

## **Introduction**

The Rabbinical College of America has developed its Institutional Plan for Restart based on the standards published by the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education of New Jersey and on the Governor of New Jersey's Executive Orders pertaining to Institutions of Higher Education. The Plan for Restart is posted on the institution's website.

Rabbinical College of America included members of its community in developing this plan, including members of the administration, members of the administrative staff, members of the faculty and student representatives.

## **General Safeguarding**

The RCA has instituted general safeguarding guidelines for sanitation and social distancing to protect the health and safety of all students, faculty, staff and visitors.

The cleaning and sanitation protocols are: Entrance halls and common areas will receive extra cleaning and sanitization. Classrooms will be cleaned daily, restrooms will be cleaned and sanitized 2-3 times a day. Food preparation and service areas will be sanitized before and after each meal service.

Hand sanitizers will be placed in common areas, and signage will encourage vigilant personal hygiene and hand washing practices.

RCA has already sourced credible and reliable suppliers for PPE equipment and will have adequate supplies for students, faculty and staff. Students and staff will be requested to bring their own masks. The RCA will have a supply of masks available at the Department Chair's office for those who need. The RCA will keep adequate supply of personal protective equipment such as cleaning spray/wipes, soap and hand sanitizer, paper towels, masks, and gloves. Director of Buildings and Grounds, Rabbi Hersh Lipsker, will be responsible to keep adequate stock of supplies and restock on a regular basis.

As per the Governor's orders, students, faculty, staff and visitors will be required to comply with all social distancing and face covering regulations.

Prior to arrival on campus, students, faculty and staff will be notified of COVID policies via email and through publicity on our website. Program participants will be required to sign a document acknowledging that they have read, understand and agree to comply with all COVID related policies. At the beginning of the semester, students will be reminded of these policies as well. This practice will continue when deemed necessary by the administration and/or faculty. Signage will remind all persons on campus to remain vigilant about COVID policies and safety precautions.

Every student will be required to submit proof of a negative COVID test or a positive antibody test prior to arrival on campus. Students will further be required to acknowledge that they have not been exposed to individuals who have tested positive or had COVID symptoms within 14 days prior to arrival on campus.

Common areas and other spaces that require visual cues for proper social distances, will have designated furniture to facilitate distancing and there will be tape markings on the floor. Director of buildings and grounds, Rabbi Hersch Lipsker, and his staff, will frequently check and adjust the setup of all furniture, to ensure that it is properly distanced.

### **Screening, Testing, and Contact Tracing Protocols**

The RCA will be following all state and CDC guidelines for safe COVID handling and will be working with the Morris County Department of Health. The RCA is fortunate to have a strong rapport with our local officials and we have been in contact with them from the beginning of this pandemic for their guidance on many issues that have surfaced. We will continue to abide by their instructions and report to them as required.

All testing and contact tracing will be executed in a manner that will protect the privacy of those tested or confirmed to be infected with COVID. All confirmed cases of COVID will be reported to the local health department in a timely manner to ensure that proper measures and contact tracing can be put into effect. All students and personnel are required to be tested and have a negative test result before they can return to campus. Testing is available at the following locations:

Refuah Health Center  
728 N Main Street  
Spring Valley, NY 10977

Due to the limited staff, the RCA will not be offering on-campus testing. Any person displaying COVID symptoms such as fever, difficulty breathing and lack of taste and smell will be required to be tested under the guidance of medical professionals. In the event that campus wide testing is suggested, the RCA will work with medical facilities and local labs to coordinate such testing within reason.

Should any person on campus test positive, they will immediately be isolated in a designated COVID isolation wing. The RCA will notify the Morris County Board of Health and follow their protocol. Should a local student become sick with COVID, The RCA will make arrangements to safely transport the student to his home. If the situation requires more serious and immediate attention, The RCA will contact EMS. If a student is not local, or cannot return home for any other reason, the RCA will consult with his family to safely transport him home. If transport is not safe or practicable, the student will be able to quarantine in a specific dormitory wing which has been designated for this purpose.

The RCA will keep a log of all students, faculty, and staff that has returned to campus, in order to contact trace should someone on campus become sick with COVID.

Signs will be placed prominently in the entrance way, reminding anyone returning to or visiting campus to comply with COVID policies. Anyone who had returned to campus prior to

reopening, such as administrative and janitorial staff, will also be informed about COVID policies.

Visitors will not be allowed into student areas. In the rare event that visitors need to enter student areas on campus for urgent and essential reasons, they will be required to testify that they have not come in contact with an individual who has tested positive with COVID -19 or exhibited symptoms of COVID-19 within the last 14 days. Visitors will be required to use face masks and practice social distancing for the duration of time in student areas of campus. Failure to comply with any of the above will result in dismissal from the campus.

Appropriate signage will be placed at key entrances to the campus buildings as reminders of COVID policies.

For students and staff, a very routine schedule of courses and study sessions is part of the fiber of the academic program. Key faculty members are aware of attendance at any given time and have access to these logs. Following Department of Health protocols, we would be able to notify students, faculty and staff within a very quick timeframe of any exposure to COVID-19.

