

This flyer was created as part of the network project „Verbesserung der Aufnahmebedingungen für Schutzsuchende, Schutzberechtigte und vorübergehend Schutzberechtigte in Brandenburg“ (VASiB) of the Kooperation für Flüchtlinge in Brandenburg (KFB).

More about the VASiB project and the KFB at:
www.kooperation-für-flüchtlinge-in-brandenburg.de



Who is part of the KFB network?



You can find further information on the topic of „how to find a flat“ on the website for this flyer:



bit.ly/info-wohnung

HOW TO LOOK FOR AN APARTMENT?

Seek advice at a counseling center!

The advisors can help you to find and apply for an apartment.

How much may the apartment cost?

If you have a job, you should calculate about 1/3 of your net salary for the rent.

If you receive benefits from the Jobcenter or the Social Welfare Office, find out how high the rent for an apartment may be in the district in which the apartment is located (KdU = „Kosten der Unterkunft“).

Where do I look for an apartment?

There are various housing portals on the internet such as immobilienScout24.de and immowelt.de. You can also find apartment ads on kleinanzeigen.de. Make sure that it is a serious advertisement and do not pay any money in advance. There are also housing cooperatives. Apartments are a little cheaper here. At wg-gesucht.de, for example, you can find rooms in shared flats.

What kind of documents do I need to look for an apartment?

Prepare the following documents:

- ▶ “Rental debt-free certificate” (the „Mietschuldenfreiheitsbescheinigung“ is a certificate from your landlord/landlady or from your shared accommodation that confirms that you have no rental debts),
- ▶ copies of your identity documents,

- ▶ “Schufa certificate” (the Schufa report shows whether you are “creditworthy”, i.e. whether you can pay your bills. You can obtain a free copy at: www.meineschufa.de/datenkopie),
- ▶ cover letter (which is a letter in which you introduce yourself to the landlord/landlady),
- ▶ proof of salary for the last three months or a current notification from the Jobcenter or Social Welfare Office.
- ▶ Do you need a so called „Wohnberechtigungsschein“ to rent the apartment? The „Wohnberechtigungsschein“ is valid for cheaper social housing. You must apply for it in advance.

I HAVE FOUND AN APARTMENT! AND NOW?

Before you sign a tenancy agreement

If you receive benefits from the Social Welfare Office or Jobcenter:

- ▶ Submit an application to the Social Welfare Office or Jobcenter so that the costs for the apartment can be covered.
- ▶ Find out whether you can get a loan for the deposit. You will have to repay the loan in the next few months or it will be deducted from your benefits. Find out how much money you have at your disposal during this time.
- ▶ You can also apply for benefits for initial furnishings (furniture, etc.) and for moving house (e.g. renting a removal car).

THE APARTMENT HANDOVER AND THE TIME AFTERWARDS

Handover of the apartment:

When the apartment is handed over, a protocol is written in which it is recorded whether the apartment has any defects. For example, if something in the apartment is broken or badly worn, this is recorded here. Make sure that all defects are recorded. When you move out, it will be checked whether you are responsible for the defects. The protocol can help you to show that the defects were already present when you moved in.

Costs for electricity and heating:

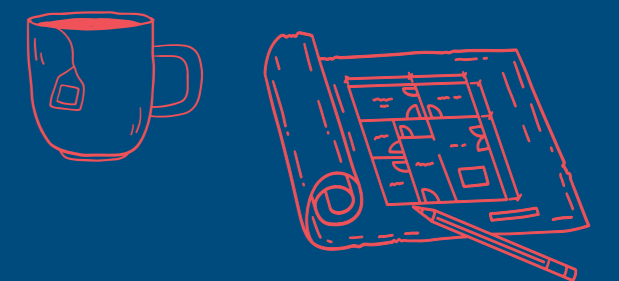
You will need to sign a contract with an electricity provider and a gas provider if your heating runs on gas. The heating and electricity costs are billed according to your consumption. If you use more, you will have to pay extra at the end of the year. Set money aside for this.

Information on your change of address:

After you have moved, be sure to inform all important authorities of your new address (Foreigners’ Authority, Social Welfare Office, Jobcenter, BAMF, school, etc.).

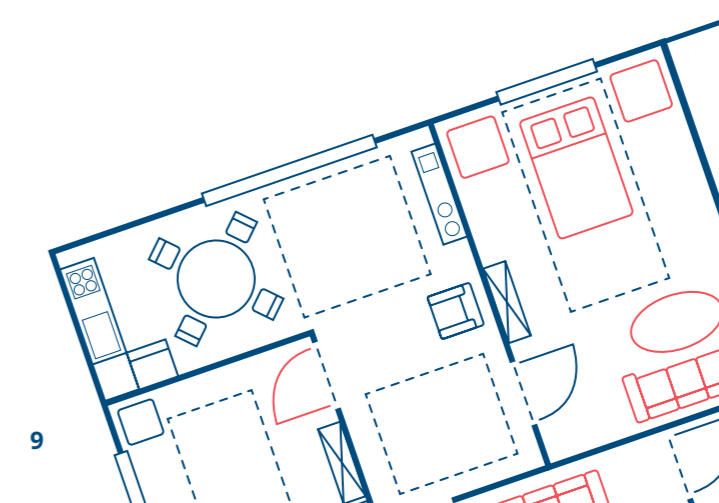
Information on finding an apartment for refugees in Brandenburg

Out of the camp into life!



