

# Online Home Study Semicha Program 5777

Under the Auspices of

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## About Us:

The Home Semicha Study Program [HSSP] is an affiliate program of Shulchanaruchharav.com which serves as the largest English Database of practical Halacha available on the web.

## The purpose of our Semicha program:

The purpose of our Semicha program is to provide Jewish men throughout the world the opportunity of learning practical Halacha within a Semicha curriculum. The entire idea behind today's Semicha is, as explained by the Lubavitcher Rebbe, to increase one's knowledge of practical Halacha in order to be aware of possible Halachic issues involving day to day occurrences. At many times one is unable to turn to a Rav to verify the answer for a Shaala and hence prior knowledge is necessary. Through this program one will gain knowledge in various topics of practical Halacha. The student will be tested and receive certification for his accomplishments. We provide learning text books for each subject. These textbooks are meant to accompany the student throughout his home learning and afterwards whenever a question comes up. This allows students who are unable to learn in an actual Semicha institute to also learn the curriculum, gain the knowledge, and receive certification.

## What is the difference between your Semicha program and other online Semicha programs that already exist?

Baruch Hashem we have seen the sprout of many different Semicha programs which cater to different types of students and a variety of settings. Some online Semicha programs currently available, offers the student an online Yeshiva setting of learning Semicha with live online classes. Other programs do not provide set online classes by a teacher, but rather allow the student to learn the material on his own or with a Chavrusa at his own pace, with assistance from the Rabbinical staff. Our program offers both tracks. One can choose the **self-study track**, in which he follows the course module and completes the study of material, and assignments on his own, using the literature that we provide. A second track, the **Yeshiva track**, allows students to join an online classroom platform which includes live Shiurim by Rabbi Goldstein, who will escort the student in his learning throughout the course. Another aspect of our program which has not yet been seen in other Semicha programs is that we offer a large variety of practical Halachic topics for study within the Semicha curriculum. Another novelty of our program is that it caters also to those who do not have background in Hebrew and are unable to learn from the original text. We offer our own Semicha text which is made available in English.

## Will I receive certification?

Yes. After completion of the Semicha curriculum the student will receive Rabbinical certification.

### **Which Rabbanim will test me?**

Students in the self-study track will be tested by Rabbi Yaakov Goldstein, and an additional Rav who is on the board of our Semicha program. Students in the Yeshiva track will be tested by one of the leading Rabbanim Hamsmichim of today, as will be arranged in conclusion of the course.

### **How does it work? What is the study plan? What assignments must the student fulfill?**

All courses are run online, on our Canvas LMS [Learning Management System]. After acceptance into the program the student will be inserted into his online course and will then begin the course study and complete assignments and quizzes as set up in his course. The student will receive a username and password for his course and an English textbook and Workbook on the material he has registered to study.

Where to study from? All the laws that the student is required to have knowledge in are found within the English textbook. Nevertheless, the student is also required to study the Hebrew text in the Shulchan Aruch in order to see the laws in the Hebrew original and gain reading skills of Shulchan Aruch.

Responsibilities of student: The student is responsible to fill in the workbook, in conjunction with the textbook, and send in the material at the completion of each chapter. The workbook material is to be sent and uploaded into the online course under the section of Assignments and is an organized summary of the material that he learned. Our staff will review the workbook and the student will be graded accordingly. Each chapter or section contains a quiz which must be taken after completion of the workbook material on that chapter. Once the quiz is taken, the student moves on to the next section in the course. Once all sections of the course have been completed, the student is eligible to receive an oral exam on the material. For students to be eligible to receive the oral exam they must have a minimum grade of 80%. For students to pass the oral exam they must receive a minimum grade of 80%. After the successful completion of the course the student will move on to the next subject. Upon the successful completion of four subjects, **plus a single course in Practical Halachic Topics**, the student will receive his Semicha certificate from our program.

