

TRAVELING JUSTLY

Keeping Labor Practices in Our Conscience

Hotel workers engage daily in the *mitzvah* of *hakhnasat or'chim* (hospitality to guests) by cleaning rooms, making beds and ensuring you feel at home while traveling. It's difficult work. Hotel housekeepers sustain injuries at more than twice rate of service sector workers as a whole; two-thirds of housekeepers report taking pain medication just to get through the day. In 2005, the Union for Reform Judaism adopted a resolution supporting workers' rights. Follow these practices to help implement our policy:

- 1) **Be neat.** The most common injuries sustained by hotel workers, such as back aches, shoulder pain and bursitis or "Housemaids' Knee" can be life-long problems. Don't contribute to the aggravated injuries of hotel workers; throw away your trash and organize your personal items so they don't need to move them.
- 2) **Leave a good tip.** Show your appreciation for quality service by thanking the valet, porter and housekeepers with your words and a tip. Suggested tipping values:
 - Housekeeping: \$2 per night per person
 - Porter: \$1-\$3 for hailing a cab or handling luggage
 - Valet: \$1-\$2 each time they get the car, more in bad weather
- 3) **Show your support for unions.** Visit hotelworkersrising.org to find union hotels where you travel. Try to stay only at unionized properties. If you have the occasion to meet with any of the hotel managers, please let them know that you appreciate their support of workers' rights and let them know that you prefer to stay at a hotel, such as theirs, which allows workers to organize.

Be an Eco-Friendly Traveler

As Jews, we are commanded to be good stewards of the Earth, which includes being conscious of our impact on the environment when we travel. Lighting, air conditioning and water heating account for 80% of energy use at the average hotel, but there are many simple things you can do to reduce your footprint this weekend.

Visit rac.org/earth-day to learn what the Reform Movement is doing to go green and how you can be part of it!

- 1) **Reduce your energy use** by turning off lights, unplugging appliances and electronics with stand-by lights, and adjusting your thermostat when you leave the room.
- 2) **Save water** by taking shorter showers, turning off the faucet when brushing your teeth, and reusing towels and linens.
- 3) **Reuse containers** and use tap or filtered water instead of bottled water. Recycle paper, glass, and aluminum cans.
- 4) **Combat** your travel-related carbon emissions by planting trees or funding clean energy projects.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) How does "traveling justly" fit into the broader goals of your trip?
- 2) What other ways can you choose to keep social justice issues in mind when traveling? What other "just traveling" tips could we add to the list? Contact the RAC to let us know!

Learn More: RAC.org/Travel