachim-va.org)), Michael Drobniis ([Mdrobniis@agudasachim-va.org](mailto:Mdrobniis@agudasachim-va.org)), Marc Wilson ([mwilson@agudasachim-va.org](mailto:mwilson@agudasachim-va.org)).

Operational Questions: Barry Nove, Executive Director ([bnove@agudasachim-va.org](mailto:bnove@agudasachim-va.org)); Glenn Mays, Accounts Clerk, ([gmays@agudasachim-va.org](mailto:gmays@agudasachim-va.org)), or any Office Team member at 703-998-6460.