



EVENT PLANNING GUIDE

Bar/Bat Mitzvahs

4905 Fifth Avenue • Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15213 • 412-621-6566
www.rodefshalom.org



Mazel Tov on your upcoming simcha! Thank you for choosing Rodef Shalom Congregation for your event. We will do everything we can to make sure your special event will be a meaningful and memorable experience for you and your guests. This document will guide you in planning your event. The policies within it have been developed to ensure that your event goes smoothly.

The following principles have guided these policies:

- The Temple is first and foremost a place of worship, study and fellowship; all uses of the building and grounds must be appropriate to the character and purposes of the Temple.
- Priority must be accorded to scheduled religious services, Religious and Preschool classes, life-cycle events of our members, funerals and scheduled activities of Rodef Shalom Congregation's constituent organizations.
- Opinions may vary as to matters of decorum, taste and personal preference, but the policies described in this guide reflect the long-standing views of the Temple's clergy, administration and elected leadership.

BAR/BAT MITZVAH PLANNING TIMELINE:

To get you started, please review the following suggested planning timeline:

- 1-2 years before...
 - Set a budget
- 12 to 10 months before...
 - Pick a theme (if applicable)
 - Start thinking about a guest list
 - Reserve your date/time/room for your celebration with Events Director
- 8 to 6 months before...
 - Book vendors like the photographer, entertainment, caterer, florist (if applicable)
- 6 to 3 months before...
 - Order your invitations
 - Schedule a tasting with your caterer (if applicable)
 - Schedule an appointment with the Events Director to tour the facility and discuss your event
- 2 months before...
 - Sent out your invitations
 - Start shopping for favors and decorations
- 4 to 2 weeks before...
 - Follow up with guests who have not RSVP'd
 - Give your final numbers to your caterer and the Event Director
 - Create a list for must have pictures for your photographer (if applicable)

BAR/BAT MITZVAH CEREMONY INFORMATION:

- **Shabbat Pulpit Flowers** - To celebrate your B'nai Mitzvah, it is a tradition to sponsor the pulpit flowers. The suggested contribution is \$60. For those with financial concerns, a minimum contribution of \$35 can be made. Donors are recognized in the service pamphlet that week and also in *Hakesher*. Please send a check payable to Rodef Shalom Sisterhood c/o Pulpit Flowers and send to Sisterhood, Rodef Shalom, 4905 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA. 15213. *Please note the name of your son or daughter and the B'nai Mitzvah date on the memo line of your check.* Flower arrangements can be customized with your favorite colors and flowers by contacting Chana Brody at 412-782-5806.
- **Photography/Videography** - Picture taking must conclude in the Sanctuary on Saturday morning by 9:30 a.m. Please discuss photography protocol with the rabbi. Professional photographers and videographers hired for the event are allowed to use the balcony and the back of the Sanctuary. No flash photography or special lighting may be used that would disrupt the religious ceremony.
- **Bar/Bat Mitzvah Announcement** - Rodef Shalom will place an announcement in the *Hakesher* and in *The Jewish Chronicle*. The family must provide two photos of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah along with a short biography by completing the enclosed form twelve weeks before the date of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Please send forms and pictures to Chris Benton at Rodef Shalom Congregation. Digital pictures may be emailed to Hope Nearhood at nearhood@rodefshalom.org

AN INTRODUCTION TO BAR/BAT MITZVAH CELEBRATIONS:

B'nai Mitzvot and their families choose to celebrate this important milestone in many ways. Three basic options include:

- Sponsored Kiddushes,
- Congregational Lunches
- Private Receptions

Each family can choose to celebrate their simcha with any combination of these commemorations. This booklet will provide you with the information you need to plan all three types of events.

To ensure your choice of rooms and spaces for any Bar or Bat Mitzvah related event, you must let the Events Director know your intention to hold an event at least one year prior to the date of your Bar/Bat Mitzvah. As temple members, your upcoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah and associated events take priority. To this end you will be given first choice of all reception and banquet areas on the date of your simcha, up to one year before the date. If you have not reserved a space for your event by the one year mark, the Temple will allow other members or organizations to rent unreserved spaces on the date of your simcha.

