

# Guide To Being A Kibbutz Volunteer

## By John Carson

[www.kibbutzvolunteer.com](http://www.kibbutzvolunteer.com)

### Introduction

Ever thought of being a kibbutz volunteer in Israel?

My name is John Carson, I'm an English backpacker and I was a kibbutz volunteer for over two years—and had a fantastic time! This free guide will offer tips, hints and information on being a kibbutz volunteer, what Israel is like and what you can get up to over there.

Let me just state that I am not an agency of any kind so can't organize a place on a kibbutz for you. I get no money for this guide or my Web site from an official kibbutz volunteer office; it's just a passion of mine that I produce for the fun of it.

I also had a book published called *Beer And Bagels For Breakfast*. This is an extremely funny and informative guide to being a volunteer on a kibbutz in Israel. I have been a volunteer four times now and, believe me, you will not understand what a good time can be had unless you try it. *Beer And Bagels For Breakfast* is a diary of those brilliant days as a kibbutz volunteer. It is fast becoming THE volunteer bible! Reviews [here](#).

I welcome any questions about being a kibbutz volunteer; just e-mail me at [kibbutzvolunteer@gmail.com](mailto:kibbutzvolunteer@gmail.com) or sign my guestbook (please...us travellers are scattered worldwide and I want to hear your comments and stories!), and return to my Web site often because I am always updating it.

There is a page of kibbutz volunteer information [here](#) for people who are thinking about doing it for the first time. There is also a very informative BBC article [here](#) about what to expect as a kibbutz volunteer—I really recommend you read this one!

Hope you find this guide and my Web site useful and decide to backpack to Israel to be a kibbutz volunteer!

Cheers,  
John Carson.

## **Kibbutz Life**

A kibbutz is a commune in Israel where the members all work and contribute to the running of the kibbutz. In return, their basic living necessities such as food and accommodation are provided free.

If people do have jobs away from the kibbutz in the cities then they submit their wages. Lately this ideal has been changing as more members fight to keep more of the money they earn, but the majority of kibbutzim follow this pattern of sharing resources.

The good part of all this is that most kibbutzim need volunteers from around the world to work with them. Volunteers work for a very small wage—it's probably closer to pocket money—but get free accommodation, food and use of the amenities. Sometimes these can include a swimming pool, tennis courts, gym and the pub.

I have been a kibbutz volunteer four times on three different kibbutzim in the Negev Desert region and by the Dead Sea. Having lived in Israel for just over two years, I can attest to this being the best experience of my life. It gave me a lot of confidence in myself, and I had the opportunity to meet some fantastic travellers from around the world... some of whom I still keep in touch with 15 years later.

Even though I personally enjoyed the kibbutz volunteer experience, it is definitely not for everyone's taste. You work hard (sometimes in very crappy jobs!), live in very basic rooms, earn a pittance and have no privacy at all. The kibbutz life is a melting pot of different cultures, gossip and communal living.

Having said all that, the majority of volunteers I have spoken to always say that memories of those days are some of the best of their lives, and they fondly recall being a kibbutz volunteer.

Of course it's not all work! Volunteers have lots of parties, go on trips around Israel, spend a lot of time in the kibbutz pub and generally let their hair down during the times when they are not working.

There are romances too between volunteers, and also with the kibbutz members on some occasions. I had some of both!

I can guarantee one thing: kibbutz life is unlike anything you would experience at home, and you will remember those days for ever. It is up to you whether it's a good or bad experience. Go with an open mind and see what happens.

## Going To A Kibbutz

There are basically three ways to get on a kibbutz:

- 1) Just turn up at the gates. Not recommended!
- 2) Apply at an agency in Israel. Bit risky, if you have paid to travel all that way and don't get accepted.
- 3) Apply at an agency in your home country. This is the safest way in my opinion, as you can check out the facts before flying over.

All the agencies I know of will take a fee for arranging a place on a kibbutz for you. For example, the [Kibbutz Program Center](#) in New York charges \$150 for registration and \$80 for insurance.

This sounds high, but if you factor that into the overall cost of your trip then you also have peace of mind knowing that a kibbutz place has been arranged for you. You also have to take into account that a kibbutz won't accept you without some kind of insurance, so bear that in mind when saving up for your trip. Click [here](#) for more info for backpackers.

I have included the actual application form at the end of this guide so you can see some of the questions you will be asked. Again, I must stress that I have no affiliation with the agencies mentioned here—the information is provided purely for your research and knowledge.

If you decide to apply at the agency in Tel Aviv, their contact details can be found [here](#).

