



Jewish Federation OF GREATER HOUSTON

April 2 PM - Jran Email

Dear Jran Community:

Today, I will go over the Paycheck Protection Program under the CARES Act and resources to help you with the PPP application, advice for religious leaders as Passover approaches, scams related to COVID19, and some helpful tips for those working from home.

Paycheck Protection Program and Other SBA Loans

First thing first, the Small Business Administration's [Paycheck Protection Program](#) (PPP) application **opens tomorrow**. If you are still looking for resources, [please email me](#). We have a CPA and lawyers willing to provide *pro bono* assistance to any of our agencies filling out the application. Demand is expected to be high, so it is important to make sure your application is in the first round.

- The Jewish Federations of North America has a [great resource page on the PPP](#)
- The U.S. Treasury has its own [fact sheet](#)
- The U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business & Entrepreneurship has their [fact sheet](#)

The Texas Governor, Social Distancing, and Passover

What does Governor Abbot have to do with Passover? On March 31st, Governor Abbott issued a stay home order which exempted essential businesses and [added Houses of Worship to the list of essential businesses](#). Many congregations took that to mean that they could [continue their regularly scheduled services](#) and were exempt from the Harris County and City of Houston Stay Home, Work Safe Order. **That is not exactly the case.**

Yesterday, the Attorney General of Texas and Governor issued a joint clarifying [opinion that provides guidance for Houses of Worship](#). Here is a breakdown of what the opinion says:

- Houses of Worship are considered essential due to their protections under the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and Article I of the Texas Constitution
- Due to the public health crisis, Houses of Worship **must** follow mitigation strategies for slowing the spread of COVID19, including moving to audio, virtual, or tele worship
- If a House of Worship cannot conduct remote services, then it must follow Federal and State social distancing guidelines
- The [CDC guidelines still apply](#) to large gatherings and must be followed
 - In-person gatherings are **limited to 10 people** or less
 - Can conduct **drive-thru religious services**
 - Can hold **car services in a parking lot**, so long people keep 6 feet apart and stay in their cars

What is the implication for Passover? Basically, Jewish congregations must still follow social distancing orders in order to comply with Federal, State and local laws. Passover gatherings must be limited to 10 people or less and attendees must be 6 feet apart the entire time.

The Secure Communities Network is going one step further, asking that [this year we do not gather](#). As one Houston Rabbi put it on a recent Zoom call, “how is this night different” is no longer a question, but a statement.

COVID 19 Related Scams

There have been a lot of reports about COVID 19 related security breaches and scams. These range from people [hacking into Zoom meetings](#) to [tax relief scams](#) (you don't need to file anything, the IRS will use your 2018/2019 return to get you the funds). Be aware during this trying time and make sure that you vet all requests for money before you send any funds.

The Secure Community Network (SCN) has a great [resource page for cyber security](#) that you might find helpful. The ADL and SCN will be hosting a call on April 7, 2020 at 1:30 p.m. CT called “[Fighting Hate From Home: Zoombombing and Other Threats to your Videoconferencing.](#)”

Tips for Working at Home

The University of Houston is offering some [free Zoom backgrounds](#) for you to use but be sure not to accidentally [turn yourself into a potato](#) during your calls (unless you want to, then by all means). Finally, Jewish Family Services of Houston shared a great [selfcare BINGO card](#) with Federation staff today. You might find it useful as you practice selfcare from home.

I hope you find time to eat something delicious today.

Take care,

Jackie

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