



# Operations: ORGANIZING YOUR FIRST MEETING

Deborah Long, [Triangle Jewish Genealogical Society](#) (2015)

Congratulations on your decision to organize your first meeting! Here are some suggestions:

- Send out notices of a first meeting to every Jewish group and place of worship in your area. Include synagogues, Hillels, kehillas, university Jewish studies departments, Jewish Community Centers, Jewish retirement communities, Jewish day care centers, Hadassahs, and Chabads. Google “Jewish + [your city]” and you should find quite a few possibilities. (For a sample email notice, go to the end of this document).
- Send out notices to all of your Jewish friends and acquaintances as well as spouses with Jewish families/roots.
- Contact JewishGen to send its subscribers in your zipcodes. (To find the appropriate zipcodes, go to <https://tools.usps.com/go/ZipLookupAction!input.action>). The [current IAJGS president](#) will help you make this contact.
- Contact [Gary Mokotoff](#) of Avotanyu.com to send you the email addresses of his subscribers in your zipcodes.
- Send out notices to your local newspapers. If you have a local religion column or religion editor, send a notice to that individual as well.
- Send an e-mail message to announce upcoming programs via the local Jewish community-wide interactive e-mail distribution list.
- Hand-deliver flyers to post on bulletin boards at local synagogues and other places that attract Jewish people.
- Mail a hard copy version of the flyer to the local libraries.
- Announce on Facebook.
- Contact the local “non-Jewish” genealogical society to make them aware that a local Jewish genealogical society is in formation.
- Contact your local Mormon church for support, ideas, and help with promotion. The Church may have a local genealogy library or research area where you can post a notice.

Once you receive responses to these communications,

- Choose from the most enthusiastic responses a few individuals who you can ask to volunteer to help you organize the first meeting. You will need to establish a date/ time for the first meeting when all these first volunteers will commit to being there to help you. If possible, meet with them in a small group and determine if there is interest in creating a JGS in your area.
- Ask them to serve as interim board members.
- If possible, find a central meeting place that is easy to find. Libraries often offer free meeting space and usually have good parking and are accessible. Jewish Federation office, retirement homes, and community centers are another good option. You will want to offer some light refreshments. Early afternoons on Sundays is a good first meeting time.