

## **THE ISRAEL SENIOR HOUSING RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION**

**[WWW.ISRA-SENIOR-RES.ORG.IL](http://WWW.ISRA-SENIOR-RES.ORG.IL)**

### **BULLETIN** **September 2022**

**Background:** The Israel Senior Housing Residents Association was founded in 2000 to safeguard the rights of older people living in residential facilities. Today its membership is over 9,000 in 47 homes. Run entirely by volunteers, the Association's treasurer, secretary and the members of its Board of Directors and Control Committee all live in senior housing facilities.

**Status:** Recognized by Israel's Justice Ministry as a representative consumer organization, the Association is authorized to represent all its members and file claims concerning their rights. This year, as in every year past, we have received the annual NGO Certificate of Proper Management.

**The Assisted Living Law:** In June 2012, following years of Association lobbying, Israel's Knesset passed the Assisted Living Law. This bill regulates a wide range of aspects of assisted living facilities, protects residents' rights, and ensures regular inspection of homes. (Its text is posted on the Association's website in Hebrew and English.)

Most of the Law's provisions were in effect by late 2012. Some, however, have yet to be implemented, and we are working hard to speed this process. Meanwhile, we have succeeded in changing the Law's ruling on our deposits (Article 27): a Knesset amendment was passed in July 2018 and this Securities Clause came into effect in January 2020.



Dear members and prospective members of the Israel Senior Housing Residents Association. This, our annual report for 2022, recaps the year gone by and looks ahead to the year to come - one in which, we hope, that many of you are involved in Association activities. For ongoing news about us, we suggest periodically checking our regularly updated website ([www.isra-senior-res.org.il](http://www.isra-senior-res.org.il)).

Thankfully, although COVID-19 still lurks, we have largely managed to resume our regular lives, and last June held our biannual elections to the Management Board and Control Committee at a face-to-face general assembly. We selected:

**MANAGEMENT BOARD:** Lea Schatz Soffer (Chair), Micha Ramati (Deputy Chair), Eithan Bloch, Dan Tamari, Yigal Shapira, Yoram Avnimelech, Israel Ben Yosef, Martha Dagan, and Amos Shvueli

**CONTROL COMMITTEE:** Shoshana Rubinfeld, Liliane Frenkel, Yochanan Ben-Yaakov.

Happily, our loyal and devoted treasurer, Nitza Roffe, and amazing secretary, Judith Gabor, both are continuing their valued work with the Association.

This is also an opportunity to thank all of you who attended our semi-annual assembly, June 26, 2022, contributing to its great success with your enthusiastic participation.

### **A. Association Home Visits.**

Board members are happy to visit member-facilities to enlarge on Association services. Residents' committees should coordinate such visits through our secretary.

### **B. The Association and the Law.**

**1. Class actions** - Two class actions were successfully concluded this past year:

- a. MISHAN homes have granted their residents their due securities.
- b. MISHAN homes have reduced the tariffs for live-in caregivers and with reimbursement dating back to January 2021.

#### **2. Legislation.**

(a) *The regulations concerning the financial status of our homes*, ready for submission to the Knesset's Labor & Welfare Committee, were sidelined last October when a new accountancy firm was asked to reformulate them. Such regulations will guarantee intervention prior to collapse. Knesset approval is required before the Welfare Ministry is empowered to award, suspend or withdraw a license

(b) *The two funds* are for ongoing management of our facilities, support of insolvent facilities, and for residents moving to their nursing wings. With polite appeals yielding nothing, heavy pressure has nudged the two funds one step ahead.

All this makes it hard for assisted living residents to think of themselves as anything other than last among Welfare Ministry priorities — despite its addition of 'Social Affairs' to its name. Sadly, we have still not succeeded in having the unsettled Assisted Living Law regulations implemented, despite high hopes of the new government and promises from the Welfare & Social Affairs Ministry. These regulations concern the financial status of our residential facilities (necessary for introducing genuine home inspections and issuing licenses) and the setting up of funds for home management and nursing care. At the time of writing, there have been no new developments.

While we have managed to receive securities for our deposits (in most cases, a first-class mortgage), we must also ensure the establishment and functioning of the management and nursing funds, under the Public Guardian's Office.