Please Note: When B'nai mitzvah families opt for either a private, invitation-only luncheon, or choose to forego a congregational luncheon at the Temple altogether, the family is *expected to sponsor* the Kiddush following the Saturday service such that there will be appropriate and adequate quantities of food for all who are in attendance, both invited guests and weekly worshippers. The Events Director can be helpful in estimating how many weekly worshippers are likely to be in attendance.

SHABBAT SPONSORED KIDDUSHES:

Members and their families can choose to sponsor an Oneg following an Erev Shabbat Service and/or a Kiddush following a Shabbat Service in honor of a Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Sponsorship of the Kiddush is announced from the pulpit and in the corresponding service pamphlet. The rabbis expect all bar/bat mitzvah families to participate at

the congregational Kiddush prior to any private celebrations. Therefore, please plan to begin your luncheon following the Kiddush.

- The charge is \$150 for a standard Erev Shabbat Oneg and \$200 for a standard Shabbat Kiddush. If you choose to sponsor both, the charge is \$250. If you expect extra guests at either or both services, the Kiddush can be increased to handle extra guests or if you wish to enhance your Oneg/Kiddush menu, costs will vary. Please see the official Kiddush sponsorship form for information on what is included in sponsored Kiddushes.

CONGREGATIONAL KIDDUSH LUNCHEONS:

If you choose to host a luncheon for your guests along with the members of the Congregation, there is **no charge for the use of Freehof Hall**. Wine and linens will be provided. The host is responsible for all fees and payment for services provided by their caterer and for the Temple's Kitchen Supervisor.

Kashrut/Food Policy for Sponsored Kiddushes/Luncheons - Rodef Shalom is not a kosher facility and does not have a kosher kitchen. However, recognizing both the long-standing identity of Rodef Shalom as a Reform congregation which has not bound itself to the strictures of *kashrut* (Jewish dietary laws), and our desire to be inclusive of members who are traditional with regards to dietary practice, our policy as pertains to the food that can be served within our building reflects a compromise.

At all congregation-sponsored events, as well as events which are sponsored by parties other than the congregation (individual members, families, auxiliaries or outside organizations) to which the entire community is welcome, all food served is to be "kosher style." In other words, at all open/all-congregational events, neither pork nor shellfish is to be served, and while meat and dairy may be served at the same meal, they are to be served apart and separately.

In addition to "kosher style" food, please be aware that a vegetarian entrée must also be offered for events sponsored by parties other than the congregation (individual members, families, auxiliaries or outside organizations) to which the entire community is welcome. Lastly, any food containing common food allergens such as nuts or gluten must be identified by either a label, sign or instruction of the servers, so that guests in the building may safely avoid those items.

Food Policy for private/invitation-only events - Individuals and families may serve whatsoever they choose without limitation. However, as such foods will fall outside of the "kosher style" policy, it is requested that these items be identified either by label or instruction so that any guests in the building may avoid consuming an item that may fall outside of their personal dietary comfort zone.

CATERING ARRANGEMENTS AND KITCHEN GUIDELINES:

Any caterer may be retained to use the Temple's facilities provided the caterer provide a current Certificate of Liability Insurance in the amount of \$1 million or more, and a copy of their current Allegheny County Health Permit. The caterer's name must be given to the Events Director at least four weeks in advance of the event in order to secure the necessary paperwork. The caterer is responsible for washing all dishes and restoring the kitchen in good order. A kitchen supervisor must be present during all catered events. The renter will be billed for the kitchen supervisor's hours.

BANQUETS, RECEPTIONS AND CELEBRATIONS

When Planning a Private Saturday Evening Event - In keeping with Rodef Shalom Congregation's obligation to the Jewish value of *Likvod Shabbat*, the Board of Trustees, in consultation with our rabbis, have established the following criteria for the use of our building and facilities during the Jewish Sabbath:

- For the purposes of congregational practice, Shabbat begins at 5:30 p.m. on Friday evening and concludes at 6:30 p.m. Saturday. These times apply even when they do not correspond to sunset. Therefore, your event may not begin until 6:30 p.m. on Saturday.
- This policy affects the start time of your actual celebration and not your vendors. Your vendors have access to the building after Morning Shabbat Service and Kiddush are concluded at 1:00 p.m. or unless previously arranged with the Events Director.

