

The *Amin Tzibur* Program

Dear Colleague,

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you into the process of being commissioned an *Amin Tzibur*. The *Amin Tzibur* (ATz) is a program sponsored by NAASE, the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, and the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. The ATz course of Jewish study, observance, and commitment was developed for a select group of synagogue executives who are recognized by their congregations not only as the chief operational and financial officer of the congregation, but also as a religious leader. These individuals, along with the rabbi(s) and cantor(s) of their congregations, serve in numerous sacerdotal areas of service, and are examples of Jewish living and resource of Judaic knowledge to their congregants.

Since 1999, the *Amin Tzibur* commission has been awarded to fewer than a dozen individuals. Upon your completion of the requirements and the awarding of your commission, you will become a member of this special group of individuals who are recognized by the Conservative Movement and their own congregation as *clai kodesh*. In the course of your study and preparation, we encourage you to contact others who have been award the commission of ATz for guidance and assistance.

We wish you all the best in this unique opportunity to grow as a Jew and to serve your congregation and *klal Yisrael*.

Randy Spiegel, FSA, ATz
Chair, *Amin Tzibur* Certification Committee

~ Visit us on the Internet at www.naase.org ~

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NAASE PA Office Voice/messaging: (215) 872-2007 Office@naase.org



The candidate will work with the Amin Tzibur Committee that consists of a chairperson and two other Amnai Tzibur appointed by the President of NAASE. The ATz Committee must approve of the candidate's original Judaic research topic **prior** to the beginning of research. Throughout the course of the candidate's research and writing of the paper, the committee will be available to assist the candidate. The committee will review and comment upon the paper prior to final submission. In addition, the candidate will provide the committee with verification of the Judaic studies requirements of the ATz commission.

The components of the *Amin Tzibur* Program are as follows:

- ⊕ Personal Observance and Religious Practice
- ⊕ General Application Requirements
- ⊕ Judaic Study and Scholarship
- ⊕ Clergy Mentorship
- ⊕ Professional Growth and Communal Service
- ⊕ Ritual and Synagogue Skills

Personal Observance and Religious Practice:

1. Candidates must be Jewish according to the standards of the Rabbinical Assembly.
2. Candidates must demonstrate a commitment to Jewish living through personal observance and religious practice within the guidelines of Conservative Judaism including the observance of *Shabbat*, *kashrut*, personal *t'filah*, and the practice of high moral and ethical standards.
3. These standards are established by the personal statement and confirmation of practices by applicant.

General Application Requirements:

1. All applicants must submit a completed application, statement of qualification and personal observance and two written recommendations (from one's Rabbi or Cantor, and one's President or other lay-leader).
2. All candidates must have completed a minimum of 10 credits or continuing education units (CEU) in adult level courses in Jewish Studies, Bible, Jewish History, Hebrew, or other Judaic studies. Candidate shall provide proof of course work by submitting an appropriate document provided by the institution of Jewish learning to the ATz Committee. If an official document is not available, the candidate may submit a signed statement attesting to the type of course work, where taken, and date of completion. For purposes of calculation, the JTS/NAASE/USCJ Week of Study Program equals 4 CEU's. Applicable CEU's earned at NAASE Conventions will vary based on the content and program. Candidates with Bachelor's or Master's Degrees in Jewish Studies, Jewish Communal Service, or related fields are automatically accepted.
3. Candidates must perform synagogue duties and have a position description consistent with the goals of the *Amin Tzibur* Program.
4. Candidates must have visited and demonstrated a commitment to the State of Israel.

Judaic Study and Scholarship Requirements:

1. Because a commitment to life-long Jewish learning is a component of the Amin Tzibur commission, the candidate must successfully complete six (6) new credit or continuing education units within 24 months of application in approved courses of Judaic content. At least four (4) of the units must be earned from the annual JTS/ NAASE/USCJ Week of Study Conference or at

another institution of higher Jewish learning. Remaining units may be earned through approved local or distance learning courses at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, educational programs of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, or other approved, recognized adult learning programs. Documentation of this coursework shall be submitted to the ATz committee.

