

משרד העלייה והקליטה
The Ministry of Aliyah and Immigrant Absorption



ENGLISH

שירות עולים בצה"ל

Military Service
7th Edition



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הודפס על ידי המדפיס הממשלתי

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The I.D.F - An Introduction to the Israel Defense Forces



Most new immigrants to Israel from English-speaking countries are not familiar with armies in general or the Israel Defense Forces (I.D.F) in particular.

Among the most highly respected armies in the world, the I.D. F. is exceptional in that it is a citizen army. Nearly all of Israel's men and women serve in it – the men throughout most of their lives.

The I.D.F is a professional force capable of complex military operations using the most modern technologies. Yet new immigrants are sometimes surprised by the human, egalitarian approach toward the individual soldier. Relations between officers and soldiers are on a first-name basis once basic training is over, and consideration is generally given to each soldier's personal and family needs.

The I.D.F recognizes the difficulties that immigrants face in adjusting to Israeli society, and understands that military service is an essential part of this integration.

Service in the I.D.F involves learning army discipline, coping with fatigue, experiencing basic training (*tironut*) learning specific military skills, and becoming part of a large and sometimes incomprehensible system. Your fortitude, sense of humor and willingness to lend a helping hand, together with your basic belief in Israel's right to exist and the Jewish people's duty to defend itself, will greatly assist you during your military service.

This booklet is designed to help new immigrants anticipate what they will face when their time comes to serve. Just remember that many thousands of immigrants have come into the army and today, despite the inherent difficulties of army service, are proud to do their share and be part of the Israel Defense Forces.



A portion of the material presented here is based on explanatory I.D.F brochures as well as the book "*Likrat Giyus*" (Towards Call Up,) by Chaim Rabiya and Emmanuel Rozen (Keter Publishing, Jerusalem, 1988). Additional material can be found online, in public libraries, and bookstores.

Information is also available from the following websites:

- aka.idf.il
- www.mod.gov
- www.klita.gov.il

Note: this is the seventh edition of this booklet, and hereby nullifies all previous editions. The information contained here is based on data provided by various official sources. Details are subject to change. In case of any discrepancy, the rules and regulations of the Israel Defense Forces, the Ministry of Aliyah and Immigrant Absorption, and all other official bodies will prevail.



Compulsory Service

Eligibility for Service

New immigrants are conscripted for regular service (*sherut sadir*) or shortened service (*sherut mekutzar*) after 12 months in the country.

A new immigrant who has not received a call-up notice (*tzav kriya*) is still legally required to register within 6 months of receiving new-immigrant status. Contact an I.D.F induction center (*lishkat hagijs*) in order to receive more detailed information.

Length and Type of Compulsory Service

The length and type of compulsory service is based on age on the date of first arrival in Israel, regardless of status at the time (tourist, temporary resident, new immigrant, etc.) and on family status on the date of induction. Medical profile is also taken into consideration. A stay in Israel as a tourist or temporary resident followed by two or more years away from Israel will usually not be counted in determining the date of first arrival.

- The date of arrival for one who stayed for up to one year on a program under the auspices of the Jewish Agency or the Student Authority, and has written authorization from these bodies, is calculated as follows:
 - ✓ For one who left the country upon completion of the program and returned to Israel after being absent for 12 months or more, the date of return is the "date of arrival."
 - ✓ For one who remained in Israel, or left and returned within 12 months, the date of first entry into the country is the "date of arrival."

Note: The information presented below is general information only. Length of military service is determined by the I.D.F according to various criteria and military personnel requirements.



Period of Service for Men who Made Aliyah up to May, 2015

Married + 1 or More Children	Married	Single	Profile	Age on Arrival
Exempt	18 months	30 months	31-97	18-19
	12 months	24 months	31-97	20-21
	6 months	6 months	65-97	22-23
	Exempt	Exempt	31-64	
	6 months	6 months	65-97	24-25
	Exempt	Exempt	31-64	
	*Reserves	*Reserves	31-97	26-29
	*Reserves	*Reserves	31-97	30 and up

Period of Service for Women who made Aliyah up to May 2015

Married	Single	Age on Arrival
Exempt	24 months	Up to 20
	Exempt	20 +

Period of Service for Men and Women who Make Aliyah Following May 2015

28 and up	22-27	20-21	18-19	Age on Arrival / Group
Exempt	Volunteering - minimum 18 months	24 months	32 months	Single Men
		18 months	24 months	Married Men
	Volunteering - minimum 12 months	12 months	24 months	Women

- * A soldier assigned to a reserve unit is subject to conscription, but is only called up for service according to the needs of the army.



Note that length of service for new immigrants may be periodically updated based on the Army's needs and guidelines. The information contained in this booklet is a general outline only. In the event of any discrepancy between the information contained here, and the rules and regulations of the I.D.F, the rules and regulations of the I.D.F will prevail. Updated information is available from I.D.F conscription centers, and from www.aka.idf.il.

Compulsory Service for Immigrant Women who Made Aliyah Up to May 2015

Age on Arrival	Unmarried	Married
To age 20	24 months	exempt
20 and over	exempt	exempt

Physicians and Dentists

The Military Service Law (1986) mandates the conscription of male physicians up to the age of 35 who are deemed fit for military service, and dentists up to and including the age of 29 who are deemed fit for military service. The Law also defines the conscription of new-immigrant physicians according to the following guidelines:

1. Male physicians for mandatory service of 18 months.
2. Male dentists for mandatory service of 18 months.

Women physicians may not be conscripted without their consent.

Physicians and dentists who are conscripted serve according to the same conditions as soldiers in the career army (*keva*) unless they make aliyah before the age of 22.

Note that the "Military Service Law" (1986) permits, as needed, conscription of new immigrants in medical professions up to the age of 38 for regular service and age 43 for reserve duty.

An immigrant physician or dentist who is conscripted, or who is interested in volunteering, is invited to meet with a military physicians board, under the auspices of the Chief Medical

Officer. During the meeting, the Board decides if the candidate is suitable to serve as a military physician, and a draft date is set accordingly.

To serve in the I.D.F as a doctor or dentist, it is necessary to have an Israeli medical license from the Ministry of Health (For details about Israeli licensing procedures, consult the brochure entitled “Medical Professionals” available from the Publications Department. See the order form at the back of this booklet.) It is also necessary to undergo specialization training for at least one year in an Israeli civilian hospital.

Note: in all cases, the exact length of service is decided only after reporting to the draft office, and may be influenced by additional factors that are not mentioned in this booklet.

Foreign Citizenship

The “Military Service Law” requires the conscription of every permanent resident, whether or not they hold foreign citizenship. Immigrants concerned about maintaining foreign citizenship in light of service in the I.D.F should check with the appropriate immigrant association, or their country’s embassy or consulate in order to clarify and protect their status. If required, the I.D.F can provide a document affirming that army conscription is an involuntary action and that it is compulsory and unavoidable.

Service in Foreign Armies

New immigrants who served in a foreign army are usually eligible for a reduction in the length of I.D.F service. Service is shortened according to the length of the foreign service, and in most cases is no less than a minimum of six months.

In order to be eligible, it is necessary to present proof of previous military service to a special committee. Documents must be translated and notarized.



Immigrant physicians and dentists who served in a foreign army can also usually have their service in the I.D.F shortened according to the length of the previous service. In most cases, shortened service is no less than a minimum of six months of service.

Returning Israelis

Child of Israel Citizens Residing Overseas

This section pertains to candidates for military service who are recognized as a "*ben mehagrim*." A "*ben mehagrim*" is a person whom the Army classifies as child of Israeli citizens residing overseas who departed Israel with their parents before the age of 16.

A "*ben mehagrim*" is required to serve according to the following criteria:

- Israeli citizens under the age of 16 who depart Israel together with their parents in order to reside abroad are generally eligible for deferred service.
- A woman born to Israeli citizens living overseas, who returns to take up residence in Israel after the age of 20, is usually exempt from service, on condition that she did not previously take advantage of a year of residence, or reside in Israel for a period of more than 120 days in a calendar year before the age of 20. If she utilizes the one-year residence period, she can be exempt from army service only if she returns to Israel following the age of 21.
- Israeli citizens who visit the country on a one-time basis, for a period of up to one year, or make separate visits for a total of no more than 120 days, are not considered as having "returned to Israel."
- Israeli citizens who leave Israel with their parents after the age of 13 and before the age of 16 in order to reside overseas, and whose parents return to Israel before their 18th birthday, are obligated to serve. Israel citizens whose parents return to



Israel following their 21st birthday do not lose their status as a "*ben mehagrim*."

- An Israeli citizen who leaves Israel at age 16 or over, one or both of whose parents remain in Israel, is subject to conscription upon becoming age 18 according to the Military Service Law. Duration of service is the same as for all other Israelis.

Exemptions from Service

Men

Exemptions from military service for men are extremely rare. Each case is investigated very carefully.