There is also an agency [here](#) that caters for people who want to try the kibbutz experience who are between the ages of 35-70, so it's never too late! (In general, most volunteers are between the ages of 18-30.)

The kibbutz representatives office in London, UK is [here](#).

Here's some more links of interest...

[World Nomads Travel Insurance](#)

[Learn Hebrew Online](#)

## The Work

Let's not lie about it—the main reason kibbutzim want volunteers is to work! And work hard!

Depending on the job, the day starts between 6-7 a.m. (earlier if in the cowsheds or fields) and finishes between noon and 4 p.m. (again, varies depending on the job you do).

And it is a six-day working week = Sunday to Friday.

Jobs include: dishwasher, fields, gardening, cowsheds, chickens, factory, picking dates and bananas, dining room, garage, supplying the nurseries with supplies, laundry, looking after children (normally only the female volunteers do this work), swimming pool maintenance (lucky to be assigned this one!) and general duties as required.

It's not unusual to be given one particular job on one day, and another the next... but generally the volunteers are kept in the same jobs for at least a month. Newcomers usually start on the dishwasher or in the dining room, and move on "up the chain" when other volunteers join the kibbutz. So don't feel disheartened at starting on a crappy job; you will have a chance to change eventually.

In my two years on kibbutzim I worked in most of the jobs mentioned above, my favourite being a gardener. I could basically set my own hours within reason, and the boss just let me get on with it. Had my own tractor and moped too... it was great!

All the jobs have coffee and lunch breaks, and sometimes you can earn extra time off for working overtime or putting in extra effort. That is negotiable between you and your boss, so don't be afraid to ask. Members have an uncanny knack of spotting the volunteers willing to make an extra effort and those who are along for an easy ride. (You won't last long if you are in the latter category.)

Don't worry about spoiling your designer jeans either; kibbutz work clothes and boots are provided for you, and also coats in the winter.

Yes, kibbutzim need volunteers 365 days a year, but obviously the summer months are most popular and competition for places is higher. Don't be turned off going in winter—Israeli winters are not that cold, mainly rainy, although Jerusalem gets a bit chilly during the winter months. Eilat is nice all year round.

## Useful Reading

Allow me a small plug for my book. It is called [\*Beer And Bagels For Breakfast\*](#) and is a diary of my time as a kibbutz volunteer.

I had such a great time I decided to commit my memories to paper. Not for financial gain (I get peanuts a copy!) but just because I wanted my future kids to see what their dad got up to as a young lad ;-)

A lot of friends and family also asked me about my experiences, so I decided to get it published for other potential volunteers to read and learn from. Be warned: it is a "warts and all" account of my adventures and observations, so there's accounts of the good times, the not-so-good times, the parties, the volunteer trips, mishaps, kibbutz characters that you meet... and a lot more than I can describe here.

Feel free to read testimonials on my [Web site](#) or at [Amazon](#).

Just to show there's room for more kibbutz volunteer research, I am also going to plug a "rival" book... although I see it as a complimentary one to mine, not competition.

It has been around a long time and is simply called [\*Kibbutz Volunteer\*](#). I actually read one of the first editions of this book and can recommend it as a useful "how-to" type of book on being a kibbutz volunteer.

This one is more about the aspects of arranging a place, what to expect etc... whereas mine is more about the stuff you don't normally hear about in the straightforward guides!

Anyway, feel free to check them out and make your own mind up:

### ***Beer And Bagels For Breakfast***

[UK orders](#), [USA orders](#), [Canada orders](#)

### ***Kibbutz Volunteer***

[UK orders](#), [USA orders](#), [Canada orders](#)

(And if you do buy mine, let me know what you think!)

## **Israel Facts**

To help you more with research, here are some basic facts about Israel.

### **Israel**

Israel is a small country founded in 1948 in the Middle East between the eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River. Israel was established on May 14, 1948, as a Jewish state. Israel is located at the land bridge between Asia and Africa and has had a full share of history. But Israel is not all ancient and religious sites, for Israel is also a thriving and modern nation packed full of attractions. From the sanctity of the old city of Jerusalem to the chaos of Tel Aviv discotheques to the dazzling corals of the Red Sea, Israel has something for everybody.

### **Israel—The Holy Land**

Israel is considered the Holy Land for Christians, Jews, and Muslims holding many holy sites from the biblical era. Many tourists and pilgrims come to Israel for Holy land tours. The diversity of sacred sites invites all religions and denominations: Christian holy land tours, Catholic holy land tours, as well as Jewish and Muslim Holy land tours to places held sacred such as: Jerusalem, the holy city for Christianity, Judaism and Islam, "Sea of Galilee" where Jesus walked on water according to Christian tradition, Nazareth, the birth place of Jesus, and many more.

