



מור ושות', חברת עו"ד ונוטריון
MOR & CO. LAW FIRM & NOTARY



Making Sense of Bituach Leumi

(Yes, It Really Is Possible!)

What You Pay vs. What You Get Back

Presented by
Adv. Yissachar Lebowitz
Partner & Head of Bituach Leumi Department, Mor & Co. Law Firm



 **September 14th, 2025**
 **Jerusalem**



Meet Your Guide to the Israeli Bureaucratic Jungle

Adv. Yissachar Lebowitz









- Attorney, 35 years old, father of three
- Head of the Bituach Leumi Department at Mor & Co.
- Son of Olim – and closely familiar with the Anglo community
- Specializes in disability claims and social security rights

*Wait, There's
More Than
Just Taxes?*

The Big Picture: What You're Actually Paying For

You know that monthly chunk missing from your paycheck?

Here's what it's buying you:

-  Healthcare (through your Kupat Cholim)
-  Disability benefits
-  Child allowances (because kids are expensive everywhere)
-  Unemployment benefits
-  Pensions (for when you're too old to argue with government clerks)
-  Injury compensation
-  Maternity benefits
-  Long-term care

It's like a membership to Costco – you pay the fee, now let's make sure you get your money's worth!

Citizenship vs. Residency (Plot Twist!)

Understanding the impact of residency on
your pension eligibility

The Israeli Government's Favorite Gotcha

Israeli Citizen \neq Israeli Resident
(for Bituach Leumi and other purposes)

Here's the deal:

- Your blue passport doesn't guarantee benefits
- Your address and physical presence does
- Leave Israel for too long? You might lose resident status
- Come back? You might need to wait to regain full benefits

Translation:

The government cares more about where you sleep
than what passport you carry.

It's like a gym membership – stop showing up and
eventually they'll cancel your access to the equipment.

The Money Talk *– What You* *Actually Pay*

Breaking Down Your Monthly "Donation" to the State

Every Israeli Resident Pays:

1. National Insurance Tax (Bituach Leumi) –
Progressive percentage out of your income
2. Health Tax – Around 3.1% of income

How It Works:

- **Employees:** Automatically deducted (you probably didn't even notice)
- **Self-employed:** Must register and report (no hiding from the taxman)
- **Unemployed:** Minimum monthly payment required (yes, even when broke)

Think of it as a mandatory subscription service – except instead of Netflix, you get access to Israeli healthcare and bureaucracy.

The Golden Rules of Bituach Leumi

What Every Oleh Needs to Know (But Nobody Tells You)

Rule #1:

Document everything.
Seriously. Everything

- Medical records, employment history, travel dates
- If it's not documented, it didn't happen (according to them)

Rule #2:

The 12-year magic number

- Some benefits require 12 years of being insured
- Start counting from when you became a resident, not a citizen.

Rule #3:

"No" is just their opening offer

- Rejections can be appealed
- Persistence pays off (sometimes literally)

Rule #4:

Know your rights before you need them

Don't wait until you're desperate to figure this out



Disability Benefits – The Age Game



Under 18: Child Disability Benefit

- For children with special needs
- Monthly payments plus additional support services



Ages 18-67: General Disability Benefit (Kitzvat Nechut)

- Based on medical evaluation + functional capacity
- Can be partial or full disability
- Pro tip: "I can't work" isn't enough – you need medical proof



Transitions to elderly care assistance

Exception: If disability started before 67, benefits may continue

Think of it as insurance for when life throws you a curveball – which, let's face it, happens to everyone eventually.

Work Injuries vs. Regular Accidents

(Yes, There's a Difference)

When Bad Things Happen to Good People



Work-Related Injury (Dmei Pgi'a):

- Covered by Bituach Leumi
- Includes compensation for lost wages and medical expenses
- Even covers the commute to/from work!



Regular Sick Days (Yemei Machala):

- Paid by your employer (not Bituach Leumi)
- Up to 90 days per year



Non-Work Accident (Dmei Te'una):

- Also covered by Bituach Leumi
- Car accidents, sports injuries, household mishaps

The moral of the story: Whether you're clumsy at work or clumsy at home, there's probably coverage for that.

Unemployment – When the Job Market Isn't Feeling You

Financial Support for Life's Awkward Transitions



Unemployment Benefits (Avtalah):

- Must have worked a qualifying period
- No minimum wage requirement (every job counts!)
- Benefits for up to 6 months



Income Support (Havtachat Hachnasa):

- Available even without work history
- For those who need basic financial support
- Catch: Can't travel abroad freely while receiving it

Requirements:

- Prove you're actively job hunting (yes, they check)
- Available for work (couch surfing doesn't count)

**It's like a safety net – hopefully you never need it,
but you'll be grateful it's there if you do.**

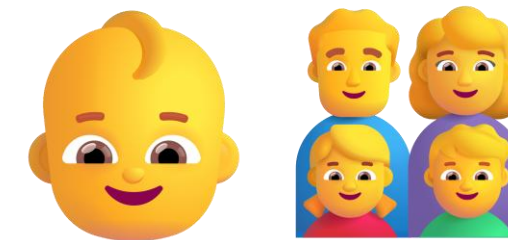
Maternity & Family Benefits (The Baby Bonus)

Because Raising Future Taxpayers Should Be Rewarded



Maternity Benefits:

- Birth grant (one-time payment)
- Maternity leave payments (14-26 weeks depending on circumstances)
- Minimal work history required



Child Allowance (Kitzvat Yeladim):

- Monthly payment for all eligible families
- Increases with number of children (economies of scale!)
- Continues until age 18
- Single parents get enhanced benefits
- Low-income families receive additional assistance

Israel's way of saying "Thanks for contributing to our demographic goals!"