### **To summarize:**

The following tasks are to be performed by the student in each course:

1. Study: Study the current chapter/section in both the Hebrew original and English textbook provided.
2. Assignments: Submit the assignment required for that chapter. The assignment consists of a written summary of the learning material of the chapter as brought in the workbook provided. One can fulfill this assignment as he is studying the material, and then submit the assignment at the conclusion of the chapter. The assignments are graded in a scale of 1-10 and count for 15% of one's total grade.
3. Quiz: After submitting the assignment the student will be eligible to take the quiz on that section. The quizzes are graded in a scale of 1-100 and count for 85% of one's total grade.
4. Every chapter and section contains an assignment and quiz. The student cannot move on to the next chapter/section until the previous section's assignments are completed.

The following tasks must be performed to achieve successful completion of the course:

1. 80% grade at the conclusion of the course. The grade is made up 20% of one's assignments and 80% of the quizzes.
2. 80% grade on the oral exam.
3. To receive Semicha the student must successfully complete four courses in this manner, **plus a single course in Practical Halachic Topics.**

### **The Yeshiva track:**

In the Yeshiva track the student will participate in live online classes that will take place through our web conference system found in the course. Rabbi Goldstein will be personally teaching the Yeshiva track students. There will be between 3-5 classes per week for a total of 2.5 weekly hours of in-class study. The Yeshiva track for a particular course is dependent on the participation of at least 5 students in the course. Rabbi Goldstein will teach the students the material from the Hebrew original and expound on it with the additions added in the textbooks provided. The Yeshiva track is scheduled for a defined number of weeks and students in this track must participate according to the schedule in order to successfully complete the course. Students in the Yeshiva track will receive the same assignments and quizzes as given to those in the self-study track. The differences between the Yeshiva track and self-study track is in the following areas:

1. Live classes: Yeshiva track students participate in 3-5 live online classes with Rabbi Goldstein per week.
2. Pace of study: Yeshiva track students must follow the weekly pace of the course without falling behind. This consists of participating in the classes, learning the material, fulfilling the assignments and quizzes on a weekly or bi-weekly basis, as addressed in the course syllabus. Students that fall behind will not be eligible to take the oral exam given at the end of the course. In the self-study track one goes on his own pace, and does not have any limitation of submission for his assignments.
3. Tuition: The Yeshiva track, in light of the live classes offered, has a monthly tuition similar to any really Yeshiva setting. In the self-study track one simply pays for the course at the start of the course, without any further fees [not including the oral exam].
4. Acceptance: Acceptance into the Yeshiva track for a particular course is dependent on a minimum registration of at least five students into that course. Likewise, one must register prior to the course and cannot join the course in middle. In the self-study track one can join the program whenever he wishes, irrelevant of number of participants.

### **When will I be orally tested?**

After submitting and successfully completing the work assignments and quizzes the student will be tested.

### **How will I be orally tested? Where will the oral exam take place?**

The test will take place online via our web conference system found in our course or over skype.

### **What learning background do I need to be able to learn Semicha and become certified?**

Our program desires to offer the knowledge of Halacha to English speaking students of all backgrounds. For this purpose the study pamphlets, or textbooks are all provided in the English

language, are clearly written and include all the material needed for the subject and the subsequent test. Thus even one who is unable to learn in Hebrew is able to study the material and receive certification.

### **Are there any qualifications that I need to be able to join the program?**

Yes. You have to be self determined and resolute to study the required material. The nature of the program does not offer a class setting and hence one requires self diligence to assiduously study the required weekly quota.

Level of religiosity: Our Semicha program is offered only to those who profess to lead an orthodox lifestyle in accordance to the traditional interpretation of Halachic texts by Orthodox Jewry. This means that all Semicha participants attest to follow their lives strictly according to the rulings of Shulchan Aruch and its classical accepted commentaries. If strict Orthodoxy is not your philosophy or you lead a lifestyle different than that which is explained above, this program is not for you. Students will be given a disclaimer to sign in their registration. If a student is found to be leading a lifestyle contrary to Orthodox values they will be automatically dismissed from the course. Our program reserves the right to revoke the Semicha of any participant or alumni who our found to be leading a life contrary to Torah values, even much later on in their life.

### **Must I learn the original Hebrew text of the Shulchan Aruch to become certified?**

The student is required to study the Hebrew text in the Shulchan Aruch in order to see the laws in the Hebrew original and gain reading skills of Shulchan Aruch. The specifics of the material required to be learned in Hebrew will be discussed based on the students background and level. Those that are not able to learn in the Hebrew original are to discuss this matter during the initial interview.

