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Registration & Change of Address — Anmeldung in Germany

How to register, change, or deregister your residence — deadlines, required documents, and appointment booking at the Einwohnermeldeamt.

Deutsche Begriffe: Anmeldung | Ummeldung | Wohnsitz | Einwohnermeldeamt | Meldebescheinigung | Bürgeramt | Bundesmeldegesetz | Meldepflicht | Wohnungsgeberbestätigung | Hauptwohnsitz | Nebenwohnsitz | Zweitwohnungsteuer | Steuer-ID | Steueridentifikationsnummer | Rundfunkbeitrag | Beitragsservice | Abmeldung | Abmeldebescheinigung | Ordnungswidrigkeit | Bußgeld | BundID | eID | Termin

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Anmeldung in Germany — what it is and why it's mandatory

Anmeldung is the official registration of your place of residence. In Germany, the registration requirement (Meldepflicht) is based on the **Bundesmeldegesetz** law and applies to **everyone** — including EU and non-EU foreigners. After moving into an apartment, you have **14 days** (two weeks) to register at the appropriate **Einwohnermeldeamt** (also called **Bürgeramt** or Bürgerservice).

Without Anmeldung, you cannot open a bank account, legally sign an employment contract, apply for a residence permit, or claim benefits — so take care of it immediately.

> **Anmeldung is free of charge.** The office does not charge any fee for it.

Required documents

• **Completed form** Anmeldung bei einer Meldebehörde — you can download it from the city's website or get it on site.

• **ID card or passport** (original) — people from outside the EU: passport.

• **Wohnungsgeberbestätigung** — written confirmation from the landlord that you actually live there (see below).

• **For families:** birth certificates of children, if necessary, marriage certificate. One person can register the entire household if all adults sign the form.

Wohnungsgeberbestätigung — the most common obstacle

This is a certificate that the **landlord is obligated** to issue within 14 days of move-in. It contains the landlord's name and address, the apartment address, the move-in date, and the names of tenants. Refusal or delay by the landlord is a violation (Ordnungswidrigkeit) punishable by a fine of up to **€1,000** — if the owner delays, invoke this obligation. Without this document, the office will not process your Anmeldung.

How to book an appointment (Termin)

In large cities (Hamburg, Berlin, Munich), appointments are often booked weeks in advance. **Book an appointment immediately after signing the lease** — don't wait until you move.

• **Hamburg:** hamburg.de/buergerservice

• **Berlin:** service.berlin.de

• **Munich:** muenchen.de/buergerservice

Tips: free slots often open up in the morning — refresh the page. In smaller towns, walk-in service (by number) also works. The actual visit usually takes 10–15 minutes.

Anmeldung online (elektronische Wohnsitzanmeldung)

In an increasing number of cities, you can register **completely online**, without visiting the office — via a **BundID** account and the **eID** function (electronic ID with active online capability). If your city offers this, you save the wait for a Termin.

Meldebescheinigung — what you receive

After registration, the office issues a **Meldebescheinigung** (proof of registration). It is needed, among other things, for:

• opening a bank account,

• residence permits,

• employment contracts,

• child allowance (Kindergeld).

It comes in a simple version (einfache) and an extended version (erweiterte) — the simple one usually suffices for offices.

What happens after Anmeldung

• **Steuer-ID** — if you register in Germany for the first time, you will receive a **Steueridentifikationsnummer** (tax identification number) by mail within approximately 2–3 weeks. It is essential for your employer.

• **Rundfunkbeitrag** — after registration, the Beitragsservice will contact you regarding the broadcasting fee (Rundfunkbeitrag), which is assessed once per household.

Hauptwohnsitz vs. Nebenwohnsitz

If you have more than one apartment in Germany, you register one as your main residence (**Hauptwohnsitz**) and another as a secondary residence (**Nebenwohnsitz**). For a secondary apartment, some cities charge a tax (Zweitwohnungsteuer).

Ummeldung and Abmeldung

• **Ummeldung** — when moving within Germany, you register at your new address; deregistration from the old office happens **automatically**, no separate Abmeldung is needed.

• **Abmeldung** — deregistration is only reported when you **leave Germany** or give up a secondary residence. You then receive an **Abmeldebescheinigung** — keep it (it may be needed abroad and for financial settlements).

Fine for delay

Failing to meet the 14-day deadline is a violation punishable by a fine of up to **€1,000** (Bußgeld). In practice, short delays rarely result in penalties, but delays block your account, work, and other official matters — so don't put off Anmeldung.