

## A GUIDE FOR KITCHEN USAGE AND FOOD PREPARATION AT CONGREGATION OHAV SHALOM.

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Ohav Shalom strives to maintain the highest reasonable standards of Kashrut (kosher) and Shabbat (Sabbath) practice. Our rabbis are available to teach you more about keeping kosher and keeping Shabbat, along with other traditional Jewish ritual and spiritual practices. Our approach to Judaism and Jewish practice is “step-by-step,” and we emphasize the meaning and values that stand behind Jewish practices.

This brief guide (which is periodically updated) is a summary of the most immediately relevant Kashrut and Shabbat rules for the synagogue kitchens and social halls, as well as at official functions outside the synagogue. For more detailed questions, please refer to Rabbi Ornstein, Rabbi Kieval, or Mr. Scott Brown, our executive director, well in advance of any activities you may be planning at or for the synagogue.

1. No food or drink may be brought into the kitchens or social halls from a private home. They may not be brought in from a food establishment which is not under kosher supervision by Rabbi Ornstein, the Vaad Hakashrut, (Kosher Supervision Board), of The Capital District, or another rabbi or kashrut organization approved by Rabbi Ornstein. Though individuals may bring in dairy or parve foods from their homes or any food establishment for personal use, all foods served in the building at parties, gatherings, meetings etc. must be from approved sources, even if the food is served outside of the kitchens and social halls. (For instance, donuts from Dunkin Donuts may not be used for official gatherings of staff or laity. However, all baked goods from the full service kosher bakeries at the Price Chopper Super Center Kosher Store in Colonie may be used. Bagels from other non-certified stores and bakeries may not be used.) This even includes fresh fruits and vegetables, which must be cut and prepared under strict kosher supervision when brought in from outside the synagogue, or in the synagogue kitchens.
2. The kosher status and labeling of all food to be used in our kitchens/social halls and at any group gatherings in the building must be checked in by the rabbis, Scott Brown, or another approved *mashgiach* (kitchen supervisor approved by the rabbis). We do not use Tablet-K or Triangle-K products in our kitchens and social halls, or at group events. The exception to this is Triangle-K products that contain no oils or grape products in them. A plain K marking does not automatically mean approval of the product. The rabbis must first check the status of the plain K-marking before approving it. If you

are bringing in a product from a kosher establishment outside of the capital district which is under rabbinical supervision, please check in with the rabbis no later than a week before your scheduled party or event to ascertain that it will have appropriate certification and labeling.

3. When the rabbis cannot be located for advice on any Kashrut or Shabbat matter requiring immediate assistance, please call the Vaad at 518-489-1530 or Rabbi Moshe Bomzer, rabbinic head of the Vaad, at 518-727-5566.
4. All food preparations in our kitchens and social halls must be done with a *mashgiach* present. (Nancy Pandolfo, our office manager, can arrange this for you. Please contact her at [nancy@ohavshalom.com](mailto:nancy@ohavshalom.com) or at 489-4706.) The *mashgiach* may not also prepare food at the same time that he or she is supervising preparations. Only Nancy Pandolfo or other pre-approved staff may enter the kitchens to make simple kiddush preparations and put out kiddush items without a *mashgiach*. The preschool staff may use the dairy kitchen only, without supervision, for school baking projects using utensils owned and kept in the building by the preschool.
5. Only one kitchen may be open at a time, unless a special arrangement is made with the rabbis. If both are open, there must be two *mashgichim* (plural for kitchen supervisors) present, and nothing may go back and forth between the two kitchens. If you need to store cold, dry, wrapped dairy foods in the meat cooler or vice versa, please speak with the rabbis or the executive director well ahead of time.
6. If a meat meal is to follow a dairy kiddush, the kiddush must be cleaned up and the dairy kitchen closed before the meat meal can be served.
7. Nothing is to be cooked, purchased, brought into or taken out of the building on Shabbat or Yom Tov. Pre-cooked, solid foods may be warmed by non-Jewish building or catering staff, in prior consultation with the rabbis. Electrical devices, personal communication devices, writing, drawing, and photographing may not be used or performed on Shabbat or Yom Tov. Before planning any activity that will take place in the building on Shabbat or Yom Tov, please consult with the rabbis.
8. All official synagogue functions are to take place using full Kashrut and Shabbat standards at all times, whether in or out of the building. If an informal meeting for synagogue business is to take place out of the building in a non kosher facility, it is understood that all participants are to order dairy or parve foods. This is especially the case when the rabbis are present at the meeting.
9. #7 includes all meetings, parties, and gatherings of synagogue staff, the preschool, and the religious school. For instance, if children bring snacks and lunch for individual use, these only need to be dairy or parve, without specific supervision. When food is brought in for an entire group, it must possess appropriate Kashrut certification or have been prepared under appropriate supervision. (This reiterates #1, above.)

