



December 2023

## Questions and answers regarding the Swords of Iron War for foreign workers caring for senior citizens

The ongoing emergency routine following the war invites unique challenges for those of you who care for senior citizens and for your patients. Below are answers to common questions that will help you to conduct yourself responsibly while maintaining the mental well-being, health, rights, and security of you and the senior citizens.

We are deeply thankful for your devoted and loving care

**Treatment of the senior citizen in an emergency | Rights and employment  
Emotional support | Foreign workers who are evacuees or war victims**



### Are there any special instructions and recommendations for treating the senior citizen during an emergency?

An emergency event is a significant challenge for each and every one of us, but, among people who care for or assist senior citizens, the challenge intensifies significantly. The difficulties may be manifested in the ability to follow the instructions, choosing the protected space and reaching it safely, stocking up on groceries, medicines, and essential equipment, and dealing with the emotional and mental reactions following the situation.

#### Recommendations:

- Follow instructions for caregivers of senior citizens on the Home Front Command website. If you don't understand, get help from the patient, family members or the representative of the private company where you are registered.
- Download the official app of the Home Front Command to your mobile phone to receive alerts in your area of residence, and check the amount of time you have available to enter the protected area from the moment the alarm sounds.
- Keep emergency numbers in your cell phone, such as the Home Front Command (104), police (100), MDA (101), Fire department (102) and the municipality (106) and, of course, the phones of the patient's family members.

#### Recommendations regarding entering a protected space:

1. Choose in advance, together with the patient and/or family members, the protected space in which you will stay during an alarm.
2. Choose the fastest and safest way to the protected space and practice it together with the patient. If necessary, clear any obstacles in advance.
3. If there is difficulty in the senior citizen's mobility, it is recommended in the near future to place the senior citizen's bed in the safe room or in an interior room (under the windows and not in front of the door) and make sure that there are no shelves or objects above the bed.
4. Talk to the patient and the family members and define together what you will do in the event of an alarm at home and outside, so that you can maintain both the patient's safety and your personal safety.
5. If the patient is a person with dementia, give him clear instructions. For example, go to the room on the left or take your cane and come with me. It is very useful to accompany words with body movements and physical gestures
6. Prepare the protected space together with the patient and family members and make sure that there is all the equipment you and the patient will need. Early preparation of the protected space will help you feel prepared and feel more in control.
7. After entering the protected area, inform the family members of your situation and his condition as quickly as possible.

“Get your house ready”

## Recommendations for going out and maintaining a daily routine:

The war going on these days causes a continuous state of tension. A change in lifestyle, confinement to being in the house, and the fear of leaving the house may cause mental and functional deterioration. Physical activity helps the metabolism, returns the feeling of control, relieves tension, maintains the existing functionality, and improves the quality and joy of life. Regular practice will help maintain health and mental strength these days. That is why it is important to maintain a daily schedule and routine that also includes trips outside the home. In order to allow going on short trips, it is useful to consult with the patient and his family members to find alternatives for a possible route, to check together where the nearest protected area is, and to be updated on the instructions of the Home Front Command of the specific residential area: [www.oref.org.il](http://www.oref.org.il)

In addition, try to maintain the regular routine to which the patient is accustomed, including various functional activities such as going up and down stairs, cooking, cleaning activities, and more, and also add varied physical activity as much as possible.

Additional recommendations and links to activity ideas:

[“Keeping the Routine”](#)

## Are there any special instructions and recommendations for a person with dementia during wartime?

The tense security situation affects all of us in a slightly different way, as well as the people living with dementia. It is important to choose to manage the situation according to what is appropriate based on the familiarity with the person himself and with yourself.

### What should you do:

- Repeat the message several times that you are by their side, and are with them, in order to strengthen confidence. Even if it's clear to you, you should say it out loud to a person with dementia.
- Share that you are also afraid. Give them a chance to say some words of comfort and encouragement. They have already been through several wars.
- Lots of hugs and relaxing music that distracts the mind.
- If you detect a significant worsening in the condition of the patient - share with family members.

### What NOT to do:

- Do not leave the TV playing with news in the background because for a person with memory difficulties it may seem like something new every time.
- There is no need to share a plan of what will happen during an alarm with a person with dementia; it is likely that they will not remember the details. The conversation may cause additional anxiety, but will not lead to an internalization of what needs to be done.

