



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **Letter from MRA, JCRC, and Federations Regarding COVID-19's Impact on the Jewish Community**

**ST. PAUL, Minn.** In the face of COVID-19, an unprecedented global crisis, we are committed to protecting the health and safety of the Jewish community and our neighbors, comforting those in need of support, and providing opportunities for sacred connection during this time of need. How might we move forward together?

The value of *pikuach nefesh*, (saving a life), whether it be our own life, the life of a loved one, or the life of someone we have never even met, is a value that supersedes all else. We must do our part to save lives by promoting measures that are known to curb the spread of COVID-19. Please review the common-sense guidelines from the Minnesota Department of Health. We wish to act with deliberate care, not with fear, in facing this new reality.

We call upon all in the Jewish and greater community to practice social distancing. We are taking proactive measures in our synagogues and organizations, including suspending large gatherings and non-essential small gatherings in our physical spaces. We remain committed to finding alternative ways for our communities to feel connected.

Even as we create distance, we must use this moment to draw close in other ways. We recommend reaching out to family and friends to let them know about financial, mental health, safety, and preparedness resources through our work and that of Jewish Family and Children's Service of Minneapolis (JFCS) and Jewish Family Service of St. Paul (JFS). We recommend reaching out to neighbors to check in and help those who might not be able to afford or access food and medicine. This is also a time to work with other communities to enhance security, address misinformation, dispel rumors, and fight prejudice and bigotry that make our whole society ill.

As we learn about the grave impact of COVID-19, we pause to notice that concern is real, and we must be present for one another with kindness and love. As rabbis and community leaders, we are here for you as our community navigates the emotional, physical, and spiritual challenges we now face. We pray our words and our actions allow us to look out for one another in all the seasons of life.

Minnesota Rabbinical Association  
Jewish Community Relations Council of Minnesota and the Dakotas  
Minneapolis Jewish Federation  
St. Paul Jewish Federation

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