



Civic Integration in Westland



Civic integration (and benefits) in Westland

You are beginning your civic integration in Westland. The purpose of civic integration is to ensure that people from other countries learn the Dutch language as quickly as possible and to empower them to participate in Dutch life. We hope that you will quickly get used to it and soon be able to participate in life here.

Civic integration falls under the Civic Integration Act (Wet Inburgering). An important aspect of civic integration is finding paid work. This falls under the Participation Act. In this flyer, we will explain more about these laws. Please read this information carefully! Do you have any questions? Please contact your Integration Consultant.

Benefits: Are you not earning enough money or do not have enough savings? And are there no other ways to get money? Then paying for groceries or, for example, the rent can become difficult. In the Netherlands, you may be entitled to social assistance benefits. With these benefits, you receive an amount of money into your account each month so that you can pay your fixed costs.

Get in touch with
Westland Municipality

PHONE	14 0174
E-MAIL	info@gemeentewestland.nl
WEBSITE	www.gemeentewestland.nl
VISITING ADDRESS	Verdilaan 7, Naaldwijk
POSTAL ADDRESS	Postbus 150, 2670 AD Naaldwijk

Rights and obligations


Integration and social assistance benefits are subject to rules. Rules that we, as a municipality, have to follow and rules that you also have to follow. We call these 'rights and obligations'. The Municipality of Westland is happy to help you find paid work. That is our duty as a municipality and you have a right to this help. But this help also includes agreements that you must keep (obligations).

Your own plan

Every person and every situation is different. Civic integration is looked at on an individual basis. The rights and obligations can, therefore, differ per person. You will receive letters containing the choices and decisions made by the municipality. These are the 'beschikkingen' (decisions).

Your rights


1. A permanent contact person



During the integration process and when receiving benefits, your Integration Consultant is your permanent contact person. This means that you only have to tell your story once to the municipality. The consultant will assist you with your integration and benefits. Would you like to speak to your Integration Consultant? Make an appointment via telephone number 140174.

Please be on time for your appointments. Do you have to cancel an appointment? Then you must do so at least 24 hours in advance. For example: if you cannot make an appointment at 2 p.m. on Thursday then you must call your consultant before 2 p.m. on Wednesday to cancel the appointment.


2. Social assistance benefits (Participation Act)



Benefits are a monthly amount of money that you receive. With this money, you can pay for things like groceries, rent and housing costs, costs of (health) insurance, clothes and shoes. An employee of the Municipality of Westland will assess whether you are entitled to benefits.

You will receive a response to your application for benefits within a maximum of eight weeks. Do you need to provide additional information? If so, this will take longer. You will always receive a letter about this. If your application is approved, you will also receive a letter. This letter will state the date on which you will receive the benefits. You will receive the money at the end of each month. The municipality cannot pay your benefits any earlier.

3. Receiving money earlier



If you need money sooner, it is possible to receive an 'advance payment'. If your application is pending, you may receive this after 4 weeks. You must apply for this yourself. You will only receive money earlier if you have sent all the requested information. Also, it must be almost certain that you will actually receive benefits. Once the amount of your benefits has been determined, the amount you received earlier will be deducted from it. If it is decided that you are not entitled to benefits, you will have to repay the advance payment.

4. The amount of your benefits

The basic amount of benefits is the same throughout the Netherlands. The basic amount applicable to you will depend on your personal situation. For example: How many people do you live with in a house? The more people aged 21 or over living in your house, the lower your benefits will be. This is because you can then share the living expenses with these people.

Do you want to know the amount of your benefits? Then look at your benefits payment overview or ask your Integration Consultant.

The benefits for a single parent is the same as the benefits for a single person without children. However, as a single parent, you may be eligible for a higher allowance from the Tax and Customs Administration (child-related budget). You can apply for this extra allowance from the Tax and Customs Administration at www.toeslagen.nl.



5. Holiday allowance

In addition to your benefits, you are also entitled to a holiday allowance. This is an amount that is kept separate from your benefits each month. You will receive this amount in June or when your benefit payments stop.

Do you have other income from which you can also build up holiday allowance? If so, this will affect the amount of your benefits. Your payment overview will show the amount of your holiday allowance. It will also show you how much your benefits will be reduced because of this other income.

Do you have debts and is money being withheld from your benefits (a seizure or an attachment has been levied)? If so, your holiday allowance will be set aside for the creditors. You will then not receive any holiday allowance yourself.



6. Income

Benefits are always a supplement to your and/or your partner's incomes. It does not matter what type of income is involved. For example, a salary, alimony, a gift or benefits from another organisation. Your income will be supplemented up to the social assistance amount to which you are entitled.

Sometimes, you may be allowed to keep part of your income. For example, because the work increases your chances of finding employment.

Some sources of income have no effect on the amount of your benefits. This applies to child benefit, child-related budget, rent allowance and special assistance.





7. Assets

You may already have money in a savings account or other possessions of considerable value. We call these your assets. If you receive benefits, you are allowed to have a maximum amount of assets of your own. These are called 'allowable assets'.

Examples of assets: savings, shares, cryptocurrency, jewellery, antiques, car, motorcycle, caravan, boat, house and/or vacation home (including abroad). Items that almost everyone has in their home are not part of their assets (for example, a washing machine or television).

Do you have debts? These are deducted from your assets. Study debts and debts which you do not have to repay do not count.

If you own a house, you may also receive benefits. Does the surplus value of your house exceed the allowable assets limit? If so, you will receive the benefits as a loan. As soon as you have sufficient income again, you must repay the loan.

Do you want to know what your allowable assets (savings and possessions) limit is? Go to the website of the municipality www.140174.nl and search for 'vrij te laten vermogen'.



