



The Jewish Center  
PRINCETON • NEW JERSEY

September 17, 2019

Dear Fellow Congregants:

By now you have received your High Holidays packet of information with your tickets, containing information on our varied services, programming, and events. On behalf of our staff and lay leadership, I look forward to welcoming you for our High Holidays.

As stated in the letter in that packet: *“When you arrive at the synagogue or the Riverside School for services, you will see many new security plans put in place. It is our Number-One priority to provide a safe and secure environment for everyone. Please allow 10-15 extra minutes to enter the buildings this year due to enhanced security measures. We appreciate your patience and understanding.”*

For security reasons, **everyone must bring their High Holiday tickets and a form of photo ID.** Please be prepared to show them to our volunteer greeters at the entrance to the synagogue or to the Riverside service. In addition, bags will be inspected. **Entrance to the TJC building will be exclusively through the main lobby doors.** All other doors will be locked and alarmed. For those who are concerned about wheelchair accessibility, please call Roni in the office to pre-arrange accommodation.

In addition, the Board of Directors has approved a “no weapons” policy on TJC grounds and events at any time. The policy is enclosed and you can also find the policy on our web site. Weapons include, but are not limited to, guns, knives or swords with blades over four inches in length, box cutters, explosives, and any chemical whose purpose is to cause harm to another person. This applies whether or not a person has a concealed carry permit issued by New Jersey or another jurisdiction.

Your staff and lay leaders spent many hours doing research and consulting with police and other experts about how to best prepare for the holidays. Sadly, this is being done in the current national context with an increase in hate crimes and extremism in all forms, but particularly against Jews and Jewish congregations. We all wish these problems didn’t exist – but they do. Our Jewish Center community is and will remain a welcoming community, and it is our collective responsibility to make sure it is a safe one as well.

Some congregants have commented about the measures we are taking, and asked whether they are truly necessary and useful, and how our practices compare with other congregations in our area and elsewhere. To help answer these important questions, I asked our past president Gil Gordon to comment based on his role as the Chair of the Mid-Atlantic District of United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism and a member of the USCJ national board. Here is his reply:

*There isn't a congregation in the country – and probably around the world – that isn't agonizing over these issues. Everyone wants to be safe - but nobody wants to be made to feel they are under scrutiny and treated as a possible "bad actor" especially if they have been long-time members. Everyone wants to feel they can gather and pray in peace and safety - but nobody wants to feel that intrusive steps are being taken that can spoil the mood and feeling of the High Holidays.*

*Many congregations around the country routinely ask for photo ID – and conduct bag checks – for everyone entering their buildings every day of the week, let alone on Shabbat and holidays, even though there are no absolute guarantees that doing so will guarantee complete security. Most important, The Jewish Center, like many other synagogues, is partnering with local and Federal police/security resources for guidance. USCJ has shared a great deal of information with its congregations to help them make wise choices based on their situations."*

Jewish Center leadership has engaged in research and discussion followed by detailed planning and implementation of a variety of protective measures. Please help us help you feel safe and comfortable while you gather to pray by understanding and complying with our security requests. While they might be a bit inconvenient, we believe they are necessary and prudent. I have asked Gil, as well as Rabbi Feldman, Judi Fleitman (VP of Administration) and Polly Strauss (VP of Religious Affairs) to sign this letter with me to convey that we all are focused on your safety and request your cooperation.

**Please note:** We will be doing a test of our bag-checking procedures on Shabbat morning, September 28. This will be done as quickly and unobtrusively as possible by qualified security professionals from our security contractor, and they will also be doing the checks on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Please allow them to do what has been suggested for our collective safety.

**L'Shana Tova,**

*Randy Brett*  
President

*Rabbi Adam Feldman*

*Judi Fleitman*  
VP – Membership  
& Administration

*Polly Strauss*  
VP Religious  
Affairs

*Gil Gordon*  
Past President

## **TJC Policy Document: Weapons**

**Responsibility for policy:** VP Administration  
**Date initially adopted:** 09/08/2019  
**Last review date:**  
**Next review date:** 09/08/2021

### **POLICY ON WEAPONS**

Weapons are not permitted on The Jewish Center property, or at facilities rented by The Jewish Center or at events sponsored by The Jewish Center for any purpose.\*

Weapons include, but are not limited to, guns, knives or swords with blades over four inches in length, explosives, box cutters, and any chemical whose purpose is to cause harm to another person.

No one will be allowed onto our grounds or into our buildings possessing weapons, regardless of their possession of right-to-carry permit. No one will be permitted into our buildings who refuses an arms check prior to entering if requested.

\*Sole Exception: Possession of a weapon can be authorized jointly by the TJC President and Executive Director or their designees to allow hired private security personnel and police to have a weapon on TJC property when this possession is determined necessary for the safety and security of our members and guests. Only the joint authorization from Executive Director and TJC President or their designees may approve the carrying of a weapon onto TJC grounds, as defined above.