

Rules applying to social assistance, 2022

Link to relevant page:

<https://nhwstat.org/welfare/other-social-benefits/financial-social-assistance-or-cash-benefits>

Edition: 19-12-2023

Country	Denmark	Faroe Islands	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Sweden
National terminology	Kontanthjælp	Fyribils upphaldsveiting	Utkomststöd	N/A	Økonomisk sosialhjelp	Ekonomiskt bistånd
Payable as a fixed amount in the entire country?	Yes	Yes	Yes ⁴⁾	No ⁶⁾	No ⁷⁾	No ⁸⁾
Calculated individually by local authorities?	No	No	Partly ⁵⁾	Yes	Yes	Yes
Affected by housing costs?	No ¹⁾	Yes ³⁾	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Taxable?	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Payable as a supplement to other social benefits?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Payable as a supplement to income from work?	No ²⁾	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Source

Denmark: Ministry of Employment

Faroe Islands: Ministry of Social Affairs and Culture

Finland: Ministry of Social Affairs and Health

Iceland: N/A

Norway: Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion

Sweden: National Board of Health and Welfare

Notes

1) The amount of the cash benefit does not depend on rent costs. Cash assistance recipients with high net costs for rent are granted a special allowance, e.g. when the rent, following deduction of housing benefits, exceeds the fixed amount limits.

2) Social assistance (cash assistance) cannot generally be granted to supplement low income from work. Rather, it is awarded in response to a life event, e.g. unemployment or dissolution of marriage or cohabitation.

3) Single parents with 3 or more children and persons with major psychological or physical hindrance can obtain additional support.

4) Each year, a "national standard" is set that Kela apply when calculating financial social assistance. Local authorities may also award preventive and supplementary financial social assistance on an individual basis.

5) From 2017 applications for social assistance should be addressed to Kela, which decides whether the client is eligible for basic social assistance. Local authorities are responsible for granting supplementary and preventive social assistance.

6) In Reykjavik, the maximum amount for single people aged over 18 is ISK 217 799; for co-habiting couples, ISK 348 476

7) The government has drawn up recommended guidelines that form the basis for local authorities' calculations.

8) National government sets a national standard each year for common subsistence expenses. In addition, individuals may be granted financial social assistance toward the payment of reasonable rent costs and certain other expenses.