

Explanation of Jewish Holidays

The purpose of this calendar...

This calendar and holiday guide has been prepared by the Community Relations Council of the Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island to assist public officials, school administrators, teachers and private employers in planning classes and events that will not conflict with the observance of major Jewish holidays.

The First Amendment to the Constitution guarantees the right of any American to practice their religion. We hope that all Americans will respect the religious practices of their fellow citizens and permit the observance of holy days without penalty or constraint.

Explained in this guide are the biblically mandated Jewish holidays when work or school attendance is traditionally prohibited. Jewish individuals may be absent from school and work on those days. While there are other holidays on the Jewish calendar, these are the holidays when work is expressly forbidden.

★ Rosh Hashanah - New Year

Rosh Hashanah marks the beginning of the Jewish year and the Ten Days of Penitence. The holiday concludes with Yom Kippur. This two-day holiday is observed with day-long synagogue services, the blowing of the shofar (ram's horn) and the eating of apples and honey, symbolic of our hopes for a sweet year.

★ Yom Kippur - Day of Atonement

The most holy of all Jewish holidays is devoted to synagogue services, fasting, prayer and repentance.

★ Sukkot - Feast of the Tabernacles,

★ Shemini Atzeret and

★ Simhat Torah

This eight-day harvest festival is a holiday of thanksgiving and remembrance of the Israelite wanderings in the desert after the Exodus from Egypt. Although Sukkot lasts for eight days, Jews traditionally refrain from working on the first two days and the last day of the holiday. The concluding day of Sukkot is called Shemini Atzeret. Simhat Torah follows and marks the conclusion of the annual readings of the Torah - The Five Books of Moses. The conclusion of Simhat Torah marks the end of the High Holy Day season.

★ Passover

This eight-day festival commemorates the Israelite Exodus from Egyptian slavery. Two home services (Seders) occur in Jewish homes on the festival eve and first night. Work is prohibited on the first two and last two days of Passover.

★ Shavuot - The Feast of Weeks

This holiday commemorates the receiving of the Torah (Five Books of Moses) by the Israelites on Mount Sinai and is observed by two days of synagogue attendance.

★ Shabbat - The Sabbath

This weekly celebration begins on sundown Friday and concludes one hour after sundown on Saturday. Shabbat celebrates God's completion of Creation and the desire to see peace and harmony in the world. As God rested on the Seventh Day of Creation, Jews are commanded to rest and refrain from work on Shabbat as a way to recreate an atmosphere of peace and tranquility. This weekly holy day is the most revered on the Jewish Calendar.

Other major Jewish Holidays where it is permissible to work or attend school:

★ Hanukkah

This eight day festival marks the victory of Jewish forces over the ancient Assyrians, and the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem. The Jewish people fought for religious freedom and were able to throw off the yoke of their Hellenistic oppressors.

★ Purim

This day of Jewish merrymaking marks the salvation of the Jewish community from near destruction by the Persian tyrant Haman. The story of this victory is recorded in the Book of Esther.

★ Yom Ha'Shoah - Holocaust Memorial Day

Dedicated to the memory of the six million Jews murdered by the Nazis during World War II.

★ Yom Ha'Atzmaut - Israel Independence Day

Commemorating the State of Israel's Declaration of Independence in 1948.

Five-Year Calendar of Jewish Holidays

Jewish holidays begin at sundown of the previous day.

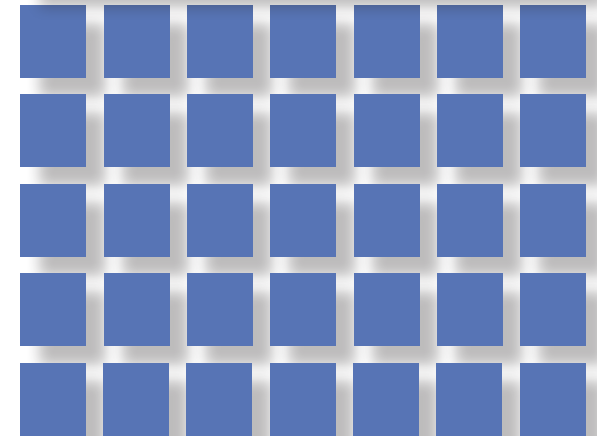
	2012/5773	2013/5774	2014/5775	2015/5776	2016/5777
Rosh Hashanah New Year	Sept. 17 & 18 Mon. & Tues.	Sept. 5 & 6 Thurs. & Fri.	Sept. 25 & 26 Thurs. & Fri.	Sept. 14 & 15 Mon & Tues.	Oct. 3 & 4 Mon. & Tues.
Yom Kippur Day of Atonement	Sept. 26 Wednesday	Sept. 14 Saturday	Oct. 4 Saturday	Sept. 23 Wednesday	Oct. 12 Wednesday
Sukkot Feast of the Tabernacles	Oct. 1 & 2 Mon. & Tues.	Sept. 19 & 20 Thurs. & Fri.	Oct. 9 & 10 Thurs. & Fri.	Sept. 28 & 29 Mon & Tues.	Oct. 17 & 18 Mon. & Tues.
Shemini Atzeret & Simhat Torah	Oct. 8 & 9 Mon. & Tues.	Sept. 26 & 27 Thurs. & Fri.	Oct. 16 & 17 Thurs. & Fri.	Oct. 5 & 6 Mon & Tues.	Oct. 24 & 25 Mon. & Tues.
Hanukkah Festival of Lights	Dec. 9 – 16 Mon. – Mon.	Nov. 28– Dec. 5 Thurs. - Thurs.	Dec. 17- 24 Weds.—Weds.	Dec. 7 - 14 Mon.—Mon.	Dec. 25 - Jan. 1 Sun. - Sun.
	2013/5774	2014/5775	2015/5776	2016/5777	2017/5778
Purim Festival of Esther	Feb. 24 Sunday	March 16 Sunday	March 5 Thursday	March 24 Thursday	March 12 Sunday
Passover	March 26 & 27 Tues & Wed.	April 15 & 16 Tues. & Wed.	April 4 & 5 Sat. & Sun.	April 23 & 24 Sat. & Sun.	April 11 & 12 Tues. & Wed.
Concluding Days of Passover	April 1 & 2 Mon. & Tues.	April 21 & 22 Mon. & Tues.	April 10 & 11 Fri. & Sat.	April 29 & 30 Fri. & Sat.	April 17 & 18 Mon. & Tues.
Yom Ha'Shoah Holocaust Memorial Day	April 7 Sunday	April 27 Sunday	April 16 Thursday	May 5 Thursday	April 23 Sunday
Yom Ha'Atzmaut Israel Independence Day	April 16 Tuesday	May 6 Tuesday	April 23 Thursday	May 12 Thursday	May 2 Tuesday
Shavuot Feast of Weeks	May 15 & 16 Wed. & Thurs.	June 4 & 5 Wed. & Thurs.	May 24 & 25 Sun. & Mon.	June 12 & 13 Sun. & Mon.	May 31 & June 1 Wed. & Thurs.

Note: Shaded areas denote holidays when work is restricted

Call the Community Relations Council at 401.421.4111 for questions, concerns, or more copies of this guide.

Jewish Holiday Guide and Calendar

2012-2017 5773-5778



401 Elmgrove Avenue | Providence, RI 02906
401.421.4111 | www.shalomri.org