Women

A woman may be exempt from military service under any of the following conditions:

- She is recognized as leading a religiously observant lifestyle.
- She comes from a religious background.
- She is married.
- She is pregnant.
- She is a mother.

A woman may be granted an exemption on the basis of a religious lifestyle provided that:

1. She has declared that for reasons of conscience, or a religious way of life, she is prevented from doing military service and has proven this to the satisfaction of the exemption committee.
2. She keeps the laws of Kashrut at home and outside the home.
3. She does not travel on Shabbat.

In order to be exempt on the grounds of a religious way of life, it is necessary to submit a statement from a Rabbinic Court,



signed by a judge and confirming that the applicant keeps the laws of Kashrut both at home and away from home, does not travel on Shabbat, and that her religious lifestyle prevents her from serving.

Many persons who are exempt from army service volunteer for "*Sherut Eizrachi*" (Civilian Service) or National Service (*Sherut Leumi*). Volunteers serve the country in various important capacities, such as assisting under-privileged children and persons with disabilities, working in hospitals, schools, social-service institutions, and in various other settings. See Useful Addresses for more information.

Deferments or Advancements of Service

Under certain circumstances, an immigrant soldier may defer or bring forward the date of conscription. Each case is judged on its own merit, and the I.D.F retains the right to allow or reject the request. The length and type of service following deferral or advancement depends upon the discretion of the I.D.F.

Submit any request for deferment or advancement of service to the "*mador prat*" of the local draft board long before enlistment date. Include any documents or authorizations that support the request.

Change of Personal Status

The I.D.F calculates the length of compulsory service for a new immigrant for whom there is any change in personal status between the date of arrival and date of call-up (e.g., marriage or additional children) in accordance with family status on the date of call-up.

All reductions in length of service because of changes in personal status are valid only if inductees register with the local draft board at the proper time, and notify the board of these changes in advance, prior to actual induction. One who postpones their initial registration may forfeit the right to have the service period shortened.



Service Options

Regular Service

Immigrants who do a full period of regular service (*sherut sadir*) have the same service options as all other recruits. At the induction center (*Bakum- "Basis Klita U'Miyun"*) inductees are presented with all the available service options (see section on *Bakum*). They then begin basic training in the army unit to which they are assigned.

The majority of I.D.F. job opportunities are open to both men and women, including technicians and communications specialists, weapons instructors, air force navigators, military and border police, cartographers, and administrative and ordnance personnel.

Immigrant Reserves

The Immigrant Reserves (*Atudat Olim*) is a military track for those who complete high school overseas, and are interested in studying for an academic or technical degree before military service. New immigrants with a matriculation certificate (*te'udat bagrut*) from their country of origin, or its overseas equivalent, and are of age for conscription into the I.D.F., can request to join the Immigrant Reserves.

Conditions of Eligibility

- New immigrants with a matriculation certificate or equivalent from their country of origin.
- Children born overseas to Israeli parents, who make aliyah following the age of 18 and who did not study in an Israeli high school, or alternatively, complete high school or academic studies overseas.

Conditions of Acceptance

- New immigrants who are accepted to an institute of academic or technical studies, or are already studying in an institution,



and will earn a BA or technology degree, provided that they commence academic study within 1 1/2 years of arrival, or technological studies within one year of arrival on any type of visa (e.g., tourist, temporary resident, new immigrant).

- Prior to military service, new immigrants may study at the bachelor's level only, although immigrants who arrive in Israel following bachelor's degree study may study for a master's degree provided that they complete studies within three years.
- As stated above, the *atudat olim* is only open to candidates who did not attend high school in Israel, including "external high school." However, studies at a pre-military high school are not considered high-school studies in Israel.
- Students may study any subject, in any academic institution in Israel, including recognized Israeli branches of overseas universities, with the exception of institutions in which study is via correspondence.

Registration

Download information and registration forms from www.aka.idf.il/giyus, and attach the following:

- Authorization of acceptance to an institution of higher education from the secretariat of the institution. The authorization should state the field of study and the academic year, and verify student status.
- Up-to-date grades and details of credit points for candidates who have already begun studies, as well as the projected date for receipt of the degree.
- Send documents to the "*mercaz sherut kedam-tzva'i*" (03)7388880. Note that sending an application does not mean automatic acceptance into the *Atuda*.



Deferring Conscription

At the beginning of each academic year, and no later than September, students must reapply for deferral of conscription. Deferral is not automatic, and not initiated by the Army. The maximum number of deferrals is 4 academic years for engineering studies and 3 academic years for exact sciences and other subjects. Students can request an additional year for pre-academic preparatory subjects (*mechina*). Another year may be granted with special permission.

Technology students can have conscription deferred for up to two years.

Deferral is for the purpose of studies only. Persons who discontinue studies are conscripted according to age, family status, and other factors.

Discontinuing Study

The Army may discontinue studies for the following reasons:

- Studies are discontinued for any reason (failure to meet academic standards, interrupted study)
- Failure to submit a request for deferral on time
- Transfer from one discipline to another, or from one institution to another, without notifying the Army and without receiving the proper authorizations.
- Failure to cooperate with the induction center or other military bodies with which it is necessary to complete various procedures.
- Failure to acquire the minimum required credit points in a given academic year.
- Disciplinary problems between the student and the academic institution or the student and the Army.



Placement in Professions

Following completion of studies, students are conscripted for I.D.F service according to age, family status, and other factors. Although the Army is not obligated to integrate soldiers according to their profession, soldiers who do serve in their profession are obligated to serve in the Career Army (*keva*) for a total of five-years (three years of compulsory service plus 2 years in the Career Army or another combination as the Army sees fit).

Hesder

Hesder combines military service with yeshiva study. It is open to graduates of yeshiva high schools recognized by the I.D.F, or to students who take matriculation exams in five study units of Talmud. Service in Hesder usually requires a commitment of approximately 48 months; 32 months with no salary (i.e. the period of study) and 16 months of active service. Registration for Hesder is at a conscription office during 12th grade, and is until the month of March. For more information, contact a conscription office, or see www.aka.idf.il, or www.hesder.org.il.

Note: For more information on service options, courses, etc. visit the I.D.F website: www.aka.idf.il.



Vocational Classification

The vocational classification procedure begins at the end of 11th grade and is for military candidates who are not drafted into combat units. Following procedures at an induction center, candidates are invited to a vocational-classification day at a placement center, during which they take various forms of aptitude tests in order to determine personal capabilities and allow the Army to decide upon the optimal placement during service. Candidates then receive an interactive questionnaire to fill out on the Army website in order to indicate service preferences.



Conscription

Every new immigrant of military age should receive an “Order to Report for Registration” (*tzav hityatzvut*) during their first year in Israel. This order indicates the date they are to report at the local induction center to register and undergo a preliminary medical examination. One who is not issued such an order, or who becomes an immigrant some time after arriving in Israel, must nevertheless report within 6 months of attaining new-immigrant status.

When to serve in the Army is one of the biggest decisions facing immigrants. Postponing military service may create a situation in which immigrants can find themselves in a unit with much younger recruits, since most Israelis enter the Army at age 18. Waiting too long may result in military service becoming inconvenient in terms of work and family obligations. Delaying service is particularly problematic for persons who establish a business before their initial service period.

Although the Army does run Hebrew language courses (*ulpanim*) it is important to have gained a basic working knowledge of Hebrew prior to induction.

Sometimes it is advisable to serve while still eligible for new immigrant benefits. The Ministry of Aliyah and Immigrant Absorption does provide some aid during regular service, and the period of benefits is extended for the term of compulsory service.

It is advisable to check with a personal absorption counselor regarding these matters before the initial visit to the draft board. Advice and counseling is also available from the various immigrant organizations.

The Registration Procedure

During the first visit to the draft board, candidates for service undergo medical examinations, tests, and a personal interview, and must supply personal information on numerous occasions.



The following items are required for the first appearance at the draft board:

- Order to report for registration (*tzav hityatzvut*), if received.
- Identity cards - *te'udat zehut* and *te'udat oleh*, passport(s), including canceled ones, showing all visas and dates of arrival, driver's license.
- Diplomas and other certificates of profession or education - (original and photocopy). Students should bring confirmation of studies, or of registration in an institution of higher education.
- Documents concerning previous service in a foreign army (if applicable,) original and photocopy as well as photographs in uniform.
- The medical form received prior to induction (if it has not already been returned by mail). A conscript who did not receive the medical form by mail can download it from the "*Olim Al Madim*" website, www.aka.idf.il/main/giyus/.
- Medical documents that attest to any health problems. Submit these with the medical form.
- Documents that certify personal status, i.e., those that attest to single or married status, in order to receive appropriate benefits.
- Results of a didactic test, if relevant, from a psychologist or didactic diagnostician, in Hebrew, for candidates with learning disabilities.

Note: bring original documents for display purposes only. Only submit photocopies. NEVER give original documents to anyone!

