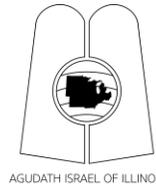


י"ז אדר תש"פ
March 13, 2020
Chicago, Illinois



Dear Chicago Community Members:

We have been monitoring developments in the Coronavirus pandemic that continues to spread and affect our daily lives. While ב"ה we do not know of any cases in our community, we recognize the need to take appropriate measures to protect ourselves.

First and foremost, as a community of יראי שמים, we know that אלו על מי להשען אלא על אבינו שבשמים – our fate and destiny is in the hands of Hashem. We must direct our prayers towards the Almighty to heal the sick and preserve everyone's health throughout this public health crisis. All shuls in the city should say chapters ק"ל and קמ"ב of Tehillim every day, in addition to accepting appropriate קבלות.

We recognize that חמירא סכנתא מאיסורא (Chulin 10a) - we must be vigilant to minimize the risk to our community. Sometimes it is necessary to curtail certain observances, even significant ones, on a temporary basis in order that we merit to observe mitzvos in the long term. Following in the footsteps of רבי עקיבא איגר and our מסורה, we are committed to following the developing recommendations of our Health Departments, and to heeding regularly updated CDC recommendations for hygiene, social distancing, and protecting the most endangered.

Following a recent meeting and in consultation with medical and public health officials, we have agreed to the following initial recommendations for our community, effective immediately and until further notice:

1. Individuals who feel symptoms of illness should not come to shul or go to any public place.
2. Individuals who are otherwise frail, elderly, or immunocompromised should not attend shul or any public gatherings.
3. Unnecessary public gatherings should be postponed or canceled. There will be no Kiddushim in shul even for simchas. Shul youth groups may continue as long as the schools are open.
4. All individuals must maintain clean hygiene and wash their hands with liquid soap or hand sanitizer on a regular basis, as recommended by the CDC.
5. Social distancing is crucial at this point. Handshakes and physical contact should be avoided. When possible, people should keep at arm's length distance or more from each other.
6. Shuls should take steps to accommodate for ample space between מתפללים during minyanim.
7. Weddings and other שמחות should be limited as possible, and not be attended by more than 250 individuals. The baalei simcha should consult with their Rav for guidance.

We will continue to monitor the situation and if needed make additional recommendations.

We are available to you during this trying time to address your questions and concerns, and we encourage you to reach out to us.

We pray that הקב"ה יצילנו מכל נגע ומחלה and that we should only have טובות to share in the future.

The Rabbanim of the City of Chicago