

Queer Not in the Army

A Study and Guide on Conscription's
Exemptions Based on LGBTQ+ Related
Reasons in Egypt



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Towards a society, aware of its fundamental and bodily rights

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Every year, many Queer people across Egypt are faced with a heavy burden; applying for the nation's compulsory military service, and every year Queer people ask themselves and their friends how can they avoid this service. Egypt's military law has provided for several conditions upon which a person can be exempted from doing military service and out of our belief that laws and bylaws should be accessible and understandable by the public, we have conducted this study to provide an overview of the legal conditions that may assist Queer people in Egypt to receive their military service exemptions.

For this study, we have conducted interviews with multiple people who managed to receive their military service exemption due to their gender identity, sexual orientation, or their status as a person living with HIV. Moreover, we have conducted an in-depth analysis of the country's military law, as well as, any available bylaws that outline the conditions of military service exemptions. We understand that the experience is unique to the individual, however, we aim through this study to fill the knowledge gap in this area. Future experiences may differ from current or past ones and we encourage all future Queer applicants to learn from the past and to share their own later in the future.

Disclaimer: Egyptian military laws and bylaws views gender and sexual identity as mental illness and as such the individual is deserving of receiving a medical exemption. We at Cairo 52 condemn this outdated classification and strongly disagree with it. However, since we aim to simplify and share legal knowledge, we will mention the law and the situation as it is in reality.

Overview of Conscription

Conscription was first introduced to Egypt during the reign of the founder of modern Egypt, Mohamed Ali Pasha. Ever since conscripts accounted for the largest force inside the armed forces¹. Military service is regulated by the 1980 Military and National Service Act no. 127. All assigned male at birth citizens aged between 18 and 30 are liable for military service. The original time of service is three years and can be reduced according to the following rules²:

One year:

- Graduate students.
- Those who did not receive formal education but memorized Qur'an in full. Memorizing test is done during the first three months of service.
- Those who spent two academic years in a military school and then left it, provided that, they were not dismissed for honor reasons.
- Al-Azhar appointees who work in the secretariat of the Qur'an services.

One year and a half:

- Intermediate qualification, such as those who only have a high school diploma.

Two years:

- vocational schools graduate

Two years and a half to three years:

- For self-employed and craftsmen and anyone who has not obtained a formal education.

Those periods exclude the boot camp period, as the official conscription period starts once you reach your assigned unit. The boot camp lasts about 30 to 60 days. University graduates can also be selected to be reserved officers and in this case, the conscription period is three years divided between a college of reserved officers (six months) and an assigned unit (2 years and a half)³. Conscripts join the reserve army upon completion of their military service and it lasts between ten to fifteen years, in which conscripts can be called for mobilization at any time⁴.

There are different stages to receiving conscripts' applications, organized by individuals' birthdays. To apply, a conscript has to visit the conscription center they are assigned to, according to their ID address. Different documents are required for the application including, criminal record, blood test, copies of graduation, or other qualification certificates. You can know the full list of documents [here](#) and the different addresses of conscription centers [here](#).

B. Exemptions related to LGBTQ+ people:

Egypt's military law has outlined the conditions and requirements for individuals to be eligible to receive an exemption from conscription. In this section, we will focus on the medical exemptions that can be given to people living with HIV (PLHIV) and members of the LGBTQ+ community, especially transgender women, as well as, gay and bi men⁵.

First: Exemption based on mental illness, as the Egyptian military views Homosexuality and Transgenderism as mental illnesses classified under severe personality disorders⁶.

Second: Epidemic diseases, and according to article 12 of the Military and National Service Act no. 127, "Directors of all governmental and private hospitals should provide a list of names of all those who serious epidemic diseases such as HIV Recruitment and Mobilization Department."

C. Required documents to receive the exemption:

Individuals who underwent the process reported different experiences during it, we will outline in this section the documentation most individuals presented in order to receive the exemption.

First: On mental-illness grounds:

For transgender women, people presented the following:

1. A psychiatric report indicating the applicant's condition (Preferably from a governmental medical entity, however, a private one can be enough).
2. Blood test

3. Hormonal tests

4. Any other medical documentation that can prove that the person is transgender, such as a medical report of having undergone sex reassignment surgery.

