The Magen Avraham (263:15) cites a practice that women who on Friday night would light candles in the adjoining shul. This practice is no longer followed (Mishnah Berurah 263:21) because the hadlaka must be in one's home, a location that meets the halachic definition of beikut. The Mishnah Berurah elaborates on this requirement based on the principles gleaned from the Gemara in Eruvin (72b-73a), which discusses the definition of beikut in reference to the dinim of mitzva and haneirot and the place of sleeping. The location labeled as the place of sleeping (Mishnah Berurah 263:29). Therefore, if one has two homes, but the homes are equally permanent and comfortably, in that case, we follow the opinion of Rav that the location labeled as beikut, which residence should be determined as the one that was the place of sleeping. (Mishnah Berurah 263:29). Therefore, yeshiva students who share a dormitory room should light neirot Chanukah in that relatively private room, and not in the public dining room used by all the students (Igrot Moshe, Yoreh De'ah, chelek 3, 14:5).

If one finds himself in a different city than the other members of his family, he must perform hadlakat neirot himself, even if his wife lights candles in his family’s house (Orach Chaim 263:6). His wife’s hadlaka in a different city does not constitute a hadlaka in yirah, since he is not metzuraf (connected) to that house at this time.1

The primary purpose of hadlakat haneirot for Shabbat is to illuminate the room in which the seuda will take place (Rama 263:10). However, if this is not possible, such as in the case of guests in a hotel who are unable to light in the dining room, we hold that the hadlaka is acceptable even if done in a different room than the one in which the seuda will be eaten (Magen Avraham 263:21).

In this case, the hadlaka should be done in the hotel room (using an incandescent bulb). It is not proper to light in a public room set aside for hadlakat neirot, since that room does not have the status of beikut. It is not the place where they slept. [This practice is very problematic for another reason as well. Since there are many candles being lit in such close proximity to each other, it is unclear if there is any illumination gained from such a hadlaka.]

If one lights in his home, but the candles will not continue to burn until the conclusion of the seuda he is partaking of at a different location, such that no benefit will be gained on Shabbat from the hadlaka, the mitzvah will not have been fulfilled (Shulchan Aruch 263:9). In such a case, one should light in his home using electric bulbs or long-lasting candles, which will remain lit until he returns to his home.

Adapted from Rav Schachter on the Moadim.

1 See B’ikvei HaTzon, pp. 117-123.

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