

Job Description

Interim Second Rabbi – One Year Contract – Rabbinic Sabbatical Cover Project

Hours:	.33 of Whole Time Equivalent (15 hours per week)
Salary:	According to the MRJ Pay Scale
Reporting to:	Senior Rabbi
Accountable to:	Synagogue Chair

Project background

This is an exciting time to join Oaks Lane Reform Synagogue – to deliver our rabbinic sabbatical project over a year where our Senior Rabbi will be taking a sabbatical over three separate months - while we continue to grow our youth provision, meet the needs of our community and care for and serve our members of all ages with empathy, respect and dignity.

Oaks Lane Reform Synagogue works closely with both East London and Essex Reform Synagogue and Sukkat Shalom Reform Synagogue, as well as with Clore Tikva Primary School, in serving the Jewish community of Redbridge and its surrounding areas, together with South-West Essex.

Purpose of the project role

To deliver our project for the provision of focused rabbinic sabbatical cover for our Oaks Lane Reform Synagogue congregation.

The Interim Second Rabbi will be an integral part of the worship team and will have primary responsibility for pastoral care and the lay-leadership rota for the synagogue.

Throughout the year of the Interim Second Rabbi contract term, the main project duties and responsibilities will be focused on providing sabbatical coverage for funerals and providing extra support to the lay leadership in worship over three separate months.

The hope is that there will also be time for community development work - although this is not a primary responsibility.

Project delivery responsibilities

- Join our worship team in presenting meaningful, enjoyable and inclusive prayer services for our adults and children.
- Providing funeral, shiva and stone setting coverage during the Senior Rabbi's sabbatical, and as needed during the twelve months within the boundaries of a .33 WTE role.
- Help support and shape the pastoral care team.
- Oversee the Lay Reader Rota and help schedule/work with Lay Torah Readers.
- Mentor B'nei Mitzvah students when required.
- High Holy Day and festival presence is preferred and negotiable.
- Develop ideas for community development when possible throughout the twelve months.
- Participate fully in the Oaks Lane Reform Synagogue staff appraisal process via regular one-to-one meetings with your line manager during and after the three-month probation period and throughout your contract term.

Project duties

Religious and spiritual life

- To officiate at Shabbat, festival and other services as agreed with the Senior Rabbi and the Religious Services Sub-Committee.
- To deliver inspiring and thought-provoking sermons that connect with the membership
- To officiate at funerals, cremations and tombstone consecrations as required - especially during the Senior Rabbi's sabbatical - throughout the one-year term of the Interim Second Rabbi contract.
- In conjunction with Lay Readers, to lead shiva prayers as required.
- To be involved in other religious lifecycle events as appropriate.
- To liaise with families regarding lifecycle events.
- Oversee the Lay Reader Rota and support the training of new Lay Readers.

- Oversee Lay Torah Readers Rota and support Torah readers by arranging rehearsals as needed.
- To liaise as necessary with the Senior Warden, Choirmasters and Lay Readers to ensure that services are properly planned and conducted.

Community development and engagement

- To assist with the planning of community and festival activities and support community and fundraising events when available.

Education and learning

- To undertake teaching duties as required.
- To undertake B'nei Mitzvah tuition and coaching as required.
- To initiate and contribute to adult learning as appropriate.
- In conjunction with the Senior Rabbi, to welcome prospective converts into the community and to teach, coach and support individuals considering or undergoing conversion - including those on the shared ECAMPS Access to Judaism conversion programme.

Pastoral care

- To take primary responsibility for creating the systems (involving the Senior Rabbi and Community Care Co-ordinator, Jewish Care, AHADA and other available internal and external assets) for the provision of pastoral care to congregants.
- To support the sick, the dying and the bereaved.
- To give support and guidance to members who are in need of pastoral support.
- To liaise with the Senior Rabbi and Office Manager to ensure effective communication regarding members' pastoral needs.

External duties and responsibilities

The Interim Second Rabbi is expected to fulfil a range of external duties and responsibilities:

- The Interim Second Rabbi is expected to be a member of or to join the Assembly of Reform Rabbis and Cantors, including being a signatory of the Ethics Code.
- To regularly attend Rabbinic Assembly meetings and feedback to Council and the lay leadership any points of relevance emanating from discussions at the Rabbinic and Cantorial Assembly or Movement for Reform Judaism.
- To reflect and report the views of Oaks Lane Reform Synagogue's members to the Assembly and Reform Judaism.

- Represent the synagogue on various Reform Judaism committees as required.
- Promote Reform Judaism in particular among members of Oaks Lane Reform Synagogue.
- Promote Reform Judaism and represent the views and interests of Reform Jews in general - and of the congregation of Oaks Lane Reform Synagogue in particular - to any relevant audiences in the wider community.
- To be actively committed to the spiritual and communal wellbeing of Oaks Lane Reform Synagogue's individual members and our congregation as a whole.
- To meet with other rabbis of ECAMPS communities to plan joint events and services as required.

Participate in the management of our synagogue

The Interim Second Rabbi is expected to participate in the management of our synagogue and to:

- Attend Council meetings and report to Council on rabbinic matters and tasks as appropriate.
- Attend regular review and development meetings with the Senior Rabbi and Chair.
- To work in active and positive partnership with the lay leadership.
- To meet with the Office Manager weekly - usually on Wednesday mornings at 10.00am.
- To meet with the Senior Warden and Choirmasters regarding the management of religious services and other services that the synagogue provides to its members as required, usually on Wednesday or Thursday evenings at 7.30pm once each month.
- To contribute to our synagogue's newsletter and weekly emails as requested.

Additional duties and responsibilities

In addition, the Interim Second Rabbi is expected:

- To take responsibility for professional development and to identify, in consultation with the Senior Rabbi, any developmental or training activities that may be appropriate.
- To undertake any other duties or activities appropriate to the role of Interim Second Rabbi as required.

Generic responsibilities

All staff members of Oaks Lane Reform Synagogue have a duty to conform to the following:

Equality, diversity and inclusion

A good attitude and positive action towards ED&I creates an environment where all individuals are able to achieve their full potential. Creating such an environment is important for three reasons: it improves operational effectiveness, it is morally the right thing to do, and it is required by law.

Members and their families have the right to be treated fairly and be routinely involved in all relevant decisions. They can expect to be treated with dignity and respect and will not be discriminated against on any grounds including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. Members have a responsibility to treat other members and our staff with dignity and respect.

Staff members have the right to be treated fairly in recruitment and career progression. Staff members can expect to work in an environment where diversity is valued and equality of opportunity is promoted. Staff members will not be discriminated against on any grounds including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. Staff have a responsibility to ensure that our members and their families will be treated with dignity and respect.

Safety, health, environment and fire (SHEF)

Oaks Lane Reform Synagogue is committed to supporting and promoting opportunities for staff members to maintain their health, well-being and safety. Staff members have a duty to take reasonable care of health and safety at work for themselves and others and to co-operate with their employer to ensure compliance with health and safety requirements. All personnel are to comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Environmental Protection Act 1990, Environment Act 1995, Fire Precautions (workplace) Regulations 1999 and other statutory legislation.

Confidentiality

Oaks Lane Reform Synagogue is committed to maintaining an outstanding confidential service. Members entrust and permit us to collect and retain sensitive information relating to their personal and family circumstances and any other matters pertaining to their situation. They do so in confidence and have a right to expect all staff members will respect their privacy and maintain confidentiality at all times. It is essential that if the legal requirements are to be met and the trust of our members is to be retained that all staff members protect member information and provide a confidential service.

Quality and continuous improvement

To preserve and improve the quality of our output, all personnel are required to think not only of what they do, but how they achieve it. By continuously re-examining our

processes, we will be able to develop and improve the overall effectiveness of the way we work. The responsibility for this rests with everyone working within Oaks Lane Reform Synagogue to look for opportunities to improve quality and share good practice.

Induction and training

On arrival at Oaks Lane Reform Synagogue all staff members will undergo a period of induction and training as required and as appropriate for their role.

Learning and development

The effective use of training and development is fundamental in ensuring that all staff are equipped with the appropriate skills, knowledge, attitude and competences to perform their role. All staff members will be required to partake and complete mandatory training as directed by the Chair or the Chair's nominated officer, as well as participating in Oaks Lane Reform Synagogue's training programme. Staff members will also be permitted (subject to approval) to undertake external training courses which will enhance their knowledge and skills, progress their career and ultimately, enable them to improve processes and service delivery.

Collaborative working

All staff members are to recognise the significance of and participate in collaborative working. Teamwork is essential in our synagogue environment. Effective communication is essential and all staff must ensure they communicate in a manner which enables the sharing of information in an appropriate manner.

Service delivery

Staff members at Oaks Lane Reform Synagogue must adhere to the information contained with synagogue policies, procedures and MRJ and other relevant directives, ensuring protocols are adhered to at all times. Staff will be given detailed information during the induction process regarding policy and procedure.

Security

The security of Oaks Lane Reform Synagogue is the responsibility of all personnel. Staff must ensure they remain vigilant at all times and report any suspicious activity immediately to their line manager or by following our security policy, protocols and procedures. Under no circumstances are staff to share the codes for the door locks to anyone and are to ensure that restricted areas remain effectively secured.

Professional conduct

All Oaks Lane Reform Synagogue staff members are expected to keep their personal political and religious beliefs entirely private (on social media, in written communications

and in person) unless they are entirely in keeping with and in support of those held, adopted and recognised by Oaks Lane Reform Synagogue.

All Oaks Lane Reform Synagogue staff members are required to dress appropriately for their role.

Code of conduct and policy on speaking and attending public events

Background

We acknowledge that we are a community with a rich diversity of opinions and we value informed decision making.

Many of our staff and volunteers/Trustees are called upon, or pro-actively choose to make public statements and appearances on difficult issues, relating to Israel, political parties and other volatile topics. It is also possible that any topic can potentially be problematic in certain contexts.

This policy aims to provide guidelines to staff and volunteers to raise awareness of the potential effect of them speaking in public or attending political meetings or events. It applies to all Trustees, Officers, Staff and volunteers of Oaks Lane Reform Synagogue. This policy sets out when you may expect Oaks Lane Reform Synagogue to protect you and when participation in public events may result in formal (disciplinary) action.

In preparing this policy, it is acknowledged that not all eventualities can be anticipated and, if in doubt, you must refer to our Senior Rabbi, our Chair or other senior member(s) of staff.

Definitions

Personal capacity means that attendance is not part of your normal work, but of interest to you.

Professional capacity means that attendance is considered to be part of your normal work.

Bringing Oaks Lane Reform Synagogue into disrepute means anything that is outwardly in opposition to our aims and values.

For those staff in the most senior positions, for example Oaks Lane Reform Synagogue Council members, Rabbis etc or for staff whose roles are outward facing, it should be noted that there are very few occasions where attending events could be considered to be in a personal capacity.

Policy

Members of staff and Oaks Lane Reform Synagogue volunteers/Trustees have a responsibility not to bring our organisation into disrepute. Oaks Lane Reform Synagogue recognises that there may be times where there is an obligation for certain members of staff to make public statements or appearances (either in their professional capacity or

privately). Where public statements are made, these, wherever possible, must be prepared in advance and advice taken from our Synagogue Chair.

Oaks Lane Reform Synagogue accepts that staff members may wish to explore a variety of events that may be of a political nature. They must be aware that, if publicly recognised at such events or gatherings, their presence may be construed as 'representing' the view of Oaks Lane Reform Synagogue. Staff members must, therefore, make it known to their line manager prior to attending such events and seek advice and guidance. Whilst the line manager will look positively at such requests, if they feel that attendance at the event would reflect poorly on Oaks Lane Reform Synagogue, in consultation with other senior managers, they may advise that the individual(s) should not attend.

Should there be any unwarranted response where permission has been given; Oaks Lane Reform Synagogue will act as it can to protect the individual(s) concerned. Attendance at such events where advice has been ignored may make it harder for Oaks Lane Reform Synagogue to publicly defend that individual and may lead to disciplinary action.

For more senior staff, where they are required to speak in public or attend high profile events, they are reminded that, regardless of whether they attend in a personal or professional capacity, anything they say will be considered to be the view of Oaks Lane Reform Synagogue. Senior staff are expected to be able to appropriately judge a situation and act accordingly. If they are in doubt about attending a particular event, they must refer to their line manager and the officers in the first instance, and thereafter the Chair if a decision cannot be made.

Person Specification

Interim Second Rabbi – One Year Contract – Rabbinic Sabbatical Cover Project

Qualifications	
Qualified to be a member of the Assembly of Reform Rabbis and Cantors UK	
Experience in the community rabbinate	
Skills and Abilities	
Ability to deliver inspiring and thought-provoking sermons	
Ability to teach and encourage lay leaders and congregants to take part in services	
Ability to make others feel at ease	
Ability to proactively and confidently mix and converse with a wide variety of people (including reaching out to the non-engaged and unaffiliated)	
Ability to manage own time and meet pre-agreed objectives including to work remotely from home should conditions require it.	
Competent PC and social media user including using communications technology	
Qualities	
Willingness and eagerness to work with our Senior Rabbi and any Student Rabbi	
A willingness to be creative and innovative and to work on new projects	
A willingness to work with the wider community and engage with Reform Judaism	
An ability to deal with difficult situations tactfully and diplomatically	
Willingness to maintain and work within the professional behaviour and conduct boundaries and expectations of a Reform Rabbi in 2024 and onwards and in keeping with the beliefs and expectations of both our shul and the wider Jewish as well as other communities	