

Senatsverwaltung für Integration, Arbeit und Soziales
Oranienstr. 106, 10969 Berlin

Integration Support Pursuant to the BTHG (Federal Participation Act).

What will change following the implementation of the Federal Participation Act?

Dear Madam or Sir,
Dear Recipients of integration support benefits,

The Federal Participation Act (BTHG) is designed to improve the participation of persons with disabilities. This legislation was passed in order to implement vital requirements of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Integration support benefits will be segregated from social welfare benefits pursuant to the twelfth volume of the Social Security Code and will be redefined by the BTHG pursuant to the ninth volume of the Social Security Code in order to implement contemporary participation rights. The ideas that each individual person may have about his or her personal way of life are at the core of this new integration law. Tailor-made support measures are to ensure more self-determination and participation. The right to social inclusion of persons with disabilities is strengthened. Administrative procedures are to be improved with the aim to make them uniformly applicable throughout Berlin.

On the basis of the Berlin Participation Act, which is a Senate resolution on the manner in which integration support is to be organised and includes the provision of more and better qualified personnel, the State of Berlin and its districts are working on the systematic implementation of the new BTHG to ensure a smooth transition to the new system.

We are now laying the foundations for the further development of integration support measures, a task which will not be completed in a month or a year.

With this letter we would like to inform you about some important changes that will come into effect on 1 January 2020. This letter is primarily addressed to adult beneficiaries receiving integration support benefits from social welfare offices.

Yours faithfully
Alexander Fischer, State Secretary for Social Affairs

1. Who will be in charge of integration support benefits in the future?

Your contact person will continue to be at your competent **Sozialamt** [social welfare office]. Nothing will change for you for the time being. You will be informed of any future organisational changes in due course.

2. How will I get integration support after 1 January 2020?

First things first: you will, of course, continue to receive benefits from 1 January 2020 onwards if you have been notified of such benefits.

There will be changes with regard to applications submitted after 1 January 2020. This will also be the case if your official notification expires and you wish to have further benefits: your integration needs will be assessed by the newly developed **Teilhabeinstrument Berlin (TIB)** [the Berlin Participation Instrument]. The TIB helps the social welfare offices determine what kind of support you need. It is a working aid for their employees and has specifically been developed for Berlin. The TIB replaces the previous working aids, such as the BBRP (Berliner Behandlungs- und Rehabilitationsplan) [the Berlin Treatment and Rehabilitation Plan] or the HMBW-Bogen (Hilfen für Menschen im Wohnen) [the HMBW form (Support for People at Home)].

You can outline your support needs in one or several discussions with your contact person, who will ask you various questions. In order to devise a tailor-made plan for your needs, you will be asked what is important to you and what you need in order to improve your situation. In general, you may decide where the interview is to take place. It can be at your home, at the social welfare office or at another place you are familiar with. Of course, you may take one or more trusted persons along to an interview.

Your contact person at the social welfare office will inform you in due course of any further change regarding new applications or application renewals that may become effective after 1 January 2020.

3. What changes are resulting from the segregation of integration support benefits from subsistence benefits in the case of residential treatment?

In line with the change in legislation pursuant to the BTHG, persons with disabilities are to be entitled to the same benefits as those without disabilities. Therefore, integration support is to cover only disability-related benefits.

If you are in residential treatment and receive benefits, you may also get all benefits from the social welfare office in the future. These include the needed **disability benefits** and **additional benefits** if you cannot earn a living yourself. Your benefits for housing, care (subsistence) and professional disability support have to be specified in a contract. Your service provider and the social welfare office will contact you to this effect, so you may discuss these issues with them.

It is also important for you to have a **bank account**. In future, the social welfare office will remit the benefits to your account. This will enable you to pay your own housing and living expenses in the future. Your caregiver and/or your legal guardian or your contact person at the social welfare office will assist you in this respect.

So far, you have been paid a certain **cash amount** (pocket money) at your residential facility, which was approved by the social welfare office and has often been paid to you by your benefits provider. In the future, you will also have cash at your free disposal (e.g. for food, clothing). Depending on your needs, the cash amount will individually be determined by your social welfare office in consultation with your contact person for integration support measures and be remitted to your bank account.

