



November 3, 2020

Frequently Asked Questions About COVID-19

General questions about reopening Temple Israel Center

When will TIC Reopen?

We have already begun limited Evening Minyan and Shabbat services in our building. The Mikveh is also now open.

Sign-up for Minyan is [here](#).

Sign up for Shabbat Services is [here](#).

Email [here](#) for the Mikveh COVID-19 procedures and to schedule an appointment..

While we are all eager to move forward as quickly as possible, the safety of our congregation remains our very top priority. Our Coronavirus Re-Opening Task Force has developed appropriate protocols and will be adjusting them as needed.

What parts of the building will be open?

Evening Minyan services take place in the Reception Hall and Shabbat Morning services take place in the Sanctuary. There is limited availability of restrooms. All other parts of the building will be closed to the public. (The mikveh is open by appointment only.)

Will the office be open?

All TIC employees are working remotely from home and periodically work from the building when necessary and under conditions that ensure their safety.

Types of Services and Activities

What time are Shabbat morning services, and how long will they last?

Our Shabbat morning services now begin at 9:45 am. We anticipate they will last approximately two hours. You can watch them on [Livestream](#). All attendees will need to [register](#) to attend by the preceding Wednesday at noon and arrive on time at the beginning of the service.

Can children attend services in the building?

Anyone under 18 will need to be accompanied by someone over 18 who lives in their home. Children are required to wear masks.

What is the current plan for Kiddush, Friday night dinners and catered events at TIC?

In order to insure the health of our community, we are not able to serve any food in the building at this time. This includes both communal as well as private events. If this should change as the pandemic situation evolves we will let you know immediately.

What is going to happen with B'nai Mitzvah ceremonies through 2020?

We anticipate that B'nai Mitzvah services will continue to take place in our main sanctuary on the dates previously assigned, under the guidelines set by the Re-Opening Task force.

How many people will the B'nai Mitzvah family be able to invite?

We are able to accommodate at least 60 people in our sanctuary and reception halls with our distancing protocols in place. For a Shabbat morning Bat/Bar Mitzvah, at least two-thirds of the available spots will be offered to B'nai Mitzvah guests, and the remaining spots will be reserved for service participants and other community members, including mourners. For a non-Shabbat morning Bat/Bar Mitzvah, the family will be able to allocate almost all of these slots to their guests (a small number of spots will be reserved for clergy and ushers).

How are we observing lifecycle events?

The clergy have officiated at funerals and weddings, complying with all social distancing, masking, and other health protocols.

Is the Mikveh reopening?

The Mikveh is now open. Email [here](#) for the Mikveh COVID-19 procedures and to schedule an appointment.

What about other activities and events?

TIC will continue with a robust schedule of activities and classes via Zoom. Events and activities in the building will NOT resume in-person until the Covid situation improves — updates will be announced as the situation evolves. Certain outdoor events (such as our recent drive-in movie) will be held at TIC — more information will be in the weekly email.

I am not comfortable returning to TIC for in-person activities. Will I still be able to participate online?

We will continue to offer Livestream services on Shabbat and virtual daily minyanim as long as the COVID crisis continues. We also offer a robust number of Zoom classes and activities.

Is Shorashim happening this year?

Religious school will be in session. Please contact [Mara Braunfeld](#) for further information.

Will the Nursery School start back up in the fall?

TIC's Nursery School will be temporarily closed for the 2020-21 school year. This decision was a deeply difficult choice caused by the pandemic and its many unfortunate ripple effects. We value our children and their integral role in this community, and we know how powerful it can be to have the synagogue serve as a second home for our youngest learners and their families, helping to ignite their love of Jewish learning and living. We are dedicated to rebuilding and reopening the Nursery School next year and look forward to a bright and successful future.

Will there be programming for our youth in the fall?

Absolutely! While youth programming will look different than it has in the past, TIC is committed to creating meaningful and engaging opportunities for youth at every age and stage. Mara Braunfeld, our Director of Learning and Engagement, and the entire Education Team are hard at work developing plans for fun, socially distanced in-person as well as virtual programming for our youth for the fall. For *Chalutzim* (Kindergarten-2nd grade) & *Ruach* (3rd-5th grade) contact [Cathy Deutschman](#). For *Kadima* (6th-8th grade) & USY (9th-12th grade) contact Adam Bender.

Will TIC be providing face masks for those entering the building?

We ask that everyone bring their own face mask to TIC events. We will have a limited number of face masks for those who do not; however, there are no guarantees that we have enough when you arrive. Remember – you may not enter the building without a face mask at this time.

Will I have to provide my own Kippah or Tallit?

No. We will provide Tallit and Kippot on Shabbat as services are only held once a week. We feel it is safe to use these items again without disinfecting them after a week of no one touching them.

General Covid Questions

What happens if someone does not comply with the requirement to wear a mask?

Wearing a mask is mandatory. TIC reserves the right to deny entry or ask members who do not comply with the safety protocols which have been implemented, to leave the building.

TIC members are encouraged to bring their own masks. Limited supplies of masks will be available for those who arrive without one.

What will happen if the incidence of COVID changes?

All of our plans are being carefully monitored by TIC Staff and the Re-Opening Task Force and are subject to change. The paramount consideration for our members is *Pikuach Nefesh*. If the leadership of TIC feels that there is an increased risk, then it may be necessary to revert back to a full lockdown once again. If the situation improves we will adjust our plans accordingly.

What Screening and Safety Measures are in effect?

Based upon current information from the CDC and State of New York, and in consultation with members of this community who are physicians and public health specialists, the Re-Opening Task Force has worked to develop safety protocols and procedures for all those entering the building. Anyone entering the building must first complete a screening protocol which can be found [here](#).

Communications

How can we stay up to date as conditions change?

We are committed to communicating regularly with the most up-to-date information in our regular emails, and we have the most current information on our home page.

How can we stay connected to each other during these times?

Please consult our weekly calendar of events to learn what is happening at TIC. Consider joining our [Facebook group](#) to keep up with all of our exciting programming and virtual events. The Hesed Circle is also available to help the community connect with things like friendly phone calls and/or socially distanced visits with senior members or those recovering from illness/injury; grocery shopping and pharmacy runs, and an intergenerational time capsule project. To contact the Hesed Circle please e-mail hesedcircle@templeisraelcenter.com.

Who do I contact if I'm having issues accessing online services or events?

We have members who are available to assist in accessing Zoom and other virtual services. To request assistance please e-mail Zoom@templeisraelcenter.org

Who is monitoring the situation and making these decisions?

Representatives from the Re-Opening Task Force, which includes members of the Executive Committee, staff and the Board of Trustees have been monitoring the situation with the pandemic and evaluating when and how to safely resume in-person activities.