### **People In Israel**

Israel is home to a diverse population from many ethnic, religious, cultural and social backgrounds. Of its more than 5.5 million population, we can find Jews, Arabs, Druze Bedouins, Circassian and many other minorities. After Israel was founded as a national home for the Jewish people, many Jews from around the world have immigrated there, creating a melting pot of different cultures and languages. The wealth of different ethnic groups creates a beautiful mosaic of traditions, as can be seen in the language, music and food of the people in Israel.

### **Languages**

The official languages of Israel are Hebrew and Arabic. English is widely used as a second language, and recently Russian has become commonplace.

## **Religion**

Freedom of religion and the inviolability of the holy places and centres of worship for all religions are guaranteed by law. The main practiced religions are Judaism 80.1%, Islam 14.6%, Christians 2.1% and others 3.2%. All three of the major western religions have special places of worship in Israel, many of the located in Israel's capital, Jerusalem.

## **Climate In Israel**

Israel, despite being a small country, has a very diverse climate. Mediterranean in the north and arid in the south. In summer the cloudless skies and no precipitation are the norm. In winter, the southern half of the country remains under the subtropical high keeping it dry, but weather in the northern half is influenced by depressions that pass over the Mediterranean, bringing moderate rainfall. Precipitation in the north averages 700 mm (28 in), falling primarily from October to March. Rainfall amounts diminish rapidly to the south making the southern end of Israel, the Negev, an arid desert area. Average summer temperatures range from 18 degrees to 32 degrees C (65 degrees to 90 degrees F) over most of the country. Winters are quite mild, with temperatures averaging 14 degrees C (57 degrees F) along the coast and 9 degrees C (48 degrees F) in the mountains.

## **When To Visit**

The mild climate in Israel makes it comfortable all year round. In the winter, Eilat and the Dead Sea in the south of Israel offer warm sunny beaches and clear blue skies even in the height of winter. Five hours away by car, one can ski on the slopes of Mount Hermon. Spring and fall offer the splendor of Israel's natural beauty at its best. Hike in the serene beauty of Israel's deserts or settle down and relax in among the blossoming flowers of the Galilee. The summer heats things up making the sandy Mediterranean beaches more attractive than ever. Don't forget to check out the night life in Tel Aviv which is always hotter than the weather.

## **Flights To Israel: Airlines And Destinations**

Flights to Israel leave daily from many worldwide destinations. Many airline companies offer routine and chartered flights from European destinations. Ninety percent of international flights land at Ben-Gurion (airport code TLV or BGN), formerly known as Lod. Some international flights from Europe, Cyprus and Jordan also arrive at Eilat Airport, Ouvda Airport (40 miles north of Eilat) and at Haifa. Flights from Europe take between three and six hours depending on port of departure. Flights from India (New-Delhi) take around seven hours,

and North American flights take between twelve and sixteen hours to arrive in Israel.

## **Travel Documents**

Every visitor to Israel must hold a valid passport. Visitors are allowed to remain in Israel for up to three months from their date of arrival, subject to the terms of the visa issued. Visitors who intend to work in Israel must apply to the Ministry of the Interior for a special visa.

Visitor's Visas: Citizens of the following countries will be issued visitors' visas free of charge at every port of entry into Israel:

Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Germany (Persons born after 1.1.28), Gibraltar, Great Britain, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, San Marino, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland.

Asia & Oceania: Australia, Fiji Islands, Japan, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Philippines, South Korea

Africa: Central African Republic, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, South Africa, Swaziland.

The Americas: Argentina, Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, St. Kitts, & Nevis, Surinam, Trinidad, & Tobago, The Bahamas, The Dominican Republic, Uruguay, USA.

Transit Visas: Visitors interested in stopping over in Israel en route to other destinations may request five-day transit visas that may be extended for a further ten days on arrival in Israel. Cruise ship passengers visiting Israel will be issued Landing Cards allowing them to remain in the country as long as their ship is in port. No visa applications are required. Extending your visa: Visas can be extended (for a small fee) at offices in the major cities.

## **Security Issues**

For obvious reasons security measures are especially stringent on flights to Israel. For this reason it is advised to arrive well before your flight as your luggage must be checked through airline security. You may be questioned as to your luggage, destination and purpose of visit to Israel. It is recommended as on all international flights not to bring sharp or weapon-like items as these aren't allowed aboard the plane, other than in the checked luggage. Security measures taken by Israeli airlines have made them recognized as the safest airlines in the world.

## **Customs**

Some goods may be brought in duty and tax free if accompanying you at the time of entry:

Clothing, footwear, and personal toiletries - of the type and quantities that would normally be brought in a person's hand luggage.

