

# LONE SOLDIERS PROGRAM

## STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

### GUIDE TO A RELIGIOUS SERVICE

There are a wide range of programs available for religious men and women drafting into the IDF, ensuring a religious service and assimilation into civilian life, if necessary. Read more to learn about the programs offered by the army and other private organizations.

NOTE: The length of time you will serve in the army is determined by your Age of Arrival; for more information about your Age of Arrival, see:

[WWW.NBN.ORG.IL/ARMYSERVICE](http://WWW.NBN.ORG.IL/ARMYSERVICE)

#### ARMY SERVICE OPTIONS FOR RELIGIOUS MEN:

- Hesder/ Machal Hesder
- Netzach Yehuda
- Plugat Che"tz
- Tomer
- Shnat Mesima
- Academic Track
- Shachar



#### ARMY SERVICE OPTIONS FOR RELIGIOUS WOMEN:

- Drafting Straight into the IDF
- Joining a Garin (External Army Program)
- Religious Exemption

# ARMY SERVICE OPTIONS FOR RELIGIOUS MEN

## HESDER/MAHAL HESDER:

The Hesder program combines Yeshiva learning with active service in the IDF, and is a joint effort between recognized Yeshivot of the Igud Yeshivot HaHesder and the IDF. Depending on your date of Aliyah and your Age of Arrival, the program runs a total of 32-44 months. Hesder participants must complete a mandatory year in Yeshiva (Shana Aleph), followed by 6-10 additional months of learning after which they will complete 17 months active service, and finish with additional learning time.

The drafts dates for Hesder Yeshivot are in March and August, depending on the Yeshiva, which enable the students to enlist into a wide variety of units and jobs, according to their medical and mental profiles. Hesder students draft into a unit together and are able to live out of the Yeshiva during their service.

Mahal Hesder (for those who have not yet made Aliyah) is the same as Hesder and Hesder Olim, except in regards to the length of Yeshiva time needed. Participants in Mahal Hesder cannot have spent more than 18 cumulative months in Israel and must be between the ages of 18-21. Registration is done through [goo.gl/yL4u5c](https://goo.gl/yL4u5c) or [www.mahal-idf-volunteers.org.il](http://www.mahal-idf-volunteers.org.il) Making Aliyah during Shalat (Unpaid service time) prior to, or during, active service qualifies the soldier for a 6 month deduction on length of the Hesder Olim program, leaving them with a 32 month service. [www.hesder.org.il](http://www.hesder.org.il)



Profile	Placement
82+	Combat placement determined by the Yeshiva
72-82	Tank corps
64 or below	Desk job assigned from a wide range of units

Program	Prerequisite Year	Shalat (Unpaid service time)	Active Service	Hesder Yeshiva	Total Time
Hesder	Hesder Yeshiva	6-10 months	17 months	17-20 months	44 months + prerequisite year
Hesder Olim	Hesder Yeshiva	6-10 months	17 months	11-14 months	38 months + prerequisite year
Mahal Hesder	Yeshiva	4 months	17 months		21 months + prerequisite year
Mahal Hesder (Aliyah during service)	Yeshiva	3-4 months	17 months	11-12 months	32 months + prerequisite year

# NETZACH YEHUDA

Netzach Yehuda is a combat battalion in the Kefir brigade, dedicated to Haredim that want to serve in the IDF. It is a unit that helps integrate Haredim into Israeli society without compromising on their values, such as: Minyanim, Kashrut, Tzniut and Limud Torah. Soldiers in Netzach Yehuda serve with like-minded people in a comfortable environment. This unit has won various awards of excellence from the IDF and other organizations.

In order to be eligible for this program, soldiers must be between the ages of 18-21 and pass the required interview after their Tzav Rishon. Placement into a specific unit is based on the soldier's medical profile from their Tzav Rishon.

(THIS PROGRAM REQUIRES AN INTERVIEW PRIOR TO ACCEPTANCE)

## UNIT CONDITIONS:

- Ensured religious lifestyle
- Strictly male only
- All food will be Mehadrin
- Daily Minyanim and Shiurim

Profile	Placement
82+	Netzach Yehuda Battalion
72-82	Maganei Hanegev (combat battalion in the Air Force)
64 or below	A wide range of desk jobs throughout the army



# TOMER

This unit is very similar to Netzach Yehuda, although on a smaller scale. Tomer is made up of a single platoon in the Givati brigade and is a unit specifically designed for those Haredim who not only want the conditions of Netzach Yehuda, but also need the guarantee that all of the soldiers in the unit are of the same mind. The acceptance interview is more intense and singles out those that were brought up and maintain a strict Haredi lifestyle, and hold maintaining that lifestyle as a high priority.

In order to be eligible for this program, soldiers must be between the ages of 18-21 and pass the required interview after their Tzav Rishon. Soldiers in this unit must have studied in a Haredi Yeshiva, or live the lifestyle of someone defined as Haredi, and must have a profile of 82 or above.

