



e-Newsletter

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"Syria, the cradle of civilization and the gateway to history."

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When Can I Pay the *Badal*?

Dear Syrian Friends in Michigan and Beyond:

I very often receive phone calls and emails asking about the *badal*, its amount and the conditions that rule its application, so I decided in this eNewsletter to address the *badal* question and summarize its basic regulations.

The new age limit to serve the military service in Syria is 42. Which means if a Syrian didn't serve the military, and waited until he is 42 then decided to serve, well sorry but he is no longer fit enough to serve in the Syrian army! In this case to legalize his status vis-à-vis the Syrian government he can pay the *badal*. The exact monetary amount of the *badal* in this case depends on the college degree the absentee (*moutakhalef*) has, but in general the *badal* in this case is about \$5,000.

IF the absentee is younger than 42, in this case he can pay the *badal* if he lived in a foreign country for 12 years. The amount of the *badal* will be \$8000 if he left Syria after the age of eleven and \$3000 if he left before eleven. If the absentee lived in an Arabic country (except Lebanon) for 5 years after the age of 18, then his *badal* is \$5000.

Finally, if the absentee was born outside Syria and continued to live outside it till the age of 18, then his *badal* is only \$500.

In all cases the process of paying the *badal* starts by contacting the Syrian embassy in Washington and submitting to them the documents showing proof of residency outside Syria. After careful examination of the documents, the embassy will issue a certificate of residency. The absentee should take that certificate to his Military Section in Syria and then to the Central Bank to pay the *badal* in US dollars.

A question I am often asked: *Can I pay the badal for my son even though he is not called to serve the army yet?* Well the answer is no, the *badal* cannot be paid for a child until he is 18 of age. Another interesting question I was asked once: *I have only one son but I would rather pay the \$500 and not to go through the hustle of renewing his single-status papers every year.* Well sorry again but a single child is privileged to be exempt from the military service in Syria but not entitled to pay the *badal*.

It is important to mention at the end that if an absentee is not qualified yet to pay the *badal*, he can still visit Syria once a year through the expatriates program.

I hope this summary will answer most of the questions you have on mind about the *badal*. Should you have any other questions please feel free as always to call me or email me at Arwashan@SyrianConsulate.org

Have a great summer!

Dr. Naji Arwashan

Honorary Consul General

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