Alcohol/spirits and wine -- for each entrant age 17 and above, 1 litre of alcohol/spirits and 2 litres of wine.

Alcoholic perfumes—for each entrant, up to 1/4 litre.

Cigarettes and other tobacco products—for each entrant age 17 and above, up to 250 grams of tobacco products.

Other items not detailed above may be brought in as long as they are for your own personal use or intended as a gift for another person. The total value of such items should not exceed US\$200. Included within this amount, each entrant may bring in up to 3 kg. of foodstuff, provided that the weight of each kind of foodstuff does not exceed 1 kg (source: Israeli Customs).

## What Are You Waiting For?

Well, that is about it. I have explained as clearly as I can what it takes to become a kibbutz volunteer. The only way to really know for certain is to give it a go.

It goes without saying that Israel can be a dangerous country to be in sometimes... but, it has been like that for a long time and people still travel there to work on kibbutzim. It would not stop me if I ever decided to go back.

I lived there for two years—including 1991 during the first Gulf War—and never felt in danger. You just have to be observant, use common sense and ask the kibbutz members for help and advice when travelling around the country. In my opinion, there's danger everywhere in the world these days, but it's up to you whether Israel is for you or not. I can't advise you one way or the other, just simply offer information from my own experience so you can make your own decision.

So, if you want a disclaimer, it's up to you whether you decide to spend time and money being a kibbutz volunteer, and I can't be held responsible. That's all I can say really!

In summary... the experience is not for everyone, but I had the best time of my life and will always remember those days with affection, excitement and fondness.

There is more information, including forums and photos, on my Web site at [www.kibbutzvolunteer.com](http://www.kibbutzvolunteer.com) and feel free to e-mail me with questions that I might not have covered in this guide at [kibbutzvolunteer@gmail.com](mailto:kibbutzvolunteer@gmail.com).

As promised, the next few pages show an actual application form for your information.

Best of luck, and safe travelling!

John Carson.

## Kibbutz Program Application

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- **Kibbutz Ulpan**
  - **Kibbutz Volunteers**
  - **Hebrew and Work**
  - **Summer Programs**
- 



633 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
New York, N.Y. 10017  
Tel: (800) 247-7852, (212) 318-6118  
Fax: (212) 318-6134  
Web site: <http://www.kibbutzprogramcenter.org>

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### CHECK LIST FOR YOUR USE:

1. Questionnaire completed
2. Medical form completed
3. Four photographs (passport sized) attached
4. Two letters of recommendation
5. College credit fee (optional) \$ \_\_\_\_\_
6. Insurance fee  \$ \_\_\_\_\_
7. Registration fee  \$ \_\_\_\_\_
8. Program fee  \$ \_\_\_\_\_
9. Total payment enclosed  \$ \_\_\_\_\_ total

- v **Keep one copy of your application and this booklet for your records.**
- v **Make the check payable to the “Kibbutz Program Center”.**
- v **There will be a \$20 charge for each returned check.**

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### TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

Do not book a flight until you have been notified of your acceptance to the program. Some of our programs have an optional group flight to Israel, and you will be notified upon acceptance if there is such a flight for your program

**Dear Applicant,**

We are pleased to give you further details of our kibbutz programs.

Please read the information and instructions carefully. When our office receives your application, we will make every effort to place you in a program that will meet your requirements.

Yours sincerely,  
The Staff of the Kibbutz Program Center.

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## HOW TO APPLY

1. Send us the following:
  - a. Your completed Kibbutz Program Application (white form).
  - b. Your medical form completed by you and your physician.
  - c. Two letters of character reference (by an employer, teacher, minister of faith, or someone of similar standing).
  - d. A check covering all your fees (see checklist at back page).
  - e. Four recent passport size photographs.
2. In certain cases additional documentation or evaluation may be required.
3. Your application procedures should be completed at least four weeks prior to your desired departure date.
4. The program coordinator will call you upon receiving your application. If your application is accepted we will send you an acceptance package for the program you requested.

## INSURANCE

All participants in Kibbutz programs are required to purchase hospitalization insurance prior to departure. We have made arrangements with an Israeli insurance company (Sahar-

Zion) to provide a package policy including personal accident, hospitalization coverage, medical expenses, baggage coverage, loss of return travel ticket, third party liability and loss of deposit or cancellation. Coverage will be in effect for the length of time stayed by you on the application form, beginning on the day you leave your permanent residence for the sole purpose of traveling to Israel and ending on the day you return to your permanent residence, providing that not more than one month is spent traveling in each direction (thus, you are covered during stopovers in Europe, for example, either on the way to Israel or on your way home, providing they are less than a month in duration). The policy only covers on entry to and one exit from Israel. In other words, if you leave Israel and then return, your policy is invalidated once you re-enter the country. We offer optional coverage, for an extra fee, that allows you to travel to Egypt and/or Jordan for a period of up to 15 consecutive days in either country, and will allow you to return to Israel without invalidation of your coverage. The fee for this coverage is \$25 for each country. This option of double entry is only applicable in Egypt and Jordan.