Pensions – Planning for Your Golden Years

Because Falafel Won't Be Free Forever



Section 246 (The Standard Route):

- Requires 12 years of work
- can go as low as 5.
- Full pension for those who put in their time (vetek)



Section 240

- new immigrants aged 60+
may not be eligible!
- May allow partial pension
with fewer residency years
- Real talk: This is complex –
each case is unique



Non-contributory Pensions:

- For low-income elderly who
don't qualify for regular
pensions
- Means-tested but available

Translation: Even if you got here late in the game, there might still be options.

Long-Term Care (Gimlat Si'ud) – When Independence Needs Support

For When You Need Help with Daily Life



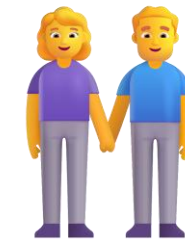
Home Care Services:

- Provides hours of home assistance
- In some cases it's possible to receive part of the hours in cash



Eligibility Requirements:

- Age 67+ (or disabled at any age)
- Functional dependency assessment
- Income and asset evaluation



Family Support:

- Assistance available for spouses and caregivers
- Recognizes that caring for someone is a full-time job

It's like having a backup plan for when you can't handle everything independently – which, eventually, applies to all of us.

Common Myths

What Your Neighbor Told You vs. Reality

- ✗ Myth: "I'm American, these benefits don't apply to me"
 - ✓ Reality: Residency, not citizenship, determines eligibility

- ✗ Myth: "I need to speak Hebrew to get benefits"
 - ✓ Reality: Services available in English (though Hebrew helps)

- ✗ Myth: "If they reject me once, that's it"
 - ✓ Reality: Appeals exist for a reason – use them!

- ✗ Myth: "I'm too young to worry about this"
 - ✓ Reality: Accidents and illness don't check your age first

- ✗ Myth: "Public insurance is enough"
 - ✓ Reality: Public is nice to have, but doesn't replace private!



Pro Tips from Someone Who's Been There

The Survival Guide They Don't Give You at the Airport



Documentation Strategy:

- Keep medical records in both English and Hebrew
- Maintain employment history records
- Track all travel abroad (those exit stamps matter!)



Timing Matters:

- Apply for benefits as soon as you're eligible
- Don't wait until you're desperate
- Some benefits have time limits for applications



"No" is just their opening offer

- Learn key Hebrew terms for your situation
- Bring a translator if needed
- Get everything in writing



The Nuclear Option:

- **Legal representation exists for complex cases**
- **Sometimes paying a lawyer saves money in the long run**





Sources That Actually Help

Your Digital Survival Kit



Online Sources:

- Bituach Leumi English website (yes, it exists!)
- Kol Zchut (Rights database in English)
- Nefesh B'Nefesh guide to benefits



In-Person Help:

- Legal aid clinics
- Rights advocacy organizations
- Your local Bituach Leumi office (bring patience)



Professional Support:

- Specialized attorneys (like yours truly)
- Social workers who understand the system
- Accountants familiar with Oleh situations



Red Flags – When to Seek Professional Help

Recognizing When You're in Over Your Head

🚨 Call for Backup When:

- Your claim has been rejected
- You're dealing with complex medical conditions
- There are residency status questions
- You're facing financial hardship while waiting for benefits
- The bureaucracy has you pulling your hair out

Remember: Sometimes the cost of professional help is less than the cost of getting it wrong.

The Bottom Line (What You Actually Need to Remember)

Your TL;DR Cheat Sheet

- ✓ You're paying into a system that can pay you back
- ✓ Residency matters more than citizenship
- ✓ 12 years is the magic number for most benefits
- ✓ Document everything, appeal everything
- ✓ You don't have to figure this out alone


Final Thought:

"Navigating Israeli bureaucracy is like learning to drive in Jerusalem – intimidating at first, but totally manageable once you know the rules. And unlike Jerusalem traffic, at least this pays dividends!"



Questions & Answers

Open discussion – no question too basic or too complex.

For personal questions
or complex cases: 

Yissi@Mor.Law

Contact us at Mor & Co. Law Firm

📍 Jerusalem office **02-5953322**

📍 Tel Aviv office **03-3030430**

We speak your language (literally and figuratively)

Remember: The only stupid question is the one you don't ask
– especially when money is involved!

Thank you for your time!

