



INDUSTRY OVERVIEW: JOBS IN THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

What are jobs in the Jewish community?

For the YU community “Jewish Jobs” generally refer to jobs that involve working for the Jewish community, most often in the areas of Jewish education or Jewish communal services. Jewish educational and communal professionals work in day schools, community centers, synagogues, congregational schools, federations, universities, social service agencies, and the military, among others. These professionals differ greatly in their educational backgrounds, job titles, duties they perform, and salaries they earn. The goal of a Jewish job is to contribute to the overall welfare, education, or cultural enrichment of the Jewish people by conducting outreach to, providing educational services for, or servicing Jews from varying age groups and backgrounds. In these roles, one is enriching and giving back to the community and strengthening their sense of Jewish identity.

Career Tracks

There are three major forms of service delivery for Jewish communal services: Case Work, Group Work, and Community Organization. Case Work usually involves working closely with individuals and families providing counseling or direct services. Group work involves working with groups of individuals such as teenagers, young adults, or seniors. Community Organization involves advocacy and mobilization around specific issues or goals and coordinating community efforts on a broad scope.

National Agencies: There are many national organizations that either serve as a coordinating umbrella group or as a direct service provider through local branches and chapters. Many are service or fundraising oriented. Some examples are: Jewish Educational Service of North America, The Jewish Community Centers Association, Association of Jewish Family and Children’s Agencies, or the International Association of Jewish Vocational Services, to name a few.

Central Agencies for Jewish Education: These organizations provide the coordination of educational services in local communities across the US. They set the standard for Jewish Education, plan projects and initiatives for improvement of education, and act as consultants to communities in areas of early childhood, day school education, congregational schools, informal youth activities, camping, and adult education. They may train teaching staff, provide educational resource centers, coordinate inter-school activities, design educational material, coordinate family education, or sponsor and promote Jewish experiences overseas (e.g., NY Board of Jewish Education).

Local Jewish Education Institutions: Jewish Day Schools, Community Day Schools, Yeshivas, Congregational Schools, and Adult Education Centers offer exciting career opportunities for those interested in formal Jewish Education. Direct teaching and administrative positions are the typical career paths.

Federation: The Federation is the central coordinating organization within local Jewish communities. They fundraise, allocate budgets, and oversee beneficiary agencies, communal planning, and coordination for welfare, health, cultural, and educational needs and services. Federations, in contrast to national agencies, are focused on local issues and are autonomous.

Jewish Community Centers and Y’s: These settings offer a wide variety of opportunities for those individuals interested in planning or implementing cultural, educational, recreational, and social programs of interest to all ages of Jews in the community.

Community Relations: Organizations in this arena are involved with issues affecting the security of Jewish communities around the world and with strengthening the Jewish community in the US. Issues such as separation of church & state, anti-Semitism, civil rights, immigration, women's rights, inter-group/interfaith relations, the Holocaust, and Israel are areas of focus for such institutions. Selected organizations that fall under this category are: Jewish Community Relations Councils, Anti-Defamation League, American Jewish Congress, Joint Distribution Committee, etc. The positions vary from research, to community liaison, to policy analysis, to program directing.

Family Service: Professionals employed by this sector tend to specialize in clinical work or case work. They have services for all ages, and address concerns of family life and life cycle events appropriate to each age group. Some offer individual and group services around aging, single parenthood, child care, adoption, marriage, refugee resettlement, poverty, abuse, and other difficulties.

Geriatric Service/Nursing Home Administration: These agencies focus on the issues and needs of the elderly and their families exclusively. Professionals may work in nursing homes, rehab centers, assisted living centers and generally are involved in counseling, programming, or administration.

Synagogue Administration: A synagogue provides religious, educational, and cultural services for its members and other constituents. Its leaders often serve as spokespeople for the local Jewish community. Rabbis, cantors, and educational staff are responsible for the religious and educational components while synagogue administrators are responsible for budget, facilities, operations, and programming.

Vocational Service: These agencies employ a wide variety of professionals, including social workers, rehabilitation counselors, teachers, counselors, translators, entitlement specialists (who work with individuals and groups interested in vocational and career counseling and training, job placement and follow up), refugee and resettlement, residential services (disabled), and case management.

Campus Development: HILLEL--The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life, Chabad, and independent Jewish on-campus organizations also offer opportunities for individuals to work on various college campuses both in the US and abroad, conducting a variety of outreach services for Jewish students. National Hillel located in Washington, D.C., also has positions in campus coordinating as well as program development.

Related Occupations

Youth Director	Community Relations Officer	Administrator
Director of Development	Coordinator of Teen Services	Student Life Coordinator
Executive Director	Dayan	Camp Director
Public Affairs Specialist	Yoezet Halacha	Program Associate
Outreach Coordinator	Community Organizer	Planning Executive
Chaplain	Jewish Studies Teacher	Principal
Rabbi	Social Worker	Adult Education Director
Cantor	Planning Executive	Operations Director
Policy Analyst	Program Associate	Campus Liaison

Requirements/Skills

Working as a professional in the Jewish community requires professional skills, Jewish knowledge, and commitment. The field is competitive, and while some entry level positions in either Jewish education or Jewish communal services require only a BA degree, a graduate degree is often needed to advance in the different areas. Among some of the preferred degrees are: Master's in Jewish education, Jewish communal services, social work, rabbinical degree, and Jewish studies. In recent years some organizations have been more open to hiring individuals with a Master's degree in business administration, public administration, law, and political science. Key skills in these fields include organization, analytical thinking, writing, public speaking, and interpersonal communication. Of utmost importance is knowledge of the Jewish community (communal services) and knowledge of Jewish texts and educational theory (education).

Salary

Compensation for positions in Jewish Education and Jewish Communal Services differs greatly depending on the organization, position, geographic location, and funding sources. Typical entry level starting salaries (with a BA) in Jewish Education fall between \$25,000 and \$40,000 in New York City and may be higher outside the Tri-state Area depending on the availability of qualified teachers. More experienced teachers and school administrators with MA or PhD or Rabbinical degrees can earn between \$60,000 and \$100,000. In Jewish Communal Services entry level position salaries range between \$20,000 and \$33,000; while those with Masters Degree are between \$35,000 and \$40,000. At higher levels (Executive Directors, Planning Executives) there is potential to earn six figure salaries, \$60,000-\$150,000.

Directories

The American Jewish Yearbook (found in YU libraries)

Torah Umesorah Directory of Jewish Day Schools—A National Guide

New York Board of Jewish Education: Guide to NY Jewish Day School and Yeshivot
Guide to NY Congregational Schools

Associations

The Jewish Communal Service Association

JESNA (Jewish Educational Services of North America)

Torah Umesorah Network of Jewish Day Schools (www.chinuch.org)

AMODS (Association for Modern Orthodox Day Schools) – look up under www.yu.edu website

Publications

Hamodia

The Jewish Week

The Jewish Press

Websites

www.jewishjobs.com

www.jewishjobster.com

www.jewishfederations.org

www.jcca.org

www.ujafedny.org

www.jcareers.org

www.idealists.org

www.werepair.org

www.luach.com

www.hillel.org

www.jewishcareers.com

www.oujobs.org

www.youngisrael.org/careers

www.parnossahworks.org

www.leadinghire.org

www.hizdamnuot.com

shul websites (i.e., teaneckshuls.com)