JEWISH COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE
JCRC

JEWISH FEDERATION
OF GREATER ORLANDO

# CALENDAR OF JEWISH HOLIDAYS

This calendar has been prepared and designed primarily to assist teachers and school administrators in planning and scheduling special events and activities such as exams, assemblies, field trips, graduations and other school related programs. Federal, state, county and city government agencies, legislative bodies, and courts, as well as private employers, may also find this calendar helpful.

Holidays with asterisks are major observances on which work is traditionally prohibited and families attend synagogue. As a result, members of the Jewish faith may be absent from both school and places of employment. While the level of religious observance may vary from one person to another, we urge you to not schedule programs, activities or exams on major holidays or the following day.

**Each holiday begins at sundown the previous day.**

| ***Secular Year*** | **2010-11** | **2011-2012** | **2012-2013** | **2013-2014** | **2014-2015** | **2015-2016** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ***Jewish Year*** | **5771** | **5772** | **5773** | **5774** | **5775** | **5776** |
| ***Rosh Hashanah (New Year)** | Thu.-Fri. Sep. 9-10 | Thu.-Fri. Sep. 29-30 | Mon.-Tue. Sep. 17-18 | Thu.-Fri. Sep. 5-6 | Thu.-Fri. Sep. 25-26 | Mon.-Tue. Sep. 14-15 |
| ***Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)** | Sat. Sep. 18 | Sat. Oct. 8 | Wed. Sep. 26 | Sat. Sep. 14 | Sat. Oct. 4 | Wed. Sep. 23 |
| ***Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles)** | Thu. & Fri. Sep. 23-24 | Thu.-Fri. Oct. 13-14 | Mon.-Tue. Oct. 1-2 | Thu.-Fri. Sep. 19-20 | Thu.-Fri. Oct. 9-10 | Mon.-Tue. Sep. 28-29 |
| **Shemini Atzeret / *Simchat Torah (Rejoicing of the Law)** | Thu.-Fri. Sep. 30-Oct 1 | Thu.-Fri. Oct. 20-21 | Mon.-Tue. Oct. 8-9 | Thu.-Fri. Sep. 26-27 | Thu.-Fri. Oct. 16-17 | Mon.-Tue. Oct. 5-6 |
| **Chanukah (Festival of Lights)** | Thu.-Thu. Dec. 2-9 | Wed.-Wed. Dec. 21-28 | Sun.-Sun. Dec. 9-16 | Thu.-Thu. Nov. 28-Dec. 5 | Wed.-Wed. Dec. 17-24 | Mon.-Mon. Dec. 7-14 |
| **Purim** | Sun. Mar. 20 | Thu. Mar. 8 | Sun. Feb. 24 | Sun. Mar. 16 | Thu. Mar. 5 | Thu. Mar. 24 |
| ***Passover (Passover) *Pesach (Concluding Days)** | Tue.-Wed. Apr. 19-20 Mon.-Tue. Apr. 25-26 | Sat.-Sun. Apr. 7-8 Fri.-Sat. Apr. 13-14 | Tue.-Wed. Mar. 26-27 Mon.-Tue. Apr. 1-2 | Tue.-Wed. Apr. 15-16 Mon.-Tue. Apr. 21-22 | Sat.-Sun. Apr. 4-5 Fri.-Sat. Apr. 10-11 | Sat.-Sun. Apr. 23-24 Fri.-Sat. Apr. 29-30 |
| **Yom Hashoah (Holocaust Remebrance)** | Sun. May 1 | Thu. Apr. 19 | Sun. Apr. 7 | Sun. Apr. 27 | Thu. Apr. 16 | Thu. May 5 |
| ***Shavuot (Feast of Weeks)** | Wed.-Thu. June 8-9 | Sun.-Mon. May 27-28 | Wed.-Thu. May 15-16 | Wed.-Thu. June 4-5 | Sun.-Mon. May 24-25 | Sun.-Mon. June 12-13 |

*JFGO, through its Community Relations Committee, is the voice of the Jewish community advocating for Israel, for Jews around the world and at home, and for a just society based on Jewish values.*

**SHABBAT**
The Sabbath is a time of rest and renewal. The Jewish Sabbath begins every Friday at sunset and concludes at sundown, Saturday night. For observant Jews, no form of labor is done. The Sabbath is meant to be a day "apart from" the rest of the week.