Note: some interviewees have indicated that the ease and speed of receiving the exemption was also depending on how feminine they present in appearance and attitude.

For Gay men, interviewees reported it is more complicated, especially since none of them had a psychiatric report. Thus, most went without medical documentation and went through the process, which we will explain in the upcoming section.



Second: Exemption on epidemic disease grounds:

1. Official medical certificate stating that the person is living with HIV.
2. Blood Tests

All applicants go through a basic medical examination during their visit to the conscription center. In this section, we will outline the process in the different conscription centers.

•The Initial conscription center:

1. Filling out medical forms declaring all medical conditions the individual has.
2. Going through general medical examinations.

3. For gay men, you can go through all medical examinations and then request a further psychiatric assessment.

4. For transgender women, sometimes are allowed to skip the general medical examination and be referred directly to a psychiatric assessment. This is dependable on the physical appearance of the transgender person.

• **Central conscription center:**

1. You will receive an appointment to receive a further psychiatric examination at the Central command for conscription services in Cairo.

2. You will be separated into different groups each depending on the medical condition each has.

3. A medical committee or sometimes only one doctor examines the applicant.

• **Main Military Hospital in Kobery El-Koba, Cairo:**

1. Intensive psychiatric tests and examinations for those who were referred for psychiatric reasons. The aim of those tests and examinations is not to treat the person, but rather to ensure that they are not faking their condition.

2. For people living with HIV, final blood tests are made to ensure that the person has HIV.

Once passing all of those tests, the applicant receives a final appointment to receive their medical exemption from the initial conscription center.

Note: Sometimes, a person does not need to undergo all of those medical examinations and this is depending on how convinced doctors are that you truly have the condition.

E. Discharge from service:

Sometimes, a person may be discharged after entering service, and the reasons for that differs:

• Filling a medical petition after entering service, requesting further medical examination for one reason or another.

• Medical symptoms that may affect the person's ability to perform their military duties. Includes, going through mental shock or having a physical accident.

• Sometimes individuals are searched and if anything, "suspicious" is found, such as ideas calling for atheism, political ideas against the state, or finding LGBTQ+ media on their phones



F. The process:

1. Being investigated either by officers inside the unit or by military intelligence personnel outside the unit.
2. Proving that the individual did not work to spread any “abnormal ideals” inside their unit nor did they commit any “homosexual acts.”
3. Undergoing IQ and psychiatric tests.
4. Being examined by a psychiatric medical committee.
5. The individual is either given a long holiday or locked inside their unit until all results are received. If all is clear, the person receives a medical exemption from the service.

G. Myth busting:

1. “The Red Certificate”: a common myth, that all of those who get rejected from conscription because of their homosexuality receive a special red certificate indicating that they are gay, as well as, calling their family to inform them of that fact. This is nothing but a myth⁷ .
2. “Forced Anal Examination”: Another common myth is that all applicants have to undergo an anal examination to see if they person is gay or not. This is not true; the only anus examination applicants undergo is done for medical reasons like Hemorrhoids tests⁸.
3. “They will write that you are gay/trans on your certificate”: Some think that they will receive a certificate clearly stating that they are gay or trans. This is not true; the certificate only has the following reason: “Unfit medically to do the national military service”⁹ .
4. “Banned from traveling”: Medical examination does not lead to you being banned from leaving the country. The only military ban may happen to those who were exempt or discharged for political or security reasons. If you received a medical exemption, you do not need to issue a travel permit from the armed forces^{tt}.

H. Advices from those who underwent to process (read full testimonies below):

- Prepare all of your medical and non-medical documents in advance.
- If you don't want to disclose why you are eligible to receive a medical exemption, write it on the medical forms you have to fill in at the beginning of the examinations.
- Do not speak with privates, only officers and preferably medical officers.
- Prepare yourself mentally and physically, as the process is long and unorganized and could require many visits, so patience is key.
- Be ready mentally to speak to multiple unfriendly doctors about your condition and to undergo many tests.
- The armed forces do not care about you being gay or bi or trans or living with HIV, as for them all of those are nothing but medical conditions that makes you eligible to receive an exemption. All of the examinations you undergo are the same as if you have bad eyesight. The goal behind it is just to prove that you truly do have the condition and not faking it. Thus, it is better for you to just tell them before entering service.



