

**FAQ**

Please note - the information in "Frequently Asked Questions" is general by nature. Details of the types of assistance offered to immigrants and the duration of assistance appear in the section on "[Assistance Regulations](#)".

Questions Concerning Status and Assistance

Immigrant Rights

1. I left Israel several times and never received a customs grant. What should I do?

The period of eligibility for a Customs Grant is 4 years from the date of Aliyah. If you have not yet received the first installment of the customs grant, it is necessary to consult with an absorption coordinator at the nearest Ministry branch office. If one received a grant in the past and gave a security deposit, they should contact the nearest District Bureau of the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption in order to be reimbursed.

2. Is it possible to receive an advance payment of the "Absorption Basket"?

The "Absorption Basket" is paid in a lump sum once a month, and there is no possibility of receiving the payments any earlier. However, an immigrant experiencing severe economic difficulties can consult with one of the branch offices of the Ministry in order to clarify eligibility for financial assistance from the Branch Director's Fund.

3. What should I do if I've lost my Immigrant's Certificate?

You must fill out a form at the nearest branch office of the Ministry. This form is a declaration that you have lost your Immigrant's Certificate (teudat oleh). You then take the form to the Registrar of the Civil Court nearest you, and swear in his presence that you have lost your Immigrant's Certificate. Once this has been done you can return to the Ministry and receive a new Immigrant's Certificate. It is also possible to obtain the necessary forms directly from the Secretariat of the Civil Court. One who loses his certificate more than once will have his eligibility reviewed in order to receive an additional certificate. The Ministry of Immigrant Absorption reserves the right to charge a fee.

4. In the past I received a loan from the Absorption Basket which I am having trouble paying back. Can it become a grant?

An immigrant who came on aliyah up until 1.1.96. who received a loan from the Jewish Agency, should contact a Jewish Agency Information Center or the Idud Company.

An immigrant who came on aliyah after 1.1.96. received a loan from the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption.

The loan will become a grant if the immigrant receives any of the following forms of assistance from the National Insurance Institute:

- old age pension with income supplement
- disability allowance
- survivor's benefits with income supplement

Contact the nearest branch office of the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption or the National Insurance Institute.

5. What is the period of eligibility for purchasing a new car exempt from Customs duties?

Eligibility for purchasing a new car exempt from Customs duties is for a period of up to three years from the date of aliyah, on condition that the immigrant possesses a valid overseas driver's license (from the country from which he made aliyah), and on condition that the license is valid in Israel. Before purchasing a vehicle, consult with the nearest branch office of the Customs Authority. In order to arrange for an Israeli drivers license, consult with the Licensing Bureau nearest you. Details on purchasing an automobile exempt from Customs duties can be obtained from the website of the Customs Authority www.moy.gov.il

I resided in Germany for two years, and now wish to make aliyah. Do I still have rights as an immigrant from the former Soviet Union?

The right to assistance as an immigrant from the former Soviet Union is granted only to one who immigrated directly from the former Soviet Union, or who spent up to one year in a 'transit' country. However, in certain cases, you can apply to the Appeals Committee of the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption. If you are still overseas, consult with the Jewish Agency office nearest you.

General Information

6. How can I obtain a Senior Citizen's certificate?

In order to obtain a Senior Citizen's certificate, contact the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, Tel. (02) 6708170/339.

7. How do I obtain a Protective Kit (Gas Mask)?

There is a gas-mask distribution station in every community. In order to ascertain the location of the station nearest you, contact the information center of the Home Front Command, Tel. 12-55-111.

8. Where can I obtain counseling on education and family life?

There is an educational guidance counselor in every school who can offer advice and referrals for help with a variety of issues. For advice and counseling on family life, check whether your local community center offers groups or workshops. Similarly, you can obtain guidance from branch offices of WIZO, Na'amat, Emunah, or the Israel Association for Family Planning (see telephone listings). You can also contact your local municipality or social services department in order to clarify whether there are any parenting classes in your community. It is recommended to check local newspaper listings as well.

9. How can I donate clothing for new immigrants, and where can second-hand items be obtained?

In almost every local authority there are warehouses for second-hand clothing and other items. You can call 106/7 in every location, or the social services department of your local authority, for more information.

