

Information on minimum income benefits in Tyrol (Mindestsicherung)

www.mindestsicherungtirol.at

Who is entitled to minimum income benefits?

Anyone who is about to face (financial) distress, is in the middle of it, or just coming out of it and is in need of support to secure the means of subsistence and to cover the costs for housing – this can apply to:

- persons who are not or not sufficiently able to raise the resources for subsistence through own efforts (e.g. anyone who cannot find a job, who is ill etc.) and
- persons whose income is below minimum income benefit levels (e.g. wage, pension, emergency unemployment assistance [Notstandshilfe], unemployment or sickness benefits, etc.).

Expenses

Rent, operating and heating costs (only up to a certain amount, see page 4) as well as seized income are recognised as expenses.

Income

A certain amount of income and assets may not be taken into account when calculating the entitlement to minimum income benefits, e.g.:

- (increased) family allowance
- long-term care benefits
- allowances for earned income (see page 4)
 - for single parents who are looking after at least one child of preschool or compulsory school age and simultaneously holding down a job or persons of higher age or with decreased working ability who are holding down a job.....€ 258.91
- subsidies of third parties that are received voluntarily and not regularly and do not exceed half of the respective minimum benefit level
- compensation payments and pension benefits for victims of abuse
- savings up to.....€ 4,315.20 when renting (Anmietung), up to.....€ 1,726.08
- child benefit plus (Kindergeld-Plus), help for starting school (Schulstarthilfe) and apprentice subsidy (Lehrlingsbeihilfe) of the state of Tyrol (as well as comparable benefits)

Please note!

Persons without Austrian citizenship are also entitled to minimum income benefits. These include:

- EEA, EU and Swiss nationals, their spouse and children up to the age of 21 with a valid registration certificate
Please note: EU citizens are not entitled to minimum income benefits in any case. However, employees and the self-employed are generally entitled, as long as this status (as per NAG – Settlement and Residence Act) remains effective.
- recognised refugees and persons eligible for subsidiary protection

- persons who have gained permanent residency (after a minimum of at least 5 years of legal residency)
- third-country nationals who have been living in Austria for less than 5 years can apply for minimum income benefits, but have no legal claim.
- Please note: Drawing minimum income benefits can endanger your residence (due to the lack of own resources), therefore, prior to the application, it is very important that you check whether an application for minimum income benefits can cause problems regarding residence rights.

Requirements when drawing minimum income benefits:

Measures of integration:

Within a certain period, persons entitled to asylum and persons eligible for subsidiary protection need to provide evidence of having attended a values course and of having German language knowledge at level A2. If both conditions are fulfilled, no additional requirements must be made. If the fulfilment of one of these conditions is unbearable due to age, physical or mental health, evidence may not be required.

If you are assigned to a course and you do not participate, benefits to secure subsistence (Lebensunterhalt) are threatened to be reduced up to 66%!

Stays abroad:

All stays abroad longer than one week must be communicated to the competent social welfare office (Sozialamt or BH of your district). If the stay exceeds a total of 14 days within a year, basic benefits are suspended – you do not receive money for that period! The period can be extended to 6 weeks for reasons that require special consideration, such as family, health or job search. If the stay exceeds 6 weeks, basic benefits are dropped.

Use of workforce:

Claimants of minimum income benefits are generally bound to show their willingness to work and to seek reasonably suitable employment – language courses or AMS courses (courses of the public employment service) are acceptable as well. Whether this is just and reasonable or not, is to be examined individually. You have a legal claim to complete a first-time apprenticeship or a compulsory education, even if you are over 18 years of age.

How much money do you receive per month?

Minimum benefit levels 2018

The minimum benefit levels refer to means of subsistence, electricity costs and clothing!

- single persons and single parents.....€ 647.28

You are considered a single person if you neither live in a community of dependence nor in a shared flat.

You are considered a single parent if you only live with minors entitled to maintenance.