The First Interview

At the induction center (*lishkat hagiys*) all pertinent facts should be brought to the attention of the clerks. These include family

status; e.g., married, without family in Israel, etc. An only son (in families in which there are no other children) cannot be sent to a front-line unit, unless his parents sign a waiver. The same qualification exists if a member of the family fell during their military service.

Tests

Recruits take a battery of tests, including a Hebrew test and psychometric tests. Immigrants who took the Hebrew test at the time of initial registration, but are not due to be inducted for several months, are advised to apply for a repeat Hebrew test if they feel that their command of the language has improved. A higher grade on the Hebrew test may mean a more interesting assignment during service.

Following completion of the tests, recruits receive a questionnaire in which they list their preferences of service (known as “the manila”). It is necessary to fill out the questionnaire in order to receive an appropriate assignment.

Medical Profile

A medical examination determines “profile” rating. The examination includes measuring weight and height, and checking blood pressure, pulse, and vision (for recruits who have not brought results of an eye exam conducted by their optometrist). Recruits are requested to supply information about illnesses or medical problems they currently experience or have experienced in the past, as well as any past surgeries. It is necessary to supply all relevant medical documentation of any conditions. When necessary, recruits are referred to additional examinations by a medical specialist.

Factors affecting profile include medical history, vision problems, medications, past surgeries, and psychological problems. Bring all relevant medical documents to this examination, and furnish all medical details in order to prevent complications during army service.



Once the medical examination is complete, inductees then wait to receive a date to report for induction.

Meitav

“*Meitav*” is the unit of the Army responsible for classifying and placing candidates for military service. The unit is part of the Army’s Manpower unit “*Agaf Koach Adam – Aka.*” *Meitav* operates an information line for inductees that they can call starting from the day they are drafted. The information line can answer questions about medical issues and conditions of service (in unusual circumstances only), and provide explanations about placement procedures. The information line can also help if a soldier needs to be located in an emergency or if a soldier is in emotional distress. The information center operates 24 hours a day during the main inductions in July, August, November, and March. For inquiries prior to induction, contact one of the induction centers. See Useful Addresses.

Placement

Job assignments are determined by the needs of the I.D.F, as well as by inductees’ preferences for serving as indicated in the questionnaire that they fill out. Additional factors taken into consideration are test results, educational background, professional training or experience, medical profile, extenuating family circumstances such as being married, being an only son, a family member injured in an enemy action, and others.

Requesting a Deferment

Inductees who feel they have a specific personal problem preventing them from serving may submit a written request for postponement of their induction date when first reporting to the local draft board. This request is given all due consideration. However, an individual who has already received notice of an official date of induction must consider this date in force until



they receive an official reply to the postponement request. New immigrants should check with a personal absorption counselor at the Ministry of Aliyah and Immigrant Absorption before submitting such a request. It is also recommended to report any personal problems that may affect army service to the local draft board.

Overseas Travel before Induction

New immigrants who wish to travel overseas prior to compulsory service do not need any authorization from the Army on condition that their overseas stay does not exceed three months, and that they return to Israel no later than three days before induction.

Before Induction - general tips

1. Talk to those who have finished their army service. Ask them what to do, what to say, and what to bring. Ask them about the different branches of service.
2. Immigrant soldiers who wish to retain foreign citizenship should check with their immigrant association and native country's embassy or consulate.
3. Prior to induction, new immigrants are summoned to the draft board and informed of the various service opportunities available to them. During this interview, explain any personal problems or difficulties.



Induction

New recruits first report to the Induction Center -- "*Bakum*" (*basis klita u'miyun*). There they receive an Army identity card (*pinkas hoger*) with a serial number (*mispar ishi*). Recruits should memorize this number as soon as possible, since they will be repeating it often. Possession of a *pinkas hoger* entitles benefits as a soldier in compulsory service, such as discounts on public transportation. It is extremely important to take care not to lose the *pinkas hoger*.

The order to report for induction should contain instructions about how to arrive at the induction center.

Bring the following:

- Order to Report for Induction (*tzav hityatzvut*)
- Identity card (*te'udat zehut*) or Israeli passport.
- Bank card or bank account details in order to receive the army salary.
- Driver's license (if applicable).
- Authorization of special conditions of service (if applicable) such as authorization of lone-soldier status, eligibility for financial assistance, etc.
- Personal belongings.

As part of the induction process, recruits replace their civilian clothing and appearance with a military uniform. Those entering compulsory service are issued uniforms, underwear, socks, a shaving kit and a toothbrush, sewing kit, towel, boots, and a kit bag (duffel bag) in which to carry possessions. Women are given similar supplies. Those entering shortened service are given less equipment. All new recruits should check that their uniform and boots fit properly as soon as they receive them. Exchange them immediately if they are uncomfortable.

On the first day at *Bakum*, soldiers are also photographed, given injections, and given a cash advance against their monthly

stipend. The Army transfers salaries directly to soldiers' bank accounts; soldiers can either open a bank account at *Bakum*, or use an existing account. It is recommended to compare conditions for soldier's accounts at various banks prior to induction.

After receiving gear, recruits are interviewed by a selection officer (unless they have made a previous arrangement such as a pilot's training course). This officer is responsible for assigning recruits to a branch of the armed forces, such as tanks, artillery, or infantry, according to the manpower needs of the Army. The officer examines medical profile and age, and asks for each person's three preferred areas of service. The decision is based primarily on the needs of the Army, although they will try to honor requests if possible. Immigrants receive no special consideration in choice of assignments. The Army's criteria for assignments include educational background, medical profile, overall proficiency rating, and a recruit's wish to volunteer for a particular unit. Immigrants are assigned according to the same criteria as any other recruit.

Among the initial induction activities, recruits are photographed for the *te'udat hoger* (soldier's identification card) and receive the card. This card remains with each soldier throughout their service and can confer eligibility to various benefits such as discounts on public transportation. Men may also receive a haircut. Inoculations are administered at *Bakum* as needed, including tetanus, hepatitis, and meningitis. It is very important for recruits with any sensitivity to inoculations to present attesting medical documentation at *Bakum*.

From *Bakum*, recruits are sent to an Army ulpan or to basic training. Each branch has its own training base. At the end of basic training recruits receive an assignment to a unit or sent on to a specialized training course.

Volunteering for Special Units

Induction procedures are slightly different for recruits who wish to volunteer for a special unit. It is necessary to take aptitude tests, psychometric exams and special medical examinations, fill



out a socio-metric questionnaire, a preference questionnaire, and pass motivation tests. Those who pass all the tests are invited to what is known as '*gibush*.' *Gibush* is essentially a series of further tests and exercises that lasts approximately one week. *Gibush* can often be very grueling, and is designed to determine the candidates' suitability for elite units. Candidates who are chosen are sent on to basic training; those who are not are assigned to a regular unit. More information is available from the website of the I.D.F Manpower Unit: www.aka.idf.

Field Units

There is a large variety of assignments within field units. A number require participation in a preparatory course known as a "*course kedam tzvai – cadatz*" or training during service. To view a list of assignments and courses, see www.aka.idf.

Special Courses for Immigrant Soldiers

At the beginning of the service period, immigrant soldiers can participate in a "*Nativ*" course that surveys Jewish culture and heritage, or in an "*Eitan*" course, which is part of the conversion procedure.

For more information, contact the telephone information center of the Aliyah Division of the Educational Corps, (03) 7376037.

What to Take

Although the Army takes care of all of soldiers' basic physical needs, it is necessary to bring some personal equipment from home. The items recommended in the following list will go a long way toward facilitating basic training and service.

- Medium-sized backpack.
- Personal first aid kit with band aids (plasters), mosquito repellent, aspirin, and personal medications.
- Plastic bags to organize and separate clothes and equipment as well as to keep everything dry and dust-free.



- Elastic (about 2 feet in length) for garters (*gumiot*) to hold up pants' cuffs and also for eyeglasses.
- Siddur, Tallit, and Tefillin for observant soldiers; the Army also supplies these upon request.
- Waterproof felt-tip pen for marking all equipment with name and serial number.
- Length of stout cord for clothes line, holding up pup tents, tying together blankets with loose equipment and a hundred other uses.
- Small flashlight.
- Toilet paper (absolutely essential).
- Small screwdriver for cleaning personal weapons.
- Long shackle lock to lock kit bags.
- Laundry soap for washing out socks and underwear.
- Shoe polish, black or brown, depending on the branch of service.
- Safety pins for pinning tags on uniforms.
- Shower sandals (*kafkafim*).
- Extra gray socks, shoelaces, and underwear.
- Toiletries and hand soap.
- A wristwatch and covered watch strap.
- An old toothbrush for cleaning weapons.
- Electrical tape.
- Sheet (optional).
- Towel (to supplement the one distributed by the army)
- Sunscreen
- Cellphone and charger

It is usually not necessary to have more than one set of civilian clothes.

Everything should be as small and light as possible, because in basic training soldiers often have to carry all of their equipment.



Basic Training

Probably the most difficult period in any soldier's career is basic training (*tironut*). *Tironut* differs in intensity depending on age, health, gender, and branch of service.

