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Apply for a citizen's allowance

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Fachlich freigegeben durch

Handlungsgrundlage

[Sozialgesetzbuch (SGB) Zweites Buch (II) - Bürgergeld, Grundsicherung für Arbeitsuchende](https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/s_gb_2)

Teaser

If you do not have enough money at your disposal to finance your necessary living expenses yourself, you can apply for citizen's allowance.

Volltext

If you do not have enough money at your disposal to finance your necessary living expenses yourself, you can apply for citizen's allowance.

Citizen's allowance, also known as basic income support for jobseekers, is a benefit provided by the welfare state for people who are able to work and cannot cover their living expenses from their own income or assets. It is regulated in the Second Book of the German Social Code (SGB II).

The citizen's income ensures the minimum economic subsistence level and enables you to participate in the cultural and social life of our society. At the same time, those entitled to citizen's allowance who are able to work receive comprehensive support from the job centres in their search for work or qualification opportunities.

Anyone who receives benefits from the state, i.e. from taxpayers, must in turn play an active role in ensuring that they can stand on their own two feet again as quickly as possible. The job centres will support you in this. Children in need of assistance also receive citizen's allowance and are looked after by the job centres in order to give them access to education and participation.

Important: Citizen's allowance is only paid on application.

If you previously received unemployment benefit II or social benefit, you will receive citizen's allowance from 1 January 2023.

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The basic security benefits are transferred to your account each month in advance.

Flat-rate monthly amount (standard requirement)

If you receive citizen's allowance, you will receive a lump sum to cover your living expenses (known as standard needs). It covers your needs, such as food, clothing and personal hygiene, and is adjusted annually. The following amounts apply to the standard needs levels (RBS) for 2025:

- Single persons, single parents, adults with underage partners: EUR 563.00 (RBS 1)
- Adult partners: EUR 506.00 (RBS 2)
- other adults aged between 18 and 24 and persons under 25 who move out of their parents' household without the consent of the local authority (aged between 18 and 24): EUR 451.00 (RBS 3)
- Children aged 14 to 17: EUR 471.00 (RBS 4)
- Children from 6 to 13 years: EUR 390.00 (RBS 5)
- Children from 0 to 5 years: EUR 357.00 (RBS 6)

Immediate supplement for children

Children, adolescents and young adults receive an additional monthly immediate supplement of EUR 20.00 (RBS 3-6).

Additional needs

If you need more money due to special situations, you can also receive additional benefits if you fulfil the personal requirements. For example, expectant mothers from the 13th week of pregnancy, single parents, people with disabilities who receive benefits for participation in working life or people who need a more expensive diet for medical reasons receive benefits for so-called additional needs.

Costs for accommodation and heating

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If you receive citizen's allowance, the costs of your accommodation and heating will be covered if these costs are reasonable. In the first year of benefit receipt, the actual costs of your flat or house (net cold rent) are covered, even if these are not reasonable (so-called "waiting period"). From the second year of benefit receipt, the costs are only covered if they are reasonable.

The one-year waiting period does not apply to heating costs. Even in the first year, heating costs are not covered to the actual extent, but to a reasonable extent. Which costs are reasonable depends on where you live.

- Special case: If you are under 25 years old and not married and want to move out with your parents or one of your parents, you can only receive these benefits if you have a so-called assurance from the job centre. You must apply to your job centre for this confirmation.

You can also receive the following benefits:

- In emergencies in which your livelihood is jeopardised, you can receive a loan in the form of cash or benefits in kind upon separate application. This may be the case, for example, if something has been stolen or broken. However, the standard requirement already includes an amount for saving. This means that you normally have to pay for new purchases and replacements from the money saved from the standard rate.
- In certain situations, you can also receive one-off support on separate application. Examples of this are initial equipment for your home or initial equipment for pregnancy and childbirth.
- You can receive contributions to your health and long-term care insurance.
- You will receive benefits for "education and participation in social and cultural life" (BuT) for your children. These are automatically applied for with the main application, for example for

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- School trips,
- communal lunchtime meals,
- School supplies (twice a year) or
- Benefits for extracurricular learning support (tutoring).

