



March 12, 2020

16 ADAR, 5780

Dear Members,

I wish to address the health crisis due to the novel coronavirus also known as COVID-19. I am sure you have all been aware of what is happening here and in Israel for the past weeks. The situation is constantly changing and that is what makes it difficult to figure out. To keep things clear I will copy from Toronto Public Health as of 12:00 PM today.

Toronto Public Health Update

Toronto Public Health (TPH) is monitoring 29 positive cases of the novel coronavirus: COVID-19 in Toronto. To date, there have been four other confirmed cases reported in Toronto. All four of these people have since recovered from their illness. TPH continues to work with our provincial and federal health colleagues along with airports in response to this situation. At this time the virus is not circulating locally, however given the global circumstances, TPH is actively working with City and health partners to plan for the potential of local spread.

If you have travelled from Hubei Province, China, or Iran within the last 14 days or have had close contact with a person ill with COVID-19, please self-isolate and contact Toronto Public Health at 416-338-7600 within 24 hours of arriving in Toronto. Information about self-isolation is available in the Other Resources section below.

If you have travelled to an area under a [travel health advisory](#) for COVID-19 (other than Hubei Province or Iran) and develop symptoms of 2019 novel coronavirus infection, avoid contact with others and call your health care professional prior to visiting.

Symptoms

COVID-19 symptoms range from common to severe respiratory illnesses and include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Muscle aches and tiredness
- Difficulty breathing
- Less commonly: sore throat, headache and diarrhea

In order to protect yourself, Toronto Health recommends the following:
There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to this virus. Prevention measures include:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 15 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoid close contact with people who are ill
- Stay home when you are ill
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then immediately throw the tissue in the garbage and wash your hands
- If you don't have a tissue, sneeze or cough into your sleeve or arm
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.”

As for Beth Jacob, we are trying to get more hand sanitizer for the building, but it is becoming more difficult to find. Kitchen staff will now be wearing gloves when serving and during kiddush please use the utensils provided when taking food. Please respect those who do not wish to shake hands and I personally will not be shaking hands so please forgive me in advance. At this time all services will continue as regularly scheduled.

This is a difficult time for all society and our community of Beth Jacob. Together with love and understanding we will get through this very stressful situation.

Respectfully,

Rabbi Dov Schochet, Rabbi

Joe Somer, President