

Emphases and Recommendation for the Management and Maintenance of Ritual Baths (Mikveh) for Women in the Epoch of the Corona Emergency

On January 30, 2020 the World Health Organization pronounced the Corona Outbreak a Public Health Emergency (PHEIC) with international implications. At this point, the activities of the Ministry of Health (in addition to the care of patients) is focused on efforts to prevent the spread of this disease. This is due to the serious public health danger to public that this virus reflects.

The following are sanitation steps in rituals baths that assist in prevention:

Emphases:

It is forbidden to immerses when one is ill or in quarantine

A distance of two meters (6 feet) must be kept between women

A distance of two meters (6 feet) must be kept between the mikveh attendant and the woman immersing (and the mikveh attendant should avoid touching the woman immersing with her hands)

The mikveh should be operated according to the laws and regulations of the business license (Proper Sanitation Condition for Ritual Baths, 5759, 1999)

General Guidelines

1. Cleaning and disinfection of surfaces should be done frequently, at least once daily, including item and equipment that is in frequent and mutual use such as chairs, table, handles, light switches, buttons pressed to operate equipment, handles, sinks etc and any surface that was touched by women who have immersed
2. The disinfection should be done after first cleaning the surface with soap and water. It should be done with a disinfection solution based on chlorine at a concentration of 1000 mg per liter (2.5-3.0 per cent bleach). To prepare this solution, add 40 ml of chlorine to 1 liter of water. Alternatively, it is possible to disinfect with an alcohol solution of at least 70% via wiping or spraying and waiting until it has dried.
3. It is recommended that there be hand sanitizer stations in places that are accessible and visible (entrance to building, entrance to stairs and elevators, hallways to bathrooms, kitchen etc)
4. Basic cleaning and sanitation will be done in bathrooms and showers and there will always be in them hand soap, paper towels for drying hands, toilet paper and waste baskets. Electric hand dryers should be unplugged.
5. The time of immersion should be by making appointment with the mikveh attendant.
6. The mikveh attendant will maintain a time period of 15 minutes between women immersing.
7. The woman immersing will shower (or bathe) with soap and water before immersion, preferably doing this at home.
8. The preparation rooms will be cleaned after every use.

9. Brides will use the ritual bath with only one escort
10. There will be no other beauty treatments done in the ritual bath (such as manicures or pedicures as is required by clause 18 of the regulations
11. There will be no mutual use of items such as towels, bath sponges, combs, scissors or nail clippers.

Laundry

12. In the case where laundry is done on site, it towels and bathrobes should be laundered after every use
13. Dirty laundry should not come into contact with clean laundry (by separate areas for clean and dirty laundry)
14. Laundry should be washed at a minimum of 65 degrees centigrade (149 degrees Fahrenheit)
15. Care of dirty laundry should be with gloves. After use, the gloves should be removed and hands should be washed with soap and water

Protective Equipment for the Mikveh Attendant, Cleaning and Maintenance Workers

16. Gloves and washing hands with soap and water

Waste Treatment

17. The contents of waste baskets will be placed in an opaque closable garbage bag
18. The garbage bag should be removed when the bag is up to 75% full, at least once a day
19. The garbage bag should be taken to a central dumpster
20. Garbage should not be strewn around the mikveh or public spaces

Ventilation

21. There should be steady ventilation of the bathrooms, dressing rooms, immersion rooms, shower rooms and hallways leading to them

Water Quality in the Immersion Pools and Storage Pools

22. The water in the immersion pool should be emptied at least once daily. In ritual baths that have an active filtration system in the immersion pool, the water should be changed at least once a week and the filtration element should be cleaned daily.
23. Cleaning and sterilization of the pool should be done according to articles 1 and 2 in this general section of this document
24. The immersion pool and the adjacent pool ("Bor Hashaka") will be sterilized according to clauses 27 and 28 of the regulations. It is important to use the highest levels of sterilization that are permitted by the regulations.
25. Chlorine levels, water clarity and water levels will be measured
26. It is forbidden to put in new treatment systems without the express permission of the local health department.

Cleaning and Sterilization after Immersion of a Corona Carrier

In the case where it becomes known that a woman carrying the SARS-CoV2 virus has immersed, the following steps should be taken

27. The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Religious Services (Religious Building Branch) should be notified
28. The mikveh staff and women who immersed should be notified and take the actions prescribed by the Ministry of Health
29. Use of the ritual bath should be stopped immediately and it should be closed for at least 24 hours
30. Empty the immersion pool and perform the actions of cleaning and sterilization on the immersion pool, the surrounding surfaces and all the building surfaces as described in this document.
31. Make sure that the personnel performing these actions are wearing gloves, gowns and masks and acting according to the first section of this document.
32. Refill the immersion pool and the adjacent pool with fresh water, add disinfection agents and maintain routine management and maintenance according to the regulations of the business license (Proper Sanitation Condition for Ritual Baths, 5759, 1999)

Signed by Amir Yitzchaki

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