Consideration of income and assets

When calculating the citizen's allowance, your income and assets and those of all persons with whom you live in a "community of need" are taken into account, as you can only receive citizen's allowance if you are in need of assistance.

Income includes

- Income from work (including from self-employed persons),
- Income replacement benefits such as unemployment benefit from the employment agency, parental benefit or sickness benefit,
- Income from capital and interest as well as income from share ownership if it exceeds EUR 100.00,
- Income from letting and leasing, agriculture and forestry,
- Maintenance payments and child benefit,
- Pensions,
- one-off income, for example tax refunds or inheritances (only until 30 June 2023) and
- Vocational training allowance, training allowance, BaföG.

Deducted from this:

- Taxes on income (e.g. wage tax and income tax).
- Compulsory contributions to statutory social insurance (e.g. health insurance, long-term care insurance, pension insurance)
- Work-related expenses, i.e. certain costs incurred in the exercise of your profession
- statutory insurance (e.g. motor vehicle liability)

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insurance),

- a lump sum of EUR 30.00 per month for private insurance, for example household contents insurance and
- Contributions for a Riester pension.

As a general rule, your income up to EUR 100.00 is not taken into account (deductible amount). If you have income over EUR 100, a further, specific amount is not taken into account (so-called tax-free amount). This amount depends on the amount of your gross income.

As a young person, you are allowed to keep income from school and student jobs and income from vocational training up to the mini-job limit (currently EUR 520.00). Your income from student jobs during the holidays is not taken into account at all.

Federal Voluntary Service and FSJ volunteers also benefit from increased allowances, as do young people in the transition period between school and vocational training.

Allowances also apply to realisable assets.

Assets are the entirety (stock) of a person's possessions that can be measured in money. However, not all assets must be realised. Assets are realisable if they can be used directly for subsistence or their monetary value can be used for subsistence through consumption, sale, lending, letting or leasing. Assets that you cannot or may not freely dispose of, for example because the asset is pledged, are not realisable.

Assets include, for example

- Cash,
- Balances in investment accounts, savings, building society savings, savings certificates, securities, cryptocurrencies,
- Endowment insurance policies,
- Accident insurance with premium refund and

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- House and land ownership and condominiums of unreasonable size as well as other rights in rem to real estate.

The following applies to asset allowances:

- Since 1 January 2023, a so-called "waiting period" of one year has applied to the first-time receipt of Citizen's Allowance. Various special regulations apply during this waiting period. During the waiting period, EUR 40,000 is not taken into account for the first person in the community of need. For each additional person, EUR 15,000 remains untouched. At the end of the waiting period, the limit of EUR 15,000 applies to each member of the joint household. However, if one member of the benefit community has more assets, but another member has less than EUR 15,000, their unused allowance is transferred to the other member of the benefit community.

In principle, your assets are not taken into account:

- reasonable household effects
- An appropriate motor vehicle for each person in the benefit community who is capable of earning. A motor vehicle is considered appropriate if it does not exceed the value of EUR 15,000.
- An owner-occupied flat of up to 130 m² or a property of up to 140 m² is not an eligible asset (larger if there are more than 4 people).
- Insurance policies and other forms of old-age provision intended for old-age provision, if they are expressly subsidised as old-age provision under federal law.
- In the case of self-employed persons, other assets earmarked for old-age provision, regardless of the form of investment. This applies up to a maximum limit to be determined individually.
- Assets that are demonstrably intended for the early acquisition or maintenance of a house or condominium of an appropriate size. This only applies

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if the house or condominium serves or is intended to serve people with disabilities or people in need of care for residential purposes and this purpose would be jeopardised by the use or realisation of the assets.

- Property and rights if their realisation would cause particular hardship for the person concerned.

Reductions in benefits

The citizen's allowance can be reduced due to breaches of duty or failure to register:

- If you fail to comply with agreements on obligations to co-operate (personal efforts, participation in measures and applications in response to placement proposals), these obligations can be made legally binding for you by means of requests with instructions on the legal consequences.

- Reductions in benefits due to breaches of duty and failure to register do not exceed a total of 30 per cent of your relevant monthly standard requirement. Accommodation and heating requirements are not reduced.