AVAILABLE RENTAL SPACES FOR CELEBRATIONS:

- **Small Dining Room:** can be used for small meals such as breakfasts, brunches, luncheons, dinners and meetings. The room can accommodate 16 people for a seated meal. Please note that the dining room furniture cannot be removed or rearranged.
- **Freehof Hall:** can be used as a banquet facility. The room can accommodate an estimated 400 guests for a seated reception or approximately 300 guests with a banquet and dance floor set up. In addition, there are doors that open to the Deaktor Terrace and another set of doors leading to the Wechsler Gallery. Both of these areas are included in the rental fee of Freehof Hall. Talk to the Events Director for more details.
- **Aaron Court:** can be used for small ceremonies, meetings, breakfasts, brunches, luncheons, cocktails and dinners. Please consult the Events Director about the room capacity for specific usage. The congregation reserves this space for Kiddush on Saturday mornings following Shabbat service. *Aaron Court cannot be used for a private luncheon on a Saturday following a Bar or Bat Mitzvah.*
- **Levy Hall:** can be used for events that require the use of a laptop, DVD player and screen. The room can accommodate up to 280 people in auditorium style. Food and drink are prohibited inside of Levy Hall.
- **Multipurpose Room:** can accommodate approximately 40 people for a seated meal and can be used for a variety of activities. Food and drinks are permitted.

RENTAL TIMES:

- The room rental fee for a luncheon or afternoon event is for two and a half hours with the possibility of a one hour extension if no evening event is being held. Please discuss this option in advance with the Events Director.
- All other room rental fees are for four hours.
- If the facility schedule permits, you may choose to extend your event beyond four hours. There will be a charge of \$150 for each additional hour, for a maximum of two additional hours. Please remember that additional fees will be required for the kitchen supervisor, front desk security, police, etc. Please discuss this option with the Events Director.
- To accommodate our neighbors, all events must conclude by 11 p.m. This policy is not negotiable.

SAFEGUARDING THE FACILITIES:

- Rodef Shalom Congregation is a non-smoking facility.
- Candles must be guarded by glass (hurricane lamps or tea lights) to avoid a fire hazard.
- The following are not permitted:
 - Live animals including birds, fish, butterflies, etc.
 - Glitter or confetti, glass beads or similar items scattered on tables
 - Any decorations which are not freestanding including posters, decorations or lights affixed to the walls, ceilings, fixtures or furniture
 - Special effects without prior approval
 - Handling of thermostats and lights by anyone other than the custodial staff
 - Rearrangement of Temple furniture, fixtures or equipment

- Removal of Rodef property
- Live petals during wedding processions in Sanctuaries
- Food or beverage in the Sanctuary, Levy Hall or the Chapel

ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES AND INFORMATION:

- In order to reserve a room, a 50 percent room deposit and a signed contract must be received. One week before the event, the balance of your room rental charge is due. Additional costs such as kitchen usage fee, police, linens, etc. will be billed after your event.
- If you have not planned an event at Temple previously, please consider making an appointment with the Events Director ahead of your luncheon or dinner event. This will ensure a smooth planning process. Three weeks before your event, an appointment with you, your caterer and the Events Director is encouraged so all arrangements including timeline, menu, floor plan, etc. can be finalized.
- Final information regarding your event must be submitted to the Events Director no later than 5 days before the event. Please note that extensive room changes **will not** be permitted the day of the event.
- Because the Temple has limited storage facilities, all deliveries of food and rented equipment should be arranged in advance with the Events Director. The pick-up of rented items, floral equipment, decorative supplies and band/DJ equipment must take place immediately after the event unless prior arrangements have been made.
- Wine, champagne and beer are permitted.
- Hard liquor may be served during an evening event and is not permitted during the day or on Shabbat. Hard liquor must be served from a bar by a bartender provided by the caterer. Family members or friends are not permitted to serve any type of alcohol. The caterer must ensure that alcoholic beverages are not made available to minors and that guests do not consume to excess.
- If alcohol is served, a city of Pittsburgh police officer is required to be onsite and the host is responsible for payment.
- If, for some unfortunate reason, you need to cancel your event, please contact the Events Director as soon as possible.
- The Gift Shop at Rodef Shalom is available to assist with your invitations and Judaica gifts

– Contact –
 Events Director
 412-621-6566 X183

* All information is subject to change *