

Text 15 – Social Welfare

Social welfare secures the existence of people in need, supports their financial and personal independence and allows social and professional integration. According to article 115 of the Swiss Federal Constitution the cantons are responsible for social welfare. The Confederation only plays a role in the distribution of social welfare for asylum seekers.

The cantonal welfare law determines the type of assistance you can receive. Only citizens with a permanent place of residence in Switzerland and who cannot cover their own basic living costs are entitled to social welfare. Immigrants without formal residence permit have no right to social welfare. However they can apply for emergency assistance.

The amount of welfare depends on the incomes and expenses of each household.

Basic needs include **living, housing and health costs**.

If you feel that you're not able to make ends meet, talk to the Social Welfare Office in your municipality. They will help you find out if you are entitled to social welfare.

People who apply for social welfare are obliged to inform the authorities about their income, assets and family circumstances. Every change should be reported to the Social Welfare Service. False statements can lead to reduction or suspension of social welfare.

Find more information about social welfare on the website of the Swiss Conference of Social Welfare skos.ch or migraweb.ch.