

Institutional Handbook of Jewish Practice and Procedure

With practice pointers and
implementation guides



*Prepared for
Chaplains and Institutional Staff*



THE ALEPH INSTITUTE

Institutional Handbook of Jewish Practice and Procedure (9/98)

Dedicated to:
The Lubavitcher Rebbe
Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson,
of blessed memory, for his constant inspiration
and leadership.

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Edited for halachic pertinence and accuracy by Rabbi Moshe Bogomilsky, to whom we owe special thanks.

Illustrations by Joseph Maya.

Citations to Jewish Law

Citations to Jewish law throughout this volume are to Rabbi Solomon Ganzfried, CODE OF JEWISH LAW: KITZUR [ABRIDGED] SHULHAN ARUKH, A COMPILATION OF JEWISH LAWS AND CUSTOMS (translated by Hyman E. Goldin, LL.B., annotated revised edition, Hebrew Publishing Company 1993) ("C.J.L."), a copy of which can be ordered through The Aleph Institute or from any Jewish bookstore.

Jewish law frowns upon the use of the actual word representing the Creator's name. Accordingly, references in this volume to the Creator are indicated as "G-d."



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What This Handbook Can Do For You

In 1978, and on many additional occasions, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, the Lubavitcher Rebbe, of blessed memory, called for attention to the Jewish population in prisons. He spoke publicly and publicized entire treatises dedicated to the moral, ethical, spiritual and educational needs for Jewish men and women in those environments and other institutional environments. For example, a person going through prison with meaning and growth—though very difficult—leaves as a better, more productive and balanced citizen. Thus the creation of the Aleph Institute and the publication of this handbook.

Since 1981, the Aleph Institute has provided valuable services to assist chaplains and institutional staff in meeting the legitimate religious needs of Jewish men and women in their care. The Aleph Institute provides answers to questions about mandated religious practices and ritual materials for daily and holiday observances. Aleph's staff and affiliated Rabbis also provide visitation to Jews in institutional environments around the country.

In June, 1995, pursuant to a written request from Peter Carlson, then Assistant Director of the Federal Bureau



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of Prisons ("B.O.P."), The Aleph Institute delivered a memorandum to Kathleen M. Hawk, Director of the B.O.P., identifying the Holy days of the Jewish faith tradition and the religious practices associated with those Holy days that are absolutely mandated by that tradition. A copy of that memorandum also was distributed to all B.O.P. wardens as part of a presentation on the Religious Issues panel at the Federal Bureau of Prisons 1995 Wardens Meeting on June 14, 1995, in Phoenix, Arizona.

Reverend Bryn Carlson, then Chief of Chaplaincy Services for the B.O.P., also requested that Aleph prepare a supplementary memorandum identifying the mandated daily religious requirements of the Jewish faith tradition and the religious practices associated with those requirements.

Recognizing that there was a limited amount of material available to chaplains and institutional staff with respect to the Code of Jewish Law, Aleph adapted those outlines of the mandated religious practices and organized the information in a format designed to provide institutional staff with an easy-to-read introduction to the basic religious requirements of Jewish residents in institutional environments.

This Handbook does not presume to encompass laws governing every facet of a Jew's daily life, *e.g.*, laws governing moral conduct and demeanor, nor is it designed to provide Jewish practitioners with a reference to guide their own observance. Instead, this Handbook is designed to provide chaplains and



institutional staff with a general, yet comprehensive, outline of the minimum daily ritual observances absolutely mandated by Jewish law and an overview of Jewish Holidays and their mandated ritual observances. Moreover, we have solicited real-life experiences and implementation strategies from Rabbis and Chaplains out in the field, providing advice on how to implement religious practices in a variety of institutional environments such as prisons, hospitals and the military.

That is the dual purpose of this Handbook — to give you an understanding of the religious needs of Jewish residents in your institution and practical advice on how to meet those needs consistent with restraints presented by your particular circumstance.

We hope that this information will assist you in establishing procedures: (1) attentive to the Constitutional mandate governing free exercise of religion; and (2) consistent with the oft-stated institutional philosophy of offering the greatest amount of latitude for the practice of religious beliefs within the constraints of the institutional environment.

The Aleph Institute has had a long history of working with state and federal officials to minister to residents of the Jewish faith, and we are willing and available to assist in any additional ways to resolve issues that may arise in implementing such procedures.



With respect to ritual items required for religious observances, we first set forth the preferred practice. In some instances, alternatives are provided by Jewish law to meet less-than-ideal circumstances. For example, Sabbath and holiday meals require blessings to be made over wine and two loaves of bread, *see pp.* 4-8. When wine is not available or permitted (such as in an institutional setting like a prison), Jewish law provides that grape juice may be used. Similarly, braided bread known as “challah” traditionally is used for the blessing over bread, but the requirement also may be satisfied by using two kosher dinner rolls or whole matzot (matzot may not be used on the day prior to Passover, and some have the custom not to eat matzot during the 30-day period prior to this Holiday). Competent Rabbinic authorities always should be consulted when questions of substitutions arise.

We plan to issue supplements to this volume as the need arises, and welcome your comments and suggestions.



1. Introduction - Basic Jewish Concepts and Beliefs

Judaism is the oldest of the Western monotheistic religions. The underlying premise and essential belief of Judaism is the existence of one indivisible, omniscient and omnipotent G-d, who is the creator and ruler of the universe and who revealed the law, the "Torah," which is eternal and of utmost importance to the Jewish people, and who has established an eternal World-to-Come.