(THIS PROGRAM REQUIRES AN INTERVIEW PRIOR TO ACCEPTANCE)

## Unit Conditions:

- All conditions of Netzach Yehuda
- Rabbinical visits on Shabbat
- Mentor that has been through the system for support and guidance



## SHNAT MESIMA

This program gives soldiers from Netzach Yehudah, Tomer and Maganei Hanegev the option to take off their last year of service in order to use that time to catch up on their education, enabling them to get a job and start a career. The requirements that need to be met in order to receive the Shnat Mesima are living a Haredi lifestyle and attending a Haredi school or institution prior to enlistment. For those coming from overseas it is based on their present status, and schooling abroad will not be taken into account – but can still help. An interview is mandatory before being accepted.

### The Shnat Mesima can be spent in one of the following educational frameworks:

- Mechina Academit (education college)
- Coursim Miktzeyim (trade school)
- Limudei Torah



Photo: Haredim IDF

## ACADEMIC TRACK:

This program is for those that already have a degree, or want to learn in a specific program in Yeshivat Derech Chaim; eligibility is up until 23 years of age. There are two track options in this program:

1. Yeshivat Derech Chaim (ages 18-22); for those who want to learn Torah and complete a degree at the same time. It involves 30 hours per week of Yeshiva learning and 20 hours per week of working towards a degree. There is a 1:20 ratio of teachers to students.
2. Akademizatia (ages 18-23); an option for those who already possess a degree and would like to work and serve in that field, if relevant. They would serve in the same conditions as Shachar, the only difference being that the degree was done privately and not through the IDF.

# SHACHAR

Shachar is a program for people between the ages of 21-28 (also 18-21 if married) that want to do a degree or professional training through the army. They will receive a degree or diploma and complete their service in the IDF, after which they will be able to enter the workforce with skills and experience.

## TIMELINE FOR SHACHAR:

- Basic training: 3-5 weeks with daily Torah Shiur and Minyan
- Courses in English and math, if necessary, for the planned degree or diploma (Hashlama)
- Release from active service to complete studies in an army institution or outside of the IDF, depending on the degree or diploma
- Upon completion of the degree, diploma or training, the soldier will use their training complete their army service
- Discharge, support and guidance
- Professional counseling for civilian life

(THIS PROGRAM REQUIRES AN INTERVIEW PRIOR TO ACCEPTANCE)

## CONDITIONS IN SHACHAR:

- Assigned to a base near their home
- Male-only units
- Live at home, work regular hours (for example 9:00-17:00) except in times of national emergency
- Monthly days in Yeshiva
- Mehadrin meals & daily minyanim



Photo: Haredim IDF

# ARMY SERVICE OPTIONS FOR RELIGIOUS WOMEN

Religious females who can serve in the IDF, either doing their mandatory time or because they volunteered, have three main options: drafting straight into the IDF through regular channels, joining a religious Garin, or receiving a religious exemption.

## DRAFTING STRAIGHT INTO THE IDF:

Religious females drafting into the IDF through standard protocols are entitled to certain rights pertaining to their religious status. After declaring their religious status at the standard Tzav Rishon (enlistment interview) they will be granted the following benefits:

- Permission to wear a skirt
- The option to serve in a comfortable environment, in regards to males
- Food that meets the desired standard of Kashrut (or ability to bring one's own)
- Respect for all religious needs

### ALUMA:

Aluma is a non-profit organization which provides support for religious women in all aspects of their service in the IDF. Religious women should be in touch with them as they move through the draft process.

[WWW.ALUMA.ORG.IL](http://WWW.ALUMA.ORG.IL)



## JOINING A GARIN:

There is the option to join a Garin through a religious program such as Hadas Chu"l/Midrashit Chu"l at Midreshet Lindenbaum or Ein Hanetziv. These programs mix a year of learning with army service in specific pre-arranged units where it is easiest to keep up the religious lifestyle. These programs require Hebrew fluency to be accepted.

For information about these programs please follow the links below:

- Hadas Chu"l/Midrashit Chu"l at Midreshet Lindenbaum: [goo.gl/WorTLu](https://goo.gl/WorTLu)
- Ein Hanatziv: [www.midrasha.co.il](http://www.midrasha.co.il)

## RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION:

There is a possibility to get an exemption from serving in the IDF on religious grounds. One can start the process of getting a Ptur (exemption – פטור) before or after receiving their Tzav Rishon (first notice – צו ראשון).

Please be aware that the army has gotten stricter about accepting religious girls' Ptur from the Rabbanut. The army has the right to question whether somebody is living a religious lifestyle or not and they have the final decision of whether or not to draft someone into the IDF. The army can invite anyone for an interview and has the legal right not to accept the letter from the Rabbanut.

Those that receive a religious exemption still have the option to do Sherut Leumi (National Service) if they so desire. This involves volunteering for year or two through one of the Sherut Leumi organizations at one of their approved locations.

**For more information:**

**[WWW.NBN.ORG.IL/SHERUTLEUMI-NATIONAL-SERVICE](http://WWW.NBN.ORG.IL/SHERUTLEUMI-NATIONAL-SERVICE)**





[WWW.NBN.ORG.IL/LSP](http://WWW.NBN.ORG.IL/LSP)



**IN ISRAEL:** \*6563

**NORTH AMERICA:** 1-866-4-ALIYAH



LONESOLDIERSPROGRAM



[LSPEN@NBN.ORG.IL](mailto:LSPEN@NBN.ORG.IL)