

# Guide

For tenants with migration background



englisch

*Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,*

*for tenants, there are certain behaviors and rules in Germany that everyone has to adhere. This guide provides hints and explanations to get an overview.*

*If you are looking for help and support on this topic, you will find a list on the last page of this guide with addresses for contact persons or advice centers.*

## 1. The lease and the transfer protocol

The lease (Mietvertrag) and the transfer protocol / hand-over certificate (Übergabeprotokoll) are important documents, because here all rights and obligations are regulated in the context of the tenancy. In the transfer protocol among others are the conditions of the apartment and the readings (meter) of the electricity, cold/ warm water and of the heating recorded. These are important to calculate correct bills of operating costs.

At the apartment handover you will receive the transfer protocol by the landlord. Check this transfer protocol for accuracy!

Please keep the transfer protocol and the lease contract, to check your rights and obligations at any time!

If you want to rent an apartment with cooperative shares or a deposit, this payment is a prerequisite for the conclusion of the lease. If you are a recipient of social benefits from the social and housing office (Sozial- und Wohnungsamt) or the job center (Jobcenter), you may submit an application for reimbursement of co-operative share or the deposit to the relevant authority. The granting of this benefit may take the form of a loan that means that the amount of money must be repaid to the office.



## 2. Registration and changes of address

---

Observe the legal obligation that you must report every move and change of address to different authorities. This ensures that you are reachable and receive important documents in the new apartment.

If you have not registered at the registration office (Einwohnermeldeamt) or at one of the "Bürgerbüros" within two weeks, you have to pay fines according to the 19th paragraph of Federal Registration Act (Bundesmeldegesetz).

From your landlord you will receive an **apartment donors confirmation (Wohnungsgeberbescheinigung)**, which you must submit to the registration office. You get an appointment in the "Bürgerbüro" on **www.magdeburg.de**.

### 2.1. Changes of the address by the public authorities

The authorities from whom you receive services are to be informed by you.

These include, for example:

- "Bürgerbüros" to change the address on your ID card / passport or your car registration
- social- and housing office (Sozial- und Wohnungsamt)
- the youth welfare office (Jugendamt)
- the job center (Jobcenter)
- the tax office (Finanzamt)

### 2.2. Change of address with other institutions

The new address should be communicated to anyone with whom you are in business or social contact.

This applies particularly to:

- money institutions / banks (Sparkasse, Postbank, Volksbank or others). If there is another financial institution near your new home, you can also apply to relocate your accounts to this bank.
- kindergarten and schools of your children
- employer
- lawyer
- telephone company, television and internet providers
- organisations, companies and institutions that you have a contractual obligation to pay to
- societies, sport clubs
- insurance companies, such as health insurance (Krankenkasse), liability insurance (Haftpflichtversicherung), car insurance (Kfz-Versicherung) etc.

### 2.3. Change of address to be reported to other current contracts

If you have phone or internet contracts, you should tell the relevant provider the new address.

### 2.4. Forwarding request at the post office

You can post a forwarding request at any office of the “Deutsche Post” or online. This has the advantage that any letter sent to your old address is automatically being forwarded to your new address.

This Service is **not** for free. For 6 months, this service costs 19,90 €, for 12 months, it costs 26,90 €.

Here is the link for the online application for the forwarding request:

**[www.nachsenden.info](http://www.nachsenden.info)**

## 3. Registrations

---

### 3.1. Electricity

Please register with an electricity provider. For this registration you will require the electricity meter reading that your landlord has noted in the transfer protocol. Some landlords, such as the WOB AU Magdeburg mbH will make this registration for you.

### 3.2. ARD ZDF Deutschlandradio Beitragsservice-TV license fee collectors

If you have a radio, a television, a PC and/or a mobile telephone, which has an access to the Internet, you must register with and pay license fees to the contributor. If you are collecting social services from job center (Jobcenter), social- and housing office (Sozial- und Wohnungsamt) or other services (for example BAföG, BAB), no fees will be charged, but you still need to register with the contributor. You can register with the collectorat at the registration office (Bürgerbüro). You will receive your exemption together with your notification of approval from the job center (Jobcenter) or the social- and housing office (Sozial- und Wohnungsamt).

More information you get on **[www.rundfunkbeitrag.de](http://www.rundfunkbeitrag.de)**.

### 3.3. Internet and TV

To get a connection to Internet and television you have to sign a separate and paid contract with one of the providers. You have to pay all costs that are regulated in the contract. For cancelling the contract take into consideration that there might be a period of notice.

