

UJA IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD



WHAT COMMUNITIES CAN DO TO HELP THEMSELVES AND OTHERS WHILE IN QUARANTINE

Moses Maimonides urged the 12th century populace of his day, writing: “It is a commandment to remove any obstacle that could pose a danger to life, and to take every precaution with regard to your health,” and as Torah teaches: “Take utmost care of yourself and protect yourself conscientiously.”

— Deuteronomy 4:9

These are suggestions shared by local communities that have experienced change due to COVID-19. Please feel free to share and add your own suggestions based on your community experiences.

> CHANGES IN COMMUNICATION AND CONNECTION

- Create a WhatsApp group, group text, or other social media closed group to minimize misinformation, and keep this channel closed, for members only.
- Change events, classes, and services over to livestream or Zoom, Facebook Live, or another streaming service.
- Consider creating “virtual minyanim” for those who need to say Kaddish.
- Empower your Board of Trustees to make calls to members as a way to check in to see who is well and who is not; a moment of crisis can and should be an opportunity for connection and spiritual support.
- Create a Google online form and/or designated phone line for anyone in need of connection or errands.

> SUPPORTING EMOTIONAL NEEDS

- There are resources available for dealing with mental health issues in times of crisis. Visit ujafedny.org/coronavirus/resources for more information about how to connect and links to webinars on this topic.
- The **Shalom Task Force** is available to help those in abusive or stressful relationships while in quarantine. If you or someone you love is experiencing abuse or stress, call 1.888.883.23.
- If you are facing financial challenges, reach out to the **Hebrew Free Loan Society**, which can provide interest-free loans to cover the costs of lost wages, childcare, medical treatment, or other mounting expenses due to quarantine. Find them online at HFLS.org.
- Promote good mental health in your community by facilitating connections with others who are alone — by email, phone, or FaceTime. Quarantine should not mean total isolation.

- Consider seniors, the homebound, and those who live alone — check in by phone if possible, keeping in mind that many seniors are not connected to internet resources. Offer for volunteers to work with them on an internet tutorial.
- Create online spaces for your community to gather virtually to check in and see each other’s faces.

> LIVING AND LEARNING

- Create a list of businesses that are still open to share with members of your organization, ones that are available to help with grocery delivery, pharmacy pick up, and other critical errands.
- Compile a list of online entertainment options for families in quarantine — these are available through local organizations and schools, Facebook live groups, and cultural institutions.
- Ask members of your community to share their talents via YouTube or live stream, whether it is music, storytelling, teaching, learning, or other forms of entertainment.
- Create a network of online tutors among the high school and college students who are home, in order to help via FaceTime or Zoom with homework and online learning.
- Contact local food delivery services to see if they will arrange a special rate for quarantined families or specify a day they will deliver to the area, and perhaps waive fees beyond a certain number of orders.
- Support local businesses and restaurants by ordering delivery and maintaining a safe handoff of goods, food orders, and other necessities.

Remember: we’re all feeling the uncertainty and anxiety of this moment. We hope you’re able to take time to feel gratitude for belonging to a community that cares for one another.