

New social compensation law (“Soziales Entschädigungsrecht”)



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Ministerium für Arbeit,
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Further information can be found at: bih.de/ser



5 Questions and answers ... on social compensation

Anyone who suffers damage to their health for which the Federal Republic of Germany bears special responsibility is entitled to benefits under social compensation law (“Soziales Entschädigungsrecht”). The relevant law has been revised and now benefits many more people.



1 What is social compensation?

Social compensation supports people who have suffered a health impairment for which the state bears a special degree of responsibility. These include certain acts of physical or psychological violence, the subsequent effects of the two World Wars, events in connection with the performance of civilian service and vaccination injuries following publicly recommended immunisation efforts. Eligible persons should be given the opportunity to quickly return to their everyday lives or receive appropriate financial and health support.

2 Who can claim benefits?

Injured parties, their relatives and surviving dependants, as well as close relatives of injured parties are entitled to assert a claim. So-called “victims of shock” (“Schockschadensopfer”) relating to violent offences are also entitled to claim. These are people who, for example, have suffered damage to their health as a result of witnessing a traumatic event.

3 Which benefits can be utilised?

Benefits in kind, monetary benefits and other services can be utilised. Benefits in kind are provided, in particular, in the area of medical treatment. These include, for example, orthopaedic or dental services and medicine. The amount of any cash benefits will depend on the individual case.

4 What is rapid assistance?

Pension benefits shall be paid without taking income and assets into account. Other benefits serve as a source of income and maintenance replacement, and, therefore, depend on individual income and assets. One service provided by way of social compensation is “Case Management” as a form of rapid assistance. In principle, social compensation is based on the respective needs.

The application process for benefits in the form of social compensation can take several months. In order to be able to help those affected quickly regardless of this point, two quick sources of rapid assistance have been created. On the one hand, these provide immediate help in an outpatient trauma centre. On the other hand, those affected are supported by Case Management when applying for social compensation benefits, as well as in further administrative procedures on request.

5 How can benefits be claimed?

In order to receive social compensation benefits, certain requirements must be met. In principle, the underlying event must have caused damage to health, and this must have led to a health impairment/condition. On the other hand, an application must be submitted to the competent social compensation organisation in the respective federal state. Rapid assistance can initially also be utilised without an application.



If you would like to know more: you are welcome to contact your competent social compensation organisation. Further information can be found on the BIH website → bih.de/ser