Would you like to move out of shared accommodation and look for your own flat? This flyer is intended to provide initial guidance and clarify some important questions.

Please note: The information cannot replace individual counseling at a counseling center. (Counseling centers can be found on the website for this flyer: bit.ly/info-wohnung)



(HOW) CAN I MOVE INTO MY OWN FLAT?

These are the **various conditions** under which you can move into your own flat:

A

You no longer live in the initial reception center and have a residence permit („Aufenthaltsgestattung“ during your asylum procedure) or tolerated stay permit („Duldung“)?

Do you **earn enough money** to pay the rent for your own flat?

The law states that you must be able to support yourself. This means that you do not receive any benefits and must be insured with a health insurance company (according to § 2 (3) sentence 1 AufenthG).

If you earn enough money, you can **move into your own flat!** In order to do so, you must submit an application to the local Foreigners' Authority („Ausländerbehörde“) to have your residency requirement („Wohnsitzauflage“) canceled.

1

Do **you receive benefits** from the Jobcenter or Social Welfare Office?

If you receive benefits, you are subject to a **residency requirement** („Wohnsitzauflage“).

This means, you will have the obligation to live in a certain area or even in a certain accommodation. You are not generally entitled to permission to move, but the authorities must examine your reasons and then decide on the application (residence permit: § 60 (1) and (2) AsylG; tolerated stay permit: § 61 (1d) AufenthG).

However, there are good reasons why you may need to move to a different area or into different accommodation or your own flat. Some of these reasons for moving may be:

If you are going through your **asylum procedure**:

- ▶ You would like to live with your minor children or your spouse or partner.
- ▶ There are other important „humanitarian reasons“ for moving. These reasons are not precisely defined in the law. (§ 50 (4) sentence 5, § 51 (1) AsylG)

In Brandenburg, certain asylum seekers also have the right to their own home:

- ▶ children and young people
- ▶ unaccompanied minor refugees (umF)

2

- ▶ people with disabilities
- ▶ elderly people
- ▶ pregnant women
- ▶ single parents with minor children
- ▶ victims of human trafficking
- ▶ people with serious physical or mental illnesses
- ▶ people who have suffered torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexualized violence

Do you or one of your children belong to one of these groups? Then you have the right to live in a home or facility that protects your health (§ 9 (4) LAufnG).

If you have a **tolerated stay permit**:

- ▶ You would like to live with your minor children or your spouse or partner.
- ▶ There are other important „humanitarian reasons“ for moving. These reasons are not precisely defined in the law. For example, an illness or disability is conceivable.

(§ 61 (1d) sentence 3 AufenthG)

3

In both cases (asylum procedure and tolerated stay permit):

Submit an application to the Foreigners' Authority („Ausländerbehörde“) and the Social Welfare Office:

- ▶ for the residency requirement („Wohnsitzauflage“) to be canceled or changed
- ▶ to move to suitable accommodation that protects your safety or health.

If the authorities have approved the move, you can now look for an apartment.

Has your application been rejected?

Appeal against the decision or file a lawsuit. Note the information on legal remedies and deadlines stated in the letter.

If the appeal is rejected, you can appeal against the decision to the administrative court. Seek support from a counseling center. The advisor can also help you to apply for a counseling voucher („Beratungsschein“). The voucher allows you to get free advice from a lawyer.

4

B

Your asylum procedure has been completed and you have a residence permit („Aufenthalts-erlaubnis“)?

For the **first three years after recognition**, you must remain resident in the federal state in which you completed your asylum procedure (residency requirement – „Wohnsitzauflage“ - according to §12a AufenthG).

However, the residency requirement must be canceled upon application for the following reasons (§ 12a (5) AufenthG):

You, your spouse, your registered partner or your minor child with whom you live together need to move to another federal state because of:

- ▶ an employment subject to social insurance contributions that predominantly secures the livelihood,
- ▶ a vocational training,
- ▶ an admission to a university,
- ▶ an integration course, a vocational language course, a qualification program („Qualifizierungsmaßnahme“) lasting at least three months that leads to professional recognition or an advanced vocational training („Weiterbildungsmaßnahme“).

5

Or your spouse, registered partner or your minor child, with whom you have previously lived together, lives elsewhere.

Or hardship is to be avoided. This is the case, for example, if:

- ▶ child and youth welfare services cannot be effective in the location where the minor lives,
- ▶ another federal state has agreed to allow you to move to this federal state for urgent personal reasons or
- ▶ comparable unreasonable restrictions arise.

Submit an **application to the Foreigners' Authority** („Ausländerbehörde“) for the residency requirement („Wohnsitzauflage“) to be canceled or changed. The federal state to which you want to move must also agree to the move.

The authorities have approved a move? Have you found an apartment? Submit an application to the Jobcenter so that the rent can be covered.

6