Basic training has two purposes:

1. To teach individuals the essentials of soldiering.
2. To teach people from different cultures and walks of life to work together and help one another.

Through the rigors of basic training, recruits learn about their own capabilities, those of their fellow soldiers, and a great deal about human nature under stress. Everyone is stretched to the limits of their endurance and strength. It may be surprising to discover physical and mental capacities greater than ever expected. One cannot really prepare for *tironut*, although some physical training, especially running, may help.

The day-to-day components of basic training include inspections, hikes, runs, carrying loaded stretchers, field exercises, and constant guard duty. Lectures, films, and excursions offer a welcome break from the daily routine.

There may be times during basic training when a recruit may feel like arguing and complaining. It is advantageous not to cut one's self off from contact with comrades, although this may not always be easy. In the majority of situations, it is better to try to establish friendships, even if they are with people not otherwise normally chosen as friends. The ability to laugh and joke together will reduce tensions considerably and help to ease the difficult moments.

Following *tironut*, most soldiers are sent to a military specialty course to learn the skills they will use throughout the rest of their army service.

Helpful Hints for Basic Training

A large amount and variety of equipment is given to each soldier. Check all equipment immediately for defects -- tears, missing

buckles, incorrect size -- and exchange defective equipment on the spot. Soldiers are responsible for every piece of their equipment. Recruits should write their name on all items and look after them carefully. Don't sign for anything not received. Remember, a soldier is liable to be tried and fined for the loss of any equipment or documents.

A soldier's weapon is central to basic training. Never let it out of sight! **Loss of a weapon is a major offense and carries a heavy penalty.**

Always show up prepared and on time. Don't be a wise-guy, and avoid arguments with officers. Stay calm and cool. Don't take anything personally. Most recruits find when it is all over that officers and commanders were simply doing their jobs. Last, and most important, buoy up fellow recruits, and they in turn will offer their support.

Women in the Israel Defense Forces

Over the past few years the I.D.F has made great efforts to integrate women into military service on a par with men; assignments are now more often based on personal ability and not on gender. A large variety of assignments is open to women, including combat positions, officers' courses, technological professions, maintenance positions, the technical and academic reserves, combat units and combat-support units, and more. Female recruits can choose from a wide range of courses (including pre-military courses) which enable them to receive high-level assignments, and to make a significant contribution during their service.

A special division within the I.D.F, the Advisor to the Chief of Staff on Women's Issues (*yoetzet leramat kal leinyanei nashim* "yohalan") works to advance equality and opportunities for women, and to help women soldiers to maximize their skills and potential. They also strive to ensure a respectful, secure, and non-discriminatory working environment for women soldiers. Contact the division via: www.aka.idf/yohalan.



Female recruits receive information about where to ask questions and seek help in the event of difficulties. A woman who feels she is being discriminated against, or experiences any difficulty, and does not find an appropriate source of aid can consult with the *"mador prat vebikoret"* of the Advisor to the Chief of Staff on Women's Issues. See Useful Addresses.

Medical Issues

Female soldiers receive information about medical examination policies with details about gynecological care and pregnancy. According to regulations, women soldiers are entitled to an examination by a unit physician, and have the right to request that a female medic or another female soldier be present during the examination. During the examination, men should be prevented from entering the room (except for doctors). Unit physicians are not authorized to conduct gynecological examinations; such examinations take place a specialist's clinic. Women may make an appointment for a gynecological examination directly, with no need of a referral from the unit physician, provided that the appointment is at a military specialist's clinic. Women may also choose a civilian gynecologist from a list that is included in the *"Guidelines for Women's Medical Examinations"* (*nohal bedika refuit lechayelet*). It is necessary to receive a referral from a unit physician (form # 103).

Counseling and Guidance

Any woman soldier in need of counseling, guidance, or aid in situations of sexual harassment, domestic violence, or other issue, can consult with the Support and Counseling Center. See Useful Addresses.

How to Guard Your Health

Despite the pressure and physical difficulties, and necessity of being active in every type of weather, the Army does its best



to send soldiers home healthy and whole. However, there are steps that individuals can take personally in order to reduce the chances of illness and to keep feeling fit. The following tips are designed to help soldiers maintain their health.

- **Drink Plenty of Water.** During the summer months particularly, it is vital to drink tremendous quantities. At least four liters of water daily is the minimum.
- **Protect Yourself From the Heat.** During the months of April through October, weather reports refer to the "*omes hahom*." This is roughly translated as the intensity of the heat and refers to a combination of the temperature, humidity, and wind speed. Being aware of the *omes hahom* is especially important to soldiers, particularly those involved in field exercises. In areas in which the heat is very intense it is possible to suffer from heat stroke even when careful to drink enough water. Don't take any chances -- heat stroke can be fatal! When exerting yourself physically, your body temperature rises and does not have the chance to cool down. Be sure to drink water at every possible opportunity. Take every available opportunity to rest, in the shade if possible. Wear a wide-brimmed hat, sunglasses, and loose clothing, but avoid sleeveless shirts. Seek medical attention immediately if you begin to experience any of the symptoms of heat stroke, including weakness, dizziness, or nausea.
- **Diarrhea.** In any case of diarrhea, consult a doctor immediately in order to ascertain that you are suffering from a simple digestive upset or virus, and not a more serious condition. Be sure to drink plenty of water in order to replace body fluids and avoid dehydration. If you have any doubts as to the cleanliness of water, use the water purification tablets provided by the Army.
- **Protect Your Feet.** Your feet take a great deal of punishment during basic training, especially during long marches. Make use of every chance to remove your boots and socks and let your feet breath. Try to change socks at least once a day.



- **Medications.** The Army is solely responsible for soldiers' health. Therefore, it is forbidden to take any kind of medications, even simple aspirin for a headache, without reporting your complaint to an Army doctor.

Rights and Obligations of Soldiers in Regular Service

Discipline

One of the fundamental principles of military service is that of discipline. Soldiers must carry out commanders' orders and instructions, remain present at their place of service, salute officers, and present an appropriate appearance. "Appropriate appearance" includes wearing a uniform or work clothes according to instructions, as well as all insignia, tags, and identification badges, which must be worn at all times. The Army has detailed regulations concerning the wearing of uniforms, insignia (rank, tags, badges, etc.) hairstyles and facial hair, overall appearance and more. Every soldier must wear ID tags.

Details about disciplinary regulations, guidelines for uniforms, etc. are provided to new recruits at the time of induction, and are reviewed at the beginning of service. Details are also available on www.aka.idf.il.

Medical Services

Soldiers are insured for medical care through the Army, and not through any of the health funds. A unit medic examines a soldier in need of medical treatment. Soldiers also have the right to request an examination by a doctor, in accordance with their state of health. Commanders are obliged to abide by any recommendations made by the doctor.

A soldier in need of corrective eyeglasses can receive one pair at the I.D.F.'s expense, upon referral from a unit physician.

A unit physician can refer a soldier to a specialist; the soldier



must bring the specialist's diagnosis and recommendations back to the unit physician. A specialist's recommendation is only binding upon the concurrence of the unit physician.

Sick leave or concessions for sick soldiers on base are granted according to the nature of the illness and upon the judgment of the physician.

A soldier who needs medical care during leave or vacation should report to the nearest local military clinic.

Leave

- **Long weekends:** soldiers in field units can receive "long weekend" leave (Friday and Saturday) once a month. Long weekends are not cumulative.
- **Regular leave:** soldiers can have regular leave of 15 days per calendar year. A soldier in a unit whose level is ranked "*aleph*" or higher can accumulate up to five days from year to year.
- **Leave for Exams:** soldiers nearing the end of compulsory service, who are preparing to study in an institution of higher education, can receive special leave of 4 days in order to prepare for entrance exams, psychometric exams, and other required exams. The commanding officer must give permission.
- **Special leave:** soldiers may request special leave for family or personal reasons. The leave may be authorized if the soldier has already used all regular leave days, and if the leave is for no more than 30 days in one year of service.
- **Demobilization leave:** soldiers may be given leave close to the end of their period of compulsory service, according to type of service.
- **Special leave for lone soldiers and immigrant soldiers:** see the section entitled "Benefits to Immigrant Soldiers."



Whom to Approach

All complaints and requests (except in extraordinary cases) must go through the regular chain of command. An enlisted soldier is not allowed to approach an officer with a particular problem without going through the *mem-kaf* (*mefaked kita* - N.C.O.) first. Most contact with the bureaucracy takes place in the office of the *mashakit tash* (she is responsible for conditions of service.) A good *mashakit* will save the soldiers in her unit lots of heartache. She can intercede on their behalf with the commanding officers, ask for special assistance, or do several little things that may make their stay in the Army easier. However, she, like them, is a “low man on the totem pole.”

Some units also have a “*mashakit aliyah*” who is responsible for helping absorb immigrants into their units, helping with Hebrew studies, and advising on issues relating to conditions of service. The *mashakit aliyah* does not replace the *mashakit tash*.