**PERSONAL ACCIDENT:** Coverage includes any permanent disability or death arising from an accident. This accident insurance does not cover claims arising from participation in operations of the armed forces, winter sports, diving, riding motorcycles or scooters, hunting, driving or riding in any kind of race, air travel (except as a passenger in any properly licensed aircraft), suicide, attempted suicide or intentional self injury. Insurance is available with benefit of \$20,000.

**HOSPITALIZATION:** coverage includes all expenses after a \$15.00 deductible up to a total of \$18,000.00.

**MEDICAL EXPENSES:** coverage includes medical treatment, medicines, etc. Dental and eye treatments are provided in case of emergency only. Expenses are covered up to a total of \$300.00.

**REPATRIATION AND/OR LOSS OF RETURN TRAVEL TICKET UP TO \$600.00** covers repatriation of the insured person due to a serious illness, increased expenses due to a death or severe illness of one of the insured's immediate family or loss of a return ticket due to a serious illness or accident.

**BAGGAGE:** coverage includes loss by theft of locked baggage, damage to property due to disasters such as fire, water damage, etc., up to \$600.00, after the first \$18.00 (i.e., \$18,000 deductibles).

**LOSS OF DEPOSIT OR CANCELLATION:** Up to \$600.00

- The coverage also does NOT include claims resulting either or directly or indirectly from war, acts of terror, sabotage or hijacking and for any claim covered by any existing law or statute or policy.
- The kibbutz Program Center is authorized to issue the policies, but claims must be submitted directly to the insurance company in Israel.
- If there is any discrepancy between what is written here and what is written on the insurance policy, assume the insurance policy is correct.

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## PROGRAMS

(All fees are in U.S. Dollars)

### 1. KIBBUTZ ULPAN

Learn the Hebrew language and use it daily while surrounded by Israel's history, culture, and geography. Five-month programs begin every month and offer classes in up to four Hebrew levels. The Ulpan program includes three days of Hebrew study and three days of kibbutz work, in addition to opportunities for short tours of the country and seminars on Israel and Kibbutz. for ages of 18 to 28. Eight academic credits available for an additional fee. A commitment for the entire course is required. Registration fee \$250.00 Minimum insurance coverage: \$80.00. Program fee: \$600.00. Optional credit: \$100.00

### 2. HEBREW & WORK PROGRAM

Study Hebrew for 12 hours each week and work on kibbutz as a volunteer. Three-month programs begin several times a year. Program is for ages 18 to 32. Registration fee: \$150.00. tuition fee: \$400.00. minimum insurance coverage: \$80.00. Study material fee: about \$20.00 to be paid on the kibbutz.

### 3. KIBBUTZ VOLUNTEERS

Become acquainted with kibbutz members and people from other parts of the world, while contributing to and learning about kibbutz lifestyle. Volunteers work on kibbutz 40 hours per week and make a commitment to stay for at least 6 weeks. In exchange, volunteers receive room and board on the kibbutz. for ages 18 to 35. Registration fee \$150.00 (non refundable). Minimum insurance coverage: \$80.00.

### 3. SUMMER ULPAN

A unique program that offers you the most from your kibbutz experience. Live on kibbutz, learn Hebrew and work with Israelis as you discover Israeli society through workshops, seminars, touring and exploring. You will live on kibbutz and observe first hand the dynamics of the community. You will work with Israelis in their regular workplaces. You

will study and maybe speak Hebrew. you will learn about Israeli society and Jewish issues in the classroom. And ... you will travel throughout Israel and form your won impressions. Registration fee: \$150.00 program fee: \$745.00 minimum insurance coverage: \$80.00.

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## REFUND POLICY

### 1. Registration fee

For all programs, 50% of the registration fee is refundable if the applicant is not accepted to the program. Registration fee to all three programs will not be refunded in case of a cancellation.

### 2 Program fee

entire fee will be refunded if notification of cancellation arrives six weeks before the beginning date of the program.

### 3. Insurance fee

Before the program begins, the entire fee is refundable, provided that the KPC receives the participant's copy of the issued policy. Once the participant leaves the country for Israel, the entire fee is non-refundable.