The essence of the Jewish faith is contained in a prayer that is recited every morning and evening, the "*Shema*":

"Hear O Israel, the Lord is our G-d, the Lord is One. And you shall love the Lord your G-d with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be upon your heart..." (Deuteronomy 6:4-6).

Observant Jews follow 613 commandments found in the five books of Moses (The Pentateuch: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy) seven laws established by the Great Rabbis and derivative



precepts expounded in the Oral Law (contained in writings such as the Talmud, the Code of Jewish Law (“Shulchan Arukh”) and later Rabbinic rulings) (collectively, the “Mitzvot” or “Halacha”). Since the destruction of the Temple — and the exile that followed — not all 613 commandments are applicable, since many involved services in the Temple.

The eternal nature of the Torah is expressed in the belief that no religious law may be abrogated, eliminated or compromised. For the observant Jew, the original precepts and ancillary rules remain in force even in modern times and circumstances.

Jewish sages generally refer to the Torah as a “yoke.” See, e.g., Ethics of Our Fathers 3:5; Rashi, Talmud Tractate *Rosh Hashanah* 28a (“The mitzvot were not given to Israel so that their observance be a pleasure, but were given to be a yoke on their necks.”); Cf. Rashi, Talmud Tractate *Megillah* 25a (“Decrees of the King, to impose upon us His yoke, to make known that we are His servants and keepers of His commandments.”).

That yoke confines and restricts, but also uplifts and emancipates, and connects the performer with G-d:

It gives its adherents direction so that they should not flounder in the arbitrary ways of humanism, or fall in the morass of hedonism and moral obtuseness. It raises man from being a creature of animal instincts alone, to a rational human being who reflects upon the



consequences of his conduct. The Halacha endows those who observe its precepts with a sense of purpose, giving their life both meaning and sanctity. It therefore embraces every aspect of human activity; both interpersonal relationships... between man and his fellow man—as well as purely ritualistic duties and ceremonials... between man and God, both equally regarded as *mitzvot*, or religious imperatives. (Rabbi Mendell Lewittes, *Jewish Law: An Introduction*, (Jason Aronson Inc. 1987).

The Jew who accepts the authority of the “Halacha” will turn to it for guidance in every undertaking. Indeed, Jewish law imposes a duty to insure that all actions, including eating, drinking, talking, walking, sitting, transacting business, lying down and rising up, are all performed in a manner mandated by Jewish law for the sake of, and in a manner worthy of, serving the Creator. C.J.L. ch. 31.

In Judaism, faith and belief alone do not provide salvation. Faith cannot be separated from particular practices. Although faith is the ultimate basis for much of Halacha, the major emphasis of Halacha is on the performance of *mitzvot*, the performance of deeds.

Who is a Jew?

The Jewish tradition does not teach that one has to be Jewish to achieve salvation. All of the nations of the



world are encouraged to follow the Seven Noahide Laws, involving a faith in G-d and moral and ethical conduct. Jewish tradition teaches that, by following these rules, all people are assured a place in the World-to-Come. (An exposition of the Seven Noahide Laws is beyond the scope of this publication, but study materials are available from Aleph.)

Traditional religious law defines a “Jew” as one who is born of a Jewish mother or one who has properly been converted to Judaism according to Halacha. Conversion is a difficult process and requires a fundamental commitment to Jewishness, including all of its laws and customs, together with lengthy study of Torah, religious circumcision for conversion purposes (for males), immersion in a ritual bath (for both men and women) and confirmation by a Rabbinical court. Jews do not proselytize and conversion generally is discouraged.

Although most institutional systems allow residents to simply designate their own religious status, the Orthodox Jewish community recognizes only those who meet the above criteria and, accordingly, it would be highly unlikely for a person to be properly converted to Judaism while in an institutional environment (e.g., inmates in prison; persons in healthcare facilities).

One must recognize, however, that previously non-observant Jews may, through self-reflection, study and/or serious discussion with clergy or fellow residents, reach a sincere commitment to become more



observant in their individual religious practice. Accordingly, we have attempted to identify all of the significant rituals followed by observant Jews on a daily basis.

While many so-called “denominations” have arisen in modern Jewish life (e.g., Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, Reconstructionist, etc.), we have provided information from a traditional, Orthodox perspective. Chaplains or other personnel who have a firm understanding of the traditional orthodox observant Jewish practices should have no trouble accommodating other denominations.

Messianic Jews

So called “messianic Jews” are invariably not Jews at all, but rather Christian missionaries trying to infiltrate the Jewish community in order to proselytize and convert Jews to their own faith. Institutional staff should be aware of this subterfuge and avoid recognizing such individuals as a subset of the Jewish population for purposes of services or programming. The belief that Jesus—or anyone else—was the “son of G-d” or a “risen Messiah” is contrary to all Jewish beliefs.



Levels of Observance

Under Jewish law, every religious imperative stands separate and apart from one another. A Jew who does not observe one precept properly (e.g., rules of Sabbath) is not absolved from observing other religious rules. Accordingly, the fact that a Jew does not appear to observe all religious commandments (or does not appear to observe those commandments consistently) is not grounds to deny that person the opportunity to observe other precepts, e.g., Shabbat prayer, eating kosher food.

