

METRO

# NYC synagogues cancel Purim celebrations over coronavirus crisis

By **Melissa Klein**

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Jews in the heart of Crown Heights dressed in costumes celebrate Purim in 2019. Paul Martinka

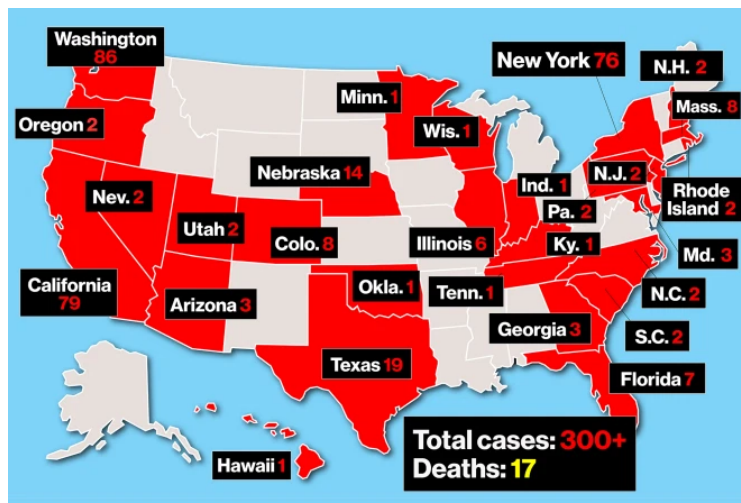
Several New York City synagogues scrubbed Purim carnivals to be held Sunday and Monday on Friday, a day before Gov. Cuomo **declared a state of emergency** amid the crisis.

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"The nature of the carnival, where physical contact is not limited, presents an unnecessary risk for our community," Temple Emanu-El on the Upper East Side announced Friday, adding "There is currently no known exposure to our congregants or facilities."

B'nai Jeshurun on the Upper West Side also nixed its Sunday carnival saying in a message to members "Most of our fellow synagogues across the city have made similar decisions."

The synagogue said "clergy will refrain from hugs, kisses and handshakes at the receiving line on Shabbat."



The Central Synagogue on the Upper East Side said Monday's carnival and a Tuesday celebration for kids were off. Congregation Rodeph Sholom on the Upper West Side canceled a carnival and teen party on Monday.

The synagogues maintained that other programs for the holiday, a joyous celebration that includes the reading in synagogues Monday night of the Megillah — the story of Queen Esther who saved the Jews of Persia — were slated to go forward.

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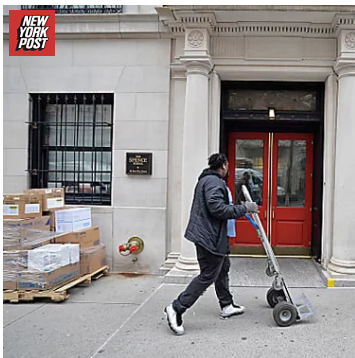
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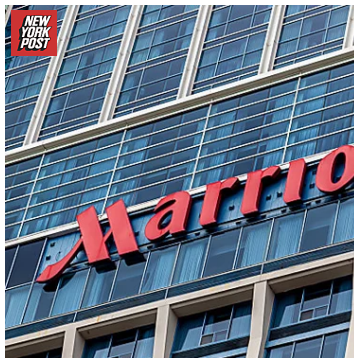
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