

Social Assistance

Social assistance helps persons who have little means to live and who receive little or no financial support from social insurance. The objective is that persons quickly regain the ability to support themselves. Social assistance is not a form of insurance. It is assistance provided by the state.

Social Assistance

Social assistance (Sozialhilfe) helps all persons in financial emergencies in Switzerland. It covers the minimum cost of living. Counseling is offered in addition to financial support. The objective is that persons regain economic independence as quickly as possible. Social assistance is not available to persons who receive sufficient financial aid for the cost of living, for example, unemployment benefits, pensions, wages, or support from relatives. Social assistance does not pay off debts. Debt must be repaid once sufficient financial means are available. Social assistance is funded by taxpayers.

Applying for Social Assistance

Persons wishing to apply for social assistance do so through the social services (Sozialdienst) in their community of residence. One must disclose income and assets so that social services can verify that requirements are met. The authorities determine the amount and type of support based on the individual's situation. Providing inaccurate or incomplete information is punishable. Social services may issue instructions or impose conditions. If these are not followed or met social services may reduce the financial help that is provided. Taking part in counseling is compulsory. Persons are obligated to make serious efforts to reduce their dependency on social assistance.

Winterhilfe "financial emergencies"

Winterhilfe - Winter aid alleviates the effects of poverty in the canton of Appenzell Ausserrhoden by easing tight household budgets and addressing emergencies with targeted assistance. It provides financial support to people in difficult financial situations.

Additional information (links, addresses, information sheets, brochures)

www.hallo-ar.ch/en/social-security/social-assistance