2. Candidates must have a basic reading knowledge of Hebrew and basic Jewish texts; and have mastered the equivalency of at least one year of college-level Hebrew.

3. Candidates must research and publish one article or paper on an approved topic of Jewish thought.

Clergy Mentorship:

1. Each candidate shall be engaged in his or her synagogue work, relating to *Amin Tzibur*, under the guidance and mentorship of a congregational Rabbi or Cantor.

Professional Growth and Communal Service:

1. Candidates will participate in professional growth and leadership through service to NAASE, the Jewish Theological Seminary, United Synagogue, or other agreed-upon community organization.

2. Candidates will attend and participate in at least one (1) regional or national NAASE, United Synagogue, or other Jewish professional convention annually.

Ritual and Synagogue Skills:

1. Candidates will demonstrate proficiency in appropriate ritual and synagogue skills required to participate as a leader of the congregation including the leading of weekday and Shabbat services and the chanting of basic *t'filot* (i.e., *kiddush*, *birkat hamazon*, *havdalah*)

2. Candidates will demonstrate competency in the fulfillment of *mitzvot* such as *tefillin*, *kashrut*, etc.

3. Candidates will demonstrate competency in using the *luach bet haknesset* to determine *b'nai mitzvah* dates, Hebrew birthdays, holidays, and *yahrzeit* observances.

Completing the *Amin Tzibur* application process:

€ Return the completed application along with the following required attachments:

€ Statement of personal observance

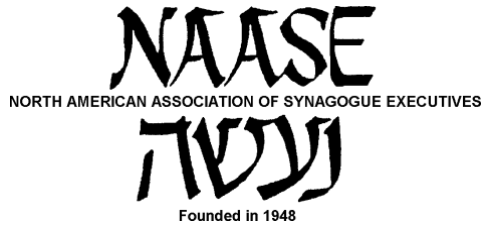
€ Documentation of the required 10 credits in Jewish Studies

€ Copy of Position Description indicating current synagogue duties

€ Two Letters of Recommendation (see enclosed format)

€ Completed Personal Statement (see enclosed format)

€ Paper of original Judaic research. **This paper must be submitted no later than February 1** of the year the candidate wishes to be awarded the *Teudat Amin Tzibur* at the JTS Week of Study.



The *Amin Tzibur* Program: Candidate Application

Name of Candidate: _____

Name of Congregation: _____

Congregation Address: _____

Congregation Phone: _____ Fax: _____ E-Mail: _____

Year joined NAASE? _____ Year awarded FSA? _____ Years in current position? _____

Employment history:

<i>Location</i>	<i>Position/Title</i>	<i>Years of Service</i>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

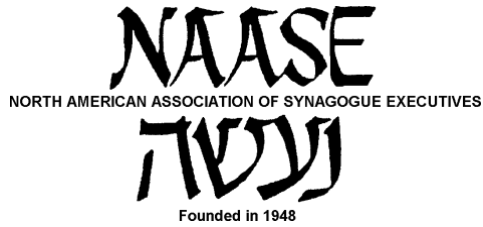
Name of Mentoring Clergy: _____ Congregation: _____

I affirm that the above candidate for a *Teudat Amin* is engaged in his/her synagogue work in areas of Jewish life under my guidance and mentorship, and that he/she is a recognized leader in his/her congregation. I attest that the above candidate performs duties consistent with the goals of the *Amin Tzibur* program.

Signature of Mentor _____ Date: _____

I hereby apply to become commissioned as an *Amin Tzibur* and apply for consideration for the *Teudat Amin* awarded jointly by the North American Association of Synagogue Executives, the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, and the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism.