### 3.4. Household and Liability insurance

A household insurance is important because it saves the inventory in the apartment. The inventory includes furnishings, basic commodity and consumer goods of the household. A household insurance covers damages by fire, tap water, storm, hail, burglary, robbery and vandalism. If there is a case of damage and there is no insurance coverage existing, you will have to pay all the arisen costs by yourself. You also should take out a private liability insurance. Like this, the liability risks that you have as a private person are covered in situations of everyday life.

To notice: **Who causes a damage, is fully liable for it!**

#### Important:

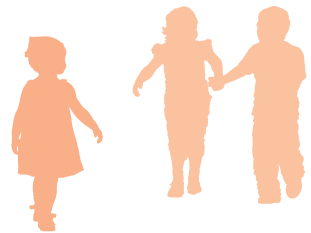
If you take out an insurance, please be aware of the term and period of notice.

## 4. Problems with the apartment

---

If there problems occur in the apartment or in the hallway, whether in case of defects or damage, please contact the landlord and ask him for help and support.

The contact data of your landlord is stored in the lease papers. If you have any special problems for example a burst of water mains, you will have to contact your landlord/ emergency service. For especial emergencies like these, there is mostly a list with emergency telephone numbers hanging in the hallway.



## 5. Structural changes, installations and conversions in the apartment

---

If you want to make structural changes like fittings or renovations (for example lay laminate or tiling work...) you will have to tell your landlord first and ask for his permission. There are requirements for the quality of the work to be observed during execution. Agreements are also made as to whether and which measures should be reversed when you move out.

## 6. Moving again

---

Please pay attention to **the period of notice** for the apartment which is **usually including three months** as well as the ones for electricity, telephone, television and Internet providers.

You can find these in the contracts with the respective providers.

If you are a recipient of support from the job center (Jobcenter) or the social- and housing office (Sozial- und Wohnungsamt), you must **submit the rental offer before the conclusion of the contract in office**. So that it can be tested for appropriateness. Then you can apply for reimbursement for rental and moving house.

If you do not have a permanent residence permit, possibly have a **DULDUNG** or an **Aufenthaltsgestattung**, you need a written permission from immigration office (Ausländerbehörde) and from the social- and housing office (Sozial- und Wohnungsamt).

The approval is available on request.

### Attention:

If you have concluded a lease without consent, it may lead to the refusal of the cost of the move and the rent.

## 7. House rules

---

Please note the house rules. In Germany, it is very important to adhere to certain rules when living together between you and your neighbors. Together with the lease you will receive the house rules, in which various rules are recorded.

### a) Avoid noise!



- Television and radio should only be listened to at low volume/not too loudly.
- During daily rest times (between 1 pm and 3 pm and between 10 pm and 7 am), please refrain from loud activities in your apartment (for example vacuuming, hammering nails or practicing music).
- Similarly, on Sundays and public holidays, please refrain from loud activities.
- If you want to have a party or a gathering of several visitors that continue past 10 pm, you should ask your neighbors for permission and inform them.

## b) Please keep public areas clean!

Every tenant should make sure that hallways, cellar and, if present, attics, yards etc. are kept clean. In some apartment buildings, cleaning is conducted by a cleaning firm. The resulting costs are split between all tenants. If tenants are responsible for cleaning public areas, the landlord should provide a cleaning schedule. Please ask your landlord or the neighbors which rules apply in your particular building.

In Germany **recycling** is very important. It protects the environment and reduces the cost of garbage disposal.

### Disposal household garbage:

The garbage should be sorted into the appropriate trash bin. There are four possible bins:



- **black** bin for general trash
- **yellow** bin for plastic
- **brown** bin for compost (like food)
- **blue** bin for paper and cardboard

Please make sure to always close the lids to reduce smell.

Avoid clogging the sewer and the toilet!



### Attention:

Food waste, textiles and hygiene products should not be disposed in the toilet!

### Disposal bulky waste:

For disposal of defective or no longer needed furniture, a separate application must be made to the Municipal Waste Management Magdeburg (städtischer Abfallwirtschaftsbetrieb Magdeburg).

Bulky waste can be picked up for free. **Twice a year up to 2 m<sup>3</sup> or once up to 4 m<sup>3</sup>.** From the registration to the collection of bulky waste it will take about 4 weeks.

The furniture may only be brought to the street on the pick-up date!

Applications can be found at:

**[www.magdeburg.de/Leben-in-Magdeburg/Umwelt/Abfall](http://www.magdeburg.de/Leben-in-Magdeburg/Umwelt/Abfall)**

### c) Please maintain safety!



- Please do not store anything in the public hallways to reduce the risk of accidents. Otherwise, you may be made liable for damages in case of injuries.



- Please lock the doors to the apartment buildings, so that unauthorized persons cannot gain access to the building.