10. Where can I find information on community centers?

Call telephone number 106/7 in every location in order to clarify the address of your community center.

11. I paid a company and did not receive service. What do I do?

The procedure in such a circumstance depends on the arrangement that you had with the company. For more detailed information, consult with the Israel Consumer Council (call telephone number 106/7 for information in your location).

12. Is it necessary to send an invitation in order for relatives to visit from overseas?

There are countries whose citizens do not require visas to visit Israel. For citizens of countries from which a visa is required, the Ministry of the Interior, according to its own judgement, is authorized to request an invitation to visit from a relative or acquaintance living in Israel in order to issue a permit to visit. In some instances, the Ministry of the Interior is not satisfied merely with an invitation, and will request guarantors as a condition of entry. There are no general guidelines, and each request is decided on a case-to-case basis. For more information, contact the branch of the Ministry of the Interior closest to you.

Social Welfare

13. How can I obtain assistance for dental care?

Any new immigrant can obtain dental care at a clinic associated with his health fund at reasonable prices. There are special discounts for those who have supplementary insurance.

14. How can I obtain financial aid for burial costs?

The National Insurance Institute covers the costs of burial, which are paid directly to the burial society, provided that the deceased was a resident of Israel. In cases where the deceased was without relatives, the National Insurance Institute may cover the costs of a grave monument one year after the death. Consult with the National Insurance Institute for details.

15. How can one obtain a heating grant for the elderly?

The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and the Social Services departments of the local authorities can offer a grant each winter to elderly individuals in need of heating. The grant is available to elderly persons who live in locations where the winters are cold or extremely cold, and who are supported by an old-age pension and an income supplement. The grant may also be available to couples who meet the following criteria: the husband is over the age of 65, the couple lives in a location with cold or extremely cold winters, they are supported by an old-age pension and income supplement, and live in an independent household (that is, they live on their own and do not reside with adult children or others). The grant is provided through the local authorities during the months of January-March. For those who live in a location with extremely cold winters, the grant is NIS 275. For those who live in a location with cold winters, the grant is NIS 220. List of locations for eligibility.

National Insurance

16. Queries about National Insurance

For information on National Insurance for pensioners, the sick, the disabled, and single parents, consult the National Insurance Institute website www.btl.gov.il

The National Insurance Institute is responsible for assured income payments and unemployment compensation.

The details of each inquiry are individual, and depend on a number of criteria (eligibility for a pension from overseas, eligibility for a pension from the National Insurance Institute, overall income, percentage of disability, available assets, etc.).

Assured income - financial assistance provided to those that the National Employment Service determines to be unemployable and who do not own an automobile, to those studying in vocational training courses within the auspices of the Ministry of Labor, and to single mothers with children up to the age of 7. For exact information on eligibility, contact the National Insurance Institute at (08) 9369696.

Unemployment compensation is available to those seeking employment and who present themselves at an office of the Employment Service, and who meet all criteria for compensation. For exact information, contact a branch office of the National Insurance Institute.

17. How long is it possible to reside overseas without losing eligibility for a National Insurance Pension?

In cases where an immigrant made aliyah following retirement age, their old-age pension is paid during the month of the journey and the following month. The pension then continues to be paid upon the immigrant's return to Israel, although it is possible that an income investigation will be conducted in order to determine eligibility for income supplements. In cases of an immigrant who made aliyah before retirement age, the pension will continue to be paid for 6 months following the journey. In all cases, an income investigation may be conducted in order to determine eligibility for renewal of payments.

Questions Regarding Status and Assistance

18. Can there be a problem if I travel overseas after one year with a non-Jewish grandchild?

No.

19. I was granted an Identity Card for a one-year period only.

What can I do?

You have most likely been granted Temporary Resident status, which must be renewed annually with the Ministry of the Interior.

20. I still have not received a reply from the Ministry of the Interior regarding my change of status.

You must clarify the issue at the nearest branch office of the Ministry of the Interior.

21. How can I obtain citizenship?

Contact the Ministry of Interior in your area to find out which documents are required in order to process your status.

Overseas: Contact the Jewish Agency.

Who is a Child of Immigrants?

An adult child of immigrants (Ben Olim) is a single individual between the ages of 17-25, who made aliyah together with their parents or within one year before or after the parents' aliyah. .