In the same vein, a Jew who violates a particular religious precept is still obligated to satisfy that precept the next time the opportunity presents itself. Accordingly, a Jewish resident who “strays” to the mainline food line should not be precluded from fulfilling the religious obligation to eat kosher food the next time. See, e.g., *Young v. Lane*, 733 F. Supp. 1205 (N.D. Ill. 1990), *rev’d on other grounds*, 922 F.2d 370 (7th Cir. 1991). The opportunity to obtain kosher food is a right, not a privilege. See, e.g., *Ashelman v. Wawrzaszek*, 111 F.3d 676 (9th Cir. 1997).

Moreover, what might appear to the uninitiated to be a “violation” of kosher laws may not, in fact, be a violation at all. For example, a resident who participates in the mainline food line—for purposes of obtaining more variety, for example—by selecting kosher-labeled products and whole fresh fruits or vegetables—is not violating Jewish law at all.



On the other side, the ability to observe one precept does not absolve the Jew from following other precepts. Accordingly, the fact that a Jewish resident may be permitted to pray and wear a yarmulke does not mean that person has been given “enough” opportunity to practice religion and then be denied other religious practices.

Living Jewishly is a process: One observes whatever precepts one is able—and hopefully one proceeds on a path of spiritual growth, observing more and more. As a practical matter, individual religious observances vary greatly. For purposes of this Handbook, we have attempted to outline the requirements of a person who has a sincerely held belief and has chosen to observe Jewish law to the fullest extent.

Finally, the process of identifying and punishing kosher food “violators” seems likely to lead to abuses. From the hundreds of letters we receive every month, it appears that situations arise at specific institutions where staff appear motivated to “violate” and remove persons from Common Fare or Kosher food lines, often as a way of limiting the number of people on those food lines.

It does not appear appropriate for chaplains or administrative staff—or any government employee—to act in the capacity of “religious police,” essentially monitoring another person’s daily religious observances. See e.g., *Reed v. Faulkner*, 842 F.2d 960, 963 (7th Cir. 1988).



2. Jewish Daily Religious Requirements

Jewish daily religious requirements generally fall under one of four categories:

- (1) daily mandated ritual observance;
- (2) clothing;
- (3) grooming; and
- (4) kosher food.



Upon Awakening

Upon rising from sleep in the morning, every person is considered a newborn creature, insofar as the worship of the Creator is concerned. Accordingly, an observant Jew immediately says a short prayer upon awakening, thanking Almighty G-d for returning the soul, and is required to wash each hand with clean water in a ritually prescribed manner and to make the appropriate blessings. Additionally, observant Jews may not walk more than approximately six feet from their beds unless they have washed their hands, except in cases of extreme necessity. C.J.L. ch. 2 §1. A cup with water and a basin is often kept near the bed.

Prayers

Jewish males are required to pray three times daily: in the morning (the “Shacharit” service), before sundown (the “Mincha” service) and at night (the “Maariv” service). Prayers missed due to forgetting or emergency can only be made up during the services that immediately follows (e.g., missed afternoon prayers can be made up only at the immediately-following evening service). C.J.L. ch. 21 §3.



One must keep away from an open lavatory when praying, even though it is enclosed by partitions and does not contain any unclean matter. C.J.L. ch. 5 §12.

One should wear decent garments during prayer. C.J.L. ch. 12 §1.

One must make a serious effort to join his prayer with a congregation. C.J.L. ch. 12 §7. It is highly meritorious to pray in a synagogue or in a House of Study, as these are sacred places. Even when there is no minyan (a quorum of ten male adults) available for prayer, it is nevertheless meritorious to pray in a group. If absolutely necessary, one should pray even if alone. C.J.L. ch. 12 §9.

During certain morning and afternoon prayers, portions of the Pentateuch (the Five Books of Moses) are read from a Torah scroll. When there is no formal Torah scroll available from which to read the required portion during prayers, someone should read aloud the appropriate portion from a “Chumash” (printed volume of the Pentateuch) and the congregation should follow along, so that the practice of reading the Torah not be forgotten. C.J.L. ch. 12 §29.

If a quorum of ten pray and they have no Torah scroll, one should be brought to them for the purpose of reading out of it only if they have prepared an ark or a reading desk a day or two before, so that they have prepared a fixed place for the scroll. C.J.L. ch. 12 §30.



The time for morning prayer services begins as early as when the day dawns; that is, when the first light of the sun is seen in the East and continues through the day. Observant Jews may not begin any kind of work, transact business or start a journey until after morning prayers. C.J.L. ch. 8 §1.

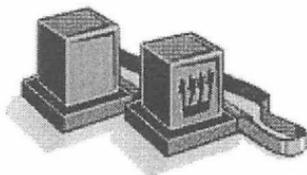
An observant Jew may not interrupt certain portions of these prayer services to speak, even when spoken to.

During one particular prayer recited at each of the three prayer services (the “Sh’monah Es’rai,” or “Eighteen Blessings”), observant Jews may not step from the place they are standing until they complete the prayer, even if jostled or ordered to move.

Observant Jews attempt to pronounce at least one hundred benedictions daily. On the Sabbath, festivals and fast days, when the number of benedictions during prayers is reduced, the number may be increased by blessings over extra foods. C.J.L. ch. 6 §7.

Phylacteries (“Tefillin”)

Jewish males are required to don phylacteries (the “Tefillin”) once daily (except on the Sabbath and certain Holy days), usually during the morning prayer service. There are divergent customs as to whether it is



necessary to don the tefillin at morning services during Chol Hamoed (the intermediate days of the Passover and Sukkot festivals). C.J.L. ch. 10 §25. See Section 6.

