



Return to In-Person Worship Policy

It is the policy of Bet Aviv to provide a safe environment for its congregants and clergy to celebrate the traditions, teachings and practices of Reform Judaism. As the country moves to regain an existence akin to that which existed prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is the policy of Bet Aviv to offer choice options between face to face and video/live stream programming. Each congregant is encouraged to assess their personal situation and circumstances, including health and confidence level, in deciding whether to participate in reestablished face to face worship, programs and learning.

It is further the policy of Bet Aviv that any reestablished face to face worship, programs or learning be consistent with the science and best practices for such gatherings as is available at the time, and consistent with applicable government restrictions and guideline, and consistent with Oakland Mills Interfaith (OMI) Center's restrictions. Nothing in this policy shall preclude the Bet Aviv Board from adopting practices that are stricter than those mandated or suggested by governmental bodies or agencies or in place for OMI according to its Board of Directors.

This policy does not establish the long-term policy of offering worship, programming or other Bet Aviv events via streaming or other remote access services. This policy is limited only to the transition from sole reliance on online services and programming to a return to in-person activities.

On or before the anniversary of the policy's enactment, the policy will be reviewed by the Bet Aviv Board at which time the Board must vote in the affirmative to keep the policy in force for another year. The Board may choose at any time to amend or cancel this policy by a vote at a Board meeting.

Section I - General

1. Worship services shall be available to the congregation through streaming or on-line conferencing software so that congregants can participate/observe in worship services, programs or events (hereafter "services") without attendance at OMI. This streaming opportunity shall constitute accommodation for all congregants, including but not limited to those who are unable or unwilling to physically attend services or those who are unable to attend due to capacity limits.

2. Attendance at services at the Oakland Mills Interfaith Center (OMI) shall not exceed the room capacity established by governmental law, regulation, order or CDC guidance. Nor shall the capacity exceed any limit established by the OMI Board. The Bet Aviv Board may establish an attendance limit less than that permitted by law or OMI policy and may maintain such limits even if governmental and/or OMI capacity limits are lifted or reduced.

3. No person shall be permitted to attend services unless that person has received the complete vaccination regimen given Emergency Use Authorization by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and allowed the recommended two-week period following the final vaccination dose to elapse. Only vaccines given Emergency Use Authorization by the US FDA shall be recognized for compliance with this section.

4. No person who is experiencing symptoms of illness or who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 within the previous 20 days shall attend services. No person who has been exposed to any person who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 shall attend services within 20 days of exposure. Persons who have a condition that suppresses immunity or who are taking immunity-suppressing medications (such as following organ transplant) are urged not to attend services in person, but to participate virtually. Consultation with a physician is urged for those in doubt. Such underlying conditions may include, but are not limited to cancer, bone marrow transplant, solid organ transplant, stem cell transplant for cancer treatment, HIV, use of corticosteroids or immunosuppressants.

5. Inasmuch as opportunities to attend services physically are extremely limited, attendance shall be limited to Bet Aviv members and any conversion candidates sponsored by Rabbi Linda Joseph.

6. No person shall be permitted at services without a mask covering nose and mouth that is properly fitted, worn correctly, and with no exhalation vents. Congregants must have masks on when entering the sanctuary, in the sanctuary and when leaving the sanctuary. This mask mandate shall apply regardless of governmental requirement until such time as lifted by the Board. No person with any condition interfering with wearing a mask shall attend services.

7. Household family units may be seated together within a suite or room at OMI. As required by governmental order, six (6) feet of social distancing shall be maintained between the various household family units. The "six feet between households" mandate shall continue to apply until such time as modified by the Board regardless of modification or lifting by the government.

8. There shall be no singing aloud or responsive reading/speaking (e.g. Modim Anachnu Lach; Mi Shebeirach) by the assembled congregation until the CDC has indicated it is safe. A physical partition shall be utilized to separate the Cantor or any singer from the congregation during any recitation/chant/song.

9. Prayer books and printed programs or materials shall not be distributed prior to or at any service. Prayers will be projected onto a screen behind the bima. Communal kepot/yarmulkes shall not be available for distribution.

10. Services shall initially be reestablished with extremely restricted attendance to test technology and procedures. Thereafter, the Board shall establish a "cap" on the number of congregants who may attend, which "cap" shall be reconsidered periodically by the Board, as further guidance is provided by the government, particularly the CDC and in conformance with the limits set by the OMI Board of Directors.

The Board shall take continued action to determine the maximum number of congregants which may be present at a particular service or event. The total attendance that will be allowed to physically attend any single service or event will be announced well in advance of the dates for services or events.

11. The Board shall make best efforts to coordinate with OMI to: (a) clean restrooms; (b) limit stalls available for use; and (c) establish a system to limit concurrent use of restrooms to a safe number of people.

12. The Board shall make best efforts to coordinate with OMI to attempt to avoid concurrent use of OMI for more than one group at the same time or close in time to ensure that OMI staff has sufficient time to clean and the ability to minimize unsafe gatherings of people.

Section II – Policy for Sponsored Events Not in OMI

1. Any event sponsored by Bet Aviv or any of its committees or affiliated organizations, including the Sisterhood and Men's Club, that is held at any indoor location other than OMI shall comply with the requirements of Section I of this policy.

2. No affiliated organization of Bet Aviv may vary the terms of this policy without the approval of the Board of Bet Aviv.

Section III – Kol Nefesh

1. In order for Bet Aviv to authorize OMI space rental for Kol Nefesh through Bet Aviv, Kol Nefesh shall certify in writing to Bet Aviv that it agrees to comply with any and all State, Federal and County government laws, regulations and orders, and to any and all policies and procedures established by OMI for the use of the OMI space. Moreover, Kol Nefesh shall certify in writing that it will establish a process for monitoring compliance during any event/program/service at OMI. Kol Nefesh shall also designate a point of contact to Bet Aviv in the event that Bet Aviv receives a communication for contact tracing associated with a Kol Nefesh event.

Approved 5/12/21