- To reduce the risk of fire, barbecue on balconies and in the yard are forbidden.



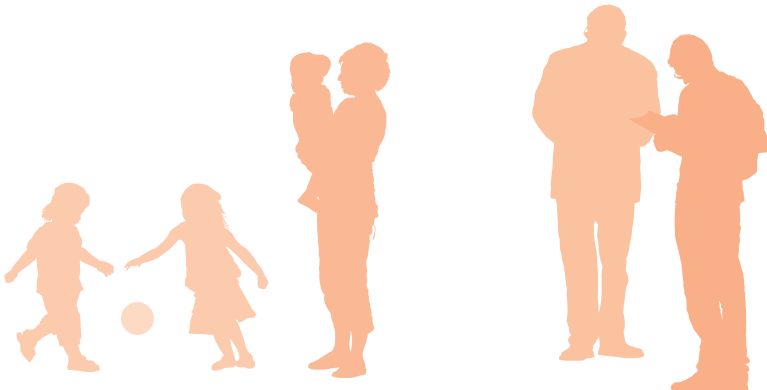
- Smoking in the public areas such as hallways, cellars, attics, etc. is not allowed.

### d) Antennas

If you want to receive the TV channels of your homeland via satellite, you will need a written permission of the landlord to install the satellite dish. The consent of the landlord may be limited to a condition, where and in which way you are allowed to set up a satellite receiver.

### e) Keeping pets

You may only keep pets (such as dogs, cats or exotic animals) if you have the permission of your landlord.





## 8. Saving Energy

---

*Energy should be used sparingly to save costs and protect the environment. For the consumption of electricity, water and heat you have to pay according to your individual consumption.*

### a) Heating and ventilation



- Please air out the apartment several times a day. When you open the window, turn down your heating to the “Frostschutz” setting (indicated by the star symbol). Please open your windows completely, since partially opened window may lead to mold.
- Every room in the apartment should be heated equally. Even rooms that are not used frequently should not be colder than 16 degrees Celsius. Only a uniform distribution of heat saves energy.

### b) Water

- Showering conserves more water than taking a bath.
- Do not let the faucet run continuously while you brush your teeth or shave.
- Washing the dishes under running water wastes a lot of water. Fill up the sink and wash the dishes in the sink instead. Do not thaw frozen foods under running water.

### c) Electricity

- Please switch on the lights only in rooms that you are currently occupying.
- The use of energy saving lamps is recommended.
- Switch off electronics completely (e.g. televisions, radios, computers, stereos, ...). Do not put them into standby mode, if they are not used. Switchable power boards or switchable sockets are very useful for this purpose.
- There are different methods to measure your energy consumption. If you consume more energy than expected, you may have to pay extra charges. The **additional payment (Nachzahlung)** of disproportionately high operating costs must be borne by you, even if you receive services from the job center or the social- and housing office.

## Definitions:

---

### **Betriebskostenabrechnung = operating costs:**

Operating costs are running costs (for example, water, heating, cleaning of the property and the road, building insurance, taxes, etc.) incurred by the owner of the house or the land. It has been agreed in the lease that the tenant monthly bears these costs as part of the rent. After one year it will be settled, in which amount the tenant has caused operating costs. The result is displayed in the operating costs statement. If the tenant consumes more than he has paid, he will have to repay money. A credit will be refunded.

### **Versicherungen = insurances:**

The insured person pays a regular amount of money to the insurance company. As a result, the insurance guarantees a settlement of claims in the event of damage.

Examples: private liability insurance, household insurance

### **Genossenschaftsanteil = cooperative share:**

The cooperative is a special company form. To become a member of a cooperative, a cooperative share must be acquired. Depending on the size of the apartment, several cooperative shares are to be acquired.

### **Kaution = deposit:**

As a deposit, the rental security is referred to, which can fall back to the landlord, if the tenant does not meet his rent or damage obligations. The deposit usually has to be paid before the keys are handed over.

### **Mietvertrag = lease:**

In Germany, a rental agreement is a mutual contract for the temporary release of use against payment, by which one party (the landlord) agrees to grant the other party (the tenant) the use of the rented, while the tenant's consideration in the payment of the agreed rent exists.

### **Übergabeprotokoll = transfer protocol:**

A transfer protocol is a written record of the condition of a rental property. The certificate is given to the tenant when moving in or to the landlord when moving out. It serves to record damage caused by the tenant or existing defects of the apartment when moving in or out. So it is possible to prevent any discrepancies regarding the condition of the rental property during the transfer.

### **Zählerstand = meter reading:**

To record the consumption of electricity, water, heat, etc., the respective meters are to be read. These are usually in the cellar of the house or in the bathroom (in the case of water, for example).

