

Overseas Volunteers in Israel

Updated: December 7, 2023

Background

The people of Israel are currently experiencing a terrible reality, filled with unbearable tragedy and uncertainty. We know that the hearts of our friends in North America are filled with hurt and worry, and we know you are eager to step up and assist, because that is what we do at Jewish Federations.

In Israel, ordinary citizens have rolled up their sleeves and are volunteering in their local communities. There are simply too many activities to list, but they run the gamut from initiatives to support bereaved families, injured citizens, soldiers, and first-responders, evacuated families, families with one or more parent in the reserves, and other populations that need special support. People are packing up supplies, delivering goods across the country, contributing shekels, and more.

Most of these activities are being coordinated by ordinary citizens and advertised via Israelis' favorite form of quick mass communication – WhatsApp.

We know that Israeli resilience is powered in large measure during times like this by volunteers who step in to fill critical gaps. This is why supporting volunteer efforts is one of the areas we will support through our collective campaign.

Volunteers From Overseas - General

In an exceptional move reflecting the important role volunteers are playing in the current crisis, Israel's National Insurance Institute (the equivalent of America's Social Security Administration) has announced that it will provide insurance for Israeli ex pat volunteers who wish to volunteer.

At present, there are only limited opportunities open to foreign volunteers. These opportunities include:

- Birthright Israel has opened [a volunteering program](#) where people from outside of Israel can come to Tel Aviv and take part in food rescue operations to prevent shortages in the Israeli market, including work to sort, pack and distribute goods for civil and military personnel.
- Masa Israel Journey has launched [Masa Volunteers](#), a six-week program offering various opportunities to volunteer in Israel.
- [Leket Israel](#) and [HaShomer HaChadash](#) are recruiting volunteers to help in farms and warehouses facing labor shortages.
- [Sar-El](#), The National Project for Volunteers for Israel, runs programs for volunteers on Israel Defense Force bases, focusing on logistical support.

Volunteers From Overseas – Medical and Mental Health Professionals

We have received many questions from medical and mental health professionals seeking to volunteer.

[The Second Line initiative](#), formed in the aftermath of October 7 to support frontline trauma and mental health care in Israel, recruits and deploys mental health professionals from around the world to volunteer in Israel. Second Line is focused on a Direct Care Program for mental health professionals to volunteer in Israel for six weeks to three months. It also has a Remote Care Program for mental health professionals to provide care over Zoom.

As of now, Israel is not experiencing a shortage of medical professionals due to the conflict. In the event of further strains on the health system, Nefesh B'Nefesh, in partnership with the Ministry of Health, will activate to bring people to Israel. They are actively collecting names of doctors who would be willing to volunteer should the need arise. https://www.nbn.org.il/dr_volunteer/

Nurses and paramedics from abroad looking to volunteer can visit the [MOH website](#) and submit their information there.

We will update as more information about opportunities for foreign volunteers becomes available.