- singles or single parents of legal age in a shared flat.....€ 485.46

Shared flat: a community of persons living together in a flat without being economically connected; everyone has their own living area; bathroom, kitchen etc. are common rooms; exception: certain supervised living facilities (without complete care); for people living in such facilities, the rates for singles apply.....€ 647.28

- persons of legal age in a community of dependence with their spouse or partner.....€ 485.46

Community of dependence: a community of persons living in the same household, keeping house together and mutual support on a family level can be assumed;

- from the 3rd person of legal age entitled to benefits onwards, provided that she or he is entitled to maintenance by a person living in the community of dependence.....€ 323.64
e.g. children of legal age living with their parents

- minors and persons with custody in the same household:
for the 1st and 2nd child.....€ 213.60
for the 3rd child.....€ 196.34
for the 4th to the 6th child.....€ 129.46
from the 7th child onwards, for each.....€ 103.56

- single mature minors (from the age of 14) not drawing family allowance, not living with their parents or not being accommodated by children and youth welfare.....€ 647.28

- single mature minors (from the age of 14) drawing family allowance, not living with their parents or not being accommodated by children and youth welfare.....€ 485.46

- pocket money.....€ 138.09
e.g. during an inpatient stay in a hospital or when living in a complete care facility

In March, June, September and December **special bonus payments** in the amount of € 77.67 are made per person entitled to benefits. It is required that, before the payment is made, minimum income benefits have been drawn for 3 continuous full months.

The following persons are entitled to special bonus payments:

minors, single parents, persons in receipt of an equalisation supplement, persons of statutory retirement age with no pension, persons in receipt of pocket money, persons with a disability of at least 50% and persons with mental illnesses drawing rehabilitation benefits.

Benefits for housing:

Basic benefits and additional benefits

▪ Housing costs:

The costs are **limited by district as per the amounts set in the regulation!** You must pay the difference between the actual costs and the regulation set maximum from the benefits to secure subsistence!

▪ Flat renting (Anmietung):

Costs connected with renting are **only paid proportionately** to the regulation set maximum. **There is no legal claim to payment of brokerage commission!** The allowance (in terms of "allowed savings") for renting is € 1,726.08. If this maximum is exceeded, you must use your savings.

▪ Basic equipment:

Costs to equip the flat (furniture and household goods) are usually paid only **once**. These amounts are also limited to the regulation set maximum!

- For adaptations, renovations and repairs (e.g. washing machine, stove, floors, etc.) benefits can be granted after consultation with the social welfare office.

It is absolutely necessary to check all of these expenses with a competent social welfare office in advance!

Right of assignment:

- A competent social welfare office has the right to assign you to an "accommodation" – this need not be a flat, a room in a home or shared flat is possible as well! The assignment cannot be put on hold (suspensive effect) by filing an appeal (complaint). If you do not follow the assignment within the period of 4 weeks, you do not get benefits for housing costs for the following 6 months.
- There are certain circumstances (e.g. rental contract running for more than 3 months, long distance to the children's school, workplace or course etc.) which need to be considered by a competent social welfare office in the assignment process. If you are assigned against your will, get in touch with a counselling centre as soon as possible!

Other additional benefits

Help towards work:

- payment of training prescribed by a competent social welfare or the AMS as long as the costs must not be paid by third parties
- travel costs to and from the course (for the cheapest form of public transport)
- examination fees for German courses (for A2 or B1)

Other special benefits:

- additionally € 35.00 per month, with documented diabetes or HIV disease; beyond that amount (up to a maximum of € 129.46), with evidence of increased illness-related expenses.

Reductions of benefits:

The benefits to secure subsistence can be reduced in stages up to 66% if

- you have put yourself in (financial) distress intentionally or by gross carelessness,
- you have not shown willingness to work or have not engaged in reasonably suitable employment,
- you have not used the funds provided economically,
- you have not taken or successfully completed the courses prescribed by the AMS or by a competent social welfare office,
- you have not completed the measures for integration successfully or in time.

AMS benefits:

Those who completely or partially lose entitlement to emergency unemployment assistance or unemployment benefits do **not get compensation** via the minimum income scheme for the period of suspension. This may imply a reduction of benefits to secure subsistence by well over 66% (rent is not guaranteed!) from one day to the next.

It is very important that you keep your AMS appointments and, if you have lost your job, to make an application at the AMS immediately.

Get in touch with a counselling centre if your benefits are reduced!

How do you apply for minimum income benefits?

- Make a written application – the forms can be obtained at counselling centres and social welfare offices or are available for download on the homepage.
- If you do not live in Innsbruck, you either make the application to your local authority of residence or directly to the competent district administration. The local authority must give an opinion to the district administration immediately!
- Applications CANNOT be submitted to the AMS.

