

The Center of our Jewish Lives



# HEALTH & SAFETY HANDBOOK

FAQ + TIPS TO HELP OUR COMMUNITY AT HOME

# IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

## WESTCHESTER JEWISH CENTER

Rabbi Jeffrey Arnowitz: [RJA@wjcenter.org](mailto:RJA@wjcenter.org)

Rabbi Jeffrey T. Segelman: [ravjeff@wjcenter.org](mailto:ravjeff@wjcenter.org)

Cantor Ethan Goldberg: [cantorecg@wjcenter.org](mailto:cantorecg@wjcenter.org)

David Goldstein, Executive Director: [david@wjcenter.org](mailto:david@wjcenter.org)

Ann Pardes, Early Childhood Director: [ann@wjcenter.org](mailto:ann@wjcenter.org)

Aleza Kulp, Education Director & Congregation Program Coordinator: [educdir@wjcenter.org](mailto:educdir@wjcenter.org)



**Please note:** Anytime you see something in **navy blue**, it is a live link and will open the page or email in a new browser!

For the most up-to-date information about virtual services, scheduling, and information, visit: [www.wjcenter.org/safety](http://www.wjcenter.org/safety)

To join our online community, visit us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

## IMPORTANT NUMBERS:

- The NYS Department of Health hotline is 888-364-3065.
- The hotline for those that think they may be infected and have symptoms is: 855-626-7662.
- The Westchester hotline number for those who are under self-quarantine is 866-588-0195.
- The New York State Department of Health Coronavirus hotline may help answer questions regarding COVID-19. For NYS/Westchester county testing, as far as we know, you still need an appointment to get a test.
- How does one get an appointment? Call the NYS Coronavirus Hotline Number: 888-364-3065. What will happen when I call for an appointment? You will get a recording: “If you are concerned that you have been in contact with someone who has COVID-19, press 11. If you live in the New Rochelle area and would like to request a test, press 2. For all other Coronavirus information press 3.” You likely will be placed on hold for a while, maybe even 40 minutes or longer before speaking to a representative, who will ask you questions to facilitate possible testing.

## SOCIAL DISTANCING

We thank the Medical Advisory Group at SAR High School for the information on social distancing.

To slow the spread of COVID-19, the CDC has encouraged us all to practice “social distancing.” Social distancing is a public health strategy that aims to reduce the encounters healthy people have with those who have COVID-19. Remember 80+% of people with COVID-19 will not have symptoms or the symptoms will be very mild. Additionally, there are also people who assume they have the flu or a common cold, but actually have COVID-19. These people will be innocently walking around with COVID-19 touching door knobs, counter tops, etc, and occasionally coughing or sneezing. By distancing ourselves from others, we will decrease our chances of being exposed.

### HOW DOES SOCIAL DISTANCING DIFFER FROM QUARANTINING?

Quarantining is when you are “stuck” in your home and are only in contact with those living in your home. Social distancing allows for movement (albeit very minimal) outside of the home, but with a focus on reducing contact with others. One of the main ways of doing this is by avoiding events and crowds, reducing meetings to a few members, doing work from home, establishing more video/ phone meetings, and keeping a safe distance of at least 6 feet with those that you are with for greater than 6 minutes (6 feet, 6 minute rule).

Not easy, we know! But during this hectic, uncertain time we are all looking for ways to help out... social distancing is something simple we all can do. It is a selfless act, an ethical responsibility, that saves lives and assists the hospitals by decreasing the overwhelming volume they could potentially see. With no public health measures in place, there would be a huge spike in the number of new cases at our hospitals.

However, with appropriate social distancing and quarantining, we are able to diminish this spike of new patients, which is referred to as “flattening the curve”. This serves the essential purpose of potentially reducing the number of people who get infected, and also importantly, of decreasing the number of those who get sick early on in the pandemic. This helps to prevent the major issue of overwhelming our hospitals with too many patients at once, which is what we have seen in many other countries to date.



## TRANSMISSION OF COVID-19

COVID-19 appears to be spread via respiratory droplets. This means with a cough or a sneeze, the viral particles fall to the ground or surfaces when they do not land on a person. They travel generally no more than 6 feet. The virus can live on surfaces for many hours, so someone who touches those surfaces and then touches their face, especially their eyes, nose and mouth, may have just introduced the virus into their system. That is why cleaning surfaces, frequent hand washing, and minimizing touching the face are crucial steps in avoiding transmission of this virus.

The CDC has a very clear website on actions to be taken to protect oneself. The recommendations on this site are very much a part of what social distancing is about.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/prevention.html>

**We are experiencing something in the world right now that requires a dramatic response and total cooperation from everyone in our community and beyond.**

To clarify, let's discuss certain terms in addition to giving better details about social distancing:

## ISOLATION

You should have no contact with anyone unless absolutely necessary. This is reserved for the COVID-19 positive individual because they have the highest likelihood of spreading the disease.