A minor child of immigrants is an individual up to age 17 who came on aliyah with his parents or within one year before or after the parents' aliyah.

Assistance to Children of Immigrants

An adult child of immigrants is in most cases eligible for all forms of assistance granted to new immigrants, with the following exceptions:

Housing: A single child of immigrants is usually not entitled to housing assistance separately from their family.

Mortgage: An adult child of immigrants who marries another new immigrant is in most cases eligible for a mortgage as an immigrant family.
A child of immigrants who marries another child of immigrants, or a veteran Israeli is in most cases entitled to a "young couples" mortgage.

See the Table of Mortgage Assistance Rates.

Customs Grant:

For immigrants from countries that confer eligibility for the customs grant.
Adult children of immigrants from countries that confer eligibility for the customs grant are usually entitled to the grant under two conditions:

1. They are 23 years of age and at the time of their aliyah, or
2. They marry a new immigrant, or a child of immigrants, within their first year of aliyah.

Customs concessions may be granted for specific household items for a child of immigrants who maintains an independent household. Consult with the Customs Authorities for details.

What Rights are Children of Immigrants Entitled To?

A child of immigrants is entitled to most forms of assistance with the exception of the following:

Housing: See Assistance to Children of Immigrants.

Customs: Generally an individual who came on aliyah as a minor is not eligible for a customs exemption.

For more details regarding eligibility contact the Customs Authority.

Who is Considered a Returning Minor?

A Returning Minor is a resident of Israel who left Israel with his parents before age 14 and returned at age 17, or over.

In order to be recognized as a returning minor one must meet the following conditions:

Age: The returning minor left Israel with his parents below the age of 14 and returned to take up permanent residence at age 17 or over.

Length of stay abroad: Residence overseas of at least four consecutive years.

Citizenship: Returned to Israel as an Israeli citizen and meets all the criteria stipulated in the Law of Return- 1950.

Compulsory Service in the Israel Defense Forces:

It is necessary to provide authorization of reporting to an IDF conscription office, or certification of exemption from service or of deferred service.

Exempt from providing authorization are:

Women aged 25 and up

Men aged 45 and up

Parents' Employment Overseas: Authorization that the parents were not working overseas for an Israeli employer, whether in the private or public sectors, for 5 years prior to the minor's return to Israel.

Stays in Israel Which Do Not Affect the Period of Eligibility

■ Visits of less than four months within one calendar year do not impinge upon eligibility.

■ Studies in Israel for one academic year in a recognized educational institution, or in a Jewish Agency program, on condition that this school year is in addition to four years abroad.

Required Documents for Returning Minor Status

■ Verification of reporting to an IDF induction center or authorization of deferral or exemption from IDF service.

■ Up- to-date identity card (*te'udat zehut*).

■ Passport stamped with the date of departure from Israel prior to the age of 14.

■ Passport or other official documents attesting to continuous residence overseas, such as verification of studies, annual report cards from primary school, high school, institution of higher education, or yeshiva diplomas, official authorizations from income tax or national insurance authorities overseas, etc.

■ It is also necessary to present the documents that attest to the returning minor's parents' residence overseas at the time that the minor was between the ages of 14-17.

■ Passport of both parents verifying date of departure.

■ Passport photos.

Customs: Information regarding tax exemptions can be obtained only at the Customs Authority and one should pay close attention to all information given them.

Where Can One Receive Accurate Information?

Overseas: Information and assistance can be sought from a certified aliyah shaliach at the Aliyah Center of the Jewish Agency closest to you.

Your final status will be determined in Israel at the district bureaus of the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption and at the Customs Authority.

In Israel: Information and guidance is available at the district bureaus of the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption. Queries regarding Customs- only through the Customs Authority.

Note: Assistance to Returning Minors is embedded in the regulations of the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption and is contingent on additional criteria of periods of stays in Israel and abroad- queries and final decision determination take place only in the district bureaus and branches of the Ministry.

Housing

22. A couple acquired a mortgage together with their parents, and the parents are now moving to an old-age home.

What do they do with the mortgage?

In principle, the person in whose name the apartment is registered must continue paying the mortgage. The couple should consult with their mortgage bank in order to make the appropriate arrangements.

