



CENTER FOR
SMALL TOWN
JEWISH LIFE

Rabbinical Student Apprenticeship Program Expectations, 2023/24

OBJECTIVES:

1. Apprentices 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 students offer within the context of a year-long apprenticeship.
3. Jews from across the State of Maine will learn the unique Torah that each apprentice brings to this work in ways that continue to resonate beyond the apprenticeship period itself.

The success of this program 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 APPRENTICES:

Each apprentice will spend seven blocks of time in Maine. These include:

- The 2023 Maine Conference for Jewish Life (Thursday evening, June 8, through Sunday afternoon, June 11)
- The 2023 Fall Shabbaton (Friday afternoon, Nov. 3, through Sunday afternoon, Nov. 5)
- The 2024 Maine Conference for Jewish Life (Thursday evening, June 20, through Sunday afternoon, June 23)
- Four additional visits of at least three days each, preferably longer to maximize the benefit for apprentices, the congregations they serve, and the statewide community. These visits typically include Shabbat and may include holidays as well.

Apprentices will also engage with Maine communities online throughout the year in a manner to be determined in consultation with their mentors. The expectation is for modest online engagement.

Each apprentice will work primarily with a single congregation under the mentorship of that community's rabbi. The apprentice and mentor will work together to identify the roles that will best advance both the apprentice's personal learning goals and the needs of the congregation, as well as to select the most appropriate dates for engagement. Apprentices 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. Apprentices are expected to consult with their congregational mentors in advance, to prepare appropriately, and to devote their full attention to their apprenticeship work when they are "on."

Each apprentice will implement a year-long project that advances needs identified by the mentorship team. The apprentice will play an active role in selecting and designing this project, which should capitalize on the apprentice's distinctive strengths and passions. Unless otherwise arranged, the congregational mentor will serve as the primary supervisor for this project.

Each apprentice will periodically engage not only the congregation they primarily serve but also Jews from other Maine communities. If this does not occur organically through the apprentice's project, the congregational mentor and the program director will work with the apprentice to identify other engagement opportunities.

Each apprentice will teach at the 2023 Fall Shabbaton and the 2024 Maine Conference for Jewish Life, working with the program director to prepare their session.

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

Each apprentice will submit a written report to both their congregational mentor and the program director shortly after each visit to Maine using [this form](#). The purposes of this report are:

- To help apprentices reflect on their experiences and professional growth, as well as identify goals and priorities for future engagement.
- To help congregational mentors and the program director better guide apprentices toward accomplishment of the program objectives and the apprentice's personal goals.
- To help the program director and congregational mentors improve the program.

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

Each apprentice 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 program.

Each apprentice will work with the CSTJL program coordinator, Liz Snider, to make cost-conscious travel arrangements in accordance with CSTJL's [travel policy](#).

Each apprentice will adhere to CSTJL [professional conduct policies](#), including but not limited to those prohibiting sexual relationships with college students or minors. Apprentices 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 prorate the honorarium of apprentices who do not fulfill all expectations (for example, by not completing all of the required visits). The CSTJL also reserves the right to terminate an apprenticeship mid-year if a fellow fails to fulfill these expectations in a satisfactory manner. The decision to dismiss an apprentice from the program will be made by the program director and congregational mentor in consultation with at least one other mentor. In the event of dismissal, the fellow will receive a prorated honorarium.

WHAT APPRENTICES CAN EXPECT FROM THEIR CONGREGATIONAL MENTORS

Each congregational mentor will invest sufficient time in this program—before, during, and after the activities of their apprentice—to provide substantive guidance and mentorship to the apprentice who serves their particular community. This will include honest feedback on the apprentice’s work and reflection with apprentices on both their strengths and their areas for growth.

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

Each mentor will lay appropriate groundwork within their congregation and within the target audience of the apprentice’s year-long project to facilitate the apprentice’s success.

Each mentor will respond to communications from apprentices in a timely fashion and will complete their portion of the activities report form within a week of the apprentice’s submission. Mentors will respond to feedback from apprentices in a professional manner.

WHAT APPRENTICES CAN EXPECT FROM THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR

The apprenticeship program director, David Freidenreich, will serve as a second mentor to each apprentice. The purpose of this mentorship is to complement, not conflict with, the guidance provided by congregational mentors. This mentorship will include periodic phone or Zoom meetings along with additional conversations as mutually agreed.

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

The director will organize cohort orientation and learning sessions aligned with the objectives of the program and the expressed interests of the fellows. Sessions of this nature will take place in person at the Maine Conference for Jewish Life and Fall Shabbaton and also via Zoom, by mutual agreement and with due attention to the prior commitments of apprentices.

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

WHAT APPRENTICES CAN EXPECT FROM THE CSTJL PROGRAM COORDINATOR:

The program coordinator, Liz Snider, will arrange for each fellow to receive honorarium payments in a timely fashion. The \$4,000 honorarium will be paid in three installments, roughly in November, February, and June.

The program coordinator will respond in a timely fashion to communications regarding travel arrangements, book flight and hotel accommodations in keeping with the terms of the CSTJL travel policy, and reimburse apprentices for appropriate travel expenses in a timely fashion.