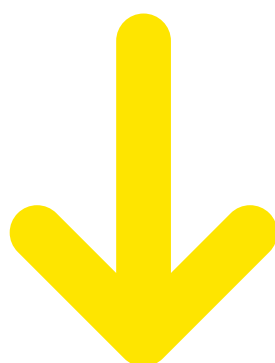




Basic income support

Everything you need to know about “Grundsicherung”

The Mobile Neighbourhood Outreach Team
informs you on your rights and responsibilities



The changes

From 1 July 2026, the old “Bürgergeld” (citizen’s income) will have a new name: “Grundsicherung” (basic income support). Many of the rules will be stricter. Here we explain the most important changes:

What happens if I miss an appointment at the Jobcenter?

If someone fails to attend an appointment, the Jobcenter will immediately send a new appointment.

If someone also fails to attend the second appointment, **their standard benefit payment (“Regelleistung”) will be reduced by 30 per cent for one month.**

If someone fails to attend the third appointment and does not send written confirmation of why they are unable to attend (e.g. a doctor’s certificate, hospitalisation), then **all benefits will be withdrawn from the following month:** the standard benefit, the rent and health insurance.

If several people are part of the same household, the Jobcentre is required to divide the rent among the remaining members of the household so that 100 per cent of the rent is paid and there are no rent arrears.



If someone stops receiving benefits: they should go to the Jobcenter immediately. The Jobcenter can then approve 70 per cent of the standard benefit for the current month.

If someone stops receiving benefits and only returns to the Jobcenter several months later: benefits (excluding the standard benefit!) will be approved retrospectively for the first month following the suspension. However, no benefits are paid for the subsequent months up until the person re-registers.

This means that for the months in which no money was paid, the Jobcenter will not pay for health insurance either.

If people with children miss three appointments at the Jobcenter, the Youth Welfare Office (“Jugendamt”) will be informed.

What about my job search?

A ‘cooperation plan’ is signed with the caseworker at the Jobcenter. This plan sets out agreements and obligations.

Examples of obligations:

- to send five job applications to companies each month,
- to start or continue suitable work, training or a subsidised job, or
- to start a workplace reintegration program (“Eingliederungsmaßnahme”), an integration course or a German language class.



What happens if I don't cooperate?

If someone fails to cooperate, they will receive a written notice. This notice obliges the person to comply with the terms of the cooperation plan.

Even at the first breach of an obligation, the standard benefit payment (“Regelleistung”) will be reduced by 30 per cent for a period of three months.

Before the reduction takes effect, the person will receive a letter inviting them to a hearing. They may also request a face-to-face hearing.

The reduction may be reversed if the obligation is subsequently fulfilled or if the person agrees to fulfil the obligations in future.

If a person is known to have a mental health condition, there should always be a personal hearing (an invitation to an appointment).

If a person refuses a job, the standard benefit is suspended for a maximum of 2 months. Additional allowances (e.g. for single parents) are not suspended. The rent for the household dependents (e.g. children) should be paid directly to the landlord.



If someone stops receiving benefits, a symbolic amount of €1 is granted so that their health and long-term care insurance contributions can continue to be paid.

If it later transpires that the job offer no longer exists (e.g. the position has already been filled), the standard benefit will continue to be paid after one month.

New: From the time a child reaches 15 months of age, parents must be in work, start a training programme or attend a language course (childcare arrangements must be in place).

How high is the rent allowed to be?

The Jobcenter pays a maximum of 1.5 times the rent cap set by the Senate. The figure quoted is always the net rent excluding heating and hot water.

When a new application is submitted to the Jobcenter, exceptions are made in the first year for families with children or in cases of hardship.

If the rent is more than 10 per cent higher than the rent for other comparable flats in the neighbourhood, it exceeds the so-called ‘rent cap’ (“Mietpreisbremse”). In that case, you must send a letter to the property management company to inform them that the rent is too high and try to negotiate a lower rent.



How much savings am I allowed to have?

You are allowed to have savings even if you receive basic income support. This is known as ‘exempt assets’ (“Schonvermögen”).

Schonvermögen from 1 July 2026:

Up to the age of 30: €5,000

From the age of 31: €10,000

From the age of 41: €12,500

From the age of 51: €20,000

The exemption for further assets (a car worth up to €15,000, an owner-occupied property, and all contracts relating to retirement provision) will be retained.

Regardless of the size of the flat, protection for owner-occupied residential property remains in place during the first year of benefit receipt (‘waiting period’). Thereafter, residential property measuring up to 130 square metres (or a plot of land for a house up to 140 square metres) is regarded as exempt assets.



Where can I receive advice?



If you're having difficulties with the Jobcenter, you can seek advice at **Mehrgenerationenhaus Wassertor** – independently, anonymously and free of charge.

The advice team will answer your questions and help you understand your rights and obligations.



**Wassertorstraße 48
10969 Berlin**



www.mgh-wassertor.de



[mgh_wassertor](https://www.instagram.com/mgh_wassertor)



030 61 50 72 61

Please book an appointment in advance

Consultations are available to people living in the following Berlin postcodes: 10961, 10963, 10965, 10967, 10969, 10997 and 10999.



We're there for you



The Mobile Neighbourhood Outreach Team is out and about in Wassertorkiez. We knock on doors, strike up conversations with people and answer questions about local support services, opportunities to meet others and volunteering in the neighbourhood. Feel free to come and talk to us!

 wassertor.org

 wassertor_e.v



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