10. Just as all children's lunches and snacks for personal use must be dairy or parve, so too all staff lunches and snacks must be dairy or parve. The daily minyan kitchen is only to be used with foods that are strictly kosher. Single or personal use dairy and parve foods from outside the building can be stored or warmed in the preschool fridges, the business office fridge, and the preschool microwaves.
11. Synagogue sponsored social events may take place at the home of any congregant, provided that only pre-wrapped or pre-packaged foods that are strictly kosher are being used, that meat and dairy are not served simultaneously, that dairy is not served after meat, and that no purchasing of products was done on Shabbat. It is best to keep all hosted social programs in a member's home dairy and parve. Plastic and paper serving utensils are to be used, regardless of the Kashrut standards of the particular home. Any coffee brewer or hot water pot may be used.
12. Our standard practice is that all meals prepared for our Yad Yonatan and Mothering The Mother programs come from kosher homes. Our standard practice is also to arrange for members with kosher homes to host others for Shabbat meals and holiday gatherings such as seders. Application of all these in-home requirements is at the discretion of the rabbis. (For instance, the membership committee and the board of education may arrange Shabbat meals for new members and Talmud Torah families in host homes, regardless of their levels of Kashrut practice, but the meals must be dairy or parve.) Members with non kosher homes are welcome to help Yad Yonatan, Mothering The Mother, and all home hospitality programs in other ways, including shopping for kosher groceries.
13. We do not scrutinize anyone's level of Kashrut observance. If you say that your home is kosher, that is sufficient for the synagogue.
14. For all goods and services auctions such as our tricky tray auction, only goods and services may be donated and offered that utilize strictly kosher or strictly vegetarian/vegan restaurant facilities and whose programs do not explicitly require the winner to violate Shabbat. (For instance, a hotel weekend package is permitted. Tickets to a play that is to take place on Shabbat are not permitted.) Raffling or auctioning off scrip or coupons for grocery store shopping is permitted.)
15. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Rabbi Ornstein, Rabbi Kieval, or Scott Brown at 518-489-4706. We look forward to helping you prepare for your *simcha* (celebration) or other gathering here at Ohav Shalom, or out in the Ohav community.

LOCAL INSTITUTIONS CURRENTLY APPROVED FOR FOOD PREPARATION AND SERVICE AT OHAV SHALOM.

Temple Israel, Albany; Agudat Achim, Schenectady; Albany and Schenectady JCCs; Hebrew Academy of The Capital District, Albany; Daughters of Sarah Nursing Center and the Massry Center, Albany; Beth Abraham-Jacob, Albany; Beth Israel, Schenectady; Price Chopper Super Center Kosher Store: includes the bagel store and the full service bakery.

WIDELY APPROVED KOSHER SYMBOLS:

1. The O-U 2. The “Khaf”-K 3. The Circle-K 4. The Star-K 5. The MVH  
6. The Diamond-K. 7. The VHCD (Vaad of the Capital District). 8. The MK (Vaad of Montreal). 9. The “Torah Scroll” K. 10. KSA. 11. Crescent (Halfmoon)-K. There are many other kosher symbols which may be used regularly or on a case by case basis. Please check with the rabbi(s) or the executive director, or have the *mashgiach* check with them if there is a particular product that you wish to bring in.