

Meine Arbeiterkammer My Chamber of Labour



Help and advice

  YouTube

AK-Hotline ☎ 05 7799-0
Meine AK. My Chamber of Labour.
Always ready to help.

AK 
www.akstmk.at



Dear colleagues,

There are situations in life when we are faced with questions that are not easy to answer. This brochure describes nine typical life situations and how your Chamber of Labour can help you in each of them. Some situations may be familiar to you. Look through the brochure, find out what you want to know and make use of our free services.

A blue ink signature in a cursive style, appearing to read 'W. Bartosch'.

Director
Dr. Wolfgang Bartosch

A blue ink signature in a cursive style, appearing to read 'J. Pessler'.

President
Josef Pessler

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It's my 14th birthday! School or job?

14 is the age when you have to take far-reaching decisions for your future life. The educational consultants of the Styrian Chamber of Labour are here to help you.

Are you practical or a theorist? Do you have artistic or other interests? After your 8th year of schooling, you have various options that differ greatly in length of training and qualification. The educational guidance team can help you find your way through the qualification jungle. A test of your interests will tell you a lot about your strengths and preferences and professional advice helps young people choose the best option for their future.

School until 18

Some young people drop out of school or vocational training, take up unskilled jobs or withdraw entirely from the educational and training system and the job market. The start you make in working life will influence the rest of your life.



This is why training until the age of 18 is compulsory. We do all we can – together with the parents – to find the right way for every young boy and girl. The Chamber of Labour helps.

School-leaving examination – what now?

After the end of secondary schooling it is important to choose the option that is right for you. The AK Interest test provides valuable information about personal strengths and preferences. If you decide to go to university – the Chamber of Labour can help you, for example with information if you need to finance your studies with a job.



Useful brochures at akstmk.at (available in German only)

- Cash tips for pupils, apprentices and students
- What to do after high school?
- Compulsory internships, holiday jobs
- Apprenticeships, vocational school



A safe start into working life

Not every beginning needs to be hard. The Chamber of Labour is here to help when you start working, change jobs or lose your job.

It is a long way from the application letter and job interview to your first day at work. The Chamber of Labour offers targeted training courses for schools where young people learn how to prepare good job applications and what you need to do to be convincing at the assessment centre or job interview.

Check your contract

You got the job? Check your contract! Many employment contracts are full of unfavourable provisions. We recommend having your contract checked by our experts. Young people enjoy special protection in the labour world. Holiday jobs, compulsory internships, permissible working hours and overtime – Your Chamber of Labour knows all the rules, your rights and duties.



Kanizaj

I want to change jobs

Are you unhappy in your job and would like to change jobs? The Chamber of Labour can help. The free interest test and detailed consultation point to new objectives. We also provide information on training options and training promotion schemes.

Job loss

Losing your job may be an opportunity for re-orientation. But first it is important to find out where you want to go to avoid any financial risk of the transition. The Chamber of Labour helps you here and with other questions concerning the Employment Service.



Qualification and further training made easy

- 2 training vouchers to the amount of 60 € per year that you can use at VHS and bfi
- € 1,000 education purse help for young parents
- VHS adult education centre: 5000 courses attended by nearly 70,000 people
- bfi: the best training



What to do? My employer owes me money and does not pay.

Basic pay, extra wages, overtime: the AK labour law experts help if your employer owes you money. If needed, courts are involved free of charge.

e.g. Achim is furious. The construction site labourer needs every cent but his company pays only the basic wage. All he gets is empty promises whenever he claims extra wages and pay for overtime worked.

Record the hours worked

The labour law experts of the Chamber of Labour know that this is not an uncommon situation. Achim did everything right: he noted down all the hours worked and asked the Chamber of Labour for help. The missing amount was precisely calculated and a letter sent to his employer demanding payment.



Representation in court

The letter sent by the Chamber of Labour did not help either, and so the matter was taken to the Labour Court. Only then did Achim get the money he was entitled to. All members of the Chamber of Labour are entitled to free representation in court. It is also very important to check the final settlement when employment ends – for any vacation not consumed or other claims.



More help for members

- Consulting in all issues of labour law
- Check of employment contracts
- Ill-treatment or mobbing
- No agreement on leave taking
- Your boss issues unreasonable instructions, e.g. with regard to working hours
- Support in unjustified dismissal



I'll be a parent soon.

Our best wishes! The great news of a baby on the way often brings questions too about your private and work future. The Chamber of Labour has all the information you need.

A lot changes for expecting parents. Pregnant women enjoy special protection at the workplace. They cannot be expected to lift heavy things or work overtime. Please note that legal protection for expecting mothers applies only after the employer has been informed about the pregnancy.

Maternity allowance

A woman must not work the last eight weeks before the expected date of birth and up to eight weeks after birth. During this period she receives maternity allowance. Once the baby is born it must be registered. The Chamber of Labour has a checklist with all the steps that need to be taken.

Parental leave and child allowance

How long should I stay home with my baby?
Some weeks after the birth of your baby is the right time to notify your company about your decision. A € 1,000



bonus is paid if the partner also takes parental leave of similar length. Working fathers have a legal claim on the "Papamonat", i.e. a one-month parental leave. A father may take his "Papamonat" while the mother is prohibited from working. During this period he is eligible to receive a "family time bonus" of about 700 Euro.