An observant Jewish male who is denied the opportunity to don his Tefillin *every* day is being denied the opportunity to observe a cornerstone of his faith. Jewish males who were raised in observant homes generally will have donned Tefillin each and every weekday morning — without fail — since their thirteenth birthday.



Tefillin consist of two sealed leather-covered boxes that contain several texts of the Torah handwritten on small parchment scrolls. One box is affixed to the forehead and the other to one arm, both with thin leather straps. Some observant Jews own and don two pairs, one after the other (each of the two pairs are constructed in a particular way and contain the scrolls in a unique order).

The appropriate time to put on the tefillin begins from that hour of morning when there is sufficient daylight for a person to recognize a slight acquaintance at a distance of four cubits (approximately six feet), C.J.L. ch. 10 §2, and continues until nightfall.



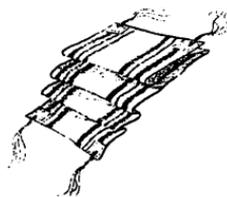
Nothing must intervene between the flesh and the tefillin of either the hand or head (e.g., cap or sleeve). C.J.L. ch. 10 §6.

The obligation to don the tefillin of the hand and of the head are two separate and distinct precepts, and the inability to observe one does not bar the observance of the other. Therefore, if a person has only one half of the set available (head or hand) or, for whatever reason, can put on only one, he is bound to put that one on. C.J.L. ch. 10 §11.

One must keep one's body clean while wearing the tefillin; therefore one should be careful not to do anything unseemly while having them on. C.J.L. ch. 10 §23.

The "Tallit" ***(Prayer Shawl)***

During morning prayer services, Jewish adult males (generally, those who are or were married) wear a "Tallit," a large four-cornered fringed prayer shawl. Observant Jewish males wear a smaller version (the "Tzitzit") all day, generally beneath their outer clothing. See p. 2-11.



Blessings Before and After Eating

Observant Jews always will make a blessing before and after consuming any food or drink.



Before eating bread or bread products upon which the benediction Hamotzi (“who bringeth forth”) is said, one must first wash one’s hands in the ritually prescribed manner. C.J.L. ch. 40 §1.

The water used for washing the hands must be poured out of a vessel that is perfect, having neither a hole nor a crack. It must also be even at the top without any indents or projecting parts. C.J.L. ch. 40 §2.

Observant Jews may not leave their seats at the table before saying Grace after the meal; nor will they go into another room to finish a meal. C.J.L. ch. 42 §19.

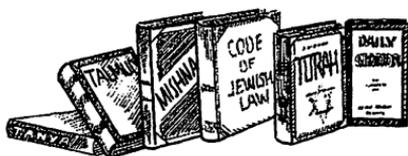


The Study of Torah

Jews are Biblically-mandated not only to observe Jewish law, but also to study it daily at every opportunity. C.J.L. ch. 27 §2. This obligation may be satisfied through the study of Torah, the Code of Jewish Law, and other Jewish texts that discuss the Torah and its precepts.

The Code of Jewish Law has an entire chapter devoted to the critical importance of the study of Torah to Jewish life. C.J.L. ch.27. Jewish law views the spiritual wealth gained by Torah study as more highly prized than the accumulation of material wealth.

If one cannot understand the original text, he may use a translation he understands. The Talmud explains that Onkolos the proselyte translated the Bible into Aramaic, the common language spoken at that time, so that everyone should be able to understand the Torah.



Torah study includes volumes as diverse as the Bible, the Mishna, the Talmud, the Code of Jewish

Law, Prayer Books, and various ethical and Chassidic writings.

The study of Torah should not be viewed as an “all or nothing” proposition where one must study Torah as a full-time endeavor in order to derive spiritual enlightenment. In the best of all possible worlds, such



study would be undertaken by each and every Jew. However, the realities of the modern world, and in particular the realities of an institutional environment, often do not facilitate this kind of time commitment. Nevertheless, while full-time Torah study may not be feasible, Jewish law teaches us that every person should strive to study the Torah by himself, be it ever so little, every day and every night.

If one cannot study the Torah because of his inability to learn or by reason of life's many distractions, he should set a goal to learn Torah each day, be it ever so little, and support others who devote themselves to study.

Upon Retiring

Observant Jews recite the "Shema" and certain Psalms before going to sleep. After saying the benediction "Hamapil" (the last prayer before sleep), observant Jews generally will neither eat, drink nor speak until after falling asleep for some period of time. C.J.L. ch. 71 §4.



Clothing:

Certain articles of clothing are mandated by Jewish law. Other religious laws governing clothing relate to Biblically-enjoined mixtures of fabrics and religious standards of modesty and dress.

Religious Laws Governing Clothing and Modesty

A Jew must dress and act modestly.

Observant Jewish females will not wear shorts, pants or sleeveless tops as they always endeavor to keep their knees and elbows covered. Observant Jewish males generally will not wear shorts or cutoff shirts.

A married Jewish female must keep her hair covered at all times. Observant females often satisfy this requirement by wearing hats, a wig or cloth head-covering.

There are no religious articles of clothing that women are required to wear.



Some segments of the Jewish community have adopted the dress of their Rabbis and nobles of the particular European or Mid-Eastern community from which they derive their traditions (typically, black jackets or caftans and hats). Traditionally, they will wear these special clothing especially on the Sabbath and Holy Days.