- Your standard needs will be reduced by 10 per cent for one month for the first breach of duty. In the event of a further breach of duty, the standard requirement will be reduced by 20 per cent for two months. For each further breach of duty within a year, you will receive 30 per cent less of the standard requirement for 3 months.

- Reductions in benefits due to breaches of duty are cancelled if you fulfil your obligations to cooperate or subsequently provide credible evidence that you are fulfilling your obligations. However, even in these cases, the reduction period is at least one month.

- If you fail to register, your relevant standard requirement will be reduced by 10 per cent of the amount due for one month.

- Benefits will not be reduced if there is an important reason or if this would lead to exceptional hardship in a specific individual case.

- You have the opportunity to present the circumstances of your individual case at a hearing. If

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you repeatedly violate your obligations or miss registration deadlines, the hearing should take place in person.

- If you are under 25, you will generally receive counselling in the event of a reduction.

Erforderliche Unterlagen

- Application forms
- valid identity document:
 - Identity card or
 - valid passport with current registration certificate
 - Residence permit
- Proof of income, for example a payslip or current bank statements (e.g. pensions, sick pay, child benefit, alimony, advance maintenance payments)
 - Proof of existing assets (e.g. savings, shares, securities, building society savings contracts)
 - Proof of expenses, for example by submitting bank statements (or, for example, rental agreement, rent receipts, heating costs, documents on insurance premiums)
 - Proof of previous receipt of benefits, also from another job centre (notice of approval, proof of benefits)
 - if you are submitting the application following an employment relationship:
 - Employment documents (also letter of cancellation or declaration of cessation of employment)
 - Certificate of employment (to be completed by the employer)

Voraussetzungen

- You are fit for work. This means that you
 - can work at least 3 hours a day and
 - are at least 15 years old and have not yet reached the statutory pension insurance age limit. If you were born after 1963, this is 67 years. If you were born before 1964, you can look up the age limit that applies to you in the table in § 7a of the German Social Code II (SGB II).
- You are in need of assistance. This means that you are unable to cover your own necessary living expenses and the living expenses of non-employable relatives living with you in a community of need either from your own resources (income and assets) and strength (use of labour) or with the help of other or priority benefits (e.g. unemployment benefit, housing

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benefit, child supplement).

- You have no priority claims against other benefit providers (e.g. housing benefit) or other persons, such as divorced spouses or the father or mother of your child.
- You live in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Kosten

None

Verfahrensablauf

To receive citizen's allowance, you must submit an application. To do this, contact your job centre. You can also do this online.

Apply for Citizen's Allowance in writing:

- Go to your local job centre. It is located in the district or city where you usually live or are registered.
- Your personal situation will be discussed at the job centre and you will be given all the application forms and documents you need to complete.
- The application forms can be sent to you if you wish, for example in a telephone call or by e-mail. You can also find the application forms on the Internet.
- Fill in the application forms for Citizen's Allowance. You can get help with this at the job centre or use the instructions for completing the form, which are available in German.
- Hand in your complete application documents to your job centre. This also includes
 - Proof of rent, heating and ancillary costs and
 - Proof of income and assets.
- The Job Centre will decide on your application. You will be notified of the decision on your application in writing by post.

Apply for citizen's allowance online:

- Simply and conveniently access the online application for Citizen's Allowance on the Federal Employment Agency's website.
- Follow the instructions and instructions for completing the application online.
- If you already have supporting documents for your

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	<p>application, please upload these as well. If you are not yet able or do not wish to submit any supporting documents, you can do so later or when your job centre asks you to do so.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The job centre will decide on your application. You will be notified of the decision on your application in writing by post or online.
Bearbeitungsdauer	
Frist	<p>There is no deadline. However, benefits are only granted from the month in which you submit the application. If you are currently still receiving unemployment benefit, it is advisable to submit the application early before this benefit expires so that you do not get into financial difficulties.</p>
weiterführende Informationen	
Hinweise	<p>The following information is available:</p> <p>The Citizen's Income Act will comprehensively reform the basic income support for jobseekers in 2023 and bring it up to date. Further information can be found on the website of the Federal Employment Agency.</p>
Rechtsbehelf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objection • Summary proceedings before the social court • Action before the social court
Kurztext	
Ansprechpunkt	
Zuständige Stelle	
Formulare	
Ursprungsportal	