Returning to work slowly

The parental part-time scheme makes it easier to coordinate work and childcare. If you had a long employment relation with a larger-sized company before your pregnancy, you are entitled to reduced working hours when you return to work. If not, you need to reach an agreement about a possible parental part-time scheme with your employer.

Information breakfast

The AK Women's Department holds regular "information breakfast" meetings in Graz and in the regions where young parents learn useful tips about maternity protection, parental leave, child allowance and re-entry. Check the Chamber of Labour's website for information and download material, such as form sheets and a brochure with tax advice for parents.



I would like to retire. What steps do I take?

Many years of hard work have worn you out? You cannot imagine working further? The experts at the Chamber of Labour know what steps to take.

Have you suffered an illness or accident and no longer feel fit to work? Consult our experts. Pension law is constantly changing and has many pitfalls. The Chamber of Labour is always up-to-date with the legal situation and knows whether you are a candidate for an invalidity or occupational disability pension.

Rehabilitation and re-qualification

People born in 1964 or later are only entitled to unlimited invalidity or occupational disability pensions. If your invalidity or incapacity to work is only temporary, there is support for rehabilitation and re-training.



Early retirement

Have you worked many hard years and still have some years to go until regular retirement? Is there any option to reduce your working hours or even retire early? The experts of the Chamber of Labour can help you and provide clarification



Additional important consulting services:

- Pension account
- Normal old-age pension
- Benefits for unemployed people
- Minimum income
- Paid rehabilitation and curative stays at health spas



My grandparents need nursing care. What steps to take?

Whether it's short-term or long-term support: family members of people needing nursing assistance need a lot of information. The Chamber of Labour can help.

It can happen so suddenly: Dad has a stroke, or grandma falls and injures herself. This leaves their family members with many open questions. The (grand) parent will come home from the hospital soon, but at home there is nobody who can look after them.

Or it may happen slowly. The partner, mother or father starts to forget things. Professional assistance will be required at some point. But how to organize it?



The Chamber of Labour knows

Detailed information about nursing care:

- Nursing at home with the help of mobile nursing staff
- Short-term or temporary nursing
- Day care, assisted living, etc.
- 24/7 nursing care
- Support if substitute care is needed

Tag der Pflege/Care Days

The Chamber of Labour regularly holds information events in Graz and the regions where providers of mobile nursing services are presented, information and legal advice is shared and nursing family members learn useful tips for lifting patients without injuring themselves.

Healthcare and social professions

The Chamber of Labour is the first contact for employees of the healthcare and social professions. It provides information in issues of labour law and organises regular free training courses that count towards the mandatory further qualification requirement.



Saving taxes. How does it work?

Get your money back from the tax office by filing your tax assessment for salaried employees. Even if you do not pay any wage tax. The Chamber of Labour can help you.

50 million euros: This is the amount that remains unclaimed every year, because one third of all Styrian salaried employees do not file their tax assessment form. Even though it is not difficult. If you need help, contact us.

Tax saving days

Every spring, the Chamber of Labour organizes tax saving days where experts tour Styria to help people on site fill in their tax assessment form. In the majority of cases money is paid out.

Austrian law provides that the employer withholds the wage tax from each wage payment and transfers it to the tax authorities without taking special circumstances into account. When you file your tax assessment form



you can claim special expenses (such as the creation of housing, donations), advertising expenses (e.g. training course, trade union/works council contributions), exceptional costs (illness, disability) and childcare costs.



AK subsidies at a glance:

- 2 € 60 “Bildungsscheck” qualification vouchers/year
- € 1,000 education purse help for parents on parental leave
- € 200/year training allowance for healthcare and social professions
- € 250/year school allowance
- € 250/year study allowance
- up to € 650 for the promotion of academic work
- € 220 support for the vocational matriculation examination
- up to € 389/year commuter allowance of AK and the Styrian government
- up to € 700 interest allowance for the creation of housing
- “Digi-Bonus”: up to € 300/year for digital trainings and qualification measures



Housing trouble. What steps to take?

Have you got problems understanding the details of your rental agreement or do you suspect you are paying too much for heat? 40 percent of all inquiries addressed to the consumer protection department of the Chamber of Labour refer to housing.

Housing is a basic need, but the roof over your head takes up a huge part of your income. The costs of living have increased significantly over the past few years, especially for less well-off families. No wonder that this is the number 1 issue where consumer protection experts are consulted.

Rent

Most cases refer to rented property. The consumer protection experts of the Chamber of Labour check the rental agreement before it is signed. Will you have to replace the broken heater or leaky windows yourself? The Chamber of Labour knows who will have to pay for



what and has helpful advice if you are afraid you will lose your security deposit.

Running and heating costs

Often there are disputes about the running and heating costs, both for rented and freehold accommodation. The experts of the Chamber of Labour know if the costs are justified and will clarify the matter with the property manager.