Testimonies

Note: Technical details such as name and location were changed to maintain the interviewee's security and confidentiality.



My name is Hana, I am a 24 years old transwoman. I discovered myself as a transwoman and a transgender person in my childhood and discovered at that stage that Egyptian society refuses to acknowledge that I am a woman because I was born as a male, which led me to severe depression for a couple of years plus an eating disorder. But when I started reading and discovering the science

of gender and sexuality through the Internet, I discovered that science, knowledge, and other sources on the internet are the things that can help the queer community in Egypt, and that help to understand, learn, and share experiences away from the complexities of Egyptian society and its methods of falsifying facts, destroying the queer society and distorting morally and materially,

After I knew who I am. And when I moved to Cairo and began to be financially and socially independent away from my family, I began my transitioning procedures, obtained my psychological report, took steps in my hormonal replacement therapy, and conducted the first operation in 2019 with one of the doctors specialized in those operations unofficially, due to the medical situation of transgender people in Egypt is very bad and unrecognized, my parents discovered my transitioning in 2019, and they abused me physically and verbally.

I had prepared myself for five years to end my conscription medically, as being a trans woman prevents me from performing military service, as the medical regulations that regulate the process of mandatory conscription in Egypt place gender dysphoria under the umbrella of mental illnesses, for which the patient is excluded from performing military service.

So, I waited until it was time for my mandatory conscription, and I went to the recruitment headquarters to apply and presented as my true self a proud woman. I hoped that the procedures would end in just one day for fear of bullying and discrimination that I could face, which affected my psychological state severely. I had completed all the required papers and procedures such as the psychiatric report, the operation report, and the hormone reports, which were required to complete the procedures completely and in one day.

I went as a woman, and I was asked in the reception about the reason for attendance and I answered that I wanted to finish some paperwork and that requires me to meet an officer, which was met by the security soldier with more questions about my identity and the reason for my presence as a woman in the recruitment headquarters, This is

because they often don't have a level of awareness that allows them to understand my request and to deal seriously with me rather than discriminating or bullying me.

Indeed, the officer understood my request and brought one of his assistants to finish the procedures. He told me that in that case, they were willing to delist my name from the mandatory conscription records. However, given my knowledge of this procedure and its effect on me in the event of completing any legal papers later, such as job application papers and travel papers, it opens the door to questions such as why I did not join the military service. And if there is a reason why the armed forces prevented my mandatory enrollment? Hence I asked him to carry on with regular producers regardless of the delisting procedure, and he added later that the medical examination procedures can be completed at the recruitment headquarters in Cairo. He asked me to come on another day to finish the conscription procedures and medical examination that is done by the committee that they form. indeed, I attended and completed all the procedures, and they set me another day to receive the exemption certificate from the same headquarters.

I avoided dealing with privates and NOCS and only dealt with officers, as NOCs and privates may deal with me and my presence inside the recruitment headquarters with bullying and discrimination.

My advice to the queer community, especially transgender people:

1. That the papers are authentic and conform to the reality of yourself and understand that the military establishment is very bureaucratic and your papers can save you a lot of time. To deal with the officers because they would understand better, unlike those in lower ranks.
2. During the process of obtaining the exemption certificate, representatives of the military institution should be treated with respect and direct ease of communication, without resorting to manipulation of concepts, events, or words.
3. The psychiatric report should be from a governmental medical institution, due to the weak confidence for the military institution in the private medical institutions, and in the event of difficulty of psychological follow-up in a government agency, the psychiatric report issued by the private medical institutions could be stamped with the eagle seal (official gov. stamp) in any governmental verified medical institution.
4. The required paper must be fully prepared to ease and facilitate the process of obtaining the certificate, and to ensure the requirements because they are always changing. If you are not aware of something, you can ask the officers directly and politely about it and about the stages of extracting what is required.
5. Not to go under psychological pressure, as this process requires patience, and a lot of mental stability to be able to deal with the military establishment.



***Mohamed - non-binary person
living with HIV***

*25 years old
Zagazig
exempted in the year 2020*

I am Mohamed from Zagazig, 25 years old, currently studying at the university besides work. After I found out that I had HIV. I decided to finish my conscription file, as the Egyptian army excludes people living with HIV from compulsory conscription.