### **Are there Chavrusas available for me to study with?**

The Rabbinical staff of the program encourages the learning of the text with a Chavrusa and will place due effort in setting up students with a Chavrusa if they are interested. Nevertheless we cannot guarantee that one will have a Chavrusa as in the nature of our global program it is dependent on many factors. In one's course one will have visibility of other participating students and they can be reached out to for the possibility of being your Chavrusa.

### **How many hours of study must I put in each day?**

You Decide! Nonetheless we suggest one hour of study per day in order to have a steady schedule on the subject.

Yeshiva Track: You must put in enough time to be able to participate in approximately 3 hours of Shiurim per week, as well as self-study of the material, completion of assignments and quizzes.

### **What is the curriculum of study to receive Semicha?**

For Semicha certification our program requires the student to successfully complete the study of four Halachic topics or four courses, plus a single course in Practical Halachic Topics. Currently there are six Halachic subjects learned during Semicha are available. Our Rabbinical staff is constantly working on making more Halachic subjects available for study, together with study

textbooks on the subject. As these subjects become ready for study they will be posted as part of the subjects which one can study for Semicha.

**The following are the current available subjects:**

1. Hashkamas Haboker
2. Tzitzis
3. Shabbos
4. Yomim Tovim series: [may only choose one of these subjects as part of the 4]
  - a. Erev Shabbos & Motzei Shabbos & Rosh Chodesh
  - b. Rosh Hashanah & Yom Kippur
  - c. Chanukah & Purim
  - d. Sefiras Haomer & Shavuos
5. Pesach
6. \*Basar Bechalav [mandatory]
7. Taaruvos
8. Melicha
9. \*Topics in Practical Halacha [mandatory 5<sup>th</sup> subject for completion of Semicha]

**What subjects must/should I choose?**

Our only mandatory subject is Basar Bechalav, and the "Topics in Practical Halacha" as a closing topic. One of the four subjects must be Basar Bechalav, and the student must finish a 5<sup>th</sup> subject in "Topics in Practical Halacha." Other than that, you choose the other three subjects. Of the topics, we most recommend are Hashkamas Haboker, which contains many useful laws for daily living, and the laws of Shabbos. A student may only choose one topic from within our Yom Tov series topics.

**Is there anyone I can ask questions to?**

Yes. You can contact Rabbi Goldstein in your online course to discuss any questions you may have relating to understanding the material, or technical issues. You can also send your questions in email to [rabbiygoldstein@gmail.com](mailto:rabbiygoldstein@gmail.com)

**What do I do if I am stuck in understanding a subject I am learning?**

Contact Rabbi Goldstein as stated above.

**Are there live online classes given?**

Yes. Live classes are offered for students who join the Yeshiva track.

**How do I register? Who should I contact?**

[Rabbiygoldstein@gmail.com](mailto:Rabbiygoldstein@gmail.com)

**How much does the program cost?**

**A. Self-study track**

\$1,800 for the entire set of four courses, plus a practical Halachic topic course, and Semicha!  
You pay as you progress in the program.

**The breakdown of the costs:**

\$300 per course subject [there are 4 subjects total for achieving Semicha].

- The Shabbos course is however \$500 [Split into two sections. You can pay \$250 as you do each section].

\$200 for the Practical Halachic topics course [mandatory]

\$100 for the final exam [per exam]

**Total:** \$400 per subject for 4 subjects + \$200 for Practical Halacha course=\$1800.

**When do I pay?**

You pay as you go along, so its only \$300 to start your first course. Meaning to register to the course and receive your username/password, the workbook and textbook is \$300. Upon successful completion of the course, you pay \$100 for the oral exam. At the completion of the oral exam you then move on to the next course, with the next payment of \$300, and so on and so forth until the completion of all four courses, plus the Topcis in practical Halacha course. At the conclusion of all four courses you receive your Semicha certificate and have paid a total of \$1800.

**B. Yeshiva Track:**

In the Yeshiva track students pay a monthly tuition. Tuition is approximately \$200 per month until the completion of the course. This includes Final tuition obligations will be decided upon enrollment to a particular course and will depend on the number of course participants and the monetary capability of the student.