



Information leaflet

Citizen's benefit (Bürgergeld)

Basic security benefits for jobseekers

The most important information in brief

Basic security benefits for jobseekers support you with benefits for integration into employment and benefits to cover subsistence costs.

The aim is for you to be able to ensure your own livelihood and that of your dependants in the future.

Payments for basic security benefits are financed from taxation and paid as a bridge for all who have insufficient or no funds of their own available.

The job centres are responsible for the implementation of the tasks.

This leaflet provides information on the benefits that can be paid and what you need to be aware of.

I. Citizen's benefit

You may receive the citizen's benefit if you

- Are capable of employment,
- Are in need of assistance,
- Are at least 15 years old and have not yet reached retirement age and
- Your place of residence is in Germany.

Special rules apply to foreign nationals. For example, starting employment must be permitted. Asylum seekers are excluded from benefits in accordance with SGB II (Social Code Book II). People who are recognised as entitled to asylum may receive benefits.

If you are under 15 years old or are unable to work for health reasons, you may also receive the citizen's benefit if you live in a so-called benefits community with a person who is capable of work and entitled to benefits.

Benefits community

If you live in a partnership or with children in the same household, you usually form a benefits community. Similar to families, the income and assets of one person are to be used for the others as well.

The citizen's benefit is a benefit that is intended to secure subsistence. This includes:

Standard need

The standard need is a flat-rate payment that covers the costs, among others, of food, clothing, electricity, personal care and household goods. The amount basically depends on the applicant's age and personal circumstances (for example single or in a partnership). Go to the website of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (www.bmas.de) to see the current standard needs.

Additional needs

Under certain circumstances an additional need may be paid for in addition to the standard need, for example for pregnant women or single parents.

Accommodation and heating

In general, only reasonable costs of accommodation and heating will be paid. What is regarded as reasonable depends on where you live. Special regulations apply during the so-called grace period; this is normally the first year during which you receive the benefit. Do you want to move? To avoid disadvantages, please obtain the approval of the job centre before signing a new lease tenancy agreement.

II. Non-recurring benefits

Non-recurring benefits can be granted in addition to the citizen's benefit, for example for the initial furnishing of accommodation, including household appliances, initial purchases of clothing or initial purchases for pregnancy and birth.

III. Health and long-term nursing insurance

If you are capable of having a job and you receive the citizen's benefit, you normally have mandatory insurance under the statutory health and long-term care insurance fund. If you most recently had private health and nursing care insurance, you will remain insured under this system while you receive the benefit. Your job centre can grant you a subsidy to pay the premium.

IV. Benefits for education and social participation

Additional costs can be covered for children, young people and young adults; for example for school supplies, school day trips and school trips that last for more than one day, membership fees for sports clubs or the cost of music lessons.

V. Benefits for integration into the labour market

The most important task of the job centre is to support you with integration into the labour market. The job centre staff will discuss this with you and offer suitable vacancies. In

addition, your job application costs can be reimbursed. If you need additional knowledge and skills, you may also be offered vocational training and further training.

VI. What are the effects of income and assets?

Before you receive financial assistance, you must use your own resources, that is income and assets (with the exception of household goods, for example). Income includes all earnings in money that you receive from the submission of the application. Assets are all "goods and chattels" that you had in your possession before submission of the application and that are quantifiable in monetary value. Special regulations apply during the so-called "grace period", which is generally the first year in which you receive the benefit. You can also receive the benefit if you are employed but your earnings are insufficient to ensure your subsistence.

VII. Applications

Benefits in accordance with SGB II are paid on application only. For this reason, you should report to your job centre as soon as possible. There is no charge for applications. You can obtain the forms from the job centre and on the Internet. Please answer all questions in the application and in the annexes in full and truthfully.

If you do not yet speak German sufficiently, you are welcome to bring someone with you who does, when you apply. Otherwise, ask your job centre whether an interpreter can be made available to help you.

VIII. What do you need to be aware of?

From the date on which you submit your claim, you must be available to be contacted by the job centre. You are obliged to register at your job centre in person or to appear for a doctor's or psychological evaluation, if requested to do so. If you are unable to keep an appointment, please notify your job centre immediately and state the reason. If changes occur, which can have an effect on benefits (for example, starting work or university studies, moving house, the birth of a child, a person moving into your accommodation), you must notify the job centre of this immediately. Failure to do so may result in disadvantages for you (repayment of any funds that were paid in error, administrative offences or criminal proceedings).

You are obliged to take every opportunity to ensure your livelihood with your own efforts. This means that you must look for employment independently and you must apply for reasonable vacancies.

IX. Further information

Further information is available:

- In the data sheet "Merkblatt Bürgergeld – Grundsicherung für Arbeitsuchende – SGB II".
- At www.jobcenter.digital as well as
- From your job centre.

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