## QUARANTINE

You should restrict yourself to your home and only have contact with individuals in your home. Practice not sharing utensils, beds, cups, etc, and stay 6 feet from each other. This is for the person who was exposed to COVID-19 and therefore may become a carrier and then potentially sick with COVID-19. Because people shed disease before they have symptoms, we have to be cautious with this group. This may seem extreme, and it is certainly disruptive to life, but it makes sense in the big picture of the transmission of this virus. Of note, many countries have instituted regional/national quarantining as a safeguard measure because the virus had spread so much and so quickly that these countries wanted all people to be separate from each other.

## SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDELINES

Unlike earlier in this pandemic when COVID-19 appeared to be limited to certain travelers or individuals, it is now spread randomly in our larger community. Please consider this as you read through the information below. We are all now entering a phase of social distancing and increased vigilance of our social interactions. **Think of social distancing as quarantine, but just turned down a small bit.**

Again, it's particularly important to maintain that 6-foot distance from people other than immediate family. Along with physical distancing, proper hand washing is still important for protecting not only yourself, but others around you.

**Getting fresh air every day is important.** Going for family walks or hikes is good, but be sure to stay 6 feet away from others. People in apartments can go outside but should avoid touching handrails or other items in the stairwell (and use hand sanitizer or good hand washing practices afterwards) and should avoid crowded elevators.

The following chart contains recommendations on social distancing policies. It does not replace guidance from your own doctor, or governmental organizations. These guidelines should apply to all members of your family. We understand these guidelines may be especially difficult for children and teenagers. We get it. But our children are not in school for a reason. NYC Public Schools are closed for a reason. This is very serious and this is not a test. This is all very real.

Being proactive about this level of guidance is the most effective way to mitigate this disease. These guidelines will be reevaluated on a regular basis.

\*Please note that this is subject to change based on evolving CDC recommendations.

SOCIAL DISTANCING RECOMMENDATIONS		
MARCH 2020		
NOT PERMITTED	USE CAUTION APPLY 6 FOOT RULE AND HAND WASH BEFORE AND AFTER	SAFE TO DO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group gatherings such as weddings/funerals/minyanim (including home minyanim)</li> <li>Sleepovers and playdates</li> <li>Sports with non-household family members</li> <li>Joint meals with friends and neighbors</li> <li>Hanging out with friends</li> <li>Non-essential driving with others (sharing a car is considered close contact)</li> <li>Non-essential visitors in the home</li> <li>Non-essential workers in the home</li> <li>Prolonged presence at any business beyond pickup</li> <li>Gyms</li> <li>Malls</li> <li>Mass Transit</li> <li>Crowded Stores</li> <li>Concerts/Movie theaters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grocery stores (opt for delivery, if practical)</li> <li>Pharmacy (opt for delivery, if practical)</li> <li>Going to work (depending on contact, consider changing and washing clothing upon returning home; also, wash hands as soon as possible)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Go for a walk or a run (maintain and anticipate 6 foot distance rule from others)</li> <li>Ride a bike</li> <li>Play in the backyard with household members not on isolation</li> <li>Go for a drive with household members (if not in quarantine)</li> <li>Cook a meal or bake together as a family</li> <li>Work from home</li> <li>Exercise at home</li> <li>Meditation</li> </ul>

# MENTAL HEALTH AND COVID-19

As the coronavirus pandemic affects numerous facets of our society, it also impacts each person in different ways. We are all feeling uncertain about what could happen in the coming weeks, as we hope to slow the spread of this modern-day plague. Feelings of anxiety and uncertainty are completely normal during times like this.

It is important to realize that social distancing does not have to mean social isolation, especially with modern technologies available to many of us. Connecting with our friends and loved ones, whether by high-tech means or through simple phone calls, can help us maintain ties during stressful days ahead, and will give us strength to weather this difficult passage.

**If you need support coping with the events of the last few weeks, there is advice and help available:**

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has a webpage 1 with information on dealing with fear, anxiety, and stress brought on by the coronavirus pandemic. A section of this CDC page is specifically geared toward those with children, as they can be particularly sensitive to uncertainty.
- For additional shareable resources for those with children, see this NPR story 2 and this article and video from the Child Mind Institute 3 .
- For those with mental illnesses, be sure to continue your treatment regimens. Consider developing a plan for telehealth sessions with your provider if you (or your provider) are quarantined or must avoid exposures to the public for any reason. And please reach out to friends and family for support, virtually if necessary.
- [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/managing-stress-anxiety.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fabout%2Fcoping.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/managing-stress-anxiety.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fabout%2Fcoping.html)
- <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2020/02/28/809580453/just-for-kids-a-comicexploring-the-new-coronavirus>
- <https://childmind.org/article/talking-to-kids-about-the-coronavirus/>