

Reserve Service Benefits

The National Insurance Institute (NII) pays this benefit to any person who is called up for reserve service under the Defense Service Law, as well as to those drafted for training under the Emergency Labor Service Law. The NII also pays grants to working youths up to the age of 18, who are absent from their jobs due to participation in pre-military education (on condition that they participated in this activity for at least two consecutive days, and that they worked at least 30 working days in the three preceding months).

The NII may, after consulting with the Public Committee on Reserve Duty, provide grants for development of welfare services for reservists and their families.

Participation in the Welfare Basket Project

Since 1999, the NII has participated in an extensive IDF project to increase social cohesion and create a sense of identification with and appreciation for reservists, by participating in the funding of a **welfare basket** project, run by the IDF Manpower Directorate (known by the abbreviation AKA). This project includes recreational activities, evening gatherings for units, tribute evenings, and other team-building activities. The total of the grants will not exceed 0.25% of the estimated overall annual amount of reserve service benefits paid by law, and the entire budget for this branch is funded by the Ministry of Finance as part of the defense budget. In 2014, NIS 6.5 million were transferred for the budgets of each year from 2014-2016.

Payment of Advances in Emergency Situations

During emergency situations, the Reserve Service Division of the NII in partnership with with the IDF and the defense establishment, pays advances on reserve service benefits to all employers whose employees were called up for reserve duty, and to all unsalaried

reserve duty soldiers: the self-employed, students, the unemployed, etc. Thus for example in 2014, during Operation **Protective Edge**, approximately 78% of those drafted were salaried workers whose employers received advance payments worth an overall total of NIS 184 million, and 22% were unsalaried and received personal advances at an overall total of NIS 44 million.

Benefit Rate and Scope of Payments

The daily benefit rate is determined in accordance with the employee's gross salary (liable to insurance contributions) in the three months preceding the 1st of the month in which the service began, divided by 90 days. For the purpose of the calculation, reserve service benefits, unemployment, work injury allowance and maternity allowances are taken into consideration. The benefit will not be less than the minimum – 68% of the basic amount divided by 30 (in January 2016: NIS 196.02 per day, NIS 5,881 per month), and shall not exceed the maximum: 5 times the basic amount divided by 30 (in January 2016: NIS 1,441.33 per day, NIS 43,240 per month).

The scope of payments to reservists is subject to many fluctuations in accordance with security events. In 2010-2012 it increased, however in 2013 it decreased (Table 1). In 2014, in the wake of Operation **Protective Edge**, payments rose again in real terms by 22.5%, reaching approximately NIS 1.4 billion, and then dropped in 2015 by approximately 24%, to about NIS 1 billion. In 2016, there was again an increase in real terms of 10.1%, and payments amounted to approximately NIS 1.1 billion.

Table 1
Payments to Reservists (Thousands of NIS), 2012-2016

Year	Current prices	2016 prices	Real-term change (percentages)
2012	1,124,500	1,133,626	5.8
2013	1,103,003	1,095,242	-3.4
2014	1,357,530	1,341,593	22.5
2015	1,021,479	1,015,913	-24.3
2016	1,118,136	1,118,126	10.1