I went to my recruitment office and inquired about the date of applying for military service, as it is determined according to academic qualifications and date of birth. After knowing the date, I went to the Health Affairs Directorate at the Governmental Authorities Complex in Giza, to obtain a medical report on my condition as a person living with HIV, the Health Affairs Directorate only required a copy of my ID to issue the medical report. Although the recruitment headquarters doesn't recognize the official medical report, it still helps with the explanation of my situation, as well as, helping shorten medical discussions with the army's medical officials.

Before applying for military service, I submitted the required documents to the recruitment office, which is usually inside the police station to which your address is registered:

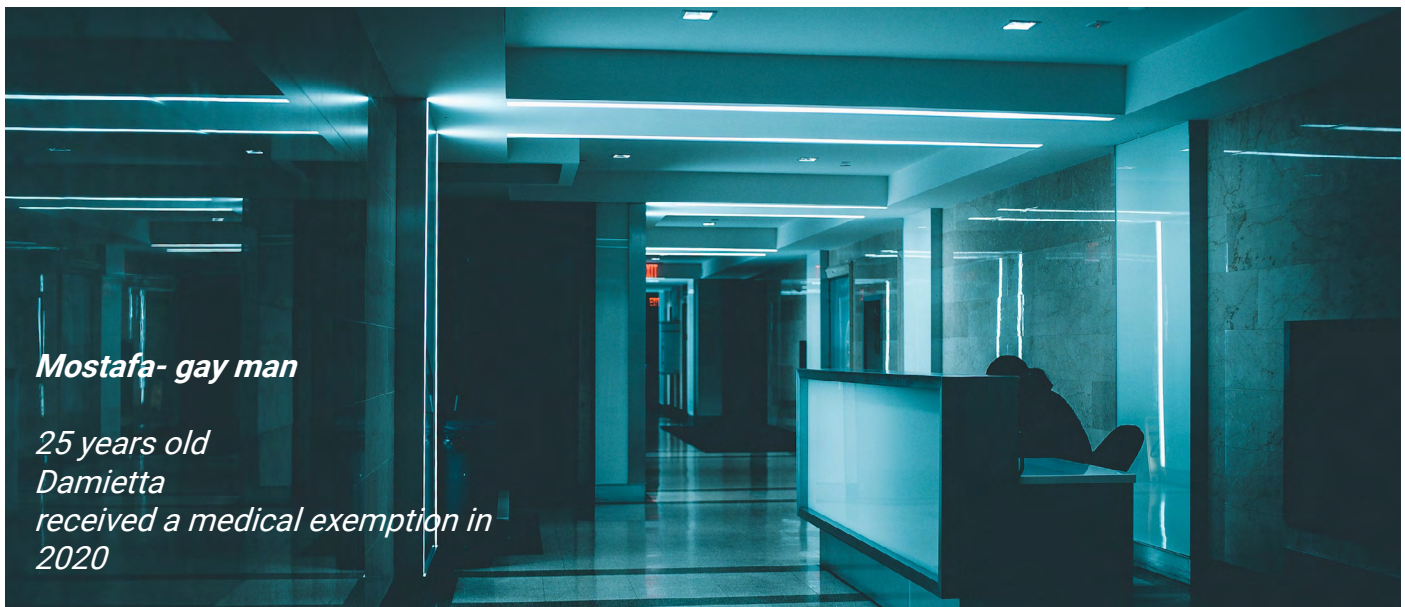
1. Original copy of academic qualification.
2. A criminal record from the same police station.
3. Jund Form (Military Certificate from University).
4. Birth certificate.
5. Copy of the national ID card.

After reviewing the required papers, I received my recruitment file and went to my designated recruitment center. In the recruitment center, files are collected from individuals, where they are prepared for fingerprinting, photographing, and medical examination. At the medical examination stage, the examination form is provided, with a section dedicated to the

complaint or symptoms, so I wrote that I am living with HIV, then I continued with the stages of the medical examination until I reached the final stage, where I submitted the report of the Directorate of Medical Health Affairs, so the specialized doctor stamped my papers with a special stamp for people living with HIV, so I can receive a further medical examination.

