

Updated COVID Mask Requirement

Congregation Or Zarua, New York, NY -- August 5, 2021

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Congregation Or Zarua has been focused on implementing appropriate measures to maintain the health and safety of its members and guests. In light of the high rate of transmission of the Delta variant of COVID-19, the OZ Health Task Force met last night to discuss the necessary next steps to ensure the health of the OZ community and its guests.

In the last few weeks, the transmission rate of the predominant Delta variant has increased dramatically on the Upper East Side of Manhattan, as elsewhere, going from 6.5 new cases per 100,000 persons on June 8 to 89.1 on August 1 (<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-data.page#transmission>).

According to the CDC, although increasing COVID-19 vaccination coverage remains the most effective means to achieve control of the pandemic, additional layered mitigation strategies will be needed in the short-term to minimize preventable illness. Vaccination alone is not controlling community spread.

Therefore, the latest CDC recommendations are that all vaccinated and unvaccinated persons wear masks in public indoor settings in high transmission areas.

Accordingly, following the CDC recommendations, the OZ Health Task Force concluded that we must return to wearing masks in the OZ building. Effective immediately, everyone entering the OZ building, regardless of vaccine status, will be required to wear a mask while in the building. The only exceptions will be prayer service leaders who either will wear a mask or have a negative COVID test before the service.

We will continue to monitor the situation and inform you of any changes in our safety protocols.

We are still planning in-person services for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, and we will be communicating about the entire schedule and opportunities to celebrate together as we evaluate the most up-to-date health information.

Thank you for your help in complying with the mask requirement.