

THE SPIRIT OF THE I.D.F



The Israeli Defense Force is the army of the State of Israel. Its activities are subject to the authority of the democratic civil government of Israel and to its laws. The purpose of the IDF is to preserve the State of Israel, to protect its independence, and to foil attempts by its enemies to disrupt normal life within it. The soldiers of the IDF are obligated to fight and to devote every effort, even at the risk of their lives, to protect the State of Israel, its citizens and residents. Soldiers of the IDF shall act according to the values of the IDF and its commands, while abiding by the law, upholding human dignity, and respecting the values of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state.

Spirit of the IDF-Definition and Sources

The Spirit of the IDF defines the value identity of the IDF. It ought to underlie the activities of every IDF soldier throughout his or her regular or reserve service.

The Spirit of the IDF and the practical rules derived from it are the ethical code of the IDF. *The Spirit of the IDF* shall direct the IDF, its soldiers, commanders, units and corps in the shaping of their activities. According to *The Spirit of the IDF* they shall conduct, educate, and examine themselves and their fellows.

The Spirit of the IDF draws its inspiration from four sources:

- The heritage of the IDF and its combat legacy as Israel's army of defense.
- The heritage of the State of Israel, its democratic principles, laws, and institutions.
- The heritage of the Jewish people throughout the ages.
- Universal moral values based on the value and dignity of all human beings.

Fundamental Values

Defense of the State, its Citizens and its Residents - The purpose of the IDF is to protect the existence of the State of Israel, its independence, and the security of its citizens and residents.

Patriotism and Loyalty to the State - Service in the IDF is based on patriotism and on commitment and devotion to the State of Israel -- a democratic state which is the national home of the Jewish people -- and to its citizens and residents.

Human Dignity - The IDF and its soldiers are obligated to preserve human dignity. All human beings are of inherent value regardless of race, creed, nationality, gender, status or role.



The Values

Dedication to Mission and the Pursuit of Victory - The soldier shall fight and act courageously in the face of all dangers and obstacles and shall pursue his mission with determination and good judgment, even risking his life when necessary.

Responsibility - The soldier shall see himself as an active participant in the defense of the State of Israel, its citizens and residents. His actions shall be characterized by constant involvement, initiative and diligence, demonstrating good judgment and within the scope of his authority, and he shall be ready to take responsibility for the consequences of his actions.

Reliability - The soldier shall present matters truthfully, fully and accurately, in planning, in execution and in reporting. The soldier shall act so that his comrades and commanders will be able to rely on him in the fulfillment of the missions.

Personal Example - The soldier shall conduct himself as required, and shall behave in the manner he expects of others, out of the recognition of his ability and responsibility, both within the army and without, to serve as a role-model for others.

Human Life - The soldier shall always act with reason and caution, bearing in mind the supreme value of human life. In combat, he will endanger himself and his comrades to the extent necessary for the fulfillment of the mission.

'Purity of Arms' (Morality in Warfare) - The soldier shall make use of his weaponry and power only for the fulfillment of the mission and solely to the extent required; he will maintain his humanity even in combat. The soldier shall not employ his weaponry and power in order to harm non-combatants or prisoners of war, and shall do all he can to avoid harming their lives, bodies, honor and property.

Professionalism - The soldier shall endeavor to acquire the professional expertise and proficiency required to carry out his role and shall implement them, continuously seeking to improve his own achievements and those of his unit.

Discipline - The soldier shall do his utmost to carry out fully and successfully whatever is required of him, according to the letter and the spirit of the orders. The soldier shall issue only lawful orders and shall not obey those which are manifestly unlawful.

Comradeship - The soldier shall act out of solidarity and devotion to his fellow-soldiers, and shall always come to their assistance when they are in need or depend upon him, despite all danger and hardship, even at the risk of his life.

Vocation - The soldier shall see his military service as a vocation; he shall be willing to contribute all he can to defend the State of Israel, its citizens and residents. The soldier shall consider himself a representative of the IDF, operating on the basis and within the constraints of the authority assigned to him by military orders.