

Lo Alecha HaM'lacha Ligmor, VeLo Atah Ben Chorin LeHibatel Mimena. It's not up to you to finish the work, neither are you free to desist from it.

from Pirke Avot 2:16

“Our community's greatest strength and most precious resource is its members. We honor the range and variety of talents and experiences our members bring to the community, and appreciate and rely on the support they give to the congregation through participation and financial contributions.”

—Kolot Chayeinu Statement of Values

AT KOLOT CHAYEINU ALL HANDS ARE NEEDED

- Kolot is here for us all year long, and we all share and rejoice in the richness of Kolot's spiritual, cultural, joyful, wrestling-with-tradition, open-to-doubt, curious, creative, compassionate community.
- In turn, Kolot needs what we all bring to it: our hearts and hands to shape the breadth and character of Kolot's community, and our financial support, to enable the tachlis/nuts and bolts of our community infrastructure.

It takes \$952,500 to run Kolot all year long — that's \$2,295 from each of our members.

This **\$952,500** is the cost of everything: our staff salaries, space rentals, learning programs for adults and children, worship services, holidays, website, concerts, events, food, siddurim, you name it. All the things we love, cherish, and need.

Kolot's dues currently cover less than 50% of these community expenses. The rest we make up through voluntary contributions and fundraising activities. We think of all these contributions as terumah: the gifts we give willingly to support our community and which elevate us all in the giving.

Kolot is a diverse community and we are deeply committed to that diversity and to our values of inclusion, accessibility and mutual responsibility. We also firmly believe that money should never be an obstacle to a person's involvement in Jewish community.

Kolot's Fair Share Dues mean that our dues help meet Kolot's expenses, reflect our commitment to the community, are meaningful contributions and respect the diversity of our members' economic circumstances. Those with less, pay less; those with more, pay more. And in addition, all Kolot members and the many supporters and friends of Kolot are asked to give terumah contributions as they can. Without this combination of income — Fair Share Dues and contributions — Kolot cannot operate. Therefore, when you make your pledge, we ask you to be both candid about your financial level and as generous as possible!

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **What does Kolot mean by “income”?** Income refers to the money that you generate throughout the year and which covers your annual expenses. This money may be through work (your pre-tax earnings including commissions, bonuses and/or consulting income) or through wealth (investment income, including dividends, trust funds or rental income). The accumulation of wealth, such as the sale of a house, is not generally considered income, though some members have made special gifts to Kolot when selling a home or otherwise coming into additional money. Many members donate a portion of a stock sale or bequest as a special gift to the community, and we encourage this kind of thinking — however this is not part of your membership dues.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (CONTINUED)

- **What if I am a member but my life partner is not?** Kolot's dues are by individual and not "family" or "household." We ask you to determine your personal share of your shared household income. We understand that all households and shared finances are not the same. In households where the member's and the non-member's incomes are substantially different, we ask you to make a dues pledge that fully reflects the value of Kolot membership in your life and the life of the others in your household.
- **What if both the adults in my household are members? How do we calculate dues?** Kolot's membership is by individual, not family or household. If there are two member adults in your household, please be sure to indicate the dues amounts for each individual. If you do not do so, Kolot assumes the dues pledge is evenly split between both adults and our records and invoicing reflect that assumption.
- **When does the membership year begin and end, and when are payments due?** Kolot's congregational and fiscal year — including the year in which we track dues pledges and payments — runs September 1 through August 31. You may make your dues commitment payments in any arrangement you wish **but we require that some dues payment be made by December 31 and that dues are paid in full by June 30.** If you make regular monthly payments, we strongly encourage you to divide your total dues pledge by 10 rather than 12 and make 10 monthly payments, the last of which would be scheduled for June. It is very difficult for Kolot to plan and budget otherwise, and particularly when members carry "balances" from prior years.
- **What if I cannot afford to pay the Fair Share Dues for my income level?** Kolot believes that money should never be an obstacle to involvement or participation in Jewish life and has never turned a member away for lack of money. We encourage you to make a dues pledge that reflects your commitment to the community, the value Kolot has in your life and is a stretch-gift, meaning a little more than you might first think you can manage but certainly not financially untenable. You do not need to ask Kolot "permission" to do so; simply state your pledge on your membership renewal form. If you are wrestling with what to do or would like to speak with someone about this further, please contact us at info@kolotchayeinu.org. Such correspondence and conversations are handled with great care and confidentiality.
- **Will members be expected to contribute to Kolot beyond membership dues?** We very much hope that, if possible, you make financial gifts in addition to your dues. Though our Fair Share Membership Dues structure is enabling Kolot to grow the percentage of our income that is generated from dues, we will still have a meaningful gap between dues income and Kolot's total expenses. To bridge that gap, we rely on voluntary contributions or *terumah* — such as gifts given to Kolot connected to lifecycle events (bar and bat mitzvahs, baby namings, brit mila, birthdays and other milestones) — and fundraising activities — like special holiday fundraising appeals and community events. We encourage you to participate in these voluntary ways as you can, but dues are required of all Kolot members.

Whatever your dues are, we ask you to think about how you might increase your total financial support to the community this year. We all want Kolot Chayeinu to be here when we need it: to offer more learning; ritual and action opportunities; to provide space to pray, study and gather; to provide you with a connection to our rabbi and cantor in times of joy and sorrow.

We can only help Kolot thrive if we ourselves contribute our personally meaningful fair share to our community's growth.

REMINDER! Membership dues contributions and most other voluntary contributions to Kolot are tax deductible.
Your support of Kolot has financial benefits, too! Thank you for your generosity.