A male is forbidden to wear any garments designed for women, even though he can be recognized as a male by his other garments. A woman is likewise forbidden to wear even a single garment designed for men. C.J.L. ch. 171 §1.

The “Yarmulke” or “Kippah”



Jewish males are required to wear a head-covering at all times, in order to remind them that Almighty G-d is above them. Observant Jewish males must not walk even as much as four cubits (approximately six feet) or utter a single holy word (e.g., prayer or Torah study), while being bareheaded. C.J.L. ch. 3 §6. Some more observant Jews will sleep with their head covered, too.



Acceptable head coverings include any type of hat or cap, or a small circular traditional cloth cap (commonly referred to as the “yarmulke” or “kippah”).

The “Tzitzit” or “Tallit Katan”

The precept to wear a four-cornered, fringed garment (commonly referred to as the “Tzitzit” or “Tallit Katan”) is of great



importance, and observant Jewish males wear one all day. C.J.L. ch. 9 §1. During daylight hours, observant Jews may not walk even as much as four cubits (approximately six feet) without wearing one. C.J.L. ch. 2 §2. Observant males generally wear this religious

item under their outer garments. Some more observant Jews will sleep with the garment on, too.

Jewish male adults also wear a large fringed prayer shawl (the “Tallit”) during morning prayer services. C.J.L. ch. 9 §1.



Religious Laws
Prohibiting the Mixture
of Certain Fabrics
("Shatnez")

It is forbidden to wear a garment that contains both wool and linen. C.J.L. ch. 176 §1 (citing Leviticus 19:19; Deuteronomy 22:11). Such a forbidden combination is called "Shatnez." Even if the woolen garment has been sewn to the linen garment with silk or hemp thread, or vice versa, or if a linen thread was tied to woolen thread or braided together, all these are forbidden as Shatnez. C.J.L. ch. 176 §1.



Religious Laws Governing Contact Between Men and Women

Highly-observant men and women will not have any physical contact with the opposite sex (including handshakes) unless they are married to each other.

Highly-observant Jewish men will make every effort not to pass between two women. C.J.L. ch. 4 §1.

Highly-observant men and women will avoid any circumstance where they are left alone with a member of the opposite sex in a closed room without the presence of a spouse. Observant Jewish men and women do not socialize, dance or sing together. Indeed, most observant Jews are separated from members of the opposite sex (except family members) from an early age, attending single-sex elementary and high schools.

Institutional staff should not view lack of eye contact by observant Jewish persons of the opposite sex as antagonistic. In reality, it is often a reflection of embarrassment felt by people who are suddenly confronted by members of the opposite sex, especially in light of their religious upbringing limiting such contact.



Grooming

Jewish law mandates how and when a Jew may shave or take haircuts and when immersion in a ritual bath is required.

Religious Laws Governing Shaving

Religious law mandates that Jews not use a razor to shave certain parts of their head and face. Electric shavers may be acceptable if their cutting mechanism complies with Jewish law (*i.e.*, cutting via a scissor-like motion rather than a razor) . It is forbidden to shave off the hair of the temples on both sides of the head at their juncture with the cheeks at the ears. According to some authorities, it is forbidden to cut them even with scissors, close to the skin, as with a razor. C.J.L. ch. 170 §1.

The Torah has also forbidden Jews to shave the “corners” of their beard with a razor. The beard has five “corners” and there are many opinions as to where they are. Therefore, observant Jews will not use a razor to shave any part of the beard. C.J.L. ch. 170 §2.

Certain segments of the Jewish community do not shave or cut their beards or earlocks at all; some may trim beards or earlocks but not shave them off altogether.



Jewish law mandates certain periods of the year (e.g., the Sabbath, certain Holy days, mourning periods or fast days, sefirah period), when shaves or haircuts may not be taken. See Chapter 6 (religious holidays) and Chapter 8 (fast days).

Religious Laws

Governing Ritual Baths

The religious laws governing the construction of a proper ritual bath are beyond the scope of this Handbook. Ritual baths may be found in synagogues or other structures in any properly organized Jewish community. Under certain circumstances, natural bodies of water, such as oceans, rivers and lakes, may be suitable for ritual immersion.

Observant Jewish females must immerse themselves monthly in a ritual bath, one week after the completion of their menstrual cycle, before having any sexual contact with their husbands.

Highly-observant Jewish males customarily immerse themselves in a ritual bath in preparing for the Sabbath and Holy days. Observant Jewish males immerse themselves in a ritual bath (the “Mikvah”) on the day before Yom Kippur, to cleanse themselves spiritually and as a prerequisite to repentance, just as a convert to Judaism is required to immerse in that ritual bath. C.J.L. ch. 131 §6.



Certain segments of the Jewish community immerse themselves daily.

Ritual baths are also used to immerse new cooking and eating utensils of glass and metal before their first use.



Kosher Food

“Kosher” means much more than just “non-pork.”

Throughout history, observant Jews have practically starved themselves rather than consume any food or drink that was not “kosher” (the word means “proper” or “fit”). A Jew’s obligation to consume only kosher food is a Biblically-mandated precept as elaborated by principles set forth by Rabbis and Sages thousands of years ago, and applied today. Observant Jews believe that the slightest morsel of forbidden food taints not only the body, but the soul itself. Accordingly, the availability of nutritionally-sufficient kosher food for a Jew is not a luxury accommodation; it is an essential provision to allow that person to live.

