

Is someone allowed to open your mail?

No, only if you allow it. Opening your mail without your permission is a crime. In this case, you can file a police report.

Are the shelter workers allowed to enter your room without your permission?

No. When you are in the room, they must knock and wait until you give this person verbal permission to enter your room. When you are not there and something must be repaired, you must be informed in advance. Someone may enter your room without definitive agreement only in cases of emergency, such as the fire workers or the police.

Is anyone allowed to search your wardrobe or your belongings?

Only the police is allowed to do so when they have a search warrant. When something else is written in your house rules, please let us know. We will then ask a lawyer to review the house rules.

What can you do if a shelter manager or other shelter employees violate your rights?

If shelter managers or other shelter employees do not follow the rules, you should not tolerate it. There are many possibilities to file a complaint and to demand your rights: through the *Sozialamt*, the Integration Commissioner of the district, or the State of Brandenburg. We recommend to turn to a good advice centre. You can get addresses from the Refugee Council or the Integration Commissioner.

Flüchtlingsrat Brandenburg

Rudolf-Breitscheid-Str. 164
14482 Potsdam
Tel. 0331 – 716 499
info@fluechtlingsrat-brandenburg.de
www.fluechtlingsrat-brandenburg.de



The Commissioner for the Integration of Immigrants of the Federal State of Brandenburg

Prof. Dr. Karin Weiss
Heinrich-Mann-Allee 103
14473 Potsdam
Tel. 0331 – 866 5900
integrationsbeauftragte@masf.brandenburg.de



What can Refugee Shelter Managers do?

What do they make decisions about?

What are their tasks?

Information by the
Flüchtlingsrat Brandenburg
(Refugee Council of
Brandenburg)



What are the tasks of shelter managers?

They should organize living in the refugee shelter, and not more. They are not the 'boss'. In many refugee shelters, the shelter managers are also social workers. They are paid to help you when you need something in addition to social help, such as clothing, or if you would like to apply for an apartment.

Do shelter managers have power over your asylum status?

No. The shelter managers have nothing to do with your process of asylum seeking. The decision about your asylum application is made by the *Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (BAMF)*: the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees in Eisenhüttenstadt. If your application is refused by BAMF, you can appeal in court. For the court appeal, you need a good lawyer! BAMF or the court decides on your residence permit, not the *Ausländerbehörde* (Foreign Affairs Office), and certainly not the shelter managers.

Do the shelter managers have an influence on your *Duldung* and deportation?

As long as you have a *Duldung*, the *Ausländerbehörde* (Foreign Affairs Office) will try to deport you. For this, they need information about you. Sometimes the *Ausländerbehörde* tries to get this information from the shelter managers. But it is not the shelter managers who decide about *Duldung* and deportation. You can defend yourself against the wrong decision of the *Ausländerbehörde* (Foreign Affairs Office). Contact a *Flüchtlingsberatungsstelle* (Advice Centre for Refugees).

Do the shelter managers decide how much money you get?

No. You receive *Sozialhilfe* (social assistance) from the *Sozialamt* (Social Assistance Office). The *Sozialamt* may instruct the shelter managers to pay out social assistance in the home. But it is always the *Sozialamt* which decides how much money you get, not the shelter managers. If you have a *Duldung* and the *Ausländerbehörde* (office of foreign affairs) accuses you of doing too little for your deportation, the *Sozialamt* can reduce the amount of your social assistance. The shelter managers have nothing to do with this decision.

Do the shelter managers decide if you get an apartment?

In many refugee shelters the shelter managers are also social workers. They are paid to help you, for example, if you want to apply for an apartment. The shelter managers do not decide if you get an apartment, this decision is made by the *Sozialamt*.

Do the shelter managers decide if you get a job?

The shelter managers distribute the 1-Euro-jobs in the refugee shelter. They must distribute these jobs fairly among all the residents. These jobs are paid by the *Sozialamt*. There are also 1-Euro-jobs outside the refugee shelter. You can receive information about these from the *Sozialamt*, and it is best to apply for them in writing.

To which accommodation rules must the shelter managers adhere?

The shelter managers are responsible for your accommodations. They must follow the laws, and this also means the „minimum conditions for the operation of community shelters.“

- They may decide who lives with whom in the same room. But they should think of the „national, ethnic, cultural and religious characteristics“ in making this decision.
- If possible, not more than four people should live in the same room. When more people live together in the same room, but another room is empty, one can make a complaint.
- Every person is entitled to 6 m² of living area.
- Every person should have a bed, their own place in the wardrobe, a place at the table and a chair.
- It must be possible to lock the room.
- There must be separate showers and toilets for men and women. It must be possible to lock the toilets and showers while using them.