Chairman of the Histadrut and the President of Lahav: "The time has come to realize the pledge"

Against the backdrop of the cumulative economic damage that continues to suppress the self-employed, the Histadrut is committed to assisting and uniting a front with Lahav (Israel's Chamber of Independent Organizations and Businesses).

In a meeting today (20/3/2020) Histadrut chairman, Arnon Bar David, with Lahav President Adv. Roy Cohen. The two announced their intentions to explore...
common ways to support self-employed and freelancers in Israel.

The increasing growing public protests of the self-employed and small business owners, the need for solidarity, and dramatic measures to save hundreds of thousands of civilians, the economic situations remain unanswered by the Government of Israel.

The Chairman of the Histadrut and the President of Lahav sharply criticized the State's bailout programs, stating: "After fifty days devoted to empty promises and idle plans, the time has come to realize the pledge. Funds raised for the crisis should be activated, and compensation for the decline in turnover and drop in the volume of business activity needs to be fulfilled. It is necessary to give financial air to the self-employed and to ensure that they can survive."

Bar-David and Cohen issued a joint demand to the Government to ensure immediate payment of unemployment benefits to self-employed workers, according to the same rules and rights of the workers. "As long as the businesses are closed, according to the State's instruction, and the employees entitled to unemployment benefits during the furlough, the business owners also need to be taken care of."

The parties agreed to tighten the cooperation, to ensure that the workers and the self-employed in Israel can return to a functioning economy.

**Government Emergency Regulations (19/4):**

- The industry, production and services branches will be able to return to a work format of 30% personnel or up to 10 employees at the same time at the same workplace, whichever is higher.
- This restriction shall not apply to workplaces and businesses that meet the rules of the 'purple badge' standard, and will be able to employ greater proportions of personnel.
- Following are the principal rules of the 'purple badge' standard for employers: Every business will appoint someone to be responsible for coronavirus on its behalf; adherence to the rules of hygiene; a prohibition on gatherings in coffee areas and kitchenettes; employees will eat in their rooms to the extent possible; maintaining a distance of two meters between people; checking body temperatures upon entry; arranging for and maintaining transportation for the same group of employees and the same shift, to the extent possible; two workers may be present in a room of up to 20 square meters – more workers may be present if there is a barrier to prevent the transfer of droplets; five workers may be present in a room of greater than 20 square meters – more workers may be present if there is a barrier; meetings and discussions of up to eight people may be held.
- Should an employee be infected with the coronavirus at a workplace, the entire – or part of a – workplace shall be closed for a period no later than the conclusion of the epidemiological investigation by the Health Ministry.
- In addition to the foregoing, it is recommended that anyone with background illnesses avoid physically going to their workplace.
- Businesses shall meet the 'purple badge' standard via self-regulation. To the extent that businesses meet the determined rules, they shall be allowed to return to activity immediately without the need to receive a permit. Violation of the rules is a criminal offense and entails a return to the previous restrictions.

For more information: peterl@histadrut.org.il