4 participants asked to leave the kibbutz by the program staff are not entitled to any refund.

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## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

### Please Read Carefully

Before you make a final decision about going to kibbutz in Israel, you should know more about what you are going to face there and the commitments you must fulfill.

Although we believe in kibbutz life, we are not going to elaborate on its positive aspects. We believe that these aspects can be found very easily by reading about kibbutz, or better yet, by spending some time there. It is far more important to talk you out of any false expectations you might have, and to prepare you for the worst. If in the end, it turns out better than that, we are sure you will forgive us.

1. **Work:** As an ulpan student you will be working full time for three days a week, while as a volunteer you will eight hours a day, six days a week. The work is manual labor. You cannot be fussy about the kind of work you will be doing. It is important to be a good worker in order to be accepted by the kibbutz society. For kibbutz members, working well is a very serious moral commitment and they will judge you accordingly. Basically, it is important to have a positive attitude about work. One must have strong will-power, stamina, and a feeling of commitment to overcome the challenge of hard work.

**2. Study:** It is not easy to study a foreign language, especially one as difficult as Hebrew, for six to seven hours a day, three days a week. This is even more difficult to do when you are tired from the hard work. Although it is an adult program without grades, the teachers expect you to take it seriously, to participate in the classes, and to do your best to study the language. Remember it is a commitment of both work and study.

**3. Accommodations:** Housing on kibbutz is assigned on seniority basis, and no kibbutz can afford to build nice apartments for its temporary residents. You must be prepared to live in less comfortable conditions than you have here. Housing is dormitory style with 2 to 4 people per room, so you will not have much privacy. Your room will have basic furniture- a bed, a table, a closet- and will be comfortable but certainly not luxurious.

**4. Social adjustment:** You are going to Israel and to the kibbutz with enthusiasm and high expectations. Naturally, you expect reciprocation of this enthusiasm by people on kibbutz. This may not be the case. You must realize that every kibbutz has already hosted thousand of program participants. For you it is the first time and a new experience; for them it is not. This does not necessarily mean that you will not have an opportunity to adjust to kibbutz society- as a matter of fact, we have found that close to 90% of the thousand of people who have volunteered on kibbutz liked it very much -but that it will be more difficult than you might think.

Keep in mind that the kibbutz is very different from anything you have known- different mentality, habits of living, etc. Many things are going to seem, at least at the beginning, strange, curious and maybe funny. Nevertheless, you must adjust to that way of life; they will not adjust to yours. Living in a closed community demands much more use of common sense and discretion to avoid bothering people or hurting their feelings. That means sometimes imposing self-limitations and self-restrictions.

The kibbutz is a rural society, and thus does not offer the night life of a big city. Although there are all kinds of cultural activities, there will be many times when you will have to take the initiative and create things that interest you.

In short, adjustment to this society is most difficult challenge, but a most rewarding one if you succeed. Based on long experience, it will be up to you -your positive attitude, your ability to cope with problems and overcome difficulties, your initiatives, and most of all, your seriousness about this experience.

**5. Language:** Most people in Israel speak English to the extent that you can communicate with them. If you are going for only a short time, language will not be an impassable barrier. Of course, knowledge of the Hebrew language (even a little) will help a lot and enable you to communicate better and to participate more fully in the cultural life there.

**6. Drugs/Alcohol:** Use of any kind of drugs (including marijuana) is intolerable, unacceptable, and a most serious offense to kibbutz people and to the Israelis in general. We see it necessary to warn you that use of any drugs can lead to most serious repercussions. Quite a few Americans have been asked to leave the kibbutz and some have been arrested and deported from the country. We ask you for a 100% commitment not to use drugs of any kind while you are in Israel, with no reservations. If you have any doubts about your ability to live up to this commitment, please do not go to kibbutz. The use of alcohol on kibbutz is also very limited. Drinking must not interfere with your work or studies. If it does, you will be asked to leave immediately.

**7. Medical and mental health:** Going to a kibbutz is a physical and a mental strain. We want to be sure you can take it without risking too much. This is the reason we ask you to go through a medical examination and often-psychological one as well. If you know of anything that could handicap you physically or mentally, please do not hide it. It will be to your benefit to discuss every thing openly and frankly with us.

**8. HIV Test:** Kibbutzim may require HIV testing for temporary residents. Those who do not agree to take the test or have tested positive for the HIV virus will be asked to leave.

**9. Length of Stay:** Kibbutz Ulpan is a five-month program. You must make a commitment for the full length of your program. If you have any doubts about your ability to stay such a length of time, please pick another program.