Soldiers' Complaint Commissioner

The Soldiers' Complaint Commissioner (*netzivut kvilot chayalim*) is a unit of the Ministry of Defense that handles inquiries and complaints from soldiers about issues including conditions of service, unreasonable orders or unfair treatment, injustice or blatant deviation from regulations, etc. Inquiries may be submitted in writing, and must include personal details including home address and telephone, and details of the incident. See Useful Addresses.

The Public Appeals Commissioner

The Public Appeals Commissioner (*Katzin/Katzinat Pniyot HaTzibur*) is an intermediary between the I.D.F and the civilian sector, and handles direct inquiries of soldiers in regular service and in reserve duty regarding irregularities, injustices, and mismanagement in their units. The Commissioner also deals with



soldier's inquiries about deferments and exemptions from military service, family and psychological problems affecting soldiers, medical problems and medical-board decisions, and unanswered requests for easing of conditions of service. Families of soldiers may also consult with the Public Appeals Commissioner.

The Town Major

The Town Major's office (*Katzin Halr*) in each city may be able to assist in matters including salary advances, permits, authorizations and documentations (of rank, occupation, completion of courses, etc.). The Town Major may also be able help families to locate soldiers on bases.

Religious Services

The Israeli army is a Jewish army, but every soldier in the I.D.F (regardless of faith) is entitled to practice their religion freely, and accommodations are made to ensure that they may do so.

All food preparation is required to comply with the laws of Kashrut. Officially, every base maintains Kashrut and every soldier has time to perform all the daily rituals. However, rules and reality are not always the same. It depends on the officers, the people in the unit, and the person responsible for religious matters on the base.

Problems include mixing dairy and meat dishes and utensils, especially out in the field when there is a shortage of such items.

During basic training, soldiers receive only one mess kit and one set of silverware. Religious soldiers may request an additional mess kit. All mess kits must be "kashered" beforehand.

Time is of the essence in saying morning prayers and still being prompt for morning inspection. During maneuvers, this is sometimes difficult, but not impossible.

Shabbat and Jewish religious festivals are observed in the I.D.F (except when observance may endanger human life or in emergency situations), and special religious articles for festival



observance are issued to every unit before each holiday.

Soldiers are encouraged to contact their unit chaplain or religious coordinator (*mashak dat*) should they encounter any problems of a religious nature.

Soldiers who find violations in kashrut observance should report them to the *mashak dat*.



Benefits to New Immigrants

The period of compulsory I.D.F service is not considered part of the period of eligibility for new-immigrant benefits and rights by the Ministry of Aliyah and Immigrant Absorption. In other words, the period of eligibility for benefits and rights is extended based on the length of the period of service.

New immigrants who complete their military service should consult with the Ministry of Aliyah and Immigrant Absorption, in order to have an extension of their period of eligibility registered into their *te'udat oleh*. Present authorization of completed I.D.F service.

All soldiers receive general benefits (salary, leave, social services, etc.) The following benefits are in addition to the general benefits and are in two parts:

1. Benefits due to all lone or married soldiers.
2. Benefits due to new immigrants, who may or may not fall into the categories of lone or married soldiers (note that these benefits do not apply to soldiers who are drafted only for reserve service).

Lone Soldiers (Chayal Boded)

In order to receive lone new-immigrant soldier status it is necessary to present an individual *te'udat oleh*. A soldier who has family in the country but with whom he has no contact must also present a report from a social worker or counselor, as well as bank statements for the prior 3 months and a recommendation from a recognized social services organization.

It is recommended that a soldier who meets the requirements for 'lone soldier' status report to the nearest I.D.F recruitment office even before conscription with their *te'udat oleh* and other relevant documents in order to be recognized as a lone soldier at the time of induction.



Benefits

- **Monthly Grant:** A lone soldier in compulsory service is entitled to a monthly grant from the I.D.F in addition to the regular army salary. The amount of the grant is adjusted on a period basis.
- **Ministry of Aliyah and Immigrant Absorption Grant:** In addition to the monthly grant from the army, lone soldiers or soldiers eligible for family payments can receive a monthly grant from the Ministry of Aliyah and Immigrant Absorption according to the following criteria:
 - New immigrants, returning minors, and immigrant citizens, who reside in Israel up to five years, (10 years for new immigrants from Ethiopia).
 - The grant is on a monthly basis. In order to apply for the grant, bring a *te'udat oleh* or *te'udat hoger* to a personal absorption counselor at the nearest Ministry office.

The amount of the grant is adjusted on a periodic basis.

Rental and Maintenance Expenses

The I.D.F participates in rental and maintenance fees for soldiers. A lone soldier can receive increased assistance. For information about housing assistance from the Army, consult with a *mashakit tash*. Bring a rental contract.

An immigrant soldier can receive assistance from the Ministry of Construction and Housing during the period of I.D.F service. The period of assistance during service is added on to the regular period of housing assistance.

A soldier with the classification of "child of immigrants" (*ben olim*) i.e., an immigrant who made aliyah to Israel together with their parents before the age of 25, is not eligible for housing assistance.

Housing assistance is provided through the housing assistance companies (Amidar, Milgam, M.A.G.A.R.). In order to receive



assistance, it is necessary to obtain a *te'udat zeka'ut*. The *te'udat zeka'ut* is a document that outlines eligibility for housing assistance. The following documents are required:

- *Te'udat oleh*
- *Te'udat zehut*
- Certification of I.D.F service.
- Certification from the Ministry of Aliyah and Immigrant Absorption that details any type of housing assistance already received (e.g., rental subsidy, placement in a hostel, etc.).

Note: For more information on housing assistance, refer to the booklet entitled "Housing," available from the Publications Department. See the order form at the back of this booklet.

Marriage Stipend: A lone soldier who marries during compulsory service may receive a one-time grant in addition to the private's full salary which every married soldier receives. Apply to the unit officer responsible for conditions of service (*katzinat tna'ai sherut pikudati*).

Leave (Furloughs)

A lone soldier can be entitled to special furloughs in addition to those furloughs granted to all soldiers.

A lone soldier whose parents live abroad can be entitled to a special leave of 30 days, once a year, for the purpose of going abroad.

A lone soldier may be able to receive one-time assistance towards the cost of a flight. Request a referral from the *mashakit tash* (conditions of service officer). This assistance is on a one-time basis only during the period of service, and is according to Army criteria.

In the event of a death in a lone soldier's immediate family abroad, the I.D.F may facilitate an emergency flight overseas.



A lone soldier can request one extra day of special leave related to personal matters in addition to that given to all soldiers. Such leave is granted once every two months with the permission of the commanding officer and with the recommendation of the *katzinat tash*. An officer may grant an additional day per month as needed.

Four to twelve days' leave may be granted for the purpose of preparing for psychometric exams or university entrance exams.

A lone soldier can be granted special leave if one or both parents residing overseas come to visit in Israel.

Note: Soldiers who go abroad on leave are not insured medically through the I.D.F; it is usually necessary to make private insurance arrangements.

Soldiers should maintain an up-to-date passport in the event of an emergency abroad. It is not possible to leave the country without a valid Israeli passport.

Other Benefits from the Soldiers Welfare Association

During leave, lone soldiers may receive room and board at a Soldiers Welfare Association hostel (*Beit HaChaya*) provided there is a vacancy, upon presentation of a "Lone Soldier Certificate" (*te'udat chayal boded*) and soldiers' identity card (*te'udat hoger*) at the offices of the town major (*Katzin Halr*) of that town. Hostels are open 24 hours a day. It is advisable to phone ahead to make sure of vacancies. Hostels are located in Tiberias, Haifa, Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and Beer Sheva. Hostels serve meals and offer laundry service.

- The Soldier's Welfare Association distributes gift coupons to lone immigrant soldiers for the holidays (Rosh HaShana and Pesach). The coupons can be used for purchases at a variety of shops.



- Lone soldiers may stay in one of the apartments maintained by the Soldiers Welfare Association throughout the country. Apartments are furnished and include appliances and other necessary items. There is no charge. Similarly, lone soldiers can be accommodated at one of the kibbutzim of the Kibbutz Movement and enjoy all of the amenities of the kibbutz including laundry service, as well as a monthly allowance.
- Following discharge, lone soldiers can receive accommodation for 30 days at no charge at a hostel. It is necessary to receive authorization from the director of the Department of Lone Soldiers.

Married Soldiers

Assistance from the I.D.F:

Married soldiers, or soldiers who support immediate family members, and who serve in regular compulsory service can receive family support payments in accordance with family income and other conditions according to Family Payment Regulations.

Apply to the *"mador prat"* at an I.D.F induction center prior to conscription in order to receive family payments. In many cases, it is necessary to have an income evaluation for some forms of assistance.

Note that families that own an automobile are generally not eligible for assistance that requires an income evaluation.