### Following the war, if the patient's behavior has changed for the worse, such as anxiety, depression, violence, etc., what can be done? What can I use?

The appearance of signs of anxiety and stress is normal these days, however, it should be noted that the decrease in function is temporary, and that after a few days we will see a trend of improvement and adaptation to the new situation. For example, if in the first few days, the patient expressed feelings of sadness and anxiety through continuous crying, it will be observed that within a day or two the crying will shorten and the ability to hold a conversation will increase slightly.

There are several techniques to calm stress and anxiety that can be used, one of them is breathing. When a person is under tension and stress, his breathing becomes fast and flat. Such breathing creates a feeling of anxiety and panic that increases the breathing rate. Exhalation, not inhalation, is linked with relaxation, so find a quiet and comfortable place, slow down the exhalation and focus on a slow and long exhalation. When the lungs are empty, stop and count to 4 before taking another slow breath. The operation must be repeated as much as possible.

### When should you report and update the family members or the company?

When we feel that the person in distress has changed and that he no longer controls his emotions or physical reactions and cannot be at rest.

When there is no trend of adaptation but rather, a worsening of the symptoms.

When the patient cannot sleep for several days.

When the patient is in functional decline over time.

When the patient expresses great anger towards those who come to his aid.

**Don't keep this to yourself** - the confusion and difficulties should be shared.

Share your doubts and concerns with family members or the social worker at the company, and if necessary, ask for support from professional resources.

Video link with recommendations for **“Keep Breathing!”**

## General Instructions

**Where can I get instructions and information regarding the employment of foreign workers in the current situation? Due to the situation, is there any ease of restrictions regarding the employment of foreign workers?**

Guidelines and updated information, as well as easements related to the employment of workers during this period, can be found on the website of the Population and Immigration Authority. A notice on concessions dated October 24, 2023: [Click here](#)

The Administration of Foreign Workers at the Population and Immigration Authority has compiled for you, the foreign workers, an explanatory video in English, which includes important instructions, advice and tips: [Click here](#)

**Will new foreign workers be allowed to come to Israel during wartime?**

Yes. The requests for foreign workers are processed as usual, and foreign workers are coming on a regular basis.

## Instructions regarding a change of residence

**What are the instructions regarding a change of residence due to the situation?**

**In a situation where the senior citizen or his family members apply for evacuation:**

In cases where it is a temporary move given the situation and up to 60 days, it is possible to continue to employ the foreign worker.

If it is a matter of evacuating a senior citizen to a nursing home (independent or in a weakened state) through the Ministry of Welfare, the employer must continue to pay the foreign worker his salary. The Ministry of Social Affairs finances the stay for the senior citizen and the foreign worker.

In the event that the senior citizen is referred to a nursing facility under the supervision of the Ministry of Health, the employee can move and accompany him in accordance with the consent of the new facility.

**In case of moving to a more central geographical area:**

A nursing patient who temporarily moved to a more central residential area together with the foreign worker may continue to employ the foreign worker who is caring for him. There is no requirement to change the geographic area in the employee's license.

## Instructions regarding going on vacation

**If I want to return to my country during the war, can I return to Israel after the war?**

In accordance with the Authority's procedures, foreign workers may go on national leave for up to 90 days in coordination with the employer and upon obtaining a re-entry visa prior to departure.

**I am on vacation and the employer does not want to renew the entry, what should I do?**

You must contact your company to assist you.

**What to do in case the employer does not agree that I will go on vacation?**

You must contact the company in order to assist in the matter as well as assist the patient in finding a replacement employee.

**In case I missed the return date due to the situation and/or required to extend Inter-Visa:**

In these cases, your company must contact the employer division at the Population Authority by email and report it, for the purpose of extending the employee's re-entry visa at no additional cost.

## Instructions regarding the termination of employment

**Are there special instructions in the event that the employer requests to terminate the therapist's work during the war?**

No. The employer must inform the company about the matter so that it will take proper action to report it to the Population Authority, and will also assist the employee in finding another patient.

In the event that I suddenly decided to leave Israel permanently, do I have to be paid compensation and can I redeem the deposit money that was deposited for me?