**10. Deposit:** While on the kibbutz, you will be required to pay about \$100 as a safety deposit. Provided no damage was done to kibbutz property, the deposit will be returned to you at the end of the program.

Many of these issues may not pertain to you. We have described all of them and the commitments very frankly and openly in order to avoid any misunderstandings in the future. Keep in mind that this is only part of what kibbutz life is like, and there is a very good chance that if you overcome the challenges, as most people do, you will find it the best and most rewarding experience you have ever had.

Please feel free to call us with any questions.

**Please note that the kibbutz Program Center reserves the right to reject any applicant.**



9. Desired date of departure \_\_\_\_\_

10. How long do you plan to stay on the kibbutz? \_\_\_\_\_

11. Relatives or friends living in Israel:

Name	Address	Relation	Occupation

12. Personal References:

Name	Address	Occupation

13. If applying to the volunteer program:

Expected date of arrival at the volunteers office in Israel: \_\_\_\_\_

## College Credit for Kibbutz Ulpan

Students who successfully complete the ulpan program are eligible to receive up to eight semester credits for their Hebrew studies. The student must register in advance for these credits by paying a fee. Upon completion of the ulpan, credit students who have met course work and attendance requirement will take an exam administered by University of Haifa. The University will forward a transcript to the student's home university. However, since every institution has its own policy regarding credit earned overseas, we strongly advise that you check with your school about these credits before you leave for Israel. if you have any questions about this, please contact our office.

Please be advised that once your program begins the money is not refundable for any reason.

Do you wish to apply for credit?      yes                       no

If yes, please include an additional \$100.00 with your application payment.

## INSURANCE

PLEASE READ THE DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF INSURANCE COVERAGE IN THE PREVIOUS PAGES. COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING FORM AND ADD THE SUM INDICATED TO YOUR APPLICATION PAYMENT.

A COPY OF YOUR POLICY WILL BE RETURNED WITH YOUR ACCEPTANCE PACKAGE.

Rates: (please check the box next to the coverage desired)

Period	Sum Insured
	\$20,0000

1-6 months                                      \$80.00

7-12 months                                     \$95.00

### Optional:

Jordan Insurance                             \$25.00

Egypt Insurance                                \$25.00

Are you: Right handed                                          Left handed   

What date do you want your insurance policy to become active (up to one month before you arrive to the kibbutz)? \_\_\_\_\_

Passport #: \_\_\_\_\_

## COMMITMENT

I hereby confirm that I have read the pages describing the problems and commitments of kibbutz programs. I am ready to live up to these commitments with no reservations. If I have made flight arrangements prior to final acceptance, I will not hold the Kibbutz Program Center responsible for any charges incurred if I must change or cancel the flight.

- Volunteers – I will stay and work for time required
- Other programs - I will stay, work and study Hebrew for the entire term of the program. I understand that I may be transferred to another kibbutz if the original kibbutz to which I have been accepted cancels its program or if my level of Hebrew is not suitable for the specific ulpan.

I understand and agree that in case I do not live up to these commitments, or if I am found unsuitable by the kibbutz, the kibbutz has the right to ask me to leave without assuming responsibility for any additional expenses incurred.

I certify that all the information in this application is correct to the best of

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Signature of Applicant

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Signature of parent or guardian  
(required if applicant if under age 18)

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Date

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## MEDICAL EXAMINATION FORM

### Part 1:

(to be completed by applicant)

Social Security #: \_\_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Medical History - check all that apply, note dates.

	Date		Date
Heart Disease:	<input type="checkbox"/> ___/___/___	Tuberculosis:	<input type="checkbox"/> ___/___/___
Liver Disease:	<input type="checkbox"/> ___/___/___	Kidney Disease:	<input type="checkbox"/> ___/___/___
Jaundice:	<input type="checkbox"/> ___/___/___	Mental Disorder:	<input type="checkbox"/> ___/___/___
Peptic Ulcer:	<input type="checkbox"/> ___/___/___	Depression:	<input type="checkbox"/> ___/___/___
Anemia:	<input type="checkbox"/> ___/___/___	Epilepsy:	<input type="checkbox"/> ___/___/___
Hernia:	<input type="checkbox"/> ___/___/___	Hypertension:	<input type="checkbox"/> ___/___/___
Skin Condition:	<input type="checkbox"/> ___/___/___	Rheumatic Fever:	<input type="checkbox"/> ___/___/___

Other diseases not listed above (include dates): \_\_\_\_\_

Detail major operations/hospitalizations (include dates): \_\_\_\_\_

Detail all allergies and drug interactions: \_\_\_\_\_

### PART II:

(to be completed by applicant's physician)

Notes to the examining physician:

1. The applicant will be touring and working in a sub-tropical climate throughout the summer months, with temperatures reaching 100 degrees Fahrenheit in the shade. The climate is mostly dry, with semi-arid conditions over a large part of the country.

