

FAQ's
What you need to know about
Date Changes, Lessons, Fees, and More

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah Committee works hard to meet the needs of every family and will accommodate date changes whenever possible. Following are some general guidelines that are explained more fully in the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah Handbook*, which can be accessed on the Woodbury Jewish Center website at www.thewjc.org or can be emailed to you at your request.

Shabbat Morning Versus Alternate Service

The dates we assign are always for a Shabbat morning service during the school year. You can request a different Shabbat morning during the school year, a Shabbat morning during a school holiday or vacation, or a move from a Shabbat morning to what is known as an “alternate” service.

Alternate services include Sunday Rosh Chodesh and Saturday evening Mincha Ma'ariv Havdalah. During your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah year, there is one available Sunday Rosh Chodesh date on May 1, 2022.

Considerations in Requesting a Date Change

At WJC, a boy cannot become a Bar Mitzvah prior to his thirteenth birthday, as determined by the Hebrew date. A girl may become a Bat Mitzvah within her twelfth year if she is enrolled in the Hey year of Religious School.

Considerations in Requesting an Alternate Service

Please note that if you choose an alternate service, you are required to use our caterer, Regal Caterers, to host your party. Currently, there is an additional fee of \$350 if you choose a service not held on Shabbat morning.

Alternate services require your child to have more advanced Hebrew reading skills than a Saturday morning service. During a Shabbat morning service, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah child chants a Haftarah portion, which is printed with vowels, punctuation and musical notations. However, on Sunday morning or Saturday evening, no Haftarah is chanted. Instead, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah candidate is called upon to read from the Torah, which does not include vowels, punctuation or musical notations and is considered more difficult to master.

Please consider the strength of your child's abilities when making your request for an alternate service. As the date approaches, if it is determined that your child is not sufficiently proficient in Hebrew reading, he/she may not be called to read from the Torah. Of course, the child would be called for a Torah aliyah.

FAQ's continued

If Your Child has a Learning Problem

All children receive approximately six months of private individual instruction prior to the scheduled Bar/Bat Mitzvah date. If your child has an 'IEP' or '504' in public school, we can extend your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah training.

Our goal is to make sure every child achieves his or her own 'personal best.' We offer children with documented learning issues extended lessons (double the usual number of lessons) to begin one year in advance. Parents are free to accept or decline this extension. While there is an additional fee beyond the basic Bar/Bat Mitzvah fee, the cost is extremely reasonable and is not simply double the fee.

Extra Lessons for Children Without Learning Issues

If your child is having difficulty but doesn't have a documented learning disability, or if you simply wish to expand your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah training, you may request additional private BBM lessons beyond those covered by the basic Bar/Bat Mitzvah fee. These are arranged directly with the Cantor at the appropriate time, with the additional cost determined by the number of additional lessons requested. You may request an additional two, four, or six months of lessons and will be billed accordingly.

How to Request a Change in Date

Requests for a date change should be made by 5:00 pm on October 19, 2018. All requests, including those for a different Shabbat morning or for an alternate service (even on the same date), must be made to Cindy Matte by email at cfmatte@gmail.com. While we do consider requests that are received after October 19th, it is much easier to accommodate everyone's requests if they are received and evaluated at the same time. In the event of multiple requests for an alternate service on a specific date, a lottery, supervised by one of our clergy, will be held to resolve the issue.

Using Our Caterer to Host Your Party

Should you desire to engage the services of our caterer, Regal Caterers, you may contact them at (516) 864-0001. Please note that bookings with the caterer may not take place until all of the dates have been confirmed and all requests for changes considered. This process should be complete within three months of receiving this letter.

Members of Woodbury Jewish Center enjoy a limited priority in reserving our catering facilities on the weekend of their child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah. This priority ends on February 1, 2019 for all Bar/Bat Mitzvah families scheduled for 2022. For families scheduled in January 2022, the priority expires three years prior to your assigned date in January 2019. After these reservation deadlines, Regal Caterers can accept bookings from the general public.

If two WJC families want to have a party with our caterer at the same time, a lottery will be held to resolve the issue. However, families that choose the Sunday Rosh Chodesh or Mincha Ma'ariv Havdalah alternative services are granted priority for the use of the catering facilities. If you want to move to either of these alternate services, let us know as soon as possible to avoid potential conflict.

In Conclusion

Our policies were created to make sure that every child reaches the milestone of becoming a Jewish young adult with as little stress as possible and that the process runs smoothly for every family. We look forward to seeing your child stand proudly on the bimah on that special day.