

Appendix B– Filling Out the Application Form

In 2003, 40 Pregnancy Termination Approval Committees operated in Israel with permits from the Ministry of Health. Each committee is supposed to meet at least once a week, depending on the number of applications. According to the law, committee members must include two doctors, a social worker and the committee's secretary.

After the registration fee is paid, the secretary of the committee (or in some cases the social worker) obtains the applicant's medical documents, which must include an ultrasound exam or a gynaecological examination to determine the age of the foetus (if the applicant has not been examined then she will be referred to a gynaecologist) and fills out the application form. By law, all minors (under the age of 17) must be referred to a social worker, who is also a member of the committee. Other applicants who wish to consult a social worker are also referred at this time (at some committees, the referral is automatic unless the applicant indicates otherwise). The committee renders a decision after confirming the age of the foetus and after confirming that the applicant has received an explanation of the risks involved in the abortion procedure (as required by law). The applicant does not have to appear before the committee. If the application is denied, the applicant may meet with the committee and appeal its decision.

In some cases the committee postpones its decision and records "no decision" on the form. This means that additional documents are required prior to making a final decision.

The application form usually remains with the committee until a decision is reached and only then is transferred to the CBS with a form which specifies whether the request was approved or rejected. Nonetheless, a few forms stating "no decision" remain every year.