#### **3. Admissions.**

In response to many complaints regarding admission of residents who do not comply with the Assisted Living Law criteria (Clause 15), we have proposed to the Ministry that a public official sit on every admission committee. Should this not be acted on, we will table a Knesset amendment.

#### 4. Social workers.

The pandemic highlighted the need for more social workers in our homes. Our suggestion that the law be amended to stipulate a fixed ratio of social workers to residents was answered with: “We’ll first complete the 2012 Regulations.” (See above what happened with this....)

#### C. High Numbers of Caregivers Living in Homes.

Roundtable discussions with the Association of Nursing & Assisted Living Home owners (A.B.A) the rescinding of Clause 33 of the Assisted Living *Law* — *a provision which permits residents to employ live-in caregivers*- was repeatedly raised. While we obviously oppose rescinding the clause, we are aware of the impact of a large number of caregivers in one home and have formed a committee to review the issue. Their proposals will be circulated to all member homes for comment and then brought before A.B.A and Welfare & Social Affairs Ministry.

#### D. Synchronizing Medical Records from our Clinics and Health Insurance Funds.

This has been on our agenda for a long time. The official position is that our clinics constitute ‘private medical care’ for which the government cannot be responsible. Our delight when the Welfare Ministry appointed a Chief Medical Officer and a Chief Nurse was short-lived. There was no change in policy. This necessitates a return to the Supreme Court — which must wait until after the national elections.

Breaking news: one health fund appears to be addressing the issue. We are in contact and will update you...

#### E. 0% VAT.

Both the Minister for Social Equality Merav Cohen and A.B.A support our efforts to have our facilities be levied with a 0% Value Added Tax (VAT) — Ms Cohen even meeting with Israel’s Chief Tax Officer. Alas, no luck as yet. Our search continues for a Knesset member to promote this as legislation.

#### F. Third Party and Apartment Contents Insurance and Subrogation Waiver

As far as we know, few Association residents have third party or apartment contents insurance. Some of our facilities include a subrogation waiver in their overall policies, which protects residents from liability for damage to the apartment, but **this is not true for all our homes. It is of critical importance that all homes include the subrogation waiver.** In two recent apartment fires, residents were not indemnified — and one ended up paying for damage incurred. We draw your attention to a new fire hazard: the loading of bicycle and/or motorized scooter batteries is a major cause of fires, according to the Fire & Rescue Authority. We urge you to insure your apartment and its contents, making certain that the policy includes a subrogation waiver. Details of a sound insurance policy quotation are available from the Association secretary and your residents’ committee. You are obviously free to contact any other insurance agent of your choice.

### **G. Raising Maintenance Fees above the Cost of Living Index —Transparency**

Residents' committees in several of our homes have succeeded to ensure transparency in a joint resident-management inspection of the percentage by which monthly fees are raised above the Index each year. We encourage all the other Residents Committees to follow suit. Our legal and accountancy consultants are available, as needed.

### **H. Construction over Inhabited Residences.**

We are in the final stages of formulating an amendment to the Assisted Living Law on this issue and will submit it as soon as the new Knesset is in session.

### **I. Renewal of Identity Cards.**

Validity of ID cards was extended by two years beyond their expiry date.

### **J. Issue of the New Public Transportation Card.**

The Transport Ministry agreed to send its representatives to our homes to facilitate and assist with the issue of the Zahav Kav, launched last month. The new card- Zahav Kav - allows free travel countrywide on all public transportation for those aged 75 and over.

### **K. Improper use of floor shelters.**

Raising in the Media the issue of poor maintenance of floor shelters, some homes using them as storage space, resulted in the Home Front Command contacting us and sending the exact regulations regarding maintenance of such spaces. We sent them to our member Residents Committees. We still have to solve the issue of homes lacking floor shelters.

*WE WISH ALL OUR MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES A HAPPY NEW YEAR, GOOD  
HEALTH IN BODY AND SOUL,  
AND MAY YOU ALL CONTINUE LIVING AN ACTIVE AND JOYOUS LIFE.*

*SHANA TOVA*

*The Association's Management Board*

