



The Association of Jewish Cemeteries of Greater Hartford of the Jewish Federation of Greater Hartford

Important Information Concerning the COVID-19 Pandemic Revised and effective March 26, 2020

The Association of Jewish Cemeteries of Greater Hartford (AJC) is committed to the health and safety of those individuals visiting our cemeteries, the families who are making funeral arrangements, our caretakers, gravediggers, funeral directors and the AJC professional team. In compliance with the CDC, the World Health Organization and protocol promulgated by federal, state and local governments, AJC is closely monitoring the COVID-19 situation.

Effective immediately, and subject to change, AJC is operating according to the following protocol:

Our Cemeteries: As of now, AJC cemeteries will remain open to the public for visitation Sunday through Friday from sunrise to sunset except for religious holidays.

Burials: We will continue to allow all scheduled burials at AJC cemeteries, subject to specific protocol regarding social distancing, protective gear for our caretakers and gravediggers and limitations regarding attendance at graveside memorial services and burials with the following protocols:

- Graveside memorial services shall be limited to 10 **immediate** family members **only**.
- Everyone on the premises where the burial is taking place must be wearing disposable gloves at all times.
- Any and all individuals attending or providing a service for the burial exhibiting cold or flu symptoms, including coughing, WILL BE strictly prohibited from attending a burial or otherwise being physically present at all services. In the event that anyone that is suspected of or has contracted or exposed to the COVID-19 virus, it is their responsibility and anyone that is aware of or knows to share or notify the Funeral Directors and United States Cemetery Services and related parties. If this should occur, then all protocol promulgated by the State, City, the CDC, the World Health Organization and any relevant government agency or official will be strictly adhered to.
- **A COVID-19 DEATH IS A BURIAL WITHOUT ANY FAMILY MEMBERS PRESENT. NO EXCEPTIONS, RABBI OR OFFICIANT ONLY.**
- Until further notice, canopies and chairs are not permitted on AJC cemeteries. During inclement weather, umbrellas that have been sanitized may be provided by the funeral home.

- **Funeral directors and assistants will carry the casket with the gravediggers/caretakers (no pallbearers). The casket will be lowered, the vault company will install the vault lid and then the gravediggers/caretakers will fill the grave to the top. This will be done under the supervision of clergy and the funeral director. Once this has happened, and the caretaker has created a social distance of at least 10 feet from the grave, the immediate family is then allowed to congregate at graveside. At this time the gravediggers/caretakers and vault company staffs will leave the cemetery.**
- In order to create a safe distance between the funeral director/clergy and the family, the funeral directors should place cones out.
- The ritual shoveling of dirt has been temporarily discontinued.
- Funeral directors and assistants must direct families to create a social distance at graveside of at least 6 feet from one another and will use best efforts to remind families during the service.
- Graveside memorial services conducted by clergy and family members will be no longer than 30 minutes in duration. Families must immediately return to their vehicles after the service.

General Information:

Unveilings: Unveilings will not be allowed until further notice.

Grave Sales and Pre-Planning Meetings: AJC professional staff is currently only available for an in person grave selection meeting at the cemetery to assist families **where a death has occurred or is imminent**, although preference is to make arrangements over the phone. Only one family representative will be allowed to meet our staff at the cemetery and must keep a distance of 6 feet from one another. Additionally, in person pre-need sales appointments will not be scheduled until further notice. AJC professional staff is available to schedule telephone appointments in order to answer questions and handle pre-need purchases and payment.

AJC Business Office: The AJC Business Office personnel are working remotely and can be contacted by telephone at (860) 978-1435 as opposed to in-person visits. AJC will not be scheduling appointments or meetings at our offices until further notice. AJC reserves the right to modify this protocol at any time. We appreciate your cooperation as we do our best to mitigate the risk of exposure to COVID-19 while at the same time serve the community in these challenging times.

Thank you for your cooperation. This protocol is subject to change at any time. Please contact Lisa Vaeth, AJC's Director, with any questions at 860-978-1435. Issued: March 26, 2020