The following documents are required for the application for minimum income benefits:

Proof of distress:

- proof of income: pay slips (Lohnzettel), proof of unemployment benefits, sickness benefits, pension, basic services, rent subsidies, etc.)
- bank statements of the previous 3 months
- rental contract and confirmation of housing costs
- bills, cost estimates or evidence of other expenses (e.g. alimony, etc.)
- in cases of previous jail time: release papers
- confirmation of seeking work (AMS) or incapacity to work (public medical officer)
- course certificate
- proof of identity

- **IMPORTANT:** You are entitled to minimum income benefits even without a registered address (e.g. if you are homeless).
- When submitting the application, request a written decision! Fill out the application as accurately as possible! Describe what you need the minimum income benefits for and whether you need one-time or ongoing support. It is of course possible to get immediate support if you are completely out of money!
- At your request, the competent social welfare office must give you the decision in writing. You can file a complaint against it within 4 weeks! The complaint must be submitted to a competent social welfare office.

For more information, visit:

www.mindestsicherungtirol.at



Counselling centres in Innsbruck:

- DOWAS for Women
Adamgasse 4
Phone: +43 512 / 56 24 77
- DOWAS
Leopoldstraße 18
Phone: +43 512 / 57 23 43
- Chill Out
Heiliggeiststraße 8a
Phone: +43 512 / 57 21 21
- BARWO and Eviction Prevention Assistance
Kapuzinergasse 43
Phone: +43 512 / 58 17 54
- Diakonie for Housing Counselling
Bürgerstraße 21
Phone: +43 664 / 827 34 69
- Center for Migrants in Tyrol (ZEMIT)
Andreas-Hofer-Straße 46
Phone: +43 512 / 57 71 70
- Caritas Advice Center
Heiliggeiststraße 16
Phone: +43 512 / 72 700
- Neustart Tirol
Andreas-Hofer-Straße 46/3
Phone: +43 512 / 58 04 04

Maximum housing costs in Tyrol as per regulation (operating and heating costs included)

District / Number of persons	shared flat	1	2	3	4	5 + 6	7 + 8	9 + 10	11 +
Innsbruck	470	553	691	795	895	1,023	1,151	1,279	1,407
IBK-Land	444	522	653	750	825	908	999	1,099	1,208
Schwaz	434	511	639	735	808	889	978	1,075	1,183
Kufstein	409	481	601	691	761	837	920	1,012	1,114
Kitzbühel	437	514	643	739	835	954	1,073	1,193	1,312
Imst	353	415	519	597	656	722	794	873	961
Landeck	316	372	465	535	588	647	712	783	861
Reutte	335	394	493	566	623	685	754	829	912
Lienz	325	382	478	549	604	664	731	810	891

If the actual rent exceeds the amounts listed above, the balance must be paid from the benefits to secure subsistence. Also, the costs connected with renting (deposit, etc.) are only paid proportionally when they exceed the maximum amounts. **IMPORTANT:** It is absolutely necessary to obtain approval from the competent social welfare office **prior** to rental!

Maximum rates for basic equipment as per regulation

singles or persons in shared flats	€ 765
... with kitchen unit	€ 1,265
communities of dependence ... however, up to a maximum of	€ 765 + € 220 for each additional person € 1,865
communities of dependence if a kitchen unit is necessary ... however, up to a maximum of	€ 1,265 + € 220 for each additional person € 2,365

Maximum rates for individual furnishings and household goods

bed including slat frame and mattress or sofa bed	€ 150
wardrobe	€ 50
desk	€ 50
chair	€ 20
kitchen furniture (without appliances)	€ 400
kitchen unit including appliances and fittings	€ 900
coat rack, other small furniture, curtains, venetian blinds	€ 65
lighting	€ 30
household goods* for singles (also in a shared flat), in communities of dependence for the first person	€ 200
in communities of dependence for each additional person	€ 80

* household goods include: basic cooking utensils, dishes, cutlery, glassware, cups, cleaning utensils, bedding, blanket and pillow, towels, drying rack and the like.

Maximum rates for household appliances

stove**	€ 300
fridge**	€ 250
washing machine	€ 250

** The stove and fridge are only granted if no benefits have been granted for the purchase of a kitchen unit.

If higher expenses are necessary, e.g. for medical or constructional reasons, it is possible for the social welfare office to allow higher amounts under private law.

Listing of allowances

- allowances for earned income:
 - for single parents who are looking after at least one child of preschool or compulsory school age and simultaneously holding down a job OR persons of higher age or with decreased working ability who are holding down a job€ 258.91
 - if you are unemployed for the first time or have been unemployed for over 9 months (interruptions of up to 3 months possible) and you have been drawing minimum income benefits for at least 6 months, according to your working hours, for the first 6 months:
 - full-time employment over 50%.....€ 258.91
 - full-time employment over 25% to 50%.....€ 129.46
 (subsequently, reduction of the amount for another 12 months – see homepage)