***ROSH HASHANAH**
Rosh Hashanah marks the beginning of the Jewish New Year. It is a time of serious introspection as one examines his/her deeds over the past year. Some Jews observe one day while others observe two days of the holiday.

***YOM KIPPUR**
Yom Kippur comes 10 days after Rosh Hashanah. It is the holiest and most solemn day of the year and is a day of fasting – of abstaining from food and drink. One is to continue the process of self-examination (started at Rosh Hashanah) and work to repair relationships with one's fellow man as well as to ask for forgiveness for sins against God. Jewish tradition says that a person cannot ask for forgiveness from God until one has righted wrongs done to one's fellow man.

***SUKKOT**
Sukkot is known in the Bible as The Feast of the Booths. It begins five days after Yom Kippur and lasts for seven days. It marks the time when the Israelites traveled in the desert for 40 years and lived in temporary booths known as "sukkot." Many families build a "sukkah" in their backyards where they often eat during the course of the festival.

***SHEMINI ATZERET**
Shemini Atzeret comes at the end of the festival of Sukkot. It is a Biblically-mandated festival day.

***SIMCHAT TORAH**
This comes the day after Shemini Atzeret and marks the completion of the reading of the Torah (The Five Books of Moses). It takes a year to read the entire Torah – one portion is read weekly on the Sabbath. On this holiday, Jews celebrate the joy of being the people who received the Torah.

**CHANUKAH**
Chanukah, known as the Festival of Lights, is a recorded struggle for religious freedom. Some 2,200 years ago, the Assyrians desecrated the Jews' Holy Temple and prohibited Jews from observing many religious rituals. After Judah Maccabee and his small band of Jews prevailed against the Assyrians, and recaptured the Holy Temple, they dedicated it in 165 BCE. Chanukah literally means "dedication." The holiday is marked by the lighting of the menorah, an eight-branched candelabra. Lights are kindled every evening for 8 nights. Since it is not mentioned in the Torah, it is not considered to be a major holiday.

**PURIM**
Purim is a day of costume and masquerade celebrations marking the Jews' deliverance from a wicked man, Haman, who sought to kill all the Jews of Persia (present day Iran) some 2,500 years ago. The heroine of the story is the Jewish queen named Esther. This story is told in the Biblical Book of Esther which is read on this holiday.

***PESACH (PASSOVER)**
This important holiday marks the Exodus of the Jewish people led by Moses from 400 years of slavery in Egypt. During the 8-day period, Jews do not eat leavened products. Instead, they eat a flat bread known as "matzah" that recalls the haste with which they left Egypt, not allowing time for their bread to rise. The Seder meal, which ushers in the week-long Passover observance, is a retelling of the story of the Exodus and a time when families and friends gather together.

**YOM HASHOAH**
Yom Hashoah is the annual day of commemoration honoring the victims and the rescuers of the Holocaust in Europe, 1933-1945. Jewish communities throughout the world conduct programs that reaffirm their commitment to teaching the dangers of prejudice, indifference, and blind obedience to authority. Many public and private schools also hold special programs of remembrance.

***SHAVUOT**
This biblical holiday comes exactly seven weeks after Passover. It celebrates the giving of the Torah as well as the Festival of the First Fruits.

** Indicates a holiday on which observant Jews may not attend school or work. On some holidays, more than one day may be involved.*

Prepared by the Jewish Community Relations Committee of the Jewish Federation of Greater Orlando
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