All food and their components are divided into four categories:

- (1) Meat
- (2) Dairy
- (3) Pareve (neutral)
- (4) Non-Kosher (which includes mixtures of meat and dairy, and mixtures of meat and fish).

Observant Jews will eat most food products only when they know that highly-competent skilled and learned Jews have supervised the entire process: the source,



preparation and service of the product. Many common products and national brands are labeled with symbols signifying that they have been prepared under Rabbinical supervision and comply with kosher dietary requirements.

Ingredients listed on food packaging are *not* a reliable indicator as to whether the product is kosher. Many ingredients do not list their components (e.g., “Gelatin” does not indicate whether it was derived from animal products or vegetable matter; “Flavorings” does not indicate source) and ingredients used in minute amounts are not necessarily listed.

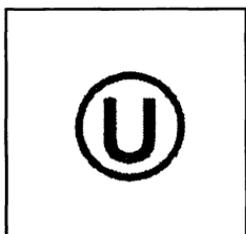
The letter “K” alone printed on a food package has no meaning unless one personally knows the supervising Rabbi to be scrupulous in his adherence of the rules of kosher, since the “K” is a generic letter that may be placed on most anything, and does not indicate that any reputable kosher certifying organization has provided any oversight at all.

The decision to accept the credentials of a particular supervising person or food-certifying organization is a highly-personal choice, often dictated by the personal level of the individual’s observance and the community in which one was raised or resides. Note that only certain symbols would be acceptable to those Jews who are most observant. There are nearly two hundred kosher symbols and agencies certifying packaged foods in the United States. *Kashrus Magazine*, a magazine for kosher consumers, publishes lists of products and manufacturers preparing kosher food, and news and



updates five times per year. One issue per year contains an extensive listing of the names, addresses and symbols used by all kosher certifying agencies. Subscriptions are \$18 per year; \$33/2 yrs, \$45/3 yrs, and may be obtained from Kashrus Magazine, POB 204, Brooklyn, NY 11204. Tel: (718) 336-8544.

The six most-commonly accepted kosher certification symbols, and the organizations behind them, are as follows:



O-U...

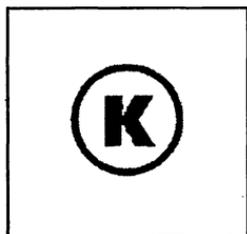
The Union of Orthodox
Jewish Congregations

333 Seventh Avenue
New York, NY 10001

Tel.: (212) 563-4000

Fax: (212) 564-9058

Publication: *The "OU" Kashrus
Directory*



O-K...

The Organized Kashrus Laboratories
1372 Carroll Street

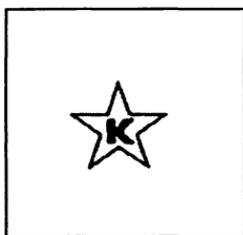
Brooklyn, NY 11213

Tel.: (718) 756-7500

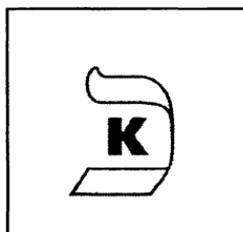
Fax: (718) 756-7503

Publication: *The Jewish Homemaker*

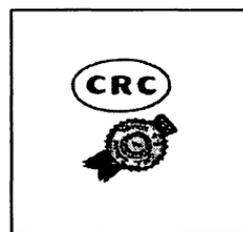


**Star-K...**

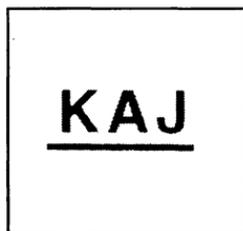
Star K Kosher Certification
11 Warren Road
Baltimore, MD 21208-5234
Tel.: (410) 484-4110
Fax: (410) 653-9294
Publication: *Kashrus Kurrents*

**KOF-K...**

Kof-K Kosher Certification
1444 Queen Anne Road
Teaneck, NJ 07666
Tel.: (201) 837-0500
Fax: (201) 837-0126
Publication: *The Kosher Outlook*

**CRC...**

Central Rabbinical Congress
(Hisachdus Horabonim)
85 Division Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11211
Tel.: (718) 384-6765
Fax: (718) 486-5574
Publication: *CRC Kashrus Directory*

**KAJ...**

K'hal Adath Jeshurun (Breuer's)
85-93 Bennett Avenue
New York, NY 10033
Tel.: (212) 923-3582
Fax: (212) 781-4275
Publication: *KAJ Newsletter*

The intricate laws regarding the selection and preparation of religiously-acceptable kosher food is



beyond the scope of this treatise. For purposes of this outline, we have identified the three essential qualities of kosher food:

- 1- it must be derived from a religiously-acceptable source;
- 2- it must be prepared and served in a religiously-acceptable way; and
- 3- meat and dairy products may not be mixed.

Derived From a Religiously-Acceptable Source

All agricultural products (whole fruits and vegetables) are kosher. Cut fruits and vegetables must be prepared with kosher utensils (*see below*).

Only certain Biblically-defined animals are kosher (*e.g.*, no pork products or shellfish); only certain portions of those animals may be consumed.

Kosher land animals generally are limited to ruminants with split hooves (generally cows, sheep, goat and deer), and poultry (generally, chicken, turkey, duck, goose and pigeon). Only fish with scales and fins are kosher. Accordingly, no shellfish are kosher. Shark, eel, catfish and whale are also forbidden.



