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Abmeldung — Deregistering Your Residence in Germany

What you need to know about Abmeldung when leaving Germany: deadlines, required documents, and important consequences.

Deutsche Begriffe: Abmeldung | Abmeldebescheinigung | Bürgeramt | Wohnsitz abmelden

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Abmeldung — Deregistering Your Residence in Germany

What is Abmeldung?

Abmeldung (residence deregistration) is the opposite of registration: you notify the resident registration office (Einwohnermeldeamt) that you are leaving Germany. The **Abmeldebescheinigung** is an important document you need for many administrative matters.

When must you deregister?

• **Mandatory** if you are permanently leaving Germany (no longer have a residence in Germany)

• Earliest **1 week before** your move

• Latest **2 weeks after** your move

• When moving within Germany: only **registration** at the new location is required (automatic deregistration)

Where do you deregister?

At the **Bürgeramt** (resident registration office) of your city:

- **In person** — by appointment (recommended)
- **By mail** — send signed Abmeldung form
- **Through an authorized representative** — with written power of attorney

What documents do you need?

1. **Abmeldung form** (available at Bürgeramt or downloadable online)
2. **ID card or passport**
3. **Registration certificate** (if available)
4. For written deregistration: **signature** and copy of ID

⚠ Why Abmeldung is so important

Without deregistration:

- You remain **taxable** in Germany
- You must continue paying **health insurance**
- You must continue paying **GEZ** (broadcast fee)
- Your **child allowance** continues to be counted

What happens after Abmeldung?

You lose:

- Entitlement to **child allowance** (usually)
- **Health insurance** (ends after deregistration, transition period possible)
- **Bank account** — some banks terminate for foreign residents

You retain:

- **Pension claims** — already paid contributions remain
- **Tax ID** — valid for life, also abroad
- Right to **tax return** for your last year in Germany

Checklist before departure

- ☐ Abmeldung at Bürgeramt
- ☐ Notify employer / resignation
- ☐ Terminate lease (observe notice period!)
- ☐ Cancel/notify health insurance
- ☐ Deregister from GEZ
- ☐ Cancel electricity, gas, internet
- ☐ Clarify bank accounts (possibly keep for pension)
- ☐ Set up mail forwarding with postal service
- ☐ Deregister child allowance/parental allowance
- ☐ Deregister vehicle (Kfz-Zulassungsstelle)
- ☐ Keep Abmeldebescheinigung safe!