

Initiate or apply for the indexing of a medium harmful to minors

If you as an authority or youth welfare organization consider the content of a medium to be harmful to minors, you can apply to the Federal Agency for the Protection of Children and Young Persons in the Media (BzKJ) for an indexing procedure or initiate one.

Competent Department

- [Bundeszentrale für Kinder- und Jugendmedienschutz \(BzKJ\)](#)

Basic information

The Federal Agency for the Protection of Children and Young Persons in the Media (BzKJ) operates a testing center for media harmful to minors and maintains a list of media harmful to minors. Indexing on this list is intended to prevent children and young people from being confronted with media that are harmful to minors. Media are harmful to minors if they are likely to

- the development of children and young people or
- jeopardize their education to become responsible and socially competent individuals.

Certain media that are harmful to minors must be indexed in accordance with the German Youth Protection Act (JuSchG):

- media with a brutalizing effect,
- media that incite violence,
- media inciting to crime,
- media inciting racial hatred,
- self-serving, detailed depictions of violence,
- suggestion of vigilante justice,
- immoral media

In addition, the following media and content are harmful to minors:

- Media that violate human dignity,
- Discrimination against groups of people,
- glorification of National Socialism,
- glorification of drug use,
- glorification of excessive alcohol consumption,
- Suggestion of self-harming behavior,
- Endangering personal integrity

If the BzKJ review board decides to index a medium, it publishes this in the specialist journal "BzKJ aktuell" or in a non-public list. Indexing is also published in the Federal Gazette. From then on, far-reaching restrictions apply depending on the medium.

The indexing of a medium can only be applied for or suggested by authorized bodies in accordance with the Youth Protection Act. This includes authorities and independent youth welfare organizations. In the case of an application for indexing, the review body must take action. In the case of a suggestion, the review body can decide for itself whether it will take action.

Private individuals can submit neither an application nor a suggestion to the BzKJ. If you as a private individual consider a medium to be harmful to minors, you can contact numerous authorities, such as the youth welfare office, the school or the police in your community.

The consequences of indexing depend on the type of media.

Carrier media:

- Are media with texts, images or sounds that are distributed by passing on objects, for example:
 - Books and notebooks,
 - Data storage devices such as CDs and DVDs,
 - audio or video cassettes,
 - posters and billboards
- indexed media
 - may not be offered, made available or made accessible to children and young people,
 - may only be distributed, sold, presented or advertised to a very limited extent,
 - may not be shown as telemedia if children and young people could then have access to it.

Telemedia:

- are data offerings of texts, images and sounds that are transmitted electronically, for example:
 - Homepages and Internet search engines,
 - chat rooms and online games,
 - Television text and teleshopping,
 - movie files on video platforms (video-on-demand).
- Indexed telemedia may not be played in a place that is accessible to children and young people.
- Further restrictions, such as a ban on distribution or advertising, are possible.

Broadcasting:

- Radio and television are considered broadcasting.
- Indexed media may generally not be broadcast there.

- Details are regulated by the Interstate Treaty on the Protection of Minors in the Media (JMStV)

Under certain conditions, regularly published media can also be indexed for a period of up to twelve months in advance, i.e. for several issues.

Indexing a medium does not lead to an absolute ban. This means that adults continue to have access to these media. The BzKJ ratings provide parents and media education professionals with guidance on which media content violates the socio-ethical values and which educational goals are at risk.

In the case of indexing, the fundamental rights of third parties must be taken into account, such as freedom of art and freedom of expression.

If you would like to check whether a particular medium has already been indexed and included in the public or non-public list, you can send a query to the BzKJ in writing or by e-mail.

For Internet sites, you can contact the Commission for the Protection of Minors in the Media (KJM) or an Internet complaints office. The KJM is the central supervisory authority for private broadcasting and the Internet and can initiate an indexing procedure with the BzKJ.

Requirements

- You would like the Review Board of the Federal Agency for the Protection of Children and Young Persons in the Media (BzKJ) to review a medium and index it if necessary.
- The medium has already been published.
- You belong to one of the following institutions that can submit an application:
 - Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ),
 - supreme state youth authority,
 - Central supervisory body of the federal states for the protection of minors in the media,
 - State youth welfare offices,
 - youth welfare offices,
 - recognized institution of voluntary self-regulation,
 - Internet complaints offices funded by the federal government, the federal states or the state media authorities
- You belong to one of the following authorities that can make a suggestion for indexing
 - All other authorities, such as
 - Police authorities,
 - schools,
 - customs offices,
 - tax offices,
 - public order offices,
 - schools and
 - the recognized providers of independent youth welfare services, for example

- educational institutions and
- youth facilities.

What documents do I need?

- Certificate of recognition from your authority or organization at the Federal Centre for Child and Youth Media Protection (BzKJ)

or: Your code number at the BzKJ

- If applicable, the medium in the original or as a copy

Procedure

You can submit the application or suggestion by post, e-mail, fax or via an online service.

If you wish to submit the application or suggestion online:

- Go to the website of the Federal Center for Child and Youth Media Protection (BzKJ). In the "Service"/"Forms" section, select whether you want to submit an application or a suggestion.
- In the list, select the medium for which you would like to apply or suggest indexing.
- Complete the online form in full, enter the e-mail address of your institution or authority and submit the form
- Add
 - in the case of carrier media, the original or a copy of the reported medium by letter or e-mail to the BzKJ,
 - for telemedia, add the corresponding URL.
- In the case of a suggestion, the BzKJ will check whether it is necessary to carry out the procedure.
- You will receive information about the next important steps in the procedure.
- One person from your institution can take part in an oral hearing in the so-called standard procedure.
- In each individual case, it will also be decided whether expert opinions are required.
- The responsible committee decides on the indexing.
- You will receive the completed indexing decision for your information.
- The indexing of media is published in the Federal Gazette and included in the list of media harmful to minors in the journal of the Federal Review Board BzKJ.
- Entities entitled to file an application can appeal against a non-indexing decision to the administrative court.

If you wish to submit the application or suggestion in writing by e-mail:

- Download the application form or the suggestion form from the BzKJ website under "Service"/"Forms", fill it out on your computer.
- Then send the form with the required documents to the BzKJ by e-mail.
- The next steps are identical to the online procedure.

If you wish to submit the application or suggestion by post:

- Download the application form or the suggestion form from the BzKJ website under "Service"/"Forms", complete it on your computer and print out the form.
- Alternatively, you can print out the form first and then fill it in by hand.
- Then send the form with the required documents by post to the BzKJ.
- The remaining steps are identical to the online procedure.

Legal bases

- [§ 18 Jugendschutzgesetz \(JuSchG\)](#)
- [§ 21 Jugendschutzgesetz \(JuSchG\)](#)

More information

There are no indications or special features.

Legal remedies: Legal action by authorized bodies before the administrative court if a medium has not been indexed.

What deadlines must be paid attention to?

There is no deadline.

How long does it take to process

The duration of the procedure depends on the requirements of each individual procedure. Extensive research may be necessary. In individual cases, expert opinions may extend the processing time.

What are the costs?

There are no costs.