Assistance from the Ministry of Aliyah and Immigrant Absorption

Following I.D.F authorization for family payments, the following categories can receive an additional allowance from the Ministry of Aliyah and Immigrant Absorption, provided that they commence the period of military service within 5 years from receipt of status:

- children of immigrants



- immigrant citizens
- returning minors
- married new-immigrant soldiers
- married children of immigrants
- soldiers who support immediate family members

Returning residents who are eligible for family payments from the I.D.F can also be eligible for the grant from the Ministry of Aliyah and Immigrant Absorption, provided they are conscripted within 2 years of receipt of returning-resident status.

To receive this benefit, bring the following documents to the nearest Ministry of Aliyah and Immigrant Absorption office:

- Identification documentation (*te'udat hoger* or *te'udat zehut*).
- Copy of marriage certificate

Housing Assistance

The I.D.F offers assistance for apartment rental and maintenance fees. Married soldiers who receive a family allowance can receive partial assistance. It is also possible to request full coverage of rental costs in place of a family allowance.

Immigrant soldiers can also receive housing assistance from the Ministry of Construction and Housing through one of the housing assistance companies. It is necessary to present a *te'udat oleh* with details of the housing assistance the family has already received from the Ministry of Aliyah and Immigrant Absorption, authorization of I.D.F service, and a rental contract.

Assistance to Parents or Spouses of Soldiers

In some cases, the parents or spouse of a soldier may receive family payments according to their financial situation.

Submit the following documents:

- Bank statements of parents or spouse for the 3 months prior to application (according to the type of request).

- Authorization from the National Insurance Institute of payment of allowances for the 3 months prior to application (if applicable).
- Credit card statement for the 3 months prior to application.
- Photocopy of parent's or spouse's *te'udat zehut* with the addendum listing any additional children in the family.
- Application form filled out and signed by both the soldier and the soldier's parents or spouse.
- Authorization of guardianship if necessary.
- Authorization of ownership of an automobile if applicable.

Following authorization, payments are transferred directly to the bank account of the soldier or spouse. Assistance can include a monthly grant, a supplement to the soldier's salary, holiday gift coupons, and other items, as needed.

Additional Assistance to Soldiers Experiencing Economic Difficulties

- The Assistance Fund of the I.D.F and the Soldier's Welfare Association offers financial assistance to soldiers experiencing financial distress.
- Loans - as needed.
- Special Leave – a soldier with a severe and immediate economic or personal difficulty can receive leave for the purposes of working once he has used up all regular leave – up to 30 days for each year of service.
- Work permit- a soldier with economic difficulties can request a permit for employment following the regular hours of his unit.

Soldiers with exceptional family difficulties can request concessions on their conditions of service. Concessions are according to the nature of the situation.



It is necessary to affix the following relevant documents to the request:

- Up-to-date medical authorization confirming the relevant family member's state of health (when applicable).
- Financial statements – bank statements, credit-card statements, documentation of debts, etc.
- Social worker's report.
- Any other documentation relevant to the request.

Benefits to Soldiers who Marry During Compulsory Service

- Soldiers who get married during compulsory service can receive 10 days of leave. This leave is subtracted from special leave days.
- One-time grant as a wedding gift. The grant is equivalent to a private's salary.
- Rental subsidy to newly-married soldiers.

Benefits to Soldiers who Have Children Born During Compulsory Service

- Soldiers who have children born during compulsory service can receive 8 days of leave. This leave is subtracted from special leave days.
- One-time grant as a baby gift. The grant is equivalent to a private's salary.

Additional Benefits to All Soldiers

- Some municipalities grant a discount on municipal taxes (*arnona*) to soldiers in compulsory service. To receive this discount, present a soldiers' identity card (*pinkas hoger*) and submit a copy of the certificate of military service to the municipality. This discount is also valid for four months



following discharge from service. The soldier must prove ownership of the apartment or provide a rental contract in their name. For more information, contact the local authority.

- Soldiers in compulsory service can receive reduced fares on inter-urban buses, at museums and at other places of entertainment on presentation of a *pinkas hoger*.

Easing Conditions of Service

A soldier with an exceptional family situation can request an ease of conditions of service. The nature of the alteration is according to the situation.

It is necessary to attach the following documents to the request:

- For medical situations: up-to-date medical authorization of the family member's state of health as well as all other necessary medical authorizations.
- For financial situations: financial documentation such as bank records, salary statements, verification of debts, records of credit-card purchases, etc.
- Social-worker's report.
- All other authorizations and documentation that support the claim.



Discharged Soldiers

The Guidance Division and Fund for Discharged Soldiers (*HaYechida VeKeren LeHachvanat Chayalim Meshuchrarim*) of the Ministry of Defense aids former soldiers during the five years following discharge from either the compulsory or career army.

The Division offers information regarding courses and work opportunities throughout the country, and sponsors a program to enable discharged soldiers to complete their matriculation examinations (*bagrut*).

The Division advertises the rights of discharged soldiers and opportunities for study and professional and industrial training in the booklet "*Zechuyot LeChayal HaMishuchrar*" (Information Bulletin for Discharged Soldiers,) which is sent to discharged soldiers. The booklet is also available from the Division.

Financial Benefits to Discharged Soldiers under the Discharged Soldiers' Law

Discharged soldiers are entitled to financial benefits to assist in returning to civilian life. These benefits are designated for specific purposes, namely acquiring housing, obtaining higher education or vocational training, establishing a business, or getting married. Benefits include a demobilization grant (*ma'anak shichrur*), and a personal deposit account (*pikadon ishi*). Benefit levels are based on length of service as calculated by the number of complete months of compulsory service. For calculation purposes every day of compulsory service is counted with the exception of unavoidable periods of conscription as defined by law. The maximum length of service that is taken into account when calculating the period of rights is 36 months for men and 24 for women.

Any pre-army service, study periods in the Study Corps (*Atuda*) or deferred service for studies is NOT taken into account when calculating the period of benefits.

Eligibility

Soldiers in the following categories can be eligible for financial assistance:

- Male and female soldiers who serve at least 12 months or more (not including obligations to serve in the standing army or unavoidable periods of service {for example general mobilizations}).
- Soldiers who serve in compulsory service and are discharged for reasons of ill-health or disability, even if they serve for less than 12 months, can also be eligible.
- Men or women who serve in the Border Police or the Israel Police for 12 or more months.

Eligibility Information Form

Following the conclusion of I.D.F service, discharged soldiers receive an "Eligibility Information Form" (*tofes meida al zeka'ut*) at their civilian address. This form lists personal eligibility for financial grants. A discharged soldier who does not receive a form, or who wishes to check for more information, should consult with the nearest Guidance Division. Updated information about financial grants is also available on the website of the Guidance Division and Fund for Discharged Soldiers, www.hachvana.mod.gov.il.

The Demobilization Grant

A man or woman who accumulates 12 full months of regular compulsory service is eligible for the Demobilization Grant (*Ma'anak Shichrur*). The amount is based on the length and type of service, and is transferred directly to the recipient's bank account within 20-60 days of demobilization; it is therefore recommended to retain the bank account used during military service for 60 days following the date of discharge.

It is possible to verify the amount of the grant by contacting a computerized information line (03) 7776785, or online on the website of the Guidance Division (See Useful Addresses).



The Personal Deposit Account

Men and women who serve at least 12 months in compulsory service have a personal deposit account (*pikadon ishi*) opened on their behalf. Unlike the Demobilization Grant, the recipient does not receive the personal deposit account directly into their bank account. The amount is based on a specific shekel amount multiplied by the number of months served. The sum is linked to the Cost of Living Index. The recipient receives a statement of their balance on a regular basis for as long as the deposit remains in the bank. A discharged soldier can access the account at any bank branch after three weeks following the conclusion of service.

The money may be used for certain specific purposes:

- To enable the discharged soldier to complete high school, pursue academic studies, post-high-school yeshiva studies or professional training at a recognized institution.
- To purchase an apartment, to establish a business, or purchase into an established business.
- To get married (during or following military service.)
- It will also become possible at some point to use the funds for driving lessons. Check with the Division for updated information.

It is not permissible to use funds from the account for any other purpose; however, funds may be used for more than one of the above-listed objectives.

A discharged soldier can make use of the funds within five years from discharge. After five years the money may then be used for any purpose, for an additional two years only. The money is available for use after thirty days following discharge. Once thirty days have passed, the recipient can obtain an application form from Bank HaPoalim or Bank Leumi. The form should be submitted to one of the banks together with the documents required for the purpose of the funds. Consult with the bank for more information.



Note: Discharged soldiers receive periodic updates of their deposit balance. Therefore, it is important to notify a district office of the Division of any change of address or cell-phone number.

Discharged soldiers can also check their balance in the “personal area” on the website: www.hachvana.mod.gov.il.

