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## Understanding Official Mail — Bescheid, Deadlines, Objections

How to read official letters correctly: What do Bescheid, Anhörung, and Rechtsmittelbelehrung mean?

**Deutsche Begriffe:** Bescheid | Anhörung | Widerspruch | Frist | Rechtsmittelbelehrung | Zustellung

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### Why is Official Mail So Important?

In Germany, you regularly receive official letters from government agencies. These letters often contain **deadlines** that you must meet — otherwise you face consequences (fines, rejection, loss of appeal rights).

### The Most Important Types of Letters

#### 1. Bescheid (Administrative Decision)

A **Bescheid** is an official decision by a government agency — for example:

- Approval or denial of child benefit
- Residence permit
- Tax assessment
- Citizen's allowance decision

**Important:** At the end is the **Rechtsmittelbelehrung** — it explains how and by when you can file an objection.

#### 2. Anhörung (Hearing Notice)

Before an agency makes a negative decision, it must give you the opportunity to **submit a statement**. **Always** respond to hearing notices!

### 3. Reminder / Payment Demand

Outstanding amounts (broadcast license fee, fines, taxes) are collected via reminder. Respond quickly to avoid **late payment surcharges**.

## Deadlines — The Essential Information

Deadline	Meaning
<b>1 month</b>	Objection period for most Bescheide
<b>2 weeks</b>	Deadline for responding to Anhörung (may vary)
<b>14 days</b>	Residence registration deadline after moving

**The deadline begins** the day after delivery (date on letter + 3 days for postal service).

## Filing an Objection

If you disagree with a Bescheid:

- 1. Check the deadline** — usually 1 month from delivery
- 2. File objection in writing** (letter, fax, or online portal)
- 3. Include reasoning** (why you disagree, with evidence)
- 4. Use registered mail** (proof of timely delivery)

### Costs

- Objection to social benefit decisions: **free**
- Objection to other decisions: fee may apply (refunded if successful)

## Tips

- **Open EVERY official letter immediately** — ignoring causes problems
- If you have difficulty understanding, **seek help** (advice center, social worker, hamboorg.city Asystemt)
- **Keep copies** — of every letter and response
- For language barriers: you have the right to **translation** in important administrative proceedings

--- As of: March 2026. All information provided without guarantee.

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