



Temple Sinai of Palm Beach County

A Guide for Reopening
our Facility and Resuming
Operations in the
Age of COVID-19

The state of Florida and Palm Beach County have begun allowing for the reopening or partial reopening of certain businesses and institutions following closures caused by COVID-19, leaving Temple Sinai grappling with how and when to do so safely and responsibly. Because the top concern should be the health and safety of our community members, the most important fact to remember is this:

Just because it is legal or permitted to reopen does not mean we have to reopen immediately; Temple Sinai of Palm Beach County will make decisions based on a combination of factors, to include what we are prepared for and what is best for us.

This virus is not going away anytime soon. We must understand that until vaccines and treatments for COVID-19 are widely available, infection will continue to spread. There may be multiple closures and re-openings of varying degrees until this pandemic is behind us.

Please understand that no-one with any health risk, either due to age or preexisting condition, should be in the Temple until the Covid-19 situation is substantially under control as reported by federal and/or state health authorities based on trusted scientific information. That clearance will be determined by Temple presidents with the board of trustees.

Anyone entering the Temple while we are under COVID 19 rules, does so at that persons own risk and fully accepts all liability associated therewith. Entry shall constitute knowledge of and acceptance

ALONG WITH CONSIDERATIONS AROUND SAFETY, SECURITY, HEALTH AND WELFARE, INSTITUTIONS SHOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT OUR JEWISH VALUES:

Pikuah Nefesh ("Safeguarding Life"): Supersedes most other obligations or mitzvot. Temple Sinai must balance any efforts to reopen or resume operations with the obligation to preserve life.

Kol Yisrael Areivim Zeh Bazeh ("We Are Responsible for One Another"): We have an obligation to look out for one another, regardless of circumstance, status or perception.

A note on singing: As we move into the possibility of small gatherings, one of the most challenging things for us to think about as a community has been the particular risks of singing. There is still a lot we don't know, and research is ongoing. However, several studies have demonstrated that the aerosolized particles can travel 30ft when we sing and cannot safely be contained with a cloth mask.

Phases of Openness

Base: Safer at home/ Shelter in place

- All gatherings of any size are via Zoom Meeting or Phone
- Gatherings for life cycle events (i.e. B'nai Mitzvah) at home and a member of our clergy or board are present, a limit of 10 persons are allowed with social distancing and facial masks
- Staff meetings are online or via phone.
- All individual appointments are online or via phone.
- Minimal, drop-in staffing sufficient for essential operations
- Our primary High Holiday offerings this year will operate at "base" -- that is, offerings will be virtual, to be enjoyed from the safety of home.

Phases of Openness

Phase One: Very small groups (up to 10 with distancing and facial masks)

Criteria to enter phase one based on CDC opening guidelines (CDC Activities and Initiatives Supporting the COVID-19 Response)

- Downward trajectory of influenza-like and covid-like symptoms reported within a 14-day period.
- Downward trajectory of documented cases within a 14-day period
- Downward trajectory of positive cases as a percent of total tests within a 14-day period (flat or increasing volume of tests)
- Hospitals can treat all patients without crisis care
- Robust testing program in place for at-risk healthcare workers, including emerging antibody testing.

Phase 1 Criteria

Vulnerable persons should continue to shelter in place. All individuals should maximize physical distance from others and wear PPE (personal Protective Equipment). Social settings of more than 10 people should be avoided. Non-essential travel should be minimized, and individuals should isolate 14 days following travel.

Guidelines Temple Sinai community life during Phase One:

Continue holding online services only.

It may be possible to resume streaming from the sanctuary, while maintaining at least 6 ft of space between staff and wearing facemasks.

School and organized youth activities that are currently closed should remain closed.

Life rituals (weddings, Bar Mitzvah, etc.) should be kept to 10 people or less in attendance, including participants themselves. Consider limiting to immediate family only. 6 ft of distancing and facemasks to be enforced. This includes offsite (home) events where temple clergy or board members are present

Prayers to be read and not chanted.

Small groups continue to meet online.

Limit in-office functions to essential operations Make sure that surfaces, including the phone, are regularly cleaned.

Leadership teams of fewer than 10 might consider meeting in person while wearing masks and maintaining social distancing, or continue meeting online.

For higher risk individuals, currently defined as people over 60 and those with underlying conditions, the risk during this phase is still significant. We recommend that these individuals, whether staff or congregant, remain at "base" - i.e. continue to shelter in place.

Phase Two Criteria

Groups of up to 50 with distancing and facial masks

Criteria: Palm Beach County satisfies the original gating criteria a second time, and there is no evidence of a rebound. (14 Day Trajectory Downturn as defined for Phase 1)

Remember, it is possible that conditions will not improve, and infections will increase again. In that case, physical distancing recommendations would need to be tightened temporarily in order to get back on track. Progress will not necessarily be linear. You can help by encouraging careful hygiene, following the physical/social distancing recommendations, encouraging people to stay at home if they have any symptoms of illness, and to cooperate with contact tracers if they are diagnosed.

Summary: All vulnerable individuals should continue to shelter in place.

Guidelines and Expectations during Phase Two:

- Services may be streamed from the Temple sanctuary with a small group of congregants present in person under the following conditions:
- Everyone present must wear a mask.
- Avoid congregating in the lobby space.
- Chairs will be spaced in the sanctuary such that those who live together will sit together, and there will be at least 6 feet of distance between each household.
- There will be no food served, and no time set aside for community mingling after the service.
- Because of the similarity between singing and chanting the Torah and its blessings, we expect that both the *parsha* and the blessings will be read and not chanted. Holding and touching the Torah scroll should be minimized with an eye toward safety. Distance should be maintained during *aliyot*; people might simply rise from their seats to reduce congestion at the *bima*.

Guidelines and Expectations during Phase Two: (Continued)

Lifecycles can take place with careful attention to the following:

- ♦ Even in a large venue, the total number of people present must be under 50, including family, guests, and staff;
- ♦ Social distancing must be observed, which may create additional limitations on the number of guests in a smaller venue.
- ♦ Guests from out of town -- i.e. a different viral environment than South Florida's -- may participate only virtually.
- ♦ All present must wear masks.
- ♦ We will carefully attend to the most current guidelines on singing/ chanting. Our guidance right now indicates that these are not safe group activities.
- ♦ There will be no oneg or kiddush.
- ♦ Regular office functions could resume more or less safely while maintaining social distancing and wearing masks. Continue to attend to cleaning the office. Pay particular attention to high-touch surfaces and handwashing.
- ♦ Individual meetings with the rabbi could resume, or could continue virtually.
- ♦ Leadership teams might consider meeting in person while wearing masks and maintaining social distancing, or continue meeting online.
- ♦ Allow building users/renters to resume operations, with a plan to address cleaning needs and agreement to observe gathering and distancing protocols.
- ♦ Clean the building regularly and between user groups, paying extra attention to high-touch surfaces.

References

The Jewish Federations of North America
& Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations

“A Jewish Community Guide for Reopening Facilities and Resuming
Operations in the Age of Covid-19”

[JewishFederations.org](https://www.jewishfederations.org)

Secure Community Networks

“Consideration for Reopening and Resumption of
Operations”

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention

www.CDC.gov

Florida Department of Health

[FloridaHealthCovid19.gov](https://www.floridahealth.gov/covid-19)

Palm Beach County Health Department

<https://discover.pbcgov.org/coronavirus/Pages/default.aspx>