The employee must give advance notice in accordance with the standard procedures, but if the employee does not give advance notice, his salary can be deducted as detailed in the final bill law. As for the severance payments, as long as the employee

resigns, the employee is entitled to partial severance payments that would have been set aside as part of the pension provision.

[Additional information about this](#)

For more information, you can contact the Commissioner for Foreign Workers' Rights at the Ministry of Labor.

As for the redemption of the deposit paid to the employee, as long as the employee wishes to leave Israel permanently without re-entry, and does not have a re-entry permit, the employee may redeem the deposit money deposited for him, and can do this before his departure at the airport.

## Emotional Support

### I am under a lot of stress from the war, what can be done?

**Here are some recommendations that can help you take care of yourself and lower your stress levels:**

**Do physical activity.** Physical activity helps the metabolism, to restore the sense of control, to relieve stress, to maintain the existing function and to improve the joy and quality of life, and regular practice will help to maintain health and mental strength these days. Try to be in motion at home and outside as much as possible, combine stretching and moving your body.

**Take deep breaths.** When we are under tension and stress, the breathing becomes fast and flat and we may even feel difficulty breathing. Returning the breathing to a normal rhythm will allow the pressure level to be lowered. Therefore, find a quiet and comfortable place, slow down the end of your breath and focus on a slow and long exhalation. As the lungs empty, stop and count to 4 before taking another slow breath. Repeat the action several times until you feel your breathing slowing down.

**Avoid watching harsh/violent videos shared on social media.** The videos contain unforgiving images that affect the mind and consciousness and may lead to trauma. And please do not forward and distribute such videos.

**Be sure to have limited exposure to the news.** Increased consumption may interfere with functioning and increase anxiety, listen to it in a controlled manner and look for reliable information as much as possible.

**In a chaotic situation, action can restore a sense of control to life.** Try to maintain your and your patient's daily routine, and try to find activities that you can do together with the patient that will give both of you a good feeling.

**And most importantly, don't stay alone with your fears and worries.** Share your doubts and concerns with the patient and his family members, friends, or the social worker at the company, and if necessary, ask for support from professional sources.

[Video link caring for yourself | self care for foreign caregivers](#)

## Are there emotional and social measures to support the foreign workers?

In view of the situation, foreign workers can receive initial psychological assistance at a call center for foreign workers, through the social workers of the Population and Immigration Authority, and the center's interpreters in various languages.

In order to make a request, please leave your contact details on this online form. You can also directly contact the call center that provides answers to foreign workers in different languages, at the number: 1-700-707-889.

In addition, Zoom meetings are held to support and provide tools for the foreign workers, you can see many answers [Click here](#).



### What can be done to better cope with the evacuation?

We are in an “emergency routine”, one of the characteristics of which is continuous uncertainty. However, the long-term struggle is different from the short-term that characterized the first days of the war. In order to deal better with the uncertainty over a long period of time, you need to regulate the resources you have by planning in advance and organizing your life in accordance with the new situation.

Here are some recommendations that can help you organize and regain control over our lives:

**To return to routine, as much as possible, the 3 most important things:**

1. Food - eat at least 2 nutritious meals a day.
2. Sleep - sleep can be improved by meditation, relaxing music, guided imagery or breathing exercises.
3. Movement of the body.

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- Be active - both in the routine of daily care and in helping and supporting others
  - Optimism and humor - finding little things to laugh about during the day
  - Get plenty of sun and stay outside as much as possible.
  - Occupy your thoughts with useful and positive things.
  - Being in the "here and now" - every little moment when "you are fine" adds up to something bigger and more meaningful.
  - Do meaningful actions together with others - be part of a community, pray together, listen to each other and help each other.

### Is there assistance from the State of Israel for caregivers who work in Israel and were affected by the war?

A foreign worker who was injured in a terrorist incident during the Swords of Iron War will receive all the benefits and rewards as an injured Israeli resident, if he entered the country legally, even if his residence visa in the country has expired. For more information about these rights, [click here](#).

A foreign worker who is suffering from anxiety is entitled to receive treatment to be more resilient centers and clinics. For information, [click here](#).

For questions and inquiries, you can contact the hotline for immediate assistance at 02-6269999.

#### **All my property is left behind, am I entitled to anything?**

You can check your eligibility to receive financial compensation from the compensation fund of the Tax Authority. For more information and inquiries, you can contact the compensation fund, the support center \*4954