

קו לעובד
Worker's Hotline
عنوان العامل

This past month has been very busy at Kav LaOved. We published, for the first time, a mid-year report on work accidents in all sectors of the workforce– and the findings are bleak: the number of fatalities is the highest in five years. On June 20th, “World Refugee Day,” we highlighted our work with refugees. During the first five months of 2019 over 2000 asylum seekers came to our office to request assistance in attaining their rights. In the meantime, the State's response to our petition in the High Court of Justice against the Deposit Law for asylum seekers, which deducts 20% of their wages, reveals that only 0.2% of the asylum seekers who work receive their money as the law requires. An examination committee commissioned by Tel Aviv University determined that the students who were sent to work in agriculture, under the guise of applied learning, were employed in an inappropriate manner. Also: Kav LaOved has been denied Civil Service positions for next year. Our civil service volunteers are invested in helping workers realize their rights. Why? Because someone “upstairs” decided that workers' rights should not be considered welfare... Yes, we will need your help



The number of fatal work accidents in the first half of 2019 is the highest in five years.

This month, for the first time, [we published a report](#) that covers the status of work accidents in all sectors of the labor market, including the construction sector, which accounts for 60% of work accidents, even though it employs only 8% of workers. We also published exclusive information revealing that the police has [only opened investigations for a quarter of the severe accidents which have occurred](#). The conclusion is simple: because investigations are insufficient and there is no due process, deterrence against future work accidents is non-existent.

However, there are accomplishments that should be noted. For example, KLO advocacy efforts ensured that a government contractor, Mahamid Tawfiq, was held accountable to the law for the dangerous safety conditions at his construction company's work sites. Through our successful petition calling for transparency of information regarding safety orders at construction sites, we learned that although his company had received two stop work orders, one due to the death of an employee at the company's Kiryat Gat site, they had faced no consequences and were still registered as a potential government contractor. This despite a regulation enacted in February which prohibits companies with this sort of track record from participating in government bids. After KLO provided information about this situation to the press, the Ministry of Finance announced that the contractor would be crossed off the list.



On World Refugee Day, refugees receive less than minimum wage.

The USA State Department's report on Trafficking in Persons, which received minimal media attention, recommended that Israel repeal the Deposit Law that orders deducting 20% of asylum seekers' wages. We welcome this recommendation and say the same wherever we can, including in the High Court of Justice: this law allows for daily, collective theft. We see evidence of this on the pay slips of dozens of asylum seekers who come to us every week: many employers deduct the 20% from workers' wages but do not deposit them in the designated fund. Actually, even the State's response to our High Court of Justice petition revealed the law's inadequacy. The response showed that **approximately 0.2% of asylum seekers, that is only 68 individuals out of more than 33,000, had all of their monthly deposits deposited legally**. So now that we know that the government is aware of the robbery, does it enforce the law? We'll spare you the suspense, the answer is no. Let's hope that the message will get through, and the devastating law will be repealed.



What does the state want? Tzedaka (Charity) and not Tzedek (Justice), and that's why they decided not to allow Kav LaOved to have civil service volunteers— we need your help.

It turns out that the Knesset and the Civil Service Authority believe that disadvantaged workers obtaining labor rights withheld from them does not constitute welfare. We are not kidding, even though the previous sentence can fool you. Kav LaOved has been counting on the assistance of civil service volunteers for 15 years. These volunteers, who come to us as an alternative to military service, meet dozens of workers whose basic rights have been violated on a daily basis. They assist them with rare devotion, but somehow, due to amendments to the law, we were notified that we will not be

granted civil service positions anymore. And why? Because changes to the law amended the definition of welfare and we are no longer considered an organization that improves workers' wellbeing. Clearly KLO's work hasn't changed, rather the new law defines welfare differently. What's the subtext? A governmental attempt to lead a policy of charity, instead of justice. Kav LaOved submitted an appeal opposing the decision and we are waiting for an answer. In the meantime, we need your help in spreading the experience of our former civil service volunteers who wish to tell the public what they are accomplishing here. Judge for yourself whether or not it constitutes welfare.

And let's finish with a sweet success:

Do you remember the case of third world country students who were employed in agriculture in an exploitive manner, under the guise of a "practicum program", hosted by Tel Aviv University? Our efforts have yielded fruit and a University-commissioned committee submitted a report [concluding that the students were inappropriately employed in unsuitable conditions](#). We can only hope this conclusion will deter academic institutions from hosting such illegal programs in the future – but if they do, we will be there to fight them.

Help us show workers they are not alone in their fight for just employment! A monthly donation to Kav LaOved will assist workers in standing up for their rights. Any new donation of at least **300 NIS** (approx. \$85.00 USD total) - or donations that triple previous ones - will be matched by one of our funding partners

To securely donate via "Israel Gives":

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Contact us via email at
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All donations will allow "Kav LaOved" to help workers get their rights at work and the money taken from them by their employers. Even a fixed contribution of 10 NIS per month. To donate by direct debit bank or credit card deposit contribution [click here](#). Association account: Bank Hapoalim branch 781 Account 431095 in the name "Kav LaOved".

To send a check to the offices of the association via mail: Kav LaOved PO Box 2319 Tel Aviv 61022
Donations to Kav LaOved within Israel are income tax deductible under Section 46. Tax-deductible donations from abroad, by New Israel Fund. For more info: hagar@kavlaoved.org.il

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