



**A Pardon Track for Relief From Fines for Those Who Successfully
Comply with the Community Court Program**

1. The community courts established in 2014 in Israel provide assistance and rehabilitation for offenders sanctioned in a magistrate's court with offenses with a "mild" and "moderate" severity, mainly drug, property, and violent offenses, which were subject to prison sentences. The background for the acts committed by the subjects participating in the program is social, financial, or personal problems (such as drug or alcohol addiction, physical, cognitive, or mental disabilities, poverty, social exclusion, unemployment, dropping out of educational institutions, etc.), and they were defined as highly motivated to transform and with high rehabilitation potential.

The community court program participants receive overall support from all concerned parties, including the court, the prosecution, the public defender's office, the probation system, and legal aid, and a rehabilitation program is established for them that comprises all aspects of life, including financial assistance and debt settlement, which, based on experience, constitute an essential part of the rehabilitation process.

2. So far, approximately 420 defendants have successfully completed the program.
3. Due to the program's uniqueness in the community court, the President of the State and the Minister of Justice designated a track for participants in the clemency program to reduce sentences of fines, in which the power of pardon will be used more broadly than usual concerning applicants who successfully comply with the program, to recognize their effort and to help them persevere and uphold rehabilitation.
4. The designated track concerns fines owed **due to criminal, traffic, or administrative proceedings. The entities accompanying the participants of the community court program will assist in submitting requests for relief of fines in relevant cases, and special consideration will be given to adherence to the rehabilitation program in the community court.**
5. Granting pardon will be considered concerning fines that meet the following criteria:
 - **Fines due to criminal, traffic proceedings (excluding parking tickets), or administrative imposed prior to rehabilitation.**
 - **The applicant contacted the Fines Collection Center or the relevant entity in the two years preceding application submission.**

6. Concerning each application, the following criteria will be assessed alongside the aforementioned: the applicant's personal circumstances, financial distress, the severity and circumstances of the offenses committed, the traffic record, other components of the punishment imposed in addition to fines, payment of compensation to crime victims, the amount of fines, the number of fines' portfolios they have incurred, efforts made to pay the fines, the ability to pay, etc., as is customary in the handling of such pardon requests.
7. The request for pardon must be submitted to the President of the State in the online form on the Office of the President's website, with the assistance and support of community court professionals.
8. The application can also be submitted by the applicant's representative or a first-degree relative. A power of attorney must accompany the application submitted by the applicant's counsel. An application submitted by a relative should include a declaration that it has been submitted with the subject's knowledge and consent.
9. It should be specified in the pardon request that it is submitted as part of the designated track for participants in the community court program.
10. The pardon request must be accompanied by details and documents substantiating the reasons for the request, including personal information, personal circumstances, details of the fines for which the request is submitted, including the debt collection entity, efforts to settle the debts, as well as documents attesting to the applicant's financial situation, including, inter alia:
 - ✓ Current checking account statement for the three months preceding the application submission date.
 - ✓ Supporting documentation concerning active debts (writ of execution, loans, etc.).
 - ✓ Supporting documentation concerning annuities.
11. It should be noted that no overall general pardon will be granted. Pardons will be granted only following the submission of a pardon request, the assessment of each case based on its merits, and after obtaining a recommendation from the relevant authorities.
12. In addition, it should be noted that the designated track does not preclude submitting a pardon request as part of the general pardon authority granted to the President of the State per accepted rules.
13. For additional information, please refer to the Office of the President's website:
<https://www.gov.il/he/departments/guides/amnesty-application>
The Pardons Department website at the Ministry of Justice:
https://www.gov.il/he/departments/ministry_of_justice_pardons.
14. For further inquiries, please contact the Legal Bureau at the Office of the President on Sundays through Thursdays, between 09:00-11:00 at 02-6707211, as well as with the secretariat of the Pardons Department at the Ministry of Justice on Sundays through Thursdays between 09:00-11:00 and 13:00-15:00 at 073-3927070.