

## **INFORMATION SHEET for Jewish Personnel in the Army and Civil Defence**

### **1. Introduction**

The responsible bodies of the Army and the Civil Defence adopt an understanding approach to the particular needs of Jewish conscripts, and we recognise this with thanks. In most cases Jewish conscripts can fulfil their religious obligations while on service.

This information sheet is based on the “Dokumentation zum Thema Religion für AdA” (“Documentation on the subject of religion for Army personnel”):

[http://www.vtg.admin.ch/internet/vtg/de/home/militaerdienst/allgemeines/armeeseelsorge/glaube\\_und\\_militaerdienst.html](http://www.vtg.admin.ch/internet/vtg/de/home/militaerdienst/allgemeines/armeeseelsorge/glaube_und_militaerdienst.html)

The Civil Defence organisations are run at community level, which means that no generally binding written directives or regulations exist. The following information, however, applies as appropriate to Civil Defence personnel.

### **2. Jewish holidays recognised by the Army**

The Army recognises the following Jewish holidays:

Pesach (Passover)  
Shavuot (Feast of Weeks)  
Rosh Hashanah (New Year)  
Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)  
Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles)  
Simchat Torah (Feast of Rejoicing with the Torah)

The civil dates of these holidays are listed on our website. All Jewish holidays begin on the preceding evening one hour before sunset and end on the last day one hour after sunset, in accordance with the calendar published by the rabbinate.

For leave on the Sabbath item 21, para. 4, of Regulation 51.024d “Organisation of Training Services (ODA) of 1 January 2010” applies: “Personnel who keep the Sabbath holy should as far as possible be granted leave as from Friday afternoon. This time off will be made up by Sunday duty.”

For details please refer to “Documentation on the subject of religion for Army personnel”.

### **3. Kosher food**

In accordance with item 45 of Regulation 51.024d, personnel are permitted on request “to take meals elsewhere for religious reasons”. Personnel providing their own food in this way are entitled to payment of cash compensation in accordance with Regulation 51.003d “Administrative Regulation”. The request for this must be made before commencement of the period of service. The same entitlement exists for conscripts serving with the Civil Defence.

## **4. Requests for leave**

4.1. The following information applies to all Army personnel.

4.2. All requests for leave must be clarified at an early date with the responsible commanding officer or the responsible Civil Defence organisations (in the case of schools and courses before they start) and a compensating service (Sunday duty, preparatory training for officers, etc.) should be offered.

4.3. Anyone having to be on service in a period which includes lots of holidays should get in touch as soon as possible with the company commander or the responsible Civil Defence organisation and, stating the reasons, request to do this service with a different unit. It is recommendable to ascertain in advance from the call-up posters which units do not have refresher courses over the holidays. This differs from corps to corps.

Requests for deferral of service (with the exception of officers) are to be sent, together with the service record book, to the corps-controlling military authority. Officers should send their request, without their service record book, through official channels to the corps-controlling military authority. If important holidays fall at the beginning or the end of the service period, a request must be made to the commanding officer for permission to report for duty later or to leave earlier.

4.4. All requests for leave must be submitted, stating the reasons, to the commanding officer of the assigned unit, or the school or the course. If such requests are unsuccessful, Jewish personnel in the Army can turn to the Department of Religious Affairs of the SIG.

4.5. Days on leave do not count towards the total period of compulsory service. Any effects on the military exemption tax or military pay should therefore be taken into account.

## **5. Call-up posters**

The call-up information on training service for units appears in newspapers in the November of the previous year and is also displayed in poster form from the start of the year. It is therefore possible for each member of the Army to ascertain promptly whether he is required to be on service over the holidays and to react as soon as possible.

## **6. Leave means commitment**

It is self-evident that Jewish personnel in the Army should prove worthy of the leave granted by being fully committed and having a positive attitude to the duties they are required to perform.

Wherever possible, they should offer some form of compensating service (Sunday duty etc.).

## **7. Information**

If any questions or unclear matters arise, the Department of Religious Affairs of the SIG will be pleased to assist Jewish personnel in the Army at any time.