

Information for Refugees and Migrants

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"Asylkreis Schwalmatal" together with the Catholic and Protestant Churches want to help you to get a better orientation in this place.

Here you find some information which will help you, who you can turn to and whatever else is important for living together well in Schwalmatal.

The local authorities in Schwalmatal are responsible for your accommodation and the payment of money for your upkeep. The address is: Schwalmatal-Waldniel, Markt 20 (town hall). You will find the responsible personnel in rooms 110 and 111.

If you are ill and need to see a doctor, please go to the town hall, rooms 213 or 214. Here you will get a sickness certificate, with which you can go and see a general practitioner. If you need to see a specialist, you will be given a "Überweisung" (referral) by your general practitioner. This you will have to take to the town hall, room 110 or 111. Often you will be given permission straight away but it is also possible that it has to be investigated first if the treatment is necessary. Should you fall ill after 18:00 hrs, on Wednesdays from 13:00 hrs or on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays you will have to take a bus to Viersen, Hoserkirchweg 63. Here you will find the emergency surgery (Notdienstpraxis) right next to the hospital. If you should have to go to hospital for further treatment and cannot get there because of your injury or illness the doctor will give you a "Krankenwagenschein" (ambulance certificate). You then have to dial 02162 19222 and you will be taken to hospital by ambulance. In case of an emergency, meaning danger of life (for instance bleeding, loss of consciousness, circulatory collapse, strong chest pain) please call 112. An emergency doctor will pick you up with an ambulance.

When you have found work, you may unfortunately not work for the first three months of your stay in Germany. After three months your future employer can apply in "Ausländeramt" for a work permit for this particular job. The processing will take about six weeks. Then you will find out if you are allowed to work. If you have been in Germany more than 15 months, you do not need to put in an application anymore. However the "Ausländeramt" can confer an unlimited ban on employment at any time. Always remember to inform the town hall, room 213 or 214, when you work and have earnings. Your income reduces the money you receive from the social services. Should you not declare it, you can be charged with an offence and punished accordingly.

If you travel by bus or train you need a valid ticket. It is very important that you stamp your ticket on the bus immediately. In the train station you can find the machines for stamping

your ticket down in the passage way before going onto the platform. Advice: buy a four-trip-ticket instead of four single ones because it is cheaper.

Children must go to school. By law there is an obligation for teenagers up to the age of 18 to attend vocational school. Smaller children can attend a playschool. Both institutions are important for your children, because they will usually learn German quickly and make friends.

To live in this society it is important that you observe some rules. Please avoid noise and disturbances of all kind. In flats and houses it is very important that there is silence from 22:00 hrs so that everybody can sleep.

It is your responsibility to keep your room, the hallways and the house surroundings clean. Please make sure that in particular the kitchens(here especially the cooker) as well as showers and toilets are always clean. Everyone is responsible for cleaning up his or her own messes!

Energy and water are very expensive in Germany. Tapwater is drinking water . To save resources and protect nature we expect you to avoid waste.

Please air your rooms regularly several times a day to avoid the build- up of mould and to save energy. For this open the windows completely only for a few minutes.

Please avoid long showers! Do not hang any washing on the radiators for drying. This costs a lot of energy and the rooms will get damp. Whenever the weather allows dry your washing outside.

In Germany we separate our rubbish. Paper and cardboard must be put into the blue bin or in special containers, glass only in special containers. Please separate white, green and brown glass. Packaging belongs into the yellow bin or in bags that you can get free of charge at the "Bürgerservice" in the town hall. The remaining rubbish belongs in the grey bin. Please dispose leftover food immediately and make sure you always close the lid of the bin in order not to attract any vermin. Advice: a lot of plastic bottles and cans are returnable bottles. You will get a refund when you take them back to the shops.

When you have a bike please be considerate in traffic, and teach your children to do so as well. Always ride on the right side of the road, watch out whose right of way it is and make sure that brakes and bike bell are in functioning order. The front and rear lights have to be working when riding in darkness. Children up to the age of 8 are not allowed to ride on the road, they have to stay on the pavement.

Men and women have equal rights in Germany. People who live on their own, families and couples with or without marriage certificate - there are lots of different ways to live in Germany. Women make their own decisions and move within society and profession with the same self-determination as men.

In Germany it is forbidden to hit children.

When you have an appointment at your doctor's surgery oder any public authority you have to be on time. You must not be late. This is especially important when you have started work.

You will be visited by volunteers who are part of "Asylkreis" in irregular intervals. If you have any problems or questions (for example visits to doctors or public authorities, schools or playschools, learning German, translations, questions in connection with your right of residence etc.) ask us. We will try to help you!

Your "Asylkreis Schwalmtal"