**Wohnungsgeberbestätigung = apartment donors confirmation:**

The apartment donors confirmation is an necessary document for the registration in the registration office (Einwohnermeldeamt, Bürgerbüro). You will get this from the landlord if you sign the lease.

**ARD ZDF Deutschlandradio:**

This is a public service broadcaster, which requires a defined contribution from the citizen for every household.

**Kündigungsfrist = period of notice:**

The period of notice is the period of time between the termination and the effected end of the contractual relationship.

**2. Edition / September 2018 © All rights reserved**

This project is sponsored by Ministerium für Inneres und Sport Sachsen-Anhalt.

**Edited by:**

Landeshauptstadt Magdeburg | Sozial- und Wohnungsamt | Abt. Zuwanderung  
 Caritasverband für das Bistum Magdeburg e.V. | Interkulturelles Beratungs- und Begegnungszentrum  
 Wohnungsbaugesellschaft Magdeburg mbH  
 Wohnungsbaugenossenschaft Magdeburg-Stadtfeld eG  
 Wohnungsbaugenossenschaft Otto von Guericke eG  
 MWG-Wohnungsgenossenschaft eG Magdeburg

**Copyright / Performance Protection Law**

The published information and the provided information are subject to german copyright and performance law. Any kind of duplication, processing, distribution, storage and any kind of recovery out of the limits of copyright law requires the prior written consent of the respective rightholder. The unauthorized copying/ saving from provided information is not permitted and punishable by law.

# Where can I get help? / important addresses:

---

## Advice and information:

**Caritasverband für das Bistum Magdeburg e.V.**  
**Interkulturelles Beratungs- und Begegnungszentrum**  
Karl-Schmidt-Str. 5c  
39104 Magdeburg  
Tel.: 0391 408 05 14 oder 0391 408 05 15

## Verbraucherzentrale Magdeburg

Breiter Weg 32  
39104 Magdeburg  
Tel.: 0391 543 9979

## Mieterverein Magdeburg

Otto-v.-Guericke-Str. 6  
39104 Magdeburg  
Tel.: 0391 561 91 55 oder 0391 541 01 09  
E-Mail: info@mvmd.de

## Bürgerbüros der Stadt Magdeburg

Bürgerbüro Mitte: Leiterstr. 2A  
Bürgerbüro Ost: Tessenowstr. 15  
Bürgerbüro Süd: Salbker Chaussee 67  
Bürgerbüro West: Bruno-Beye-Ring 50  
Bürgerbüro Nord: Lübecker Str. 32

## Debt counseling agencies for rental debts or energy debts:

### Sozial- und Wohnungsamt Magdeburg

Wilhelm-Höpfner-Ring 4  
39116 Magdeburg  
Tel. 0391 540 34 08

### Deutscher Paritätischer Wohlfahrtsverband

Wienerstr. 2  
39108 Magdeburg  
Tel.: 0391 629 33 73

### Internationaler Bund e.V. Magdeburg

Walther-Rathenau-Str. 30  
39104 Magdeburg  
Tel.: 0391 739 10 89

### AWO Kreisverband Magdeburg e.V.

Thiemstr. 12  
39104 Magdeburg  
Tel.: 0391 406 80 31

## Applications for the assumption of moving house and rental costs:

### Jobcenter Landeshauptstadt Magdeburg

Otto-v.-Guericke-Str. 12 a  
39104 Magdeburg

### Sozial- und Wohnungsamt Magdeburg

Wilhelm-Höpfner-Ring 4  
39116 Magdeburg  
Tel.: 0391 540 34 08

## Furniture and household service:

### AQB gGmbH

Morgenstr. 10  
39124 Magdeburg  
Tel.: 0391 72 72 60

### GISE

Schönebecker Str. 56  
39104 Magdeburg  
Tel.: 0391 40 95 10 7

## Apartments / flats:

### WOBAU – Wohnungsbörse

Breiter Weg 117 a  
39104 Magdeburg  
Tel.: 0391 610 44 44

### Wohnungsbaugenossenschaft

**Otto von Guericke eG**  
Scharnhorststr. 8/9  
39130 Magdeburg  
Tel.: 0391 726 12 00

### Wohnungsbaugenossenschaft

**Magdeburg-Stadtfeld eG**  
Peter-Paul-Str. 32  
39106 Magdeburg  
Tel.: 0391 568 49 10

### MWG-Wohnungsgenossenschaft eG

**Magdeburg**  
Letzlinger Str. 5  
39106 Magdeburg  
Tel.: 0391 569 84 44

More information can be found on the online page of the migration site at:

[www.willkommen-in-magdeburg.de](http://www.willkommen-in-magdeburg.de)