

Immersion Information

Everything you need to know for your appointment at MACoM — from who will greet you to how to prepare beforehand.

Mikvah Guides

When you arrive for your appointment, a volunteer mikvah guide will be there to welcome you. Your guide is available to show you around the mikvah, explain the immersion process, and answer any questions you might have.

Preparing for the Mikvah

Before immersing in the mikvah, you will thoroughly cleanse your body to remove anything that might be a barrier (chatzitza) between you and the water. This includes removing jewelry, contact lenses, makeup, bandages, and nail polish; showering or bathing; and cleaning your nails and teeth.

MACoM provides all the supplies and instructions you'll need, so you do not need to bring anything with you. Preparation at MACoM usually takes about 15 minutes.

A few additional things to keep in mind:

Contacts & Glasses: If you wear contacts, you may want to bring glasses. You may take them into the mikvah room and place them at the edge of the pool while you immerse.

Body Piercings: If jewelry or a piercing cannot be removed, rotate it in the water during immersion so the water can come into contact with the area as fully as possible.

Skin: If you have stitches or open sores, you may wish to consult with your rabbi or contact us for guidance.

Hair: Shampoo your hair and remove any braids or tangles. When possible, avoid conditioner, which some consider a barrier. If you use it, rinse thoroughly.

Acrylic & Gel Nails: Acrylic or gel nails worn for more than 30 days are considered part of the body and do not need to be removed for immersion.

Menstruation: If your immersion falls during your menstrual cycle, you may prefer to reschedule. Please contact us if you would like to discuss your options.

If you have questions about any aspect of preparation, please contact us or consult with your rabbi.

Immersing in the Mikvah

Once you enter the warm water of the mikvah, it is customary to immerse fully so that your entire body, including all of your hair, is beneath the water at the same time. This generally includes lifting your feet from the floor and relaxing your limbs.

Three immersions are customary, although practices vary; some people immerse once, while others may immerse seven or eight times. Depending on your tradition and reason for immersing, blessings may be recited during the process. MACoM provides the blessings in Hebrew, English, and transliteration by the side of the mikvah pool. Your rabbi can guide you regarding which blessings to say and when.

You are also welcome to incorporate additional prayers, readings, or songs into your immersion. MACoM has a selection of ceremonies created for different immersion experiences that you may take with you into the mikvah.

Witnesses

Personal immersions for reasons other than conversion do not always require a witness. If you would like, your Mikvah Guide can serve as a witness to confirm that each immersion is complete.

To respect your privacy, the guide will hold a towel or robe above their eyes, lowering it only at the moment of immersion to confirm that your entire body, including all of your hair, is beneath the water.

For conversions, please consult with your rabbi regarding witness requirements.

Guests

Some immersions mark celebrations, milestones, or meaningful life transitions, and you may wish to share the experience with family or friends. You are welcome to bring guests to your appointment. Guests may join you in the mikvah room, wait in the lobby, or gather in the room just outside the mikvah. A transom window between the gathering room and mikvah can be opened so guests can hear the blessings during your immersion.

If you plan to bring a larger group, please let us know in advance.