The Division also offers personal guidance from consultants at district offices in Tel Aviv, Haifa, Jerusalem, and Beer Sheva. They offer consultations on topics including studies, vocational training, employment, and rights and benefits with various bodies. There are also vocational libraries with information about a wide variety of subjects and courses of study at different levels. A computer program helps to identify areas of interest using a database containing information about a large number of professions at all levels of study and training. Information about public reception hours, addresses, etc. is available from the Division website. See Useful Addresses.

For more information about the “Absorption of Discharged Soldiers Law” and the financial benefits available, contact the nearest Division and Fund for Discharged Soldiers.

Additional Benefits for Discharged Soldiers

Note: the details in this section are presented as a service to discharged soldiers. In case of any discrepancy between the information in this booklet and the rules and regulations of the bodies providing service, the rules and regulations of the bodies will prevail.



Grant for “Essential Occupations” – the National Insurance Institute

National Insurance Institute regulations specify that demobilized soldiers who serve in regular compulsory service can receive a one-time grant if they work for 6 months in one of the following areas (excluding clerking positions):

- Gas stations
- Construction
- Hotel work
- Agriculture and produce-packing- under some circumstances it may be possible to receive a partial grant for fewer than six months of employment, but no less than four months. Consult with the National Insurance Institute for details.
- Certain industrial factories and plants
- Nursing

During the first year following conclusion of military service, eligibility is automatic, therefore, it is recommended to commence employment during the first year.

Eligibility

In order to be eligible for the grant for employment in an “essential occupation”, it is necessary to fulfill the following criteria.

- Type of work: it is necessary to be employed in one of the recognized areas in order to receive the grant (it is advisable to ascertain with the National Insurance Institute that the job is recognized for the purposes of the grant).
- Duration of employment: employment in an “essential occupation” in a full-time capacity for at least 6 full months, and within those months, the applicant works for at least 150 days, on either a consecutive or cumulative basis, within the 24 months following the date of demobilization, for one or more employers.



In order to receive a grant, apply to the National Insurance Institute following the conclusion of the 6-month period, and not later than 42 months from the date of conclusion of compulsory military service. Claims forms are available from branch offices of the National Insurance Institute, or for download from the National Insurance Institute website: www.btl.gov.il. Attach a copy of authorization of discharge from compulsory service. The back of the form must contain details of the employer, the type of work and the number of days worked each month.

For updated information on grant amounts, consult the National Insurance Institute, or visit their website: www.btl.gov.il.

Visit also the website of the Division and Fund for Discharged Soldiers: www.hachvana.gov.il.

Note: The types of jobs considered “essential occupations” and conditions of eligibility are subject to change. Consult with the National Insurance Institute for updated details.

During the second year following discharge, it is up to the applicant to prove that they have worked for 12 full months out of the 18 months prior to beginning employment in an “essential occupation,” in order to be eligible for unemployment compensation.

Unemployment Compensation

Discharged soldiers are entitled to unemployment compensation for a period of up to 70 days during the first year following demobilization, following the conclusion of half a year of employment. During their second year following discharge, discharged soldiers can be entitled to up to 50 days of unemployment compensation if they work for 12 months out of the 18 preceding appearance at an office of the National Employment Service (www.employment.gov.il). Applicants can receive compensation on condition that they are registered



with the National Employment Service and the Service has not succeeded in finding suitable employment. Note that soldiers above the age of 20, whose income is below a set level, can also be eligible for assured income payments according to criteria of the National Insurance Institute. Consult with the National Insurance Institute for details.

Vocational Training Through the Ministry of Economy and Industry

The Manpower Division of the Ministry of Economy and Industry, through National Employment Service Bureaus, offers a variety of vocational training courses to discharged soldiers seeking employment. Courses include construction, computers, administration, and others. The costs of the courses are subsidized, and the price of a course depends on the subject. All discharged soldiers are entitled to register for a course through an Employment Bureau. During the first year following demobilization, discharged soldiers can be entitled to a vocational training allowance during studies without the necessity of a previous period of employment. For more information, consult with a vocational advisor at one of the Employment Bureaus.

Income Tax Concessions

Discharged soldiers who serve in regular compulsory service or National or Civil Service are entitled to credit points for concessions on income tax, according to length of service. These points are in addition to credit points granted to all other employed persons. Each credit point represents a reduction of the amount of income tax paid.

The credit points are for 36 months following discharge. In order to receive the credit points, discharged soldiers must present their employer with a discharge certificate (*te'udat shichrur*) or authorization from the I.D.F of length of service and date of conclusion. Discharged soldiers can check the number of credit



points to which they are entitled on the website of the Unit and Fund for Discharged Soldiers: www.hachvana.gov.il.

Lone Soldiers, or soldiers with the classification of 'entitled to assistance,' can receive additional benefits from the Guidance Division for Discharged Soldiers until the conclusion of their period of service. For information, consult with the Guidance Division and Fund for Discharged Soldiers.

Soldiers can begin consulting with a Guidance Division for Discharged Soldiers within 6 months prior to discharge, and continue to consult with them for 5 years following demobilization. Benefits as a discharged soldier can be utilized for a five-year period following demobilization from compulsory service. When visiting an office, be sure to have authorization of "lone soldier" status valid up to the conclusion of service. Discharged soldiers can receive this authorization from the *Katzin Halr*, or from the I.D.F website, www.aka.idf.il/ishurim. The authorization of lone-soldier status that lone soldiers receive during service is not valid for receiving benefits for discharged soldiers following demobilization.

Towards the end of the period of service meetings are often organized for "lone soldiers" in order to provide information to help prepare for civilian life. Details are available from the *mashakit tash* in individual units.



Reserve Duty

Most soldiers are placed in a reserve unit following discharge from initial compulsory service.

The age at which reserve soldiers are no longer required to serve varies according to position, rank, and other factors, and is determined exclusively by the I.D.F.

For more information about exemption age and length of reserve duty (*miluim*), consult with the I.D.F. See Useful Addresses.

In most cases, length of reserve duty varies according to security and budgetary conditions. It usually ranges from 2 to 5 weeks a year, depending on specialty and rank.

The length of reserve duty for students also varies. In order to be entitled to concessions for up to 21 days of reserve duty per year, students must present an official authorization from the educational institution. Students in pre-academic and pre-engineering preparatory courses are in most cases called up for 12 days of reserve duty per year.

Notice of reserve duty is usually sent out several weeks in advance so that there is enough time to arrange personal matters. Sometimes there is no previous warning, as in emergency call-up exercises.

Reserve soldiers may be able to postpone reserve duty by contacting their unit.

All salaries, up to a certain maximum, are paid to reservists either directly by the National Insurance Institute or through their employer.

Though conditions during reserve duty may be quite Spartan and the period of service itself may fall at an inconvenient time, most Israelis accept annual reserve service as a basic fact of life in the country. Some even look forward to *miluim* as a welcome break from their everyday routine and a chance to enjoy the camaraderie of their army unit.



Reserve Duty Compensation

Reserve-duty soldiers are entitled to receive compensation (*tigmol miluim*) from the National Insurance Institute. The amount depends upon occupation prior to serving in reserve duty and the length of service, and is subject to National Insurance Institute calculations and regulations.

Period of Service

Reserve-duty compensation is for each day of service (including sick days and hospitalization) commencing from the first day of service.

When completing a period of reserve duty, soldiers receive I.D.F form # 3010. Check that the number of days of service served is listed correctly.

Salaried workers should submit the form to their employer as soon as they receive it. The employer forwards it to the National Insurance Institute and the employee receives their regular salary.

The self-employed and the unemployed must go promptly and directly to the National Insurance Institute to submit the I.D.F form and claim for payment.

A reserve soldier who has a special employment situation or any questions about compensation for reserve duty should contact the National Insurance Institute reserve-duty telephone line (see Useful Addresses). Information is also available on the National Insurance Institute website: www.btl.gov.il.

In addition to the salary from the National Insurance Institute, the I.D.F pays a separate salary to reserve soldiers who have accumulated a specific number of days of reserve duty in one year. This salary is a mark of appreciation for service to the country. The required number of days is determined on a yearly basis according to the prior year; the level of the salary is also determined according to the previous year. The salary and other benefits to reserve soldiers are paid on May first.

For more information, visit www.miluim.aka.idf.il.



Useful Addresses and Telephone Numbers



Telephone numbers and some addresses change frequently in Israel. Consult the latest telephone directory or information operator if you do not reach a number listed here. When a telephone number has been changed, there may not be a recorded message noting the change. Thus, if the number continues to be unanswered, check whether it is still in use.