Dairy products must be derived from kosher animals. Accordingly, milk products from a pig, camel, or other non-kosher animal are not kosher. Many observant Jews will not consume milk and dairy products unless they have a high level of Rabbinical supervision during processing (“Cholov Yisroel”).

Eggs should be examined before using them in the preparation of food, as any blood spots found in them renders the eggs non-kosher. C.J.L. ch. 46 §1.

Some observant Jews only eat bread made by Jews. In some communities, they do buy bread of a non-Jewish baker where the ingredients are certified as kosher. C.J.L. ch. 28 §1.

Prepared and Served in a Religiously- Acceptable Way

Animals must be slaughtered in a religiously-mandated humane way by skilled and learned Jews.

Meats must be soaked and salted in a religiously-mandated way observed by skilled and learned people.

Care must always be taken that kosher foods are prepared and served with appropriate utensils (e.g., utensils that have not been used for non-kosher foods



or washed together with non-kosher utensils, and are not used both for meat and dairy products, *see below*).

Glass and metal utensils bought for culinary purposes, even when new, may not be used before they are immersed in a mikvah (ritual bath) and the proper benediction made. C.J.L. ch. 37 §1.

In order to be fit for ritual drinking, kosher wine must be certified kosher and “Mevushal” (cooked) C.J.L. ch. 47 §3.

Religious Laws

Governing Meat and Dairy Products

Meat and dairy products may not be cooked or eaten together, C.J.L. ch. 46 §5, nor may a Jew derive any benefit from such mixed foods, *id.* Dishes, cutlery or cooking utensils used for milk cannot be used for meat, and vice versa.

Accordingly, two separate sets of cooking utensils, dishes and cutlery are required: one for meat products and one for dairy foods. *Id.* §8.

It is customary to mark all utensils used for dairy foods, so that they might not be interchanged with those used for meat. C.J.L. ch. 46 §8.



Even a very small amount of meat or dairy (or their derivatives) in a product renders that product “meat” or “dairy.”

Observant Jews will not eat meat at the same table at which dairy products are simultaneously consumed, or vice versa. C.J.L. ch. 46 §6. A loaf of bread used at a dairy meal may not be consumed at a later meat meal, or vice versa. C.J.L. ch. 46 §7.

Kitchen and food service administrators should be made aware that, with respect to meal schedules, observant Jews generally will have to wait a certain period of time after consuming meat before they will eat dairy products. The waiting period usually is determined by tradition. Jews who hail from certain Eastern European countries may wait as long as six (6) hours after eating meat products before eating or drinking dairy products. C.J.L. §46:9. Other traditions dictate shorter waiting periods, e.g., three hours under German tradition. Accordingly, a late meat lunch may prevent a Jewish resident from eating a dairy dinner. Generally, only a short waiting period is required after eating dairy products before meat products may be consumed. *Id.* §11 (generally 1/2 hour; some wait as long as one hour). However, one who eats hard cheese is required to wait the same amount of time before eating meat as if he had eaten meat and now wanted to eat dairy.



“Pareve” Products

Everything kosher that does not fall under the categories of meat or dairy is called “pareve” (“neutral”). Included are eggs, kosher fish and agricultural products (fruits and vegetables). Pareve products may be eaten with either meat or dairy products, with one exception: fish may not be mixed with meat in a single dish.

It is forbidden to eat fish together with meat. Observant Jews will not even roast meat and bake fish at the same time in a small oven, unless either one or the other is covered. There is no prohibition against roasting the two together in separate utensils in a large oven. C.J.L. ch. 23 §1.

“Non-Kosher” Foods

Certain foods are intrinsically non-kosher:

- ◆ animals that do not chew their cud, and those that do not have split hooves
- ◆ most birds except poultry
- ◆ all animals that have not been slaughtered, soaked, salted and
- inspected according to Jewish law
- ◆ all shellfish
- ◆ all insects and rodents
- ◆ all grape juice products not supervised by a Rabbi



- ◆ all hard cheese products not supervised by a Rabbi
- ◆ all mixtures of meat and fish
- ◆ all mixtures of meat and dairy

Other foods may be non-kosher as a result of processing:

- ◆ spray-dried products
- ◆ some canned foods
- ◆ reacted flavors
- ◆ food prepared with equipment previously used for non-kosher food
- ◆ production of fatty acids

Ingredients

The overwhelming majority of basic ingredients may or may not be kosher depending on their origin or processing history. Accordingly, they require Rabbinical supervision to insure that their origin is from a kosher product, and to determine whether they are meat, dairy or pareve.



