

# Submit application for increase in housing allowance

If you already receive housing benefit, you can apply for an increase in housing benefit under certain circumstances.

## Competent Department

- [Die Senatorin für Bau, Mobilität und Stadtentwicklung | Referat Wohngeld](#)

## Basic information

Your eligibility for housing assistance could increase if

- Your total income has decreased by more than 10 percent,
- your rent or the burden of home ownership (excluding heating costs) has increased by more than 10 percent, or
- the number of household members has increased.

In the event of a rent increase or an increase in the burden of home ownership, the housing allowance may also be increased retroactively, but only up to the point at which you were granted housing allowance.

If your total income has decreased due to the fact that there are fewer members in your household to be considered, this can also be a reason for an increase in housing allowance.

## Requirements

- Your total income must have decreased by more than 10 percent, or
- the number of your household members has increased, or
- Your rent or your home ownership burden (excluding heating costs) has increased by more than 10 percent.

For details, please contact your local housing allowance office.

## What documents do I need?

- Evidence of the change in the household members to be taken into account.
- Evidence of modified income
- Evidence of change in rent or charge

# Procedure

You can send your application via the online service or in writing to the housing benefit office responsible for you.

## Online

- The online service guides you through the application step by step.
- The authority will check your application and send you a notification.
- If approved, the housing benefit is usually granted for 12 months.

## In writing

- You send your application by post or e-mail to the housing benefit office responsible for you. You can find the contact details under "Responsible offices".
- You can find the application under "Further information" - "Forms" - "Housing benefit - Forms" - "Application for rent subsidy".
- The authority will check your application and send you a decision.
- If approved, the housing benefit is usually granted for 12 months.

## Legal bases

- [§ 1 Wohngeldgesetz \(WoGG\)](#)
- [Wohngeldverordnung \(WoGV\)](#)
- [Wohngeld-Verwaltungsvorschrift \(WoGVwV\)](#)
- [§ 25 Absatz 1 Satz 2 Wohngeldgesetz \(WoGG\)](#)

## More information

There are the following indications:

If your financial situation or living circumstances have improved or changed, this may also result in a reduction of your housing allowance. You are required to notify the housing allowance authority immediately of any changes that may lead to a reduction in housing allowance. In order to prevent or detect the unlawful claiming of housing allowance, the housing allowance authority regularly checks the household members by comparing their data.

In order to avoid or detect the illegal use of housing allowance, the housing allowance authority may regularly check the household members by means of a data comparison - also in automated form - in particular with the data office of the pension insurance. For example, it may compare

- whether Bürgergeld (formerly Arbeitslosengeld II) is being paid during the period in which the housing allowance is being received,
- whether employment subject to compulsory insurance or marginal employment exists
- or the amount of investment income for which an exemption order has been issued.

It is also possible to compare the registration addresses, housing status and dates of change of address with the registration office. It is also possible to call up accounts at the Federal Central Tax Office. Suspected cases of fraud are always reported to the public prosecutor's office.

Through these checks, the housing allowance authority can determine, for example,

- whether housing benefit is being received more than once,
- whether transfer payments leading to exclusion from housing benefit are being received at the same time,
- whether the information provided in the housing benefit application is correct
  - income from gainful employment,
  - income from one or more pensions,
  - income from capital gains (interest or dividends),
- whether, in the case of original unemployment, the payment of unemployment benefits has been discontinued (for example, due to taking up a new gainful activity), and
- whether the original dwelling for which housing benefit was paid is still actually being used.

The review is permitted up to the expiry of ten years after notification of the associated housing allowance.

### **What deadlines must be paid attention to?**

As a rule, the housing allowance will be paid to you from the first of the month (after the end of the previous allowance period) if an application for continued benefits has been submitted to the housing allowance office within one month of the end of the allowance period at the latest.

### **How long does it take to process**

A decision on the application for continued benefits will be made immediately. The processing time depends, among other things, on the completeness of your information and the submission of the evidence required for processing the application.

Any longer processing times will not be at your expense: your entitlement to housing benefit will be examined from the day you submit your application. If your housing allowance entitlement continues, you will not lose any housing allowance.

### **What are the costs?**

None

# Frequently asked Questions

## • Who is a household member?

Household member is the person entitled to housing allowance.

Household members are also:

- the spouse or partner who is not permanently separated
- the person living in a community of responsibility and responsibility for others
- siblings, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews
- parents-in-law, children-in-law, stepparents
- parents, children, siblings of the life partner
- Sister-in-law, brother-in-law and his children, niece/nephew of the spouse
- Foster children regardless of their age and foster parents

## • What income should be taken into account?

Annual income within the meaning of the Housing Benefit Act is the sum of the positive income (gross less income-related expenses) in accordance with Section 2 (1) and (2) of the Income Tax Act plus the income in accordance with Section 14 (2) of the Housing Benefit Act less the deductions for taxes and social security contributions of each household member.

For the calculation of housing benefit, a forecast decision is made, i.e. what income is to be expected. The last 12 months prior to the application can serve as the basis for this forecast decision.

All taxable and tax-free income must always be carefully declared.

### Examples

- for employees: Wage/salary (certificate of earnings)
- for pensioners: pensions of all kinds (pension notices, pension notification)
- for income taxpayers (if proof cannot be provided by the certificate of earnings):  
all income, to be proven by  
Income tax prepayment notice  
Last income tax assessment notice  
Last income tax return
- for recipients of maintenance payments: Proof of the maintenance payer, the type, amount and recipient of the benefits
- for children: Proof of child benefit
- for unemployed persons: notice of approval from the employment office regarding unemployment benefit or unemployment benefit II / citizen's allowance
- for trainees or students: Proof of the type, amount and recipient of the training grant (e.g. BAföG, vocational training grant)
- for recipients of social assistance or war victims' welfare: proof of the type, amount and recipient of the benefits

- Proof of other benefits: (e.g. proof of interest income or other investment income, rental income, third-party benefits, including on a loan basis if applicable, benefits in kind, scholarships)

- **What is a "negative certificate"?**

If you apply for housing allowance in another municipality or in another federal state, the responsible authority usually requires the submission of a negative certificate. This is then issued on request by the housing allowance office of the former place of residence. This is to check whether and until when housing benefit was paid.

The issuing of the negative certificate is free of charge. A personal appearance to get the certificate is not required. The application is made informally. It is also possible to apply for the negative certificate by telephone. An authorized person is entitled to take out the negative certificate at the housing allowance office on behalf of the applicant. The power of attorney must be presented.

- **What do I need to communicate?**

Changes to be reported immediately include:

- Number of household members,
- Decrease in rent or burden,
- increase in income, and
- Change in living quarters, including within the home.