Address

Telephone/Fax

Ministry of Aliyah and Immigrant Absorption

www.klita.gov.il

info@moia.gov.il

Main Office

2 Rehov Kaplan

(02) 6752611

Kiryat Ben Gurion, POB 91950

Jerusalem

National Telephone Information Center

(03) 9733333

Public Inquiries

(02) 6752765

Fax: (02) 6752741

(03) 5209127

Fax: (03) 5209161

Southern and Jerusalem District Headquarters

31 Rehov Zalman Shazar

(08) 6261216

Beer Sheva

Fax: (08) 6230811

Jerusalem and Judea District Office

15 Rehov Hillel

1-599-500-923

Jerusalem

Fax: (02) 6249398



Address	Telephone/Fax
Publications Department	Fax: (02) 6241585
Ashdod and Ashkelon Region	
1 Sd. Begin, Tzimer Bld.	1-599-500-914
Ashdod	Fax: (08) 8668030
Hadera Region	
13 Rehov Hillel Yaffe	1-599-500-904
Hadera	Fax: (04) 6108417
Haifa and the Kraiot	
15 A Sderot HaPalyam	1-599-500-922
Haifa	Fax: (04) 8632336
Upper Galilee Region	
"Big" Bld. Industrial Zone	1-599-500-920
Carmiel	Fax: (04) 9580875
Upper Nazareth Region	
Rehov HaMalacha	1-599-500-903
"Lev Esekim" Bld.	Fax: (04) 6564019
Upper Nazareth	
Holon and Rishon LeTzion Region	
3 Rehov Yisrael Galili	1-599-500-910
Holon-Rishon LeTzion	Fax: (03) 9525893
Tel Aviv Region	
6 Rehov Esther HaMalka	1-599-500-901
Tel Aviv	Fax: (03) 5209173
Netanya and the Sharon Region	
3 Rehov Bareket	1-599-500-905
Netanya	(09) 8629435



Petach Tikva and the Shfela Region

26 Rehov HaHistadrut

Petach Tikva

1-599-500-907

Fax: (03) 9312606

Beer Sheva and the Negev Region

31 Rehov Zalman Shazar

Beer Sheva

1-599-500-921

Fax: (08) 6280529

Local Authority Information Lines (Moked Ironi)

105/6/7

I.D.F Induction Centerswww.aka.idf.il./main.giyus

"Meitav" Induction Center Information Line (03) 7388888/6666

Fax: (03) 7388880

103 Rehov Rashi

Jerusalem

Tel HaShomer

(main induction center)

18 Rehov Omar Al Kayam

P.O.B. 22210

Haifa

22 Rehov Yad VaShem

Beer Sheva

Rehov Nazareth

Tiberias

Note that induction centers may also be located in other cities.

Call a municipal information line 105/6/7 for information.

Olim Al Madim – I.D.F Information Website for Conscriptswww.aka.idf.il./main/giyus/

I.D.F Reserve-Duty Website

www.miluim.aka.lidf.il

Information Line

*6535 or (03) 6553655

Soldiers' Ombudsman (Netziv Kvilot HaChayalim)

www.nakhal.lidf.il

HaKirya

Fax: (03) 6977135

Tel Aviv 610700

Consultation Line

(03) 6977374 a.m. (03) 6977433 p.m.

Public Appeals Commissioner (Katzin/katzinat Pniyot HaTzibur)

www.aka.lidf.il/Main/Kapatz

Doar Tzvai 02919

HaKirya

(03) 5691000 (24 hours a day)

Tel Aviv

Fax: (03) 5699400

Town Major (Katzin Halr)

27 Rehov Hillel

(02) 5697004

Jerusalem

14 Rehov Shnior

(03) 6794300

Tel Aviv

145 A. Derech Yaffo

(04) 8610500

Haifa

49 Rehov Gershon

(03) 6087300

Beer Sheva

1 Rehov HaPatan

073-3455400

Eilat



Address	Telephone/Fax
11 Rehov Ben Gurion Ashkelon	(08) 6512506
New Industrial Zone Netanya	(03) 8971800
4 Rehov Binyamin Rehovot	(08) 9374405

For a complete list of Town Majors' bureaus, visit:
www.ishurim.aka.idf.il/1046-he/CityOfficers.aspx

Assistance for Lone Soldiers

Assistance Line (03) 7375200

The Advisor to the Chief of Staff on Women's Issues

www.aka.idf.il/yohalan

Support and Counseling Center

Military Number 033-2600
 Civilian Number (03) 9482600

Soldiers' Hostels (Beit HaChayal)

911 Rehov Aluf David Shaltiel
 Jerusalem 072-2702258

Beit HaShiryon 072-2702230/9
 51 Rehov Lochemai Gallipoli
 Tel Aviv

13 Sderot Ben Gurion 072-2702170
 Haifa

2 Rehov Beit Lechem 072-2702159
 Beer Sheva

Address	Telephone/Fax
4 Rehov Beit HaSheeta Eilat	072-2702260
12 Rehov Golani Tiberias	072-2702180/1
121 A Rehov Rokach Ramat Gan	072-2702282
94 Sd. Tel Hai Kiryat Shmona	072-2702285

Guidance Division and Fund for Discharged Soldiers (Yechida VeHaKeren LeHachvanat Chayalim Meshuchrarim)

www.hachvana.mod.gov.il

Telephone Service Line (03) 7776770

Rehov Ya'akov Dori
Tel HaShomer

34 Rehov Ben Yehuda
Jerusalem

44 Rehov HaMelech David
Haifa

10 Rehov Ben Tzvi
Beer Sheva

The Michael Levin Lone Soldier Center

www.lonesoldiercenter.com

info@lonesoldiercenter.com

The Center can match new-immigrant lone soldiers with mentors for advice and support, organizes Shabbat and holiday meals



Address**Telephone/Fax**

and accommodations, can supply certain home furnishings and appliances, can link lone soldiers with “adoptive families,” offers social events, visits to lone soldiers on their bases and various other services and assistance.

20 Rehov HaHistadrut
Jerusalem (02) 5022211

23 Rehov Ben Yehuda
Tel Aviv (03) 5601931

Beer Sheva and Haifa
www.lonesoldiercenter.com

The National Insurance Institute

www.btl.gov.il

Main Office (02) 6709211
13 Sderot Weizmann
Jerusalem 95437

National Telephone Information Line *6050 (04) 8812345

Reserve-Duty Telephone Line (02) 6463010
(24 hours a day)

National/ Civilian Service

Amutat Shel

www.shel.org.il

Main Office (04) 8438690
Center (03) 5043541
South (04) 6108925



Amuta Shlomit

www.shlomit.org.il

16 Rehov Menachem Begin
Ramat Gan

(03) 6129202

HaAguda LeHitnadvut

www.sherut-leumi.co.il

3 Rehov Norok
Jerusalem

1-800-233-133

Bat Amibat-ami.org.il
sleumi@batami.org.il22 Rehov Guatemala
Jerusalem

*2696

English-Speaking Immigrant Organizations**Association of Americans and Canadians in Israel (AACI)**

www.aaci.org.il

info@aaci.org.il

37 Rehov Pierre Koenig
Jerusalem

(02) 5617151

Fax: (02) 5661186

94 Rehov Allenby
Tel Aviv

(03) 6960389

Fax: (03) 6960401

28 Rehov Shmuel HaNatziv
Netanya

(09) 8330950

Fax: (09) 8629183

Matnas "Yud Aleph"
Rehov Mordechai Namir
Beer Sheva

(08) 6434461



UJIA Israel (Incorporating Olim from Britain, Australia, and New Zealand)

32 Rehov Tuval (03) 6965244
POB 3624 Fax: (03) 6968696
Tel Aviv
Israel@UJIA.org.il

Moshav Meona
P.O.B. 5144 (04) 9975166

South African Zionist Federation

www.telfed.org.il
telfed@inter.net.il

Head Office (09) 7446110
19/3 Rehov Schwartz Fax: (09) 7446112
First Floor
Ra'ananna

13 Rehov Ben Maimon (02) 5634822
Jerusalem Fax: (02) 5663193

ESRA – English Speaking, Residents Association

www.esra.org.il
esra_her@trendline.co.il

10 Rehov HaTsabarim (09) 9508371
Herzliya



Other Available Publications

The following booklets are available from the Publications Department. To order, simply indicate the booklets you wish to receive and return the order form to the Publications Department, English Section, Ministry of Aliyah and Immigrant Absorption, 15 Rehov Hillel, Jerusalem 9458115. The publications will be mailed to you free of charge.

- Guide for the New Immigrant
- The Absorption Basket
- Employment
- Employment Centers for New Immigrants and Returning Residents-Addresses and Telephone Numbers
- Education
- First Steps
- Guarding Your Health in Israel
- A Guide to Services for the Disabled
- A Guide to Transportation in Israel
- A Guide to Ulpan Study
- Health Services in Israel
- Housing
- The Life Cycle in Israel
- Military Service
- Ministry of Aliyah and Immigrant Absorption Addresses and Telephone Numbers
- National Insurance Institute
- Professions That Require Licencing in Israel
- Retirees
- Accountants
- Artists, Writers, and Athletes
- Computer and Hi-Tech Professionals
- Engineers and Architects
- Lawyers
- Medical Professionals
- Nurses
- Psychologists
- Scientists and Researchers
- "Sela" Job-Search
- Workshops
- Social Workers
- Teachers
- Registering for a Health Fund
- Information for Olim Newspaper

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____ Date: _____