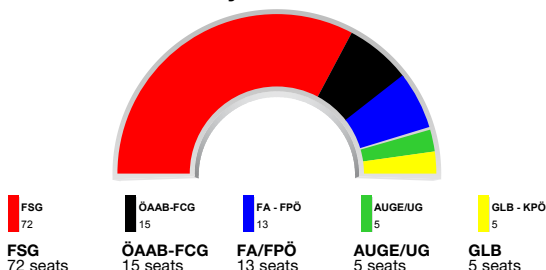
More help for members

- Goods purchased are not delivered or defective
- Comparison of loan offers
- Bank problems (e.g. high costs)
- The insurance does not pay
- Telephone or Internet bills are high
- The vacation was a disaster (flights cancelled)
- Check whether you can withdraw from a valid contract

Save money

If every penny counts check out the market research price surveys of the Chamber of Labour. The price of fuel, heating oil and pellets is regularly monitored, and other costs as well, e.g. the costs of heating service, rental cars or provident products.

The General Assembly



The 15 members of the Board of Directors:

President Josef Pessler (FSG)
 Vice-President Patricia Berger (FSG)
 Vice-President Alexander Lechner (FSG)
 Vice-President Gernot Acko (FSG)
 Vice-President Franz Endthaller (FSG)

Other members:

FSG: 7
 ÖAAB-FCG: 2
 FA/FPÖ : 1

My Chamber of Labour. How does it work?

The Chamber of Labour is more than a consultative body. The elected representatives and experts take care that politicians and society as a whole take the concerns of labour into account.

Every year we can help thousands of our members with our wide range of free, high-quality service; be it personally, over the phone or by e-mail. We offer help and assistance in many aspects of working life.

Parliament of Labour

The second major task besides the provision of services is to give a voice to the working people as specified by AK Law.

The 110 elected members of the General Assembly determine the general approach. Our members elect this "Parliament of Labour" from various political groups every five years.



Membership contribution

The mandatory membership in the Chamber of Labour is laid down by law. The Chamber of Labour is financed by a small contribution (0.5% tax deductible) that is withheld from the wage or salary. The use of the funds is strictly monitored.

Fundamentals

The Chamber of Labour employs highly qualified experts for service provision and fundamental work. They watch the local economy and the tax system carefully, point out problems such as unemployment and poverty and develop material to represent our members' interests.

Laws and bodies

The Chamber of Labour is entitled to be heard in the legislative process. It represents its members in more than 50 bodies, institutions, unions and associations. The Chamber of Labour is the strong voice of Styrian workers and employees in public, political and economic life.

Help for self-help on many channels

ZAK magazine, internet, presentations and brochures: The Chamber of Labour provides free tips on many channels to empower you - be it as a consumer, blue or white-collar worker or trainee.

- akstmk.at – updated daily, thousands of pages
- Facebook – the latest offers and campaigns
- YouTube – explanatory videos and information
- TV – the latest news
- Radio – expert advice in brief
- Brochures – free, covering many topics, order by mail or download them
- ZAK magazine – 7 editions/year provide the latest news from the working world, training and consumer protection



My ACard bonus

The ACard membership card is the key to many favourable offers for your spare time, travelling, culture and training. Check out the AK Journal supplement to ZAK magazine and the internet.



Recht haben – Recht bekommen

Die Arbeiterkammer macht den Unterschied, ob Sie Recht haben oder es auch bekommen. Egal ob ausstehendes Gehalt, Entlohnung für Überstunden oder andere berufliche Probleme: Die AK-ExpertInnen geben kompetent Auskunft und vertreten Sie im Ernstfall vor Gericht.

AK-Hotline ☎ 05 7799-0

AK. Gerechtigkeit muss sein.

AK 
www.akstmk.at

Issues of labour law	phone ext. 2475	arbeitsrecht@akstmk.at
Issues of social law	phone ext. 2442	sozialversicherungsrecht@akstmk.at
Information about economic policies and statistics	phone ext. 2501	wirtschaft@akstmk.at
Tax advice	phone ext. 2507	steuer@akstmk.at
Consumer protection	phone ext. 2396	konsumentenschutz@akstmk.at
Works Council issues and labour protection	phone ext. 2448	arbeitnehmerschutz@akstmk.at
Education, youth and corporate sports programmes	phone ext. 2427	bjb@akstmk.at
Hall rental	phone ext. 2267	saalverwaltung@akstmk.at
Brochure centre	phone ext. 2296	broschuerenzentrum@akstmk.at
President's Office/Press	phone ext. 2205	praesidium@akstmk.at
Marketing and Communications	phone ext. 2234	marketing@akstmk.at
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8160 Weiz, Birkfelder Straße 22	phone ext. 4400	weiz@akstmk.at
8740 Zeltweg (Murtal), Hauptstraße 82	phone ext. 4500	murtal@akstmk.at

AK-VOLKSHOCHSCHULE

Köflacher Gasse 7, 8020 Graz	phone ext. 5000	vhs@akstmk.at
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OTTO-MÖBES-AKADEMIE

Stiftingtalstraße 240, 8010 Graz	phone ext. 6000	omak@akstmk.at
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YOU MAY ALSO CONTACT YOUR TRADE UNION!