



## Resources & Ideas

### COVID-19 Resources

[Pesah Resources](#)

[CJLS Guidance](#)

[CJ Journal](#)

[Education](#)

[Ethical Guidelines](#)

[Leading Services](#)

[The Lev Shalem Series](#)

[Online Resources](#)

[Placement](#)

[Publications](#)

[RA Spotlight](#)

[Readings and Prayers](#)

[Home](#)

### CJLS COVID-19 Q&A

***This page was updated on March 25, 2020.***

*The following are short answers by CJLS members  
responsa of the CJLS.*

*If you have a question to submit for consideration,*

### Sections:

- [Lifecycle Events](#)
- [Pesah](#)
- [Sefirat Haomer](#)

### Lifecycle:

Should hevra kadisha members perform **tohorah**  
concerns?

(Answer by Rabbi Pamela Barmach) *Whether or not*

(Answer by Rabbi Pamela Barmash) *whether or not it is possible to place to protect the team from infection from the members of the hevra kadisha work in close proximity. If the members of the hevra kadisha (after hand washing), then tohorah may be performed. Other than the hevra kadisha or the funeral staff. Whether or not it is possible to stand from an appropriate distance with the members of the hevra kadisha.*

How should **funerals**/memorials be conducted?

(Answer by Rabbi Pamela Barmash) *Funeral should be conducted with the members of the hevra kadisha are in sight of one another but are otherwise standing at an appropriate distance.*

How should **shivas** be conducted?

(Answer by Rabbi Pamela Barmash) *Those in mourning should be encouraged to visit during visiting hours, that their visitors email them when they are unable to visit, which anyone can peek into their home. They may be able to visit when health officials lift the ban on group meetings.*

A young person becomes **bar/bat mitzvah** on their birthday. Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebrations are a significant milestones for the young person. Bar/Bat Mitzvah are a significant source of anxiety. How should they be conducted?

(Answer by Rabbi Joshua Heller) *B'nai Mitzvah ceremonies should be conducted with additional guests may be watching on live stream. The ceremony and parties should be delayed until public health guidelines are lifted.*

*In the current circumstances, many B'nai Mitzvah ceremonies have been postponed. Guidance how to handle rescheduled observances that the congregation has skipped.*

*We suggest the following options:*

*The bar mitzvah could be delayed until the next time.*

*If the celebration is rescheduled to another shabbat, a second scroll, and their Haftarah would replace the mandated reading (Rosh Hodesh, Mahar Hodesh, ...)*

*If the celebration is rescheduled to a shabbat after, added to the regular weekly reading, even though ... gathers, and since there are moments in history in ... obligation. If the child knows at least 10 verses th ... out two scrolls, combine the three weekday aliyot ... added to Shabbat Minhah, though there is disagree*

Can a **wedding** be conducted virtually?

(Answer by Rabbi Aaron Alexander) *When it is det*

- *The couple must be in the same phys ... and public health experts must be co*
- *The officiating rabbis and two valid w ... real-time, but in three different physi*
- *Have each partner (hatan/kallah, hat*
- *Rabbi reads the ketubbah and asks e ... up pen in front of them to validly ena*
- *First witness signs the ketubbah. Sna ... to rabbi (if signing), and then sends t*
- *Officiant (or couple) chants first bless ... chanting, all should have wine/grape*
- *Witnesses attest to rings/ownership/v*
- *Ring exchange, led by the officiant.*
- *At this point, the couple can move str ... another time. Or, for those communit ... by anyone present (Who could otherw*

*A physical is huppah is preferred, but the inability in which the couple began their marriage.*

What happens to the original ketubah if a **wedding**

*(Answer by Rabbi Elliot Dorff) If a wedding is postponed for the wedding, the calligraphed ketubah may be used on the postponed date of the wedding, but another, printed on the postponed date of the wedding and used for*

Should the timing of the **brit milah** be changed?

