

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. Government agencies, hospitals, and the media may find this calendar helpful.

It is designed to encourage public awareness of Jewish religious observances. It is hoped that this guide will help you in scheduling activities like examinations, sporting activities, meetings, and graduation ceremonies during times that conflict with Jewish observances.

There is broad variation of religious Jewish practices in our community. Some students and staff members as well as other employees and volunteers will be absent while others might not.

The exact days of the Jewish holidays and observances differ each year as the Jewish calendar is lunar based.

In addition to providing dates for Jewish holidays through May 2021, this guide also briefly explains the holidays and their significance. <http://www.interfaith-calendar.org/>

★ 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. It 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

Sukkot is an eight-day harvest festival of thanksgiving and remembrance of the Israelites' wandering in the desert after the Exodus from Egypt. Jews traditionally refrain from working on the first two days and the last day of the holiday. The concluding day is called **Shemini Atzeret**. **Simhat Torah** marks the conclusion of the annual readings of the Torah - The Five Books of Moses and the end of the High Holy Day season follows.

★ Passover

This eight-day festival commemorates the Israelite Exodus from Egyptian slavery. Two services (Seders) occur in Jewish homes on the festival eve and first night. This observance will likely result in absences 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 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

This day is dedicated to the memory of the six million Jews murdered by the Nazis during World War II.

★ Yom Ha'Atzmaut - Israel Independence Day

This holiday commemorates the State of Israel's Declaration of Independence in 1948.

Five-Year Calendar of Jewish Holidays

Shabbat and all Jewish holy days begin at sundown of the previous day and end at nightfall on the final day of observance.

	2016/5777	2017/5778	2018/5779	2019/5780	2020/5781
Rosh Hashanah New Year	Oct. 3 & 4 Mon. & Tues.	Sept. 21 & 22 Thurs. & Fri.	Sept. 10 & 11 Mon. & Tues.	Sept. 30 & Oct. 1 Mon & Tues.	Sept. 19 & 20 Sat. & Sun.
Yom Kippur Day of Atonement	Oct. 12 Wednesday	Sept. 30 Saturday	Sept. 19 Wednesday	Oct. 9 Wednesday	Sept. 28 Monday
Sukkot Feast of the Tabernacles	Oct. 17 & 18 Mon. & Tues.	Oct. 5 & 6 Thurs. & Fri.	Sept. 24 & 25 Mon. & Tues.	Oct. 14 & 15 Mon & Tues.	Oct. 3 & 4 Sat. & Sun.
Shemini Atzeret & Simhat Torah	Oct. 24 & 25 Mon. & Tues.	Oct. 12 & 13 Thurs. & Fri.	Oct. 1 & 2 Mon. & Tues.	Oct. 21 & 22 Mon & Tues.	Oct. 10 & 11 Sat. & Sun.
Hanukkah Festival of Lights	Dec. 25 - Jan. 1 Sun. - Sun.	Dec. 13 - 20 Wed. - Wed.	Dec. 3 - 10 Mon. - Mon.	Dec. 23 - 30 Mon. - Mon.	Dec. 11 - 18 Fri. - Fri.
	2017/5777	2018/5778	2019/5779	2020/5780	2021/5781
Purim Festival of Esther	March 12 Sunday	March 1 Thursday	March 21 Thursday	March 10 Tuesday	February 26 Friday
Passover	April 11 & 12 Tues & Wed.	Mar. 31 & April 1 Sat. & Sun.	April 20 & 21 Sat. & Sun.	April 9 & 10 Thurs. & Fri.	March 28 & 29 Sun. & Mon.
Concluding Days of Passover	April 17 & 18 Mon. & Tues.	April 6 & 7 Fri. & Sat.	April 26 & 27 Fri. & Sat.	April 15 & 16 Wed & Thurs.	April 3 & 4 Sat. & Sun.
Yom Ha'Shoah Holocaust Memorial Day	April 24 Monday	April 12 Thursday	May 2 Thursday	April 21 Tuesday	April 8 Thursday
Yom Ha'Atzmaut Israel Independence Day	May 2 Tuesday	April 19 Thursday	May 9 Thursday	April 29 Wednesday	April 15 Thursday
Shavuot Feast of Weeks	May 31 & June 1 Wed. & Thurs.	May 20 & 21 Sun. & Mon.	June 9 & 10 Sun. & Mon.	May 29 & 30 Fri. & Sat.	May 17 & 18 Mon. & Tues.

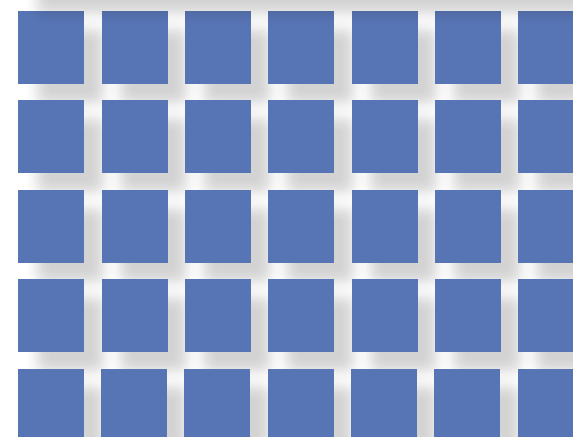
Note: Shaded areas denote holidays when work is restricted.

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

Jewish Holiday Guide and Calendar

2017-2021

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