



Guidance for Masorti/Conservative Rabbis Concerning Converts' Right to Make Aliyah

2026/6/29 י"ד בתמוז תשפ"ו

There have been many headlines lately describing a proposed law in Israel that would cancel the long-accepted right of Masorti/Conservative converts to make aliyah. We understand that this has caused a lot of concern for many Jews by choice in our communities around the world. We wish to clarify the current status of the law and hopefully assuage some of the fears.

What is the content of the proposed law?

The Law of Return currently defines a Jew as “a person who was born of a Jewish mother or has become converted to Judaism and who is not a member of another religion.”

The bill under discussion would add “*according to halacha*” after “converted to Judaism,” would likely be interpreted according to the understanding of the Israeli state rabbinate to exclude non-Orthodox conversions, or at minimum create a basis for excluding them. (In fact, not even all Orthodox conversions would be accepted, but only those deemed sufficiently “halachic” by the Israeli state rabbinate.)

How does a bill become a law in Israel?

In order to understand how worried potential olim should be about the proposed law, it is important to understand the Israeli legislative process and the stages that a bill must pass through before it becomes law:

Stage 0: Drafting and Submission

A bill may be submitted to the Knesset by the government, by a Knesset committee, or by an individual MK. Bills submitted by an individual MK are “private bills,” and must be approved by a majority vote of the full Knesset in a “preliminary reading” before they go on to consideration by the appropriate Knesset committee prior to the first reading.

Stage 1: First Reading

The bill is discussed by the Knesset plenum for a discussion on its general principles. The Knesset votes on whether to advance the bill from this stage or not.

Stage 1.5: Committee Deliberations



After the bill has passed the first reading, the bill is discussed in the relevant Knesset committee. Hearings are held, expert testimony on the bill's impact is heard, amendments are suggested, and the bill takes on a new form. This process tends to take the most time.

Stage 2: Second Reading

The bill is returned to the Knesset plenum for full discussion. The bill is debated section by section, and individual amendments may be voted on.

Stage 3: Final Reading

The bill with the amendments passed in the second reading is voted on as a whole. If the law is approved, it will be signed by the relevant authorities and published, becoming law.

Where does the proposed law on conversion stand today?

Similar laws limiting the application of the Law of Return have been proposed several times over the past several years.

[In January 2026](#), MK Avi Maoz of the Noam party (no relation to the Noam youth movement!) proposed this as a private bill. Sixty Knesset members rejected the bill in the preliminary reading and only fifteen voted in support of the bill.

[In May 2026](#), MK Simcha Rothman of the Religious Zionist party (and chair of the Knesset's Constitution, Law, and Justice Committee) reintroduced the bill for discussion amongst the committee of government ministers who decide which bills the government will support. The coalition has not made a decision to move the bill forward.

[The current bill](#) was introduced by MK Meir Porush of Agudat Yisrael. At present, it is still in the very early stages of the legislative process, prior to the preliminary reading. In other words:

- It has not yet passed a preliminary reading.
- It has not yet been discussed in committee.
- No binding decision has been made to advance it.

Is the bill likely to pass?

According to the last vote on the matter in the current Knesset, there is not enough support for the bill to pass.

An additional consideration is that the current Knesset must dissolve no later than October 27, 2026 in order for elections to be held. When the Knesset dissolves, the vast majority of



proposed legislation is halted and must be renewed in the next Knesset session if it is to become law.

Although none of us can know for certain what the results of the Knesset elections will be, it is more likely than not that the coalition of parties forming the government will be different than it is today. The current coalition includes ministers who have a specific agenda against the pluralistic Jewish movements. We hope that the next governing coalition will be more focused on supporting all of Am Yisrael than harassing our converts.

What are the requirements for a conversion to be recognized today?

When converts and conversion candidates ask you if their conversion will be recognized for aliyah purposes, you can assure them that for the foreseeable future, their most pressing concern about their aliyah application should be assembling the proper paperwork.

It bears repeating that in general, the requirements for conversion for the purpose of Aliyah are as follows:

1. A period of at least nine months of face-to-face learning and participation in an in-person, recognized Jewish community.
2. An in-person mikveh and beit din consisting of at least one rabbi from a recognized Jewish movement (i.e., an RA member).
3. A period of at least nine months of continued participation in a recognized Jewish community (and, if it has been longer than that since the conversion, demonstration of continued community involvement).

A detailed list of the requirements can be found [here](#).

What resources are available to help rabbis navigate these issues?

First of all: If this bill or a similar one *does* progress and there is a reason to change the guidance you give to converts and prospective converts considering aliyah, we will be available to answer any questions.

If you are asked by a convert in your community to write a letter supporting their conversion, please make use of the [proposed template letter available on the RA website](#).



If you have any doubts or hesitations, or are dealing with complicated cases, you are more than welcome to be in touch with our office. We work with highly experienced lawyers who specialize in the field of non-Orthodox converts' aliyah cases.

Please feel free to be in touch with us sooner rather than later; for everyone involved's sake, we would much prefer to give advice before an aliyah application is submitted than offer counsel after an application has been rejected.

Thank you for your leadership and your support of the Jews by choice in your communities. Whether for aliyah or just for a visit, it is our honor to welcome them in Israel.

B'vracha,

Rabbi Maayan Belding-Zidon, Director of Religious Services Bureau, Masorti Israel - maayan@masorti.org.il

Rabbi Ehud Bandel, Av Beit Din for Giyur, Masorti Israel - ehudbandel@gmail.com

Rabbi Sandra Kochman, Coordinator of Giyur and Secretary of the Beit Din for Giyur, Masorti Israel - sandra@masorti.org.il