*(Answer by Rabbi Elliot Dorff, in consultation with boys born during the pandemic should be done as*

1) *First choice: the surgical circumcision is done in groups to meet, the family should arrange for family the naming of the child, followed by a se'udat mitzvah*

2) *Second best option: the brit milah occurs on a mohel using appropriate covering on his/her face and by zoom or other sharing programs with however*

3) *Third best option: If the surgical circumcision is done by a urologist as to what medical procedures are appropriate and his medical condition.*

*Guidance for other life cycle rituals is forthcoming.*

**Pesah:**

How does one balance the need to keep emergency services open during shortages?

(Answer by Rabbi Pamela Barmash) *Because of a shortage of chametz, it is better to burn it rather than use it up.*

Are there safe alternatives for **burning chametz**?

(Answer by Rabbi Pamela Barmash) *It is customary to burn chametz if it can be done safely. Usually it is done outdoors. If it is not possible, it is discarded in the trash if rendered inedible by spring cleaning. It should not be collected from one's property until after the holiday. Many people prefer to sell any chametz rather than burn all of it. This is especially true in areas where the municipal sewer systems are not equipped to handle large amounts of burning chametz.*

May we observe **Pesah Sheini** rather than Pesach?

(Answer by Rabbi Pamela Barmash) *While our community has not observed Pesah sheini since the time of the destruction of the Temple, starting the 14th of Nisan, with a seder to fulfill the mitzvah of eating chametz, we cannot predict the course of the pandemic. If circumstances allow, Pesah sheini are welcome to do so.*

## **Sefirat Haomer:**

May a person be released from **Omer restriction** earlier than the 33rd day?

(Answer by Rabbi Gail Labovitz) The custom of not eating chametz from the 33rd day to the 49th day (see Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim, Siman 490, and the Mishnah Berurah, Siman 490:1, and the Mishnah Berurah, Siman 490:1) is based on the Gemara (Shabbat 127a) and the Rishonim (see, for example, the Mishnah Berurah, Siman 490:1). It is very clear that the prohibition – איסור – is not absolute. The given reason is that it is customary for them to show respect for each other (“they did not show respect for each other”), which is a mitzvah. “askara,” which Marcus Jastrow (p. 94) translates as “to ask for respect,” is also attested. In addition, mourning practices/customs are also attested, including the prohibition of eating chametz.

below). Maimonides makes no mention of this or a (7:22-25), but they do appear in the Tur and Shulh the root n.h.g., a custom rather than a prohibition after Lag b'Omer, which is said to be the day on w

As far back as the time of the Mishnah and the Tal Passover, by (among other things) getting their ha fact, they forbid haircutting during hol ha'mo'ed in the spread of the Covid-19 virus by practicing "so closed – and indeed, when it would be dangerous and as it appears that restrictions will last at least holiday without having been able to get our hair c

In fact, the authorities of the rabbinic period were the festival, and therefore in m. M.K. 3:1 allowed from these anomalous cases that the gemara, b. M

וותר והנזיר והמצורע העולה מטומאתו לטהרתו:

And these [persons] may cut [their] hair during th and the excommunicated person whom the sages and the metzora who goes forth from his impurit

Without needing to get into the specifics of each c (being at sea or imprisoned/held captive) or ritual impediment is lifted, they are given an exemption midfestival.

Similarly, we need not get into the specifics of whi in our homes to recognize that we are currently u cutting our hair prior to the festival, and that it is the counting of the Omer. I was thus delighted to Israel Meir HaKohen in a short comment in the Bi'

And in any case, those who are permitted to cut th the Omer) it is permitted, for this is not more sign

Rather, as noted above, while the restriction durin recognized as a minhag at most. Thus, when (God and barbershops are permitted by local authorities

and barbershops are permitted by local authorities. Omer may get their hair cut and styled as soon as possible, but note the resonance between the affliction that occurred on the 19th of Sivan, the day of the 19th of Sivan, 19, which often causes acute respiratory distress in children, marked in Jewish practice even long after, then it is marked, it occurs, and that celebrating by getting one's hair

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