

כ"ב אדר תש"פ
18 March 2020

TO PARENTS OF RECENTLY ARRIVED BOCHURIM / GIRLS

To parents and carers of Bochurim and girls who are returning to Australia from overseas,^{שיחי}

We are writing to you in relation to the current outbreak of COVID-19 and the measures being undertaken by the Australian Government and Health Departments, as well as our own Mosdos and Rabbonim, to stop its spread and potential impact.

Specifically, we refer to the Australian Government announcement requiring all travellers coming into Australia from overseas after March 15 to self-quarantine for 14 days. This travel restriction will apply to any children in your care who are returning home for Pesach.

Please see the letter below addressed to bochurim and girls who are returning from overseas regarding the expectations and limitations that will apply to them.

AS PARENTS, WE REQUEST YOUR ASSISTANCE BY TAKING RESPONSIBILITY AND DISCUSSING THIS WITH YOUR CHILDREN, AND TO ENSURE THAT THEY STRICTLY FOLLOW THESE DIRECTIVES.

Thank you.

OPEN LETTER TO ALL RECENTLY ARRIVED BOCHURIM / GIRLS

To all Bochurim and girls* who are returning to Australia from overseas,^{שיחי}

Welcome home!

The Australian Government has **required** all travellers coming into Australia from overseas after March 15 to self-quarantine for 14 days, and has stated that this will be legally enforced.

In addition to דינא דמלכותא דינא, Halacha **obligates us** to follow all directives from the medical authorities in matters of health and wellbeing.

As already clarified in our binding Psak Halacha to the Yeshivah Centre community, it is absolutely forbidden to endanger oneself or others. Pikuach Nefesh and even a Safeik Pikuach Nefesh overrides almost all Mitzvos and considerations, and we are obligated to make decisions based on the risk of preventing even just one potential fatality ח"ו.

Therefore, in the current COVID-19 outbreak situation and on the guidance and rulings of the medical authorities, we reiterate here our Psak Halacha to the community:

If you have returned to Australia from overseas after March 15, you are obligated מדין תורה to abide by the rules of self-isolation/quarantine set forth by the Australian Government.

Additionally, Bochurim who have returned from overseas should not attend any Minyanim, including weekdays, Shabbos or Yomtov. To attend Minyan in such

circumstances is a מצוה הבאה בעבירה. This applies even to private Minyanim held in private homes or gardens, irrespective of the size of the Minyan or how spread out it is.

Not heeding to this advice is tantamount to contravening a clear Psak Halacha, and could n"o endanger members of our community and the broader society, which also means that one would be עובר on the איסור of רעך על דם תעמוד.

We trust that we can rely upon you to adhere to the above.

בברכה לחג הפסח כשר ושמח. ושנזכה לגאולה שלימה תו"מ ונאכל שם מן הזבחים ומן הפסחים וקיום היעוד
ואת רוח הטמאה אעביר מן הארץ

Rabbi Chaim Tzvi Groner
Rabbi Mordechai Gutnick
Rabbi Yonason Johnson
Rabbi Moshe Kahn
Rabbi Shmuel Lesches

*The content of this letter applies to all travelers entering Australia from overseas.

From the Department of Health and Human Services Victoria

If you have been overseas upon your return you must stay at home (self-quarantine) for 14 days, other than when seeking medical care.

You must also:

- avoid public settings - this means you should not attend work, school, childcare or university or go to other public places such as restaurants, cinemas or shopping centres and should not use public transport or taxis
- not allow visitors into your home - only people who usually live in the household should be in the home.
- stay in a different room to other people as much as possible.

If you begin to feel unwell and develop a fever or shortness of breath, a cough or respiratory illness, you should call the dedicated hotline on 1800 675 398 for advice. This number is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

From the Australian Federal Government Department of Health

Isolation guidance

If you have returned to Australia from overseas, or been in close contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus, special restrictions apply. This information sheet should be read in conjunction with

the 'What you need to know' and 'Isolation guidance' information sheets at www.health.gov.au/covid19-resources

Who needs to isolate?

All people who arrive in Australia from midnight 15 March 2020, or think may they have been in close contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus, are required to self-isolate for 14 days.

Stay at home or in your hotel

When travelling home or to your hotel to start isolation use personal transport, such as a car, to minimise exposure to others. If you need to use public transport (e.g. taxis, ride-hail services, trains, buses and trams), follow the precautions outlined in the public transport guide at www.health.gov.au/covid19-resources

During the 14 days of isolation, you must stay at home or in your hotel and don't go to public places including work, school, childcare, university or public gatherings. Only people who usually live with you should be in the home. Do not see visitors. If you are in a hotel, avoid contact with other guests or staff.

If you are well, there is no need to wear surgical masks at home. Ask others who are not in isolation to get food and necessities for you. If you must leave home, such as to seek medical care, wear a surgical mask. If you don't have a mask, take care to not cough or sneeze on others. For more information about when to wear a mask, visit: www.health.gov.au/covid19-resources

Monitor symptoms

When in isolation, monitor yourself for symptoms including fever, cough, sore throat, tiredness or shortness of breath. Other possible symptoms include chills, body aches, runny nose and muscle pain.

What do I do if I get sick?

If you develop symptoms (fever, a cough, sore throat, tiredness or shortness of breath) within 14 days of returning to Australia, or within 14 days of last contact of a confirmed case, you should arrange to see your doctor for urgent assessment.

You should telephone the health clinic or hospital before you arrive and tell them your travel history or that you have been in contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus.

You must remain isolated either in your home, hotel or a healthcare setting until public health authorities inform you it is safe for you to return to your usual activities.

How can I prevent the spread of coronavirus?

Practising good hand and sneeze/cough hygiene and keeping your distance from others when you are sick is the best defence against most viruses. You should:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, before and after eating, and after going to the toilet.
- Cover your cough and sneeze, dispose of tissues, and wash your hands.
- If unwell, avoid contact with others (stay more than 1.5 metres from people).

- Exercise personal responsibility for social distancing measures.

Going outside

If you live in a private house, it is safe for you to go into your garden or courtyard. If you live in an apartment or are staying in a hotel, it is also safe for you to go into the garden but you should wear a surgical mask to minimise risk to others and move quickly through any common areas.

Advice for others living with you

Others that live with you are not required to be isolated unless they meet one of the isolation criteria outlined above. If you develop symptoms and are suspected to have coronavirus, they will be classified as close contacts and will need to be isolated.

Cleaning

To minimise the spread of any germs you should regularly clean surfaces that are frequently touched such as door handles, light switches, kitchen and bathroom areas. Clean with household detergent or disinfectant.

Managing the 14 day isolation

Being in isolation can be stressful and boring. Suggestions include:

- Keep in touch with family members and friends via telephone, email or social media.
- Learn about coronavirus and talk with others.
- Reassure young children using age-appropriate language.
- Where possible, keep up normal daily routines, such as eating and exercise.
- Arrange to work from home.
- Ask your child's school to supply assignments or homework by post or email.
- Do things that help you relax and use isolation as an opportunity to do activities you don't usually have time for.

More information

For the latest advice, information and resources, go to www.health.gov.au

Call the National Coronavirus Help Line on 1800 020 080. It operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If you require translating or interpreting services, call 131 450.

The phone number of your state or territory public health agency is available at www.health.gov.au/state-territory-contacts

If you have concerns about your health, speak to your doctor.