23. Requesting a Public Housing Apartment, and Exchanging an Apartment.

Eligibility for public housing is based on a number of criteria that are listed in the regulations of

the Ministry, and according to the date of aliyah. Consult with a branch office of the Ministry in order to clarify eligibility. For additional details, and information on placement on the waiting list for public housing, see the section on Housing.

24. Is a couple in which the husband is of pension age, and the wife approaching pension age, eligible for an apartment?

The couple is eligible for placement in a hostel or a group home. It is recommended to consult with a branch office of the Ministry about existing options.

Employment

25. I was fired from my job. What rights do I have?

You should consult with one of the organizations that deal with these issues (see the National Insurance data base, Kav LeOved, the Histadrut, etc.). You can also consult the She'el internet site or with a Histadrut or She'el branch office in your community

26. How can I receive assistance for travel expenses while studying in a vocational ulpan?

Consult with the Ministry branch office nearest you.

27. Can I be employed while receiving the "Absorption Basket"?

The "Absorption Basket" is given during the initial absorption period in order to enable immigrants to study in an ulpan. Ulpan study is very important and it is wise to make use of this period. Immigrants can, however, work in the afternoons or evenings.

28. Where are diplomas certified?

Diplomas are certified by the Ministry of Education. Contact Ms. Rose Braun of the Department of Certification of Overseas Diplomas, (02) 5602853 or (02) 5602836.

29. Observation period for immigrant physicians.

The observation period for immigrant physicians is a time period in which the physician works in a hospital for a trial period under professional supervision. A physician with more than 14 years of work experience overseas may be entitled to a 6-month observation period in a hospital. In cases where the physician does not have the required experience it is possible to request participation in a preparatory course for the licensing exam, or to take the licensing exam without taking a placement course.

30. What is the eligibility period for professional training?

Any person may request placement in a professional training course from the Ministry of Labor, however authorization is granted according to original profession and marketplace demands. In principle, the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption grants an eligibility period of 10 years. It is recommended to clarify your eligibility for professional courses both with the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption and the Ministry of Labor. Be sure to have all relevant information and documentation.

31. I am interested in taking a course that is not within the framework of the Ministry of Labor. Can I get a refund on the fees?

In general, the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption permits those eligible to enroll in courses that guarantee work placement at the conclusion of studies. Such courses must be under government supervision. Financial assistance is on a one-time basis, in amounts of up to NIS1,300. It is recommended to clarify eligibility and conditions in advance, through the employment coordinator at the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption branch office nearest you. Be sure to have all relevant documents.

Health

32. How can I transfer from one health fund to another?

It is possible to transfer from one health fund to another every six months. After the initial transfer, it is possible to transfer to another health fund only after one year has passed. Requests to transfer can be made at branches of the Postal Bank, and go into effect on the first of January and the first of July of each year. It is recommended to clarify that the fund you wish to transfer into has clinics and provides all necessary services in your location.

33. Are new immigrants exempt from paying National Health Insurance premiums during their first year in the country?

New immigrants are exempt from paying premiums for their first six months on country, on condition that they are not employed. An additional six-month exemption is granted to immigrants from Ethiopia who receive a living allowance from the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption.

Finances

34. How can I get loans from the Jewish Agency?

Consult with a Jewish Agency Information Center, Tel. (03) 6290683, (02) 6202251, (04) 8567602, (08) 6288562, (02) 6202251 (Russian).

35. What benefits are available from the local authorities?

Generally speaking, new immigrants can receive a discount on property taxes for a period of one year during their first two years following aliyah. In some cases, other benefits are also granted (in areas such as education, or to the elderly). Consult with the information center in your municipality by dialing 106/7.

36. The relatives of a woman soldier wish to deposit some money in a bank account for her. Can this damage her eligibility for future benefits?

Not at all.

Education

37. How can I receive a university scholarship?

Consult with a Student Authority coordinator at a Ministry of Immigrant Absorption branch office.

38. Rights of veterans.

For information on veterans' rights, call tel. (03) 5270854.

Idud Company Addresses and Phone Numbers

Branch	Telephone	Fax	Address
Tel Aviv	(03) 5647575 (03) 5647547	(03) 5604496 (03) 5604495	6 Simtat Beit
Haifa	(04) 8643050	(04) 8643144	131 Sderot HaMeginim Haifa, 35028