On the special day of the medical re-examination, I was referred to the Higher Medical Committee for Medical Examination, specializing in internal medicine, which is located in Helmeayat al-Zaytoun, the central recruitment center in Cairo. On that day, I was asked by the specialist doctor what the complaint was, and I answered that I was living with HIV, so I was transferred to the central laboratories in the Medical Complex of the Armed Forces in Hadayek al-Qubba, to do the medical analysis for HIV disease. I went to the central laboratories in the Armed Forces Medical Complex on another day, where a blood sample was taken for analysis in addition to my fingerprints. A few days later, I received a phone call from the recruitment area asking me to go to the central laboratories again to re-analyze, and then find out the result after several days from the recruitment center in Hemyat Al-Zaytoun. At the recruitment center in Hamiyet al-Zaytoun, I received the result of the analysis, and the doctor found me unfit to perform military service.

My only comment on the process of obtaining the exemption certificate is that the medical treatment or the dealing within the military institution as a whole was similar to almost any other individual, from the first medical examination to referral to the Higher Committee for Analysis and Medical Sampling. I haven't been asked any personal questions about HIV or how I contracted it. It took me one month from the time of applying till I received the exemption certificate. As for the presence of the Supreme Committee in the laboratories in the capital, Cairo only, it may be difficult for those who don't reside in Cairo, especially the residents of the border governorates, given the necessity of being in Cairo for several days, especially since the procedures are mostly routine and merely transferring papers and, in the end, receiving the certificate is in the area to which the individual belongs. Advise, if a person decides to follow the same steps, to disclose his medical condition at the beginning of the medical examination, or in the simplest case, write it in the part of the complaint and symptoms in the medical examination paper, given that the analysis is very random. In addition to being patient during that period, it depends on several procedures that depend on the presence of the person for a long time in various places, where it is quite hot.



Mostafa- gay man

25 years old

Damietta

*received a medical exemption in
2020*

My name is Mustafa, I am 25 years old, I am gay, and I was drafted into the army. I was recruited as a reserve officer with the rank of first lieutenant. I was caught talking on a smartphone, which is forbidden for anyone below the rank of major. On one occasion, while I was talking on the smartphone, a military security car stood in front of me, which is the highest level of security within the brigade. Since I was not allowed to have a smartphone on me, the phone was confiscated, and I was transferred for investigation by them.

During the investigations, I was asked to unlock the phone, so they can see what information it contained, when I opened my phone they found explicit gay photos and videos I had on it. The interrogation lasted for a whole month and luckily, I was treated politely and respectfully. I was not insulted in any way. The objective of the investigation was to find out if there were gay relations between me and another member of the military. Since the law of the Egyptian military prohibits such practices inside it. All conversations on the phone and applications on it were reviewed to ensure that. They also asked me to write several statements, such as an acknowledgment of when I discovered my sexual orientation, when was my first intimate practice and when was my last intimate practice as well.

After the investigations were completed, it was confirmed that I had not had any intimate relations within the military institution or with any of its members. I was presented to the commander of the military security of that central region, and I was given the choice between writing a declaration that I would not engage in any intimate act during the coming period until the end of my mandatory conscription period, or to be medically exempted from military service, without mentioning the reason in any of the official records of the military institution except the military intelligence's records.

Indeed, I was granted several consecutive vacations and was transferred to another military unit, until the procedures for exempting me from performing military service

were completed. I received a letter saying that I am discharged for reasons of public security, however, my official exemption certificate only had «exempted for medical reasons» on it. After leaving the army, the exemption did not impact any aspects of my life whether its traveling or working. My advice is that the homosexual identity is recognized in the medical examination, where the medical exemption certificate is issued without stating the reasons, and this is safer, as the military law prohibits and criminalizes same-sex relations, which is what a friend was exposed to, he was caught during intimate relation, and he was sentenced Military imprisonment for two years.



Hajar - Transwoman

*28 years old
Lower Egypt
received my exemption in 2016*

My name is Hajar, I am a transgender woman who received a military exemption in Egypt. My story begins when I went to the police station to start the process of applying to the military service, there I already faced harassment. Policemen and NOCs looked at me with curiosity, contempt, and disgust, people would scream at me “Ya Wad Ya Bent – Sissy boy”.

