



Information leaflet

Unemployment Benefit II/ Social Assistance

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 dependents in the future.

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

The Jobcenters are responsible for the implementation of the tasks.

This leaflet provides information on the benefits that can be paid and what you have to observe.

I. Unemployment benefit II / social assistance

You may receive unemployment benefit II if you

- are capable of work,
- are in need of assistance,
- are at least 15 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). Persons who are recognised as entitled to asylum may receive benefits.

If you are under 15 or are unable to work for health reasons, you may also receive benefits (social assistance) 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.

Unemployment benefit II and social assistance are benefits that are intended to secure subsistence.

These include:

Standard need

The standard need is a flat-rate payment that covers the costs, among others, for food, clothing, electricity, personal care and household goods. The amount basically depends on the applicant's age and personal circumstances (for example, single, 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 can be paid supplementary to the standard need, for example for pregnant women or single parents.

Accommodation and heating

Reasonable costs for accommodation and heating will be taken over.

What is regarded as reasonable depends on where you live. If you want to move, please obtain the Jobcenter's agreement before signing a new lease.

II. Non-recurring benefits

Non-recurring benefits can be granted in addition to unemployment benefit II/social assistance, 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 receive unemployment benefit II, you are compulsorily insured in the statutory health and long-term care insurance fund.

IV. Benefits for education and social participation

Additional costs can be taken over for children, young persons and young adults; for example, for school supplies, for school day trips and class trips lasting for more than one day, membership fees for sports clubs or the costs of music lessons.

V. Benefits for integration into the labour market

The most important task of the Jobcenter is to support you on integration into the labour market. The Jobcenter 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 is all earnings in money that accrue to you 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 money. You may also receive unemployment benefit II even if you are employed but the income is insufficient to ensure subsistence.

VII. Applications

Benefits in accordance with SGB II are paid on application only. For this reason, you should report to your Jobcenter as soon as possible. There is no charge for applications. You can obtain the forms from the Jobcenter and on the Internet. Please answer all questions 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 Jobcenter whether an interpreter can be made available to help you.

VIII. What do you have to observe?

From the date on which you submit your claim you are obliged to register at your Jobcenter in person, if your Jobcenter requires this. If you are unable to keep an appointment, please notify your Jobcenter immediately and state the reason. If changes occur that can have an effect on benefits (for example, starting work or university studies, moving house, birth of a child, person moving into your accommodation), you must notify the Jobcenter of this immediately. Failure to do this may result in disadvantages for you.

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

IX. Further information

You will find further information in the brochure:

- "SGB II – Basic security benefits for jobseekers".

You can find this and other brochures on the website of the Federal Employment Agency www.arbeitsagentur.de.

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