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Jewish Holidays September 2010 – August 2011

Over the years I have been asked for information about Jewish holidays. Jewish holidays run on a lunar calendar and so fall on different dates and days of the week from year to year.

There are three major divisions of Jewish observance in the United States: Orthodox, Conservative and Reform, all of which are strongly represented among the population in Brookline. Each of the three groups observes the Sabbath and holidays to a greater or lesser extent.

Some Jewish people do not work on the Sabbath, an hour before sunset on Fridays to an hour after sunset on Saturdays, or on some Jewish holidays. Some individuals will attend meetings on the Sabbath and holidays, while others will not.

If you have any questions concerning any of the above, or the information contained below, please feel free to contact me.

Lastly, if you want more information about the various holidays listed, please click on the links provided.

Rosh HaShana (2010)

This is a two-day holiday. It begins an hour before sunset on Wednesday, September 8 and ends at sunset on Friday, September 10. (It is best to avoid meetings during this holiday. Most Jewish employees will be absent on these two days.)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosh_Hashanah

Tzom Gedaliah (2010)

This is a fast-day (no food/no water). It begins an hour before sunrise on Sunday, September 12 and ends at sunset the same day. (Some employees might not report to work on this day, if they are observing the fast.)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fast_of_Gedalia

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Yom Kippur (2010)

This is a one-day holiday and the most important on the Jewish calendar. A fast day (no food/no water), it begins an hour before sunset on Friday, September 17 and ends an hour after sunset on Saturday, September 18. (It is best to avoid meetings during this holiday. Most, if not all, Jewish employees will be absent on this day.)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yom_Kippur

Succos (2010)

This is a seven-day holiday, but the first two days are the most important. Succos (first day) begins an hour before sunset on Wednesday, September 22 and ends (second day) an hour after sunset on Friday, September 24. (It is best to avoid meetings from Wednesday night through Friday night. Some Jewish employees will be absent for part or all of these first two days. Some Jewish employees may also be absent for the five following days September 25 - 29.) <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sukkot>

Shemini Atzeres – Simchas Torah (2010)

This is a two-day holiday. It begins an hour before sunset on Wednesday, September 29 and ends an hour after sunset on Friday, October 1. (It is best to avoid meetings from Wednesday night through Friday. Some Jewish employees will be absent for part or all of these two days.) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shemini_Atzeret

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simchat_Torah

Chanukah (2010)

This is an eight-day holiday. One candle is burned for the first day with another candle added each day, until eight candles are burning on the eighth day. It starts an hour before sundown on Wednesday, December 1 and ends an hour after sundown on Friday, December 8. (Some people do not engage in work activities for the hour or so (usually around sundown, but sometimes later) while the candles are actually burning. While there is generally no problem scheduling meetings during the eight days of Chanukah, some families avoid doing so in the evenings, so as to spend time with their children.) <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hanukkah>

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Fast of Teves (2010)

This is a fast day (no food/no water). It begins an hour before sunrise on Friday, December 17, and ends at sunset the same day. (Some Jewish employees might not report to work on this day, if they are observing the fast.)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tenth_of_Tevet

Fast of Esther (2011)

This is a fast day (no food/no water). It begins an hour before sunrise on Thursday, March 17 and ends at sunset the same day. (Some Jewish employees might not report to work on this day, if they are observing the fast.)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fast_of_Esther

Purim (2011)

This is a one-day holiday. It starts at sundown on Saturday, March 19 and ends at sundown on Sunday, March 20. It is best to avoid meetings on this holiday. (Some Jewish employees might not be available for meetings Saturday evening and might be absent from work for part or all of Sunday.) **<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Purim>**

Passover (2011)

This is an eight-day holiday, but the first two days and the last two days are the most important. Passover begins at sunset on Monday, April 18. Tuesday and Wednesday, April 19 and 20 are holy days. It is best to avoid meetings Monday night through Wednesday night. The last two days of the holiday resume an hour before sunset on Sunday, April 24. Monday and Tuesday, April 25 and 26 are holy days. Again, it is best to avoid meetings Sunday night through Tuesday night. (Some Jewish employees will be absent for part or all of the first two and last two days. Some Jewish employees might be absent for the entire eight day period. The holiday ends an hour after sunset on Tuesday, April 26. The holiday of Passover imposes dietary restrictions during its observance. It would be preferable not to schedule any lunch meetings, etc., with members of the Jewish faith during the entire eight days, unless they initiate them.)

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Passover>

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Lag B'Omer (2011)

Starting the second night of Passover religiously observant Jews count the fifty days until the holiday of Shavuot (see below). In the Jewish calendar these fifty days are a period of semi-mourning, during which there are no Jewish weddings, etc., because of a plague that resulted in the deaths of thousands of people around 134 C.E. It is believed that on the 33rd (Lag = 33 in Hebrew) day there were no deaths, so the mourning period was relaxed for that day only. (The day is usually marked by celebrations in synagogues, so some Jewish employees might be absent for part or all of the day, Sunday, May 22.) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lag_Ba'omer

Shavuot (2011)

This is a two-day holiday. Shavuot begins an hour before sunset on Tuesday, June 7 and ends an hour after sunset on Thursday, June 9. (It is best to avoid meetings on this holiday. Some Jewish employees will be absent for part or all of these days.)

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shavuot>

Shiva Asser B'Tammuz (2011)

This is a fast day (no food/no water). It begins an hour before sunrise on Tuesday, July 19 and ends at sunset the same day. (Some employees might not report to work on this day, if they are observing the fast.)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seventeenth_of_Tammuz

Tisha B'Av (2011)

This is a fast day (no food/no water). It begins an hour before sunset on Monday, August 8 and ends an hour after sunset on Tuesday, August 9. (Some employees might not report to work on this day, if they are observing the fast.)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tisha_B'Av