Signature of Candidate _____ Date: _____



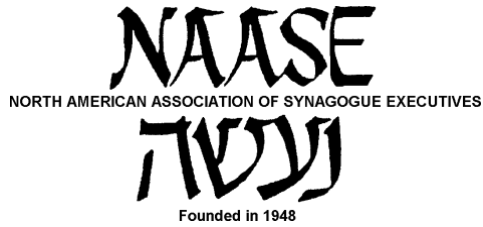
The *Amin Tzibur* Program: Letter of Recommendation

Name of *Amin Tzibur* Candidate: _____

Recommendation by: _____ Affiliation: _____

Please provide information relating to the candidate's work in the synagogue and the Jewish community. Please indicate the religious role the candidate plays within the congregation and community working with the clergy and the membership. Please include areas of such as the candidate's sacerdotal duties, Judaic study, personal observance, synagogue skills, professional growth, and commitment to Conservative Judaism.

Please utilize the space below and reverse if needed, or attach your recommendation to this form.



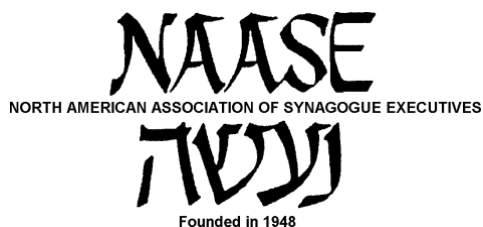
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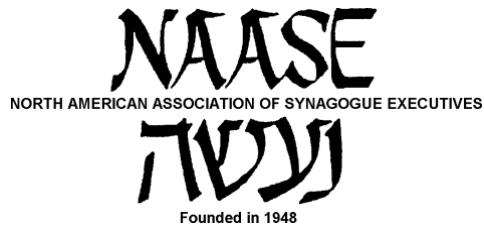


The *Amin Tzibur* Program: Personal Statement

Name of *Amin Tzibur* Candidate: _____

Please write a personal statement on your candidacy in the *Amin Tzibur* Program including how you view your role in the synagogue, your personal history and religious background, and your vision of the relationship between clergy and administrator. Please include a statement of your personal theology, religious practice, relationship to the Jewish community and the State of Israel.

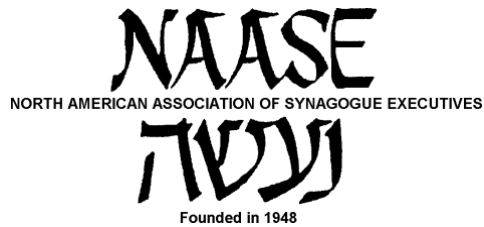
Please utilize the space below and reverse if needed, or attach your statement to this form.



The *Amin Tzibur* Program: Statement of Personal Observance and Religious Practice

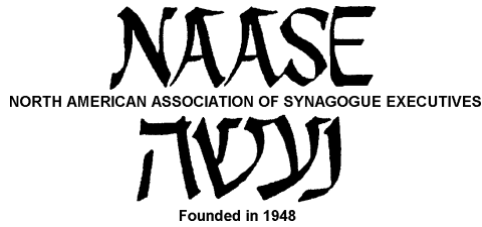
Name of *Amin Tzibur* Candidate: _____

Please briefly describe your personal observance of Jewish religious practice. Include the observance of kashrut, Shabbat, festivals, and tefillot.



The *Amin Tzibur* Program: Paper of Original Jewish Research

Because it is assumed that an *Amin Tzibur* candidate is committed to a lifetime of Jewish learning, candidates are given wide latitude in choice of Judaic subject matter. Before embarking on their original research, **the proposed topic must be submitted to the ATz chairperson and committee for approval.** This paper, which will be published in the *NAASE Journal*, is not to be an “opinion piece,” but rather a well researched paper that includes a bibliography and citing where appropriate.



The *Amin Tzibur* Program: ATz Checklist

*To be used by the chairperson of the ATz Committee.
Place date item has been received or approved on blank space.*

1. Candidate Application has been received _____
2. Candidate is a Regular Member of NAASE _____
3. Candidate has received FSA certification _____
4. Letter of Clergy Recommendation has been received _____
5. Letter of Lay-Leader Recommendation has been received _____
6. Candidate's Personal Statement has been received _____
7. Candidate's Statement of Personal Observance & Practice has been rec'd _____
8. Topic for research paper has been received _____
9. Topic for research has been approved by committee _____
10. Date candidate was notified of completion of all ATz requirements _____