

Expiry of a residence permit for stays abroad

A longer stay abroad can lead to the expiry of your German residence permit. If you want to stay abroad for a longer period of time, please note the different time limits after which a residence permit expires and apply for a certificate of continued validity of your residence permit in good time.

Competent Department

- [Migrationsamt](#)
- [Aufenthalt](#)

Basic information

What happens to your residence permit when you leave Germany?

General information

Depending on which residence permit you have, different rules apply as to when your residence permit expires (becomes invalid). The expiry of residence permits is governed by Section 51 of the Residence Act.

Important for all residence permits:

- If you already know before you leave the country that you will be staying abroad longer than permitted, please submit an application to your immigration office beforehand.
- If you stay abroad for longer due to military service, your residence permit will not expire if you return to Germany within 3 months of completing your military service. You must provide proof of this.

Residence permit

Your residence permit will expire 6 months after you leave Germany.

A longer period is possible if you submit an application beforehand and your stay abroad is in Germany's interests. Examples

- As a development worker abroad.
- Family members of German diplomats abroad.
- Students spending one to two guest semesters abroad (§ 16 Residence Act).
- As an employee of an international company based in Germany.

EU Blue Card

- The EU Blue Card becomes invalid 12 months after you leave Germany.
- This also applies to family members with a residence permit for family reasons.

Settlement permit

- Your settlement permit expires 6 months after you leave Germany.
- Exception:
 - You are at least 60 years old and
 - have lived in Germany for at least 15 years.

In this case, the settlement permit only becomes invalid after 12 months. This also applies to your spouse if they are also at least 60 years old and have a settlement permit.

- A settlement permit can also remain valid for longer if:
 - You have lived in Germany legitimately for at least 15 years, your livelihood is secure and there is no interest in your deportation.
 - You are married or in a registered partnership with a person who has German citizenship.

The immigration authority will issue a certificate for this (§ 51 Para. 2 Residence Act). This certificate may be required for re-entry to Germany.

EU permanent residence permit

- The EU permanent residence permit expires when you leave Germany:
 - After 6 years if you are within the EU.
 - After 12 months if you are outside the EU, in Denmark or Ireland.
 - After 24 months if you previously had an EU Blue Card and are outside the EU, in Denmark or Ireland.
- The permit can also remain valid for longer if:
 - You have lived in Germany legitimately for at least 15 years, your livelihood is secure and there is no interest in your deportation.
 - you are married or in a registered partnership with a person who has German citizenship.

The immigration authority will issue a certificate in accordance with § 51 Para. 2 of the Residence Act. This may be required for re-entry.

Persons entitled to asylum and recognized refugees

- If you are entitled to asylum or have been recognized as a refugee by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, your residence permit will not expire upon departure as long as you are in possession of a valid travel document for refugees issued by a German authority.
- If you leave the federal territory and the responsibility for issuing a travel document for foreigners is transferred to another state, you are no longer entitled to the renewed issue of a residence title in the federal territory.

Requirements

The requirements vary depending on the residence permit. Please contact the responsible office.

What documents do I need?

- Proof of your means of subsistence
- Notification of the reason for your extended stay abroad

Procedure

If you wish to stay abroad for longer than your residence permit allows, you can apply for a certificate from the Foreigners' Registration Office.

Please note

1. a certificate in accordance with § 51 Para. 1 No. 7 of the Residence Act (AufenthG) can only be issued if your stay abroad is in the interests of Germany.

Examples of this are

- Working as a development worker abroad
- Family members of German diplomats abroad
- One to two guest semesters at a foreign university for students who are enrolled at a German university (in accordance with Section 16 of the Residence Act)
- Work assignment for an internationally active company based in Germany

2. a certificate in accordance with § 51 Para. 2 of the Residence Act (AufenthG) can only be issued to persons with a settlement permit or an EU permanent residence permit if:

- You have resided in Germany for at least 15 years, your livelihood is secure and there are no grounds for deportation.
- You live in a marital partnership with a German citizen and there is no reason for deportation.

Legal bases

- [§ 51 AufenthG](#)

What deadlines must be paid attention to?

Please apply in good time (at least 8 weeks) before your planned departure for a certificate that your residence permit will not expire or that you may stay abroad for longer. You will probably need the original certificate for your re-entry.

How long does it take to process

Depending on the individual case.

What are the costs?

18,00 EUR Issue of a certificate in accordance with § 51 AufenthG