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**Jewish Holidays September 2011 – December 2012**

**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. This year I have been asked for this information covering the balance of 2011 and through to the end of 2012.**

**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 (2011)**

**Jewish New Year. This is a two-day holiday. It begins an hour before sunset on Wednesday, September 28 and ends at sunset on Friday, September 30. (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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosh_Hashanah)**

**Tzom Gedaliah (2011)**

**This is a fast-day (no food/no water). It begins an hour before sunrise on Sunday, October 2 and ends at sunset the same day. (Some employees might not report to work**

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on this day, if they are observing the fast.)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fast\\_of\\_Gedalia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fast_of_Gedalia)

**Yom Kippur (2011)**

**Day of Atonement.** 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, October 7 and ends an hour after sunset on Saturday, October 8. (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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yom_Kippur)

**Succos (2011)**

**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, October 12 and ends (second day) an hour after sunset on Friday, October 14. (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 through October 19.) Note that the holiday of Succos runs right into the holiday of Shemini Atzeres-Simchas Torah. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sukkot>**

**Shemini Atzeres – Simchas Torah (2011)**

**This is a two-day holiday. It begins an hour before sunset on Wednesday, October 19 and ends an hour after sunset on Friday, October 21. (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/Shemini_Atzeret)  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simchat\\_Torah](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simchat_Torah)**

**Chanukah (2011)**

**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 Tuesday, December 20 and ends an hour after sundown on Wednesday, December 28. (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>**

**Fast of Teves (2012)**

**This is a fast day (no food/no water). It begins an hour before sunrise on Thursday, January 5, 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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tenth_of_Tevet)**

**Fast of Esther (2012)**

**This is a fast day (no food/no water). It begins an hour before sunrise on Wednesday, March 7 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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fast_of_Esther)**

**Purim (2012)**

**This is a one-day holiday. It starts at sundown on Wednesday, March 7 and ends at sundown on Thursday, March 8. It is best to avoid meetings on this holiday. (Some Jewish employees might not be available for meetings Wednesday evening and might be absent from work for part or all of Thursday.)** **<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Purim>**

**Passover (2012)**

**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 Friday, April 6. Saturday and Sunday, April 7 and 8 are holy days. It is best to avoid meetings Friday night through Sunday night. The last two days of the holiday resume an hour before sunset on Thursday, April 12. Friday and Saturday, April 13 and 14 are holy days. Again, it is best to avoid meetings Thursday night through Sunday 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 Saturday, April 14. 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>**

**Lag B'Omer (2012)**

**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**

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plague that resulted in the deaths of thousands of people around 134 C.E. It is believed that on the 33<sup>rd</sup> (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, Thursday, May 10) [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lag\\_Ba'omer](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lag_Ba'omer)

**Shavuos (2012)**

This is a two-day holiday. Shavuos begins an hour before sunset on Saturday, May 26 and ends an hour after sunset on Tuesday, May 28. (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 (2012)**

This is a fast day (no food/no water). It begins an hour before sunrise on Sunday, July 6 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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seventeenth_of_Tammuz)

**Tisha B'Av (2012)**

This is a fast day (no food/no water). It begins an hour before sunset on Saturday, July 28 and ends an hour after sunset on Sunday, July 29. (Some employees might not report to work on this day, if they are observing the fast.)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tisha\\_B'Av](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tisha_B'Av)

**Rosh HaShana (2012)**

Jewish New Year. This is a two-day holiday. It begins an hour before sunset on Sunday, September 16 and ends at sunset on Tuesday, September 18. (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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosh_Hashanah)

**Tzom Gedaliah (2012)**

This is a fast-day (no food/no water). It begins an hour before sunrise on Wednesday, September 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/Fast\\_of\\_Gedalia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fast_of_Gedalia)

**Yom Kippur (2012)**

**Day of Atonement.** 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 Tuesday, September 25 and ends an hour after sunset on Wednesday, September 26. (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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yom_Kippur)

**Succos (2012)**

**This is a seven-day holiday, but the first two days are the most important. Succos (first day) begins an hour before sunset on Sunday, September 30 and ends (second day) an hour after sunset on Tuesday, October 2. (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 through October 7.) Note that the holiday of Succos runs right into the holiday of Shemini Atzeres-Simchas Torah. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sukkot>**

**Shemini Atzeres – Simchas Torah (2012)**

**This is a two-day holiday. It begins an hour before sunset on Sunday, October 7 and ends an hour after sunset on Tuesday, October 9. (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/Shemini_Atzeret)  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simchat\\_Torah](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simchat_Torah)**

**Chanukah (2012)**

**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 after sundown on Saturday, December 8 and ends an hour after sundown on Sunday, December 16. (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>**