

Congregation Keneseth Israel
Policies, Practices & Guidelines

Policy, Practice or Guideline: Ushers: Shabbat, HHD & B'nai Mitzvah Responsibilities

Source: Governance

Date Adopted: 8/1989

Date Revised: 1/2023

- I. Introduction: Ushers are the face of Congregation Keneseth Israel and should welcome all worshipers warmly.
- II. Practice Statement: It is the practice that KI provide Ushers for Shabbat, B'nai Mitzvahs, and the High Holidays.
- III. History: In the past it was always the responsibility of the Brotherhood to provide an ample number of Ushers to guide members and guests during Services and events.
- IV. Procedure:
- a. The Shabbat Usher
 - i. Should arrive 15 minutes prior to Services and Familiarize yourself with the Oneg Shabbat crew in the kitchen (on Fridays), as well as the security guard on duty.
 - ii. provide a Shabbat supplement as well as a kippah and tallit if requested.
 - iii. The doors to the sanctuary are controlled by you. Have both open upon arrival. As we get closer to services beginning, close one door. Doors should be closed while the Ark is open, the Congregation is standing, or the Rabbi is delivering a sermon. When people need to leave, open the door and remind people when they can be allowed back in if this is in question. Will ask people waiting in the Lobby to keep voices low so as not to disturb worshippers.
 - iv. Will assist those leaving or entering during the Service. Worshippers are requested to remain in the Sanctuary during the Torah Service, sermon, and musical portions. They are not to be re-admitted during these parts of the Service.
 - v. Try to get people to fill seats closer to the front, and be aware where there is room for late arriving worshipers to slip in unceremoniously
 - vi. Temperature adjustments or changes in the volume on the amplifying system should be made to the Custodian at the Ushers request.
 - vii. Please use your best discretion in suggesting people take their young disruptive children for a walk outside the sanctuary, and upon reentering stay closer to the rear.
 - viii. On Fridays, it's a good thing to alert the ONEG crew when services are about to end, so they are ready.
 - ix. If you can't attend your scheduled week, call another usher to arrange a swapping of dates. DO NOT CALL THE TEMPLE OFFICE!

- x. In case of emergency, ushers may facilitate assistance. A first aid kit is in the kitchen and Library. And oxygen is in the hallway below the AED cabinet.
- xi. If a problem arises with the facility (e.g. failure of PA system), contact the custodian.
- xii. Photography is not permitted in the Sanctuary and Ushers should ask anyone taking photographs to stop.

b. For High Holidays

- i. Please check with the usher captain of the service for your instructions 30 minutes prior to the service.
- ii. Our primary purpose will be to assist the flow of Congregants both inside and outside the building in a “Cordial” manner.
- iii. **Outside Ushers** are posted at the main Synagogue entrance on Chew Street, and by the doors on 23rd. street. A security guard will be posted at these locations as well. Ushers are to hand out prayer books prior to the service and keep people moving through the lobby area. Most outside ushers may sit with their families once the rush is over. However, people come and go during the day on Holidays, so there should always be at least one usher in the foyer area. At the end of the service, please help return all books to the racks and sweep the sanctuary to pick up all those books left behind.
- iv. **Inside (Sanctuary) Ushers** are assigned to assist people to empty seats and fill in the sanctuary before services begin. Please know that we need you to remain at the 3 doors to monitor the flow in and out of the sanctuary during the entire service! It would be helpful to get a seat near your door as early as possible. At the conclusion of the service, please assist the captains in collecting prayer books and returning them to the cases in the lobby.
- v. **Lobby Ushers** are to hand out Prayer books and supplements prior to the Service and keep people moving through the lobby. Most outside ushers may sit with their families once the rush is over; however, one usher should always be in the foyer to direct latecomers, and check bathrooms for any problems. At the end of the Service, return all books to the rack and sweep the Sanctuary to get those left behind.
- vi. Please Do Not Call the Temple Office to change a schedule. If there is a problem, call someone assigned at another time to switch with you!! If, and only if, that fails, call the assigned Captain (C) of that service.
- vii. College students need a special pass along with their photo ID to enter the building, we are no longer just allowing a student ID to gain admittance.

c. For Bar/Bat Mitzvahs – Follow responsibilities listed for Shabbat Usher

V. Reference: