

Center for Small Town Jewish Life Rabbinical Student Fellowship Program

OBJECTIVES:

1. Fellows will develop insights and transferable leadership skills through hands-on work with small-town Jewish communities under the mentorship of experienced professionals.
2. Congregations will benefit from the programs, energy, and relationships that rabbinical/cantorial students offer within the context of a year-long fellowship.
3. Jews from across the State of Maine will learn the unique Torah that each fellow brings to this work in ways that continue to resonate beyond the fellowship period itself.

The success of this fellowship depends on striking an appropriate balance between all three objectives. Excelling at some objectives while neglecting others would be inconsistent with the CSTJL's commitment to advance the goals of each stakeholder in our collaborative efforts.

EXPECTATIONS OF FELLOWS:

Each fellow will spend a total of seven weekends in Maine over a 12-month period, beginning with an orientation at the Maine Conference for Jewish Life and concluding with the following year's conference (June 12-14, 2020), at which outgoing fellows will both offer public learning sessions and help to orient incoming fellows. The five visits in between these bookends should be extended weekends (ideally, 4 days long) to facilitate maximum impact for the fellows, the congregations they serve, and the statewide community. One of these visits will include the CSTJL Fall Shabbaton (Oct. 25-26, 2019).

Each fellow will participate in three cohort learning sessions via Zoom. These sessions will be scheduled in consultation with all fellows to avoid conflicts as much as possible.

Each fellow will work primarily with a single congregation under the mentorship of that community's rabbi. The fellow and mentor will work together to identify the roles that will best advance both the fellow's personal learning goals and the needs of the congregation, as well as to select the most appropriate dates for visits to Maine. Fellows are expected to give serious attention to congregational needs even when doing so may not seem to advance their own personal goals or align with their own personal interests. Fellows are expected to consult with their congregational mentors in advance of each visit, to prepare appropriately for these visits, and to devote their full attention to their fellowship work during these visits.

Each fellow will also take on a project designed to serve a cross-section of Maine's Jewish community that extends beyond the congregation with which they work most closely. This project should capitalize on the fellow's distinctive strengths and passions, and it needs to be feasible within the time constraints of the fellowship program. Ideal projects are those whose

impact will likely extend beyond the fellowship year itself. Fellows will design and implement their projects in consultation with both their congregational mentor and the fellowship director.

Each fellow will reflect on their own goals for learning and professional growth through this fellowship program, will communicate these goals clearly to their congregational mentor and the fellowship director, and will make a consistent effort to achieve these goals.

Each fellow will submit a written report to both their congregational mentor and the fellowship director within a week of each visit using [this framework](#). The purposes of this report are:

- To help fellows reflect on their experiences and professional growth, as well as identify goals and priorities for future visits.
- To help congregational mentors and the fellowship director better guide fellows toward accomplishment of the fellowship objectives and the fellow's personal goals.
- To help the fellowship director document and report the activities of the fellows.
- To help the fellowship director and congregational mentors improve the fellowship program.

Fellows are expected to offer candid feedback to their congregational mentor and/or to the fellowship director to further these goals and the broader objectives of the fellowship program, both within these reports and informally. Each fellow will speak by phone or Zoom with the fellowship director shortly after submitting this report to discuss their most recent visit, their overall fellowship experience, and their goals for future visits.

Each fellow will make a substantial effort to respond to feedback and mentorship in a professional manner and to demonstrate professional growth over the course of the fellowship.

Each fellow will make cost-conscious travel arrangements to Maine in accordance with CSTJL's [travel policy](#).

Each fellow will adhere to CSTJL [professional conduct policies](#), including but not limited to those prohibiting sexual relationships with college students or minors. Fellows whose work involves interaction with minors may be asked to undergo a background screening and to complete an online training program.

Note: The CSTJL reserves the right to terminate a fellowship mid-year if a fellow fails to fulfill these expectations in a satisfactory manner. The decision to dismiss a fellow from the program will be made by the fellowship director and congregational mentor in consultation with at least one other mentor. In the event of dismissal, the fellow will receive a prorated honorarium (one-sixth of the total for each visit subsequent to the orientation visit).

WHAT FELLOWS CAN EXPECT FROM THEIR CONGREGATIONAL MENTORS:

Each congregational mentor will invest sufficient time in this fellowship program, both during and outside the visits of their fellows, to provide substantive guidance and mentorship to the fellow

who serves their particular community. This will include honest feedback on the fellow's work and reflection with fellows on both their strengths and their areas for growth.

Each mentor will be attentive to all three objectives of this fellowship program, will help the fellow strike an appropriate balance among these objectives within the constraints of the program's time frame, and will guide the fellow toward accomplishing all three.

Each mentor will lay appropriate groundwork within their congregation to facilitate the fellow's success.

Each mentor will respond to communications from fellows in a timely fashion and will complete their portion of the post-visit report form within a week of the fellow's submission. Mentors will respond to feedback from fellows in a professional manner.

WHAT FELLOWS CAN EXPECT FROM THE FELLOWSHIP DIRECTOR:

The fellowship director will serve as a second mentor to each fellow. The purpose of this mentorship is to complement, not conflict with, the guidance provided by congregational mentors. This mentorship will include regular phone or Zoom meetings after each visit along with additional conversations as mutually agreed.

The director will consult periodically with congregational mentors about each fellow's work and about the fellowship program more broadly. The purposes of these conversations are to advance the program's objectives collaboratively, to better mentor each fellow, and to improve the fellowship program itself.

The director will organize orientation and cohort learning sessions aligned with the objectives of the fellowship program and the expressed interests of the fellows. The director will schedule cohort learning sessions with due attention to the prior commitments of fellows and with sufficient time for fellows to plan their own schedules accordingly.

The director will respond to communications from fellows in a timely fashion and will schedule a meeting to discuss each post-visit report shortly after that report is complete. The director will respond to feedback from fellows in a professional manner.

WHAT FELLOWS CAN EXPECT FROM THE CSTJL ADMINISTRATOR:

The administrator will arrange for each fellow to receive honorarium payments in a timely fashion. The honorarium will be paid in three installments, roughly in November, February, and June; the precise timetable will depend on visit schedules.

The administrator will respond in a timely fashion to communications regarding travel arrangements and will reimburse for appropriate travel expenses in a timely fashion.