For the time being, your current social welfare office will continue to be in charge. It is planned to change the **competencies** of social welfare offices in such a way to ensure that the one in your district will be your competent social welfare office. You will be informed of such change in due course.

4. Will there also be changes regarding workshops for persons with disabilities (WfbM)?

If you work at a workshop for persons with disabilities, please note that no significant changes are envisaged for such workshops.

There will be one change concerning **lunch** though: if you wish to have lunch at your workshop or at the Beschäftigungs- und Förderbereich (BFBTS) [the Employment and Support Area (BFBTS)], you will have to pay the institution for the lunch yourself in the future. Should your income not be sufficient, you can submit an application to the competent social welfare office, where you can get a subsidy (a so-called Mehrbedarfzuschlag, i.e. a greater need allowance).

5. When do I have to contribute to the costs incurred for integration support?

The new BTHG does also provide for participation in the costs incurred for integration support measures by contributing an amount from your **income or assets** - if both are at a certain level. However, there has been a change for the better, which will be particularly positive from 1 January 2020 onwards. Pursuant to the social welfare regulations governing integration support benefits, a large portion of income and assets has been taken into account so far. These regulations have been redesigned. Pursuant to the BTHG the **allowance** has significantly been raised and will be determined annually on the basis of the prevailing nationwide wage level. As far as income is concerned, the amount of the allowance depends on the type of income (employment subject to compulsory social security contributions, pension, etc.) and ranges from € 22,428 to € 31,773 as of 1 January 2019. In the case of assets, the allowance is currently fixed at € 56,070.

If your income exceeds the allowance, you have to contribute to integration support from your income. If your assets exceed the allowance, the excess amount must be used for integration support measures. In most cases, the calculation is based on your tax return or official pension notification.

There is a further change with regard to the **income and assets of partners**. Pursuant to the BTHG, such income and assets are no longer taken into account and do not have to be declared in the application form as of 1 January 2020.

However, if you need **livelihood security benefits** in addition to your integration support benefits (e.g. basic income support), your income and assets will continue to be taken into account solely on the basis of the provisions governing social welfare.

Who can I contact?

If you have any question regarding integration support, please contact the relevant office:

The **social welfare offices** are responsible for integration support for adults; this is where all benefits are available from a single source.

<https://service.berlin.de/sozialaemter>



The **Sozialpsychiatrischen Dienste der Gesundheitsämter** [social-psychiatric services of the public health departments] provide help and support for adults with mental illness, addiction or a mental health disorder.

<https://www.berlin.de/lb/psychiatrie/hilfe-in-krise/sozialpsychiatrische-dienste-der-bezirke/>



The **[Beratungsstellen für Menschen mit Behinderungen der Gesundheitsämter](https://www.berlin.de/sen/gesundheitsaemter/themen/gesundheitsaemter/)** [the health departments' counselling centres for persons with disabilities] offer help and support for people with a physical illness. The contact address may be found on the website of the district health department concerned:

<https://www.berlin.de/sen/gesundheitsaemter/themen/gesundheitsaemter/>



Additional advice may generally be obtained from your **social service provider or health care provider**. Just get in touch with your respective contact person.

The **Ergänzende unabhängige Teilhabeberatung (EUTB)** [Supplementary Independent Participation Counselling (EUTB)] is an advisory body providing services to disabled persons and their relatives seeking advice.

www.teilhabeberatung.de



The district **Jugendämter** [district Youth Welfare Offices] can be contacted for integration support benefits for children and adolescents:

<https://service.berlin.de/jugendaemter/>



The **Senatsverwaltung Integration, Arbeit und Soziales** [the Senate Department for Integration, Labour and Social Affairs] provides information on the Federal Participation Act: <https://www.berlin.de/sen/soziales/themen/menschen-mit-behinderung/bundesteilhabegesetz/>



For information on contact addresses and responsibilities, you may also contact the so-called citizens' phone at (030) 115.



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