I couldn't say anything because I didn't want to risk the delay of my papers or facing even more harassment. As a transwoman, I am used to facing this harassment on daily basis. I finally managed to get my papers done at the police station, then I had to go those papers stamped by the Alexandria Security Directorate. Since my hair is long, I always hid it under a hat, however, that day the private responsible for collecting the paper decided to take off my hat, saying that he needs to make sure I am the one in the picture.

The private tried to deny me stamping my papers, saying he couldn't do it until I shave. However, I debated him and he backed off when he noticed that I am educated and aware of the regulations. During this process, other privates noticed that I look “different” and started commenting loudly on me with waves of laughter, something the civilians at the place took notice of and copied. This caused me to be mentally stressed because I knew I was the center of laughter for them.

The following day, I went to the conscription center and the moment I entered trouble was waiting for me. Conscripts started sneaking looks at me and whispering to each other before cracking a laugh and then screaming at me “Is this a boy or a girl? Sissy boy”. I was shaken by this and headed back home, where I cried and decided that I have to try to receive a medical exemption. Luckily, the medical exemption was organized on different days, so I had time to prepare.

I requested to be referred to the psychiatric examination but I was initially denied because I did not write it down in the medical forms on the first day, as the responsible officer was worried about being accused of fraud. However, after some debating and convincing, the officer decided to refer me to the commanding officer. The commanding officer had two other medical officers with him, one of them claimed to be a psychiatric doctor:

*You were just examining us as an internal medicine doctor, how come you are a psychiatric doctor?

**I do both, don't worry tell me what you have.

*I have GID

**What is GID?

*You said you are a psychiatric doctor, so I am sure you already know, however, GID is a gender identity disorder. Also if you were a psychiatric doctor, you would know that ethically we should have a private session in a closed space.

**Since when do you have GID?

*Since I was young

**Anyway, I noticed this from the beginning, this is why I asked you when you were filling out the medical form if you wanted to add anything because I don't have the right to tell you what to write even if I see it.

After a moment of silence, the third doctor interfered asking the others to refer me to an official psychiatric evaluation session. The doctor explained, that the internal medicine doctor will examine me first here, then give me a referral to a higher medical commission in Cairo. The problem is that all of this discussion happened in open public, so other conscripts heard everything and I was bullied and called "fag, he has a problem in his ass".

I received my referral to the higher medical commission in the central conscription center in Helmyt Zatyon in Cairo. When I first went there, I was referred to the neurological medical commission because the psychiatric one was not there yet. I talked to the neurology doctor:

** What do you have?

*It is written in the papers in front of you

** Why?

* I don't feel comfortable talking in front of all of those people

**Don't worry, we are all men in here, just talk

*But I am not a man

**He was shocked and told me to go outside, before calling me back and asking me what do you mean you are not a man?!

*You have my file with you

**No, I want to listen from you, or I will just sign your paper off and send you to do your

service.

*Okay, but I was referred to a psychiatric committee not a neurology one and I don't think you can understand what I would say

** Okay, go outside and wait for the other committee to come

I waited until the psychiatric committee came and it consisted of two doctors, a man, and a woman. Most people would only go in for a few moments, as they were faking their medical conditions. However, my examination lasted for almost an hour, the moment I entered the room, the female doctor looked thoroughly at me:

**Go back to the door and walk towards us we want to see how you walk..... oh you have such a nice style, where did you buy these clothes from?

*From outside the country

**Okay, so tell us what you have and start from the very beginning

*I have gender dysphoria, I can't feel or stand my body and I have following with a psychiatrist... The woman doctor started laughing, so I looked at her and asked what are you laughing it

**the other doctor answered, she is not laughing at you but maybe she thought of something funny, what were you laughing at?

**Nothing, just something funny crossed my mind.

*Anyway, you are not the first or last to laugh

**What do you mean?

**I mean that since I started this process everyone has been bullying me, anyway, if you want me to do the service then fine but you will be responsible for what will happen inside

**Fine Fine, so tell us how far are you in therapy.

*I am following up with a therapist and waiting to receive the hormone report to do my surgery.

