

Letter from the Reopening Task Force

As we welcome in warmer weather to the Berkshires, preparations are underway for resuming in-person connection with our Hevreh. Our Board of Trustees has approved the purchase of a large tent that will be installed in our second parking lot to welcome group gatherings this summer. Events held at Hevreh will also be accessible for virtual attendance, via Zoom or live-streaming on our website. The plan is to use the tent for Hevreh and Minyan services and group meetings, but all use must be coordinated through the office and comply with COVID-19 guidelines.

When considering whether to connect virtually or in-person, Hevreh's Reopening Task Force has always considered three factors: Federal, State, and local regulations; public health data; and our Jewish values. After reflecting on all three, the Reopening Task Force has established the following guidelines for safe in-person gatherings:

- Low community spread and test positivity rates in Berkshire County.
- A countywide vaccination rate of 70% for high-risk individuals, that is those who are 65+ or who have two comorbidities.
- All members of our staff and adult members of their households are eligible for vaccination.

We continue to monitor the Berkshire County COVID data weekly. Once these safety benchmarks have been reached, Hevreh will embark on a phased reopening. Our hope and plan is that small gatherings will be possible by May and larger gatherings, including Shabbat, will be possible by June. Our commitment to the safety of our community is of the utmost importance. Similar to the Reopening Massachusetts plan, the exact dates may change depending on the public health data.

To welcome everyone to a space that is both safe and sacred, the following guidelines are in place for all in-person, outdoor gatherings at Hevreh:

- No one should attend if they are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, have had close contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19, or have been told to quarantine.
- Those who are particularly vulnerable to or who have not yet been vaccinated against COVID-19 are encouraged to stay home.
- Masks must be worn correctly at all times.
- Physical distancing of 6 feet must be maintained, although members of the same household may group together.
- We strongly encourage pre-registration for all in-person gatherings to ensure compliance with capacity limitations. Those who pre-register will be given priority when we expect to reach capacity limits.
- Current MA regulations prohibit social gatherings for food or drink service. We hope to resume Oneg and kiddush in the future, but for now plan to gather elsewhere for post-service socializing.

Phase 1:

- Small group gatherings of up to 25 persons outdoors (under the sky)
 - Lunch and Learn, Saturday morning Torah Study, Creative Beit Midrash, Committee and Board meetings
- Religious School outdoors
- Select lifecycle events may take place in the sanctuary, with a limit of 25 persons.

Phase 2 - All of the above, plus: (under the tent)

- Larger group gatherings of up to 75 persons outdoors
 - Shabbat

- B'nai Mitzvah

You may have questions about the practical considerations of gathering. More information, including event registration and frequently asked questions will be available on our website at www.hevreh.org/welcome

When you attend a gathering at Hevreh you can expect:

- Pre-register: Sign up for events before you come so we can save you a spot.
- Pre-screen: You will be asked to affirm that you have no COVID symptoms before attending any events.
- Parking: Park in the first lot or the third lot. From the first lot, follow signs around the front of the building to the second parking lot or backyard / patio. From the third parking lot, walk over the footbridge to the second parking lot or back yard / patio. Please do not walk through the ECC play area.
- Tent: A 40'x60' tent will be located in the second parking lot.
- Seating: Bring your own chairs.
- Sharing the space: During Early Childhood Center hours, events will be held in the designated area.
- Welcome: A team of trained welcome volunteers will be here to greet you and make everyone feel at home. (If you would like to participate with the Welcome Team, please contact the Hevreh office.)
- Restrooms: Two portable toilets will be provided.
- Inside Hevreh: Except for limited lifecycle events, the building will remain closed.

If you wish to attend Hevreh events and services from the comfort of your own home, virtual attendance will continue through Zoom. Links will continue to be distributed by email each week. These will be hybrid events with attendees participating both in-person at Hevreh and online to make it possible for those joining from home to see, hear, and participate.

We look forward to gathering in person again and appreciate your patience and understanding as we carefully move through the reopening phases.

Sincerely,

The COVID-19 Re-Opening Task Force:

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