

BJE's 2025 March of the Living – Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is BJE's March of the Living and who participates in this program?

BJE's March of the Living is a powerful ten-day experiential education program that brings a delegation of L.A. high school seniors to Poland as part of the International March of the Living – the largest Jewish educational program for teens in the world. The International March brings thousands of Jewish teens and adults from all over the world to Poland for the week surrounding Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Memorial Day) to learn about Jewish life in the past, present and future. The trip is preceded and followed by BJE educational and orientation workshops led by senior educators and subject experts.

Q: What is the itinerary for the program?

In addition to joining the international March from Auschwitz and Birkenau on Holocaust Remembrance Day, the week in Poland also typically includes touring and visiting museums and historic sites in Warsaw, Krakow, and Lublin, as well as Auschwitz, Birkenau, and Majdanek camps, while interacting with Holocaust survivors and community leaders.

Q: What is the program fee and what kind of financial aid and grants are available?

The fee for this unique program, including round-trip air travel from Los Angeles, room and board, tuition, ground transportation and varied social and cultural programs is \$6,850, including a \$785 application fee. All fees are fully refundable until December 11, 2024.

BJE's March of the Living experience is available to all Jewish teens, regardless of their family's financial status. There are individual subsidies, scholarships and grants available, as well as need-based assistance. Please mark the appropriate box indicated in the on-line application if you would like to receive more information. **For payment plans please contact Chen Bain at the BJE at (323) 761-8619.**

Q: What are the dates of the trip?

BJE's March of the Living 2025 will take place from Monday, April 21 – Wednesday, April 30, 2025.

Q: Who can participate in BJE's March of the Living Program?

BJE's March of the Living program is open to all Jewish high-school seniors in Los Angeles. We welcome participants from all academic settings (including public, private, Jewish and secular high schools) and work to build community through pre-trip workshops and Zoom calls.

Q: Does BJE's March of the Living conflict with the 2025 AP exams?

AP exams are scheduled to start on Monday, May 5, 2025 and our trip returns on Wednesday, April 30, 2025.

Q: How do I apply to join BJE's 2025 March of the Living?

If you are interested in applying for the 2025 program, please visit www.bjela.org/MOTL and click the link to the complete the interest form. This form includes a few short answer questions and is to be completed by the teen.

Everyone who completed the interest form will be emailed instructions to complete Part 2 of the application in CampMinder, our registration portal. **Note:** Even if the family already has a CampMinder log-in from a previous program, their teen still needs to fill out a registration form.

Additionally, a personal interview and a letter of recommendation are required prior to acceptance. Participants **are required** to attend all pre-trip programming. **Acceptance to BJE March of the Living, upon completion of these requirements, is at the discretion of the Program Leaders.**

Each delegation's forms and procedures are specific – please do not register or apply through any other delegation's website or through the March of the Living International office website, otherwise participants risk their applications being lost or misplaced.

Q: How do I get excused from my school classes to participate?

Contact Lily Khalili at lkhalili@bjela.org for a letter that can be given to your school counselor that details the BJE MOTL experience. If there are further questions, a school official can contact her at (323) 761-8621.

Q: Is security a program concern?

Throughout the March, security and safety are our top priority. MOTL delegations travel with at least one armed security guard per bus, and all site visits are checked and 'cleared' by security in the mornings and before groups arrive. March of the Living International works with the highest levels of law enforcement and government in Poland to ensure that the security of participants is top priority.

Q: What Covid 19 protocols have been put in place to ensure the health and safety of BJE March of the Living participants?

BJE may require that all participants and staff be fully vaccinated against Covid 19. In addition to vaccination and booster requirements, BJE may implement safety rules and precautions in order to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 such as mask wearing, hand washing, hand sanitizing, vaccination, testing, and social distancing.

Q: What religious practices or expectations are there; is the food kosher?

The program is set up to accommodate the religious needs of all its participants. All food in Poland and Israel is certified kosher and we offer a variety of Shabbat services for all levels of observance.

Q: Is a passport required to participate?

Yes, a valid passport is required for international travel. A passport is considered valid when it expires no earlier than 6 months after the scheduled return date. For the 2025 BJE March of the Living, passports need to be valid until November 2, 2025.

Q: What kind of staffing is provided?

The staff accompanying the students includes a doctor, nurses, a mental health professional, educators, counselors, historians, and a song leader. All staff must pass a background check and California mandated reporter training to be a part of the program. There is approximately a 1 to 10 staff-to-teen ratio.

Q: Is this a really depressing trip?

This is a powerful and inspiring trip, and students come away from BJE's March of the Living program knowing that they have experienced a life-changing event. We have found that visiting the sites, while filled with emotion, is also quite uplifting and affecting in very positive

ways, because there are thousands of Jewish teens from all over the world experiencing it together. In our reflection groups, we discuss the Jewish experience, past and present, and the impact that anti-Semitism has had on our community. A mental health professional accompanies the group to help guide teens and groups throughout the program.

Q: Will I still be eligible for Birthright Israel if I participate in BJE March of the Living?

Currently, Birthright Israel participation is open to March of the Living alumni between the ages of 18–26 years.

Q: If I have additional questions or concerns, whom should I contact?

You can contact Lily Khalili at lkhalili@bjela.org, (323)761-8621 or Abby Cutler at acutler@bjela.org, (323)761-8609 at the BJE March of the Living office. They will be able to help you or put you in touch with someone who can.