Students will be required to have temperature and screening for symptoms on a weekly basis. Should someone exhibit temperature of more than 100 they will not be allowed on campus before clearance from a medical professional and/or negative COVID test result when deemed necessary.

## **Instruction Stage 1**

All instruction will be performed through distance education via telephone and video conference.

## **Stage 2 & 3**

Safety protocol will be put in place to ensure that the RCA is complying with general safeguarding measures as set by the State. Students and staff will be required to social distance in all classrooms and study halls. All persons will be required to wear face coverings. Furniture will be strategically placed to allow for social distancing, and tape markings on the floor will indicate proper distances. Signs will be prominently displayed, reminding all to social distance and wear face coverings. Classrooms and study halls will be cleaned and sanitized daily. Cleaning spray bottles / disinfectant wipes will be strategically placed so that high-touch areas and shared surfaces can be sanitized regularly.

The RCA is committed to making our faculty and students comfortable with their safety. Any student or faculty member that would prefer a desk barrier can notify the administrative office in writing and this will be arranged within a reasonable timeframe.

The RCA will accommodate faculty and students who cannot attend in person classes either because they are immune-compromised and at high risk for catching COVID, or because they

are sick with COVID. Students will be able to continue learning via distance education. Faculty members will be accommodated to give classes over the phone or through Zoom if necessary.

## **On-Campus Residential Housing**

### **Stage One**

No students will be allowed to reside on campus. Exceptions will be made only if a student has no suitable and safe home to return to.

### **Stage Two**

The RCA dorm on-campus residential housing will be operating at a reduced capacity. Our current occupancy allows for 308. As noted earlier, we will be opening a new wing to facilitate more spacing and we will limit our residence hall to 200 making our reduced occupancy rate at 65% of current occupancy. Students with greatest need, such as students from out of town, or students coming from emotionally/financially difficult homes will take priority in being admitted to the dormitory.

All common areas of the residence hall will be closed during stage two.

Visitors will not be allowed in the residence hall unless absolutely necessary. Students will be encouraged to minimize visits to rooms other than their own.

### **Stage Three**

RCA will continue to reduce the capacity to 90%. All common areas will be sanitized by the maintenance staff daily, and bathrooms will be sanitized multiple times per day. Common areas will be open with clear signage reminding all to socially-distance. Spray bottles and disinfectant wipes will be placed in strategic locations throughout common areas so that shared space and equipment can be sanitized as needed.

Our first-floor residents pavilion was structured to be separate from the rest of the residence halls. These bedrooms and bathroom facilities have been designated for students sick with COVID to isolate in, should the need arise. Additional dormitory rooms and bathrooms in other wings of the dormitory can be designated for quarantine as well, should more space be necessary.

## **Libraries and Computer Labs**

### **Stage One**

The Library will be closed.

### **Stage Two & Three**

Tables in the Library will be reduced to allow for proper social-distancing. Tape markings on the floors and prominent signage will further encourage safety practices are maintained. Only

appropriate number of students will be allowed in the library at a time to allow for social distancing.

Cleaning wipes/disinfectant spray will be strategically placed so that students can wipe down the covers of books prior to using them and when returning them. There will be a drop-off cart in a designated area for reduced contact book return. Students will be required to have a copy of compilations containing reference material pertaining to the tractate being studied, which will reduce the need for shared books. These volumes will be made available to students who cannot readily acquire their own copy.

### **Computer Lab**

The RCA does not currently have computer lab facilities.

### **Research**

The study of Talmud itself contains much research. The research takes place in the study halls, classrooms, and libraries. The RCA does not have a designated research lab.

### **Student Services**

The RCA offers students services such as tutoring and counseling. These services will be available to students both in person with social distancing and by phone/Zoom. When in-person services are necessary, they will be coordinated to ensure students will not congregate in waiting areas.

### **Transportation**

All buildings on the RCA campus are easily accessible by foot and are within close proximity to one another. Shared rides are discouraged. The RCA will provide transportation for students sick with or displaying COVID symptoms.

### **Dining**

#### **Stage One**

All Dining facilities will be closed.

#### **Stage Two & Three**

All dining and food service will follow the Governor's Executive Orders.

All kitchen staff and food service employees will be informed of guidelines for food service during COVID.

The RCA will have separate meal times for different academic programs and course participants, to ensure that the dining room will only be filled to lower capacity and that all students will be able to maintain social distance during meals. The RCA has converted a temporary space to provide an additional cafeteria to further promote social distancing and student safety.

Seating will be placed apart, and tape markings on the floor will indicate proper distance. All surfaces will be wiped down and disinfected before and after food service, and in between shifts. The percentage of capacity and number of students allowed in the dining room will be adjusted as necessary to comply with the governor's executive orders. Rabbi Eliezer Tunk will be responsible to coordinate delivery of food to quarantined students in a safe manner.

### **Study Abroad and International Travel**

The RCA will evaluate study abroad on a case by case basis to determine a respective student's safety and the feasibility of his completing the program. All study-abroad students will be offered the opportunity to finish their coursework at our home campus in the event of closure of the host institution.

### **Athletics**

The RCA does not have any organized athletic activity. Disinfectant spray/ wipes will be available to wash off equipment before and after use.