**Okay, don't worry you will be a very beautiful girl

**We believe you and we know you are not faking it, but the decision to exempt you must go through a higher rank in the medical authority. Give us your number so we can tell you when an appointment is set for you.

Because my examination took so long, everyone was hyped with curiosity wanting to know why did it take so long. Other conscripts read my medical file and concluded that I am gay and not a transgender woman. My number was given around and the moment I arrived in Alexandria I received calls asking "Are you are fag? Do you like getting fucked?"

I received an appointment to see the higher rank, the person who hold my freedom in his hand. He was responsible for the final psychiatric examination, he can either decide whether you are fit, unfit, or in need of further examination in the military hospital. My mental status was getting worse, due to the long process, when we started the

session he commented on my feminine way of sitting:

**You don't know how to sit in any other way?

*This is the only way I feel comfortable

*Okay tell me then what do you want

* I have GID or gender dysphoria and I am following up with a therapist and will start hormones soon

**Do you face any harassment in your life?

*My life is nothing but harassment, from the police station to the conscription center, even here the conscripts took my number and started harassing me

**How did they take your number?

*I left it here, so I can be informed of the appointment

**mmm Okay

Then I was informed of the results on the same day, I was later issued an exemption certificate stating that I was examined because I am medically unfit to do the service.



My name is Faten. I am 28 years old from Upper Egypt. I am a transgender woman. I settled in Cairo after my undergraduate studies. Served in the army in 2018. I went in for 3 months and then got out due to a psychiatric exemption. Certainly, my transitioning affected my psyche in the army because of my daily living as a male in terms of dress and attitude and having to be dealing with others in a hyper-masculine environment in which everyone is quick to become the strongest male.

I am agnostic. I was on vacation, and it was my first vacation, and at that time I had books and papers in which I wrote my diaries in a comical way, and there were my opinions in terms of the masculinity of the army, such as naming some individuals with female names due to the incompatibility of their muscular and physical construction with the view of some members of the military establishment or using some terms on them such as “Yawad ya tary” (hey soft boy) In addition to my views on religion and its impact on the members of that institution, such as forcing individuals to perform religious rituals such as prayer and fasting.

While I was going out to go on leave, they searched my stuff and found my notes, thus, I was withheld from leaving. The unit's security was faced with two options either refer me to be exempted through the psychiatric hospital or to the military prison, as what they found can be considered as spreading of atheism inside the army. Luckily, the leadership decided it would be best to just refer me to the psychiatric hospital for two reasons: the increased number of suicide cases during that period, which increased the attention to cases of depression and anxiety, to the extent that there are several decisions that any person showing abnormal psychological symptoms are to be reported, and the other reason is the sensitivity of the location inside the military

unit.

information about the incident was leaked outside the unit's security and the entire unit found out about what happened. This led to me being a subject of bullying and harassment by other soldiers who viewed me as «the atheist guy, the infidel, and the crazy guy». A decision was issued to exclude me from any assignment because I am an abnormal person, but it was not implemented. I was transferred to the Mental and Psychological Abilities Center to do tests such as image analysis and emotional abilities tests, in addition to psychological sessions with doctors, and most of them dealt with me with contempt and inferiority. Then I was transferred to the military psychiatric hospital for two weeks. There, the Medical Discharge Committee was formed, which is responsible for deciding whether I will continue to serve in the military or not. The committee's decision came to end my recruitment period because I suffer from mental illnesses that do not qualify me for military life, and a member of the medical unit was delegated to start the medical exemption procedures, as a punishment they prevented me from obtaining a leave till the completion of the procedures, which is uncommon in a normal situation, in addition to the advice and guidance sessions from the officers in an attempt to guide me to Islam. The situation lasted about a month until the completion of the procedures and my receipt of the exemption certificate.

The exemption certificate was due to medical unfitness. It has not affected my career or my travel abroad. Advice to members of the queer community, if they have medical evidence that qualifies them for exemption, to present them during the medical examination period. In the case of mental illnesses that are currently prevalent among the queer community, such as depression or anxiety, they qualify for medical exemption from the military service, which is a difficult experience, but psychologically it is better than doing military service. Not to be afraid of a medical examination, because the goal is to medically detect any diseases that prevent entry into the army. It is not intended to reveal the identity. What is important is to avoid any gay intimate relations during their military service.

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