

# FOLLOW-UP JOINT STATEMENT TO THE ORTHODOX COMMUNITY REGARDING PESACH

As our nation and our world grapples with the ongoing critical struggle to contain the mortal threat of COVID-19, we offer the following words of guidance to our communities.

We are all joined in prayer for the success of these efforts at containment, and for a speedy recovery for all those already affected. We acknowledge the pain and confusion that these efforts have imposed on everyone, especially those who will celebrate Pesach away from family and/or completely alone.

All of us share in the grief and uncertainty that is being experienced by so many individuals and families at this difficult time.

We wish for one and all that they be blessed with health and the ability to commemorate these days with meaning and with a measure of joy.

In light of the upcoming festival, we must again share critical notes of guidance. We note that the situation continues to evolve, and under all circumstances nothing should be done that is not within the current guidance offered by local governments and health departments, as well as within the standards prescribed by communal rabbinic and medical leadership.

1. Everyone must plan to celebrate Pesach where they are currently. Travel to other cities, or visits with family even within your city, should be cancelled. This applies to the entirety of Pesach, including Chol HaMoed and the last days.
2. While fresh air walks are encouraged, there should not be Chol HaMoed trips or excursions to parks, playgrounds and other venues, as these will create gathering points for community and pose a grave danger.
3. The limitation against holding Minyanim – indoors or outdoors – must sadly remain in place at this time, without exception.
4. Shopping trips must absolutely be limited to the bare minimum, and – where critical – should be done while wearing a cloth mask, per current CDC guidance. Consolidate lists, and make do with less. Take delivery or curbside pick up whenever possible. This should be observed before, during and following Yom Tov. A crush of shoppers at our stores is a risk we cannot afford.
5. Bi'ur Chametz: At this time of great stress, we may do nothing that would possibly add any stress or burden to our emergency responders. Without a controlled communal Bi'ur, significant risk would be posed by the creation of fires – public or private – for the burning of Chametz. Chametz may be disposed of via trash pick up or the sale of Chametz, and the ten very small pieces from the Bedikah may be crumbled and flushed.

## STAY HOME; SAVE LIVES

We urge one and all – while strictly maintaining the prescribed guidelines – to look out for each other by reaching out to and providing for each other, especially those living alone.

We hope and pray that our sincere Tefillos (prayers) and Chassadim (acts of kindness) will move Hashem to swiftly remove this plague from the world and bless us all with health, peace and tranquility.

Chag Kosher v'Sameiach!



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