Ingredients that can never be Kosher:

- ◆ civet
- ◆ castoreum
- ◆ carmine
- ◆ ambergris

Ingredients presently not available in Kosher form:

- ◆ musk
- ◆ natural cognac oil
- ◆ animal gelatin
- ◆ enocianina (grape skin extract)

Ingredients requiring Rabbinical supervision:

Products that may be derived from an animal source:

- ◆ all oil and fats
- ◆ natural fatty acids their esters and especially palmitic, stearic, oleic and pelargonic acids
- ◆ fatty alcohols, hydrolyzed proteins
- ◆ aldehydes and ketones
- ◆ lactones
- ◆ polysorbates, sorbitans and all emulsifiers
- ◆ amino acids and products



- ◆ glycerol and esters
- ◆ enzymes
- ◆ enzyme-modified
- ◆ whey (arising from enzyme action)
- ◆ vitamins

Products that have or may have a grape juice origin:

- ◆ juices
- ◆ wine
- ◆ enocianina
- ◆ natural cognac oil
- ◆ fusel oil
- ◆ amyl alcohol and esters
- ◆ natural valeric acid
- ◆ ethyl alcohol
- ◆ natural ethyl esters
- ◆ natural acetaldehyde
- ◆ vinegar

Products that are dairy or may have a dairy origin and will cause a product to be “dairy”:

- ◆ milk solids
- ◆ lactose, casein and derivatives
- ◆ whey and chemicals produced from its fermentation
- ◆ cream and derivatives
- ◆ starter distillates or cheese: butyric, caproic, proprionic and myrisitic acids
- ◆ fatty acids from butter



Foods That Are Not Kosher For Passover

In addition to all of the above, the following products and their derivatives may not be used during the Jewish eight-day holiday of Passover:

- ◆ wheat (except properly supervised Matzah)
- ◆ rye
- ◆ spelt
- ◆ barley
- ◆ oats
- ◆ mustard except in Sephardic (Middle Eastern) communities
- ◆ alcohol (whiskey and liquors)
- ◆ beer
- ◆ corn
- ◆ legumes (soy, peanut, etc. (except in Sephardic communities))
- ◆ rice (except in Sephardic communities)
- ◆ dextrose (from wheat or corn)
- ◆ sorbitol (except in Sephardic communities)

As a general rule, Passover products may not be manufactured with, cooked or served in utensils that were previously used with non-Passover foods. *See also* pg. 6-15.



All products that require Passover certification must be manufactured under Rabbinical supervision.

Products that contain kosher certification all year *still* require special certification for Passover. Most certifying agencies provide special symbols for Passover-acceptable products. For example, the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations usually adds the letter “P” to its certifying symbol around Passover time to indicate products that may be consumed on Passover.



Ritual Items Generally Required Daily

The following items are required for Jews to observe basic daily (non-holiday) religious requirements (females do not require items 5 through 7):

- (1) *Prayer Book* (the “Siddur”): generally contains all prayer services;
- (2) *Bible* (the “Tanach”): The Pentateuch, Prophets and Writings, which contains the daily Torah readings for the week and is also generally used for religious study, plus other volumes containing Jewish legal, moral and ethical teachings to continue spiritual development (e.g., Talmud, Tanya, Midrash and other Rabbinic writings);
- (3) *Kosher Food*: food that complies with essential religious requirements;
- (4) *Code of Jewish Law*: used as a study tool and reference to research simple questions that arise regarding religious observances (more complicated questions may require Rabbinical consultation);



- (5) *Skullcap* (the “*yarmulke*” or “*kippah*”): worn by males at all prayer services, and at all times by more observant Jews. Highly observant women keep their hair covered at all times, usually by a wig or other head-covering;
- (6) *Prayer Shawl* (the “*Tallit*”): a garment with fringes on each of the four corners, worn by males at morning prayer services, a smaller one is also worn at all times under outer garments by more observant Jews.
- (7) *Phylacteries* (the “*Tefillin*”): a pair of leather-covered boxes that contain several texts of the Torah handwritten on small parchment scrolls. They are worn by men during non-holiday morning prayers and are affixed to the forehead and one arm with thin leather straps. Some observant Jews don two pairs, one following the other (the second is constructed following a different form, and contains the scrolls in a different order).

More-observant Jews will also require a basin and cup for ritual washing of the hands upon awakening.

Each of these items (with the possible exception of large quantities of kosher food) are readily available from Jewish book stores and distributors throughout the country, local synagogues, Jewish community organizations or the Aleph Institute.



Kosher Food In Institutional Environments

Kosher food can be made available to Jews in institutional environments by: (1) preparing it on site with proper kitchen facilities under the direction of a qualified kosher food supervisor; (2) obtaining pre-packaged meals from Kosher food vendors around the country (e.g., sealed airline dinners or shelf stable packaging); (3) Selecting commercially available products containing appropriate kosher certification labels; or (4) obtaining fresh products through retail outlets and kosher food purveyors.

The use of disposable plastic or paper goods is an easy, cost-effective and religiously-acceptable alternative when providing Kosher food in an institution.

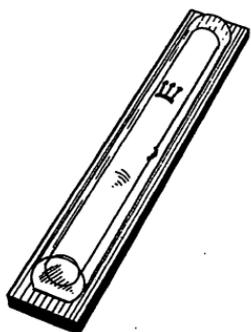
Ritual Items Not Generally Required in Institutional Environments

The “Mezuzah”

The “mezuzah” is a small parchment scroll encased in a box that is Biblically-mandated to be affixed to the



doorways of Jewish homes. The text is handwritten by a scribe and consists of paragraphs from the Bible.



Dwelling places that are exempt from a mezuzah are homes that are not owned or rented by Jews. C.J.L. ch. 11 §19. Accordingly, Jews residing in long-term-care residences, hospitals, prisons and other “public” institutional environments do not require mezuzahs to be affixed to their doorposts.

The reason for the above exemptions is that a house which is used as a *temporary* residence does not require a mezuzah. (Therefore, the *sukkah* erected for the Feast of Tabernacles also does not require a mezuzah during the days of the feast. C.J.L. ch. 11 §14.)