2. Most of the time the applicant will be living in a communal way of life. He will be sleeping in a dormitory with many other people and eating in communal dining rooms.

3. The participant's activities may include physical labor in the sun, in the kibbutz factory, or work in the communal kitchen, with all the epidemiological problems involved. He/She will also be expected to participate in a number of tours in the country, which will include walking long distances, climbing and other strenuous activities.

4. The physician should also bear in mind that medical facilities are available for participants in the program with only acute illness and accidents. There are no facilities available within the framework for the treatment of chronic disturbances. Medical care will often be entrusted to fully trained paramedical personnel, although a doctor will always be available and on call, as will the local hospital. In some cases, the patient will be transferred to Jerusalem for specialized medical treatment, and when necessary, will later be returned to the country of origin for further treatment. Dental treatment and eyeglasses are not included and will be arranged at the participant's expense.

5. This form should be filled out by a physician who has known the applicant for at least 18 months prior to the filling out of the form. Any participant who on arrival in the country or during his stay, is found to be suffering from any illness not mentioned in the form or in an accompanying letter will be returned to his country of origin at his own expenses. In the case of any participant receiving instructions to continue treatment, or to continue receiving medicines and drugs while under the auspices of the program, he should have a letter detailing the full nature of the treatment. The full pharmacological name of all medicines and drugs used by the patient should be given. If any changes take place in the applicant's conditions within the last 10 weeks before departure, it will be expected that the applicant will arrive with a full explanatory letter, detailing all treatment received for the condition plus a full diagnosis of this condition, before he will be accepted for the program.

**All medical information will be regarded as highly confidential.**

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## PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

(To be completed by a licensed physician)

If "abnormal" has been marked please include an additional doctor's letter describing the condition.

	Normal	Abnormal	Describe abnormality
Head	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
General Build	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Neck	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Ears	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Eyes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Teeth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Chest, Lungs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Heart	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Vascular System	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Abdomen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Viscera	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Hernia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
G.I. System	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
G.U. System	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Upper Extremities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Lower Extremities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Spine	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Skin, Lymphatics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Nervous System	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Mental State	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

Height \_\_\_\_\_ ft \_\_\_\_\_ in

Weight \_\_\_\_\_ lbs

Urinalysis \_\_\_\_\_

VDRL \_\_\_\_\_

Serological Tests: Hemoglobin \_\_\_\_\_

Blood Type: \_\_\_\_\_

Rh \_\_\_\_\_

Blood Pressure \_\_\_\_\_

Cholesterol: \_\_\_\_\_

Vision: Right (corr. To) \_\_\_\_\_

Left (corr. To) \_\_\_\_\_

Hearing: Right \_\_\_\_\_ Left \_\_\_\_\_

Menstrual History: Regular \_\_\_\_\_ Irregular \_\_\_\_\_

Gynecological Disturbances: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Medication/purposes: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Physical Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Restriction: \_\_\_\_\_

Special Diets: \_\_\_\_\_

Recommendations: \_\_\_\_\_

**A letter describing any abnormal condition must be enclosed**

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## PHYSICIANS STATEMENT

I have examined \_\_\_\_\_ and have, to the best of my knowledge, detailed all the applicant's medical history and findings on examination. In my opinion, the applicant is:

Capable     Incapable

of participation in the program, as outlined in the notes.

I have known the applicant for \_\_\_\_\_ months.

Physician's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Stamp and signature of physician \_\_\_\_\_

License Number \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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## APPLICANT'S STATEMENT

I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the above medical form is completed and correct in all details, and fully realize that any form of illness from which I am found to have suffered prior to arrival in Israel, and which is not described in full in the form or in an accompanying letter, will be due cause for my return to my country of origin at my own expense; or for treatment in Israel at my own expense. I also realize that medical coverage does not include dental treatment in any form whatsoever, or eyeglasses. All medications that I take regularly are to be provided by me, at my own expense, and these have been noted in the medical form.

I give my full permission for all treatment of any nature deemed necessary by doctors in Israel to be extended to me within the framework of the Medical Services of the Jewish Agency. I also acknowledge to the fact that usage or involvement with drugs of narcotics or anti-social behavior may be cause for immediate dismissal from the program and return to my country of origin, at my own expense.

I further declare that I am not addicted to any drugs.

Signature of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of parent or guardian \_\_\_\_\_  
(required of applicants under 18 years of age)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_