

Israel Confiscates Sole Medical Vehicle Serving 1,500 Palestinians

By [Middle East Monitor](#)

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Israeli occupation forces have confiscated the only vehicle available to a medical team serving the needs of some 1,500 Palestinians in an isolated region of the southern West Bank, reported [Haaretz](#).

According to the paper, this is the second time that the vehicle – which serves the residents of Masafer Yatta in the south Hebron hills – has been seized within a year, “cutting off healthcare to an isolated and impoverished population” living inside an Israeli military firing zone.

The medical team make weekly visits to the area’s Palestinian communities, which lie roughly one hour’s drive on dirt roads from the nearest town of Yatta. The jeep in question “is the only vehicle available for providing medical services to these communities”.

Last Thursday, *Haaretz* reported, Israeli occupation forces intercepted the medical team at Khirbet Al-Majaz, claiming that they were not allowed there “without prior coordination”. The patrol then impounded the jeep and held the medics for half an hour.

In February 2019 the vehicle was confiscated “under similar circumstances”, stated the paper, and only returned six months later after the medical team paid a 3,000 shekel (\$865) fine. On that occasion, the team were unable to provide medical care for the entire six months.

The Israeli military commented that “the vehicle was impounded by supervisors at the Civil Administration since it was traveling in a fire zone, a forbidden area for vehicles by law”.

The Israeli military’s “Firing zone 918” was established in the 1980s, and the army has repeatedly sought to remove Palestinians from the area.

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Featured image: Israeli security forces hinder the movement of a Palestinian ambulance in the West Bank, on 6 October 2017 [Ayman Ameen/Apaimages]

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