8. Health insurance

Everyone who lives or works in the Netherlands is required to have health insurance. This insurance reimburses certain costs you incur, e.g. hospitalisation or physiotherapy. This insurance requires you to pay a fixed monthly amount (premium) to your health insurer. Children up to the age of 18 pay no premium; they are co-insured with their parents.

People on a low income can apply to the Tax and Customs Administration for a healthcare allowance. You will then receive an amount every month with which you can pay part of the premium. You can read more about this at www.toeslagen.nl. Please note! If your income changes, you must report this immediately at mijn.toeslagen.nl. This will avoid you having to pay back your benefits at the end of the year.



9. Supplementary insurance

Health insurance is divided into 2 parts: the basic insurance and a supplementary insurance. The basic insurance does not cover all healthcare costs. If you expect high healthcare costs, it is a good idea to take out supplementary insurance.

For people on a low income, the municipality offers the 'Gemeentepolis Westland' (Westland Municipal Policy). The municipality has made arrangements with DSW Zorgverzekeraar for a 'collective supplementary health insurance policy'. This means that you will be well insured for a discounted premium.

If you do not wish to take out collective health insurance, you can receive a reimbursement (compensation) for the premium of your current supplementary health insurance. You can find more information about this at www.140174.nl, search for 'tegemoetkoming' (compensation).

10. Financially unburdened

The first six months that you live in the Municipality of Westland, your fixed costs will be paid by the municipality directly from your benefits. These include rent, energy, water, gas and health insurance. If your benefits are not enough to cover all these costs, for example, because you have roommates, you will be told which costs you must pay yourself.

During these six months, you will receive training on how to manage money in the Netherlands. After six months, the municipality will stop paying your fixed costs and you will have to do this yourself. You will then receive the full amount of the benefits.



11. Staying abroad

You may stay abroad for four weeks (28 days) per calendar year (1 January - 31 December). Your benefits will continue to be paid during this period. This also applies if you do not have any obligations relating to work (exemption from work obligations). For a temporary stay abroad, the day of departure does not count. The day you return to the Netherlands does count. You can take the four weeks spread out over the year. For couples and cohabitants, the right to stay abroad applies to each person. Are you going abroad on your own? Then your partner keeps his/her own right to go abroad.

Will you be away for longer than the permitted period? Then you will not receive any benefits during this period.

You must always ask your consultant for permission to go abroad. The municipality will then examine whether you still have sufficient days for a stay abroad. The municipality will also check whether the stay is in accordance with the agreements regarding work or studies. If you are supported by another organisation in your integration and/or job search, the municipality will ask them for advice. You will receive a letter stating whether or not you can go abroad. Are you going abroad without permission? If so, this may affect your benefits.

You must apply for your stay abroad via the municipality's website www.140174.nl (search for 'verblijf in het buitenland'). You will need your DigiD for the application.



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Your obligations

Obligations for civic integration:

- A quick start with civic integration.
- Learning to read and write the language as well as possible (as high a language level as possible)
- You follow the Integration programme several times a week (intensive integration).
- (Paid) work

Important:

you are responsible for completing your civic integration within 3 years (civic integration period).

1. Participation

You are required to actively participate in the 'broad intake' and the civic integration activities. This means that you must go to your appointments for interviews, the 'ability to learn' test, etc. You also have to keep to the appointments in your 'personal plan for civic integration and participation' (PIP). This applies to all the components that you have to complete for your civic integration.

2. During your civic integration

You should do everything in your power to become a citizen as quickly as possible. In this way, you will quickly learn to participate in everyday life in the Netherlands and the Municipality of Westland. You will need to stick to certain agreements in order to do this:

- You should cooperate fully with an investigation into your opportunities and possibilities for integration and participation.
- You must not do anything that will make it more difficult for you to integrate.
- You keep to the agreements you have made with your Integration Consultant and possibly the Patijenburg Work Consultant.
- You should do voluntary work which is useful for your social integration and society. You may be asked to do this by the municipality or the Patijenburg Work Consultant.
- You will make use of our help and opportunities to integrate and possibly get a job.
- You will participate in preparing, carrying out and evaluating a plan of action for your civic integration and participation.
- It may sometimes turn out that medical treatment can help you to get back to work (again) and to become a citizen. You must cooperate with the medical examination and any recommended treatment. Any advice will be given by an independent doctor.

Your obligations if you receive benefits:



If you receive benefits, this will also involve the following agreements:

- You do not only accept work in your own home town, but also the entire area.
- You are willing to travel for your work. You may not refuse work for which you may have to travel up to 3 hours per day by public transport.
- You are allowed to relocate. This is allowed if it is necessary to get or keep a job. This, of course, is only if it is possible for both you and your family. You must have a work contract for at least one year. And earn enough from the job that you no longer need social assistance benefits.
- You must ensure that you maintain or improve your (professional) knowledge and skills if this is necessary for getting and keeping a job. So, if you need to take a training course to learn the necessary techniques in your field, you must do so.
- You must not do things that make finding work more difficult.
- You do your best when applying for jobs. You are on time for any interviews or your job. You should also make sure that you look presentable and clean.
- You should do everything you can to keep the (part-time) job you already have for as long as possible. You are not allowed to just stop working. Stopping is only possible if your contract ends or if you are laid off through no fault of your own.

If you do not keep to these agreements, it may affect you or your benefits. You may be fined or have your benefits temporarily reduced or even stopped.



Obligation to provide information



The obligation to provide information means that you must:

- immediately report any changes in your personal circumstances to the municipality. For example:
 - changes in your housing or living situation.
 - changes in the number of persons aged 21 and over living in your house.
 - Is someone coming to live in the same house or is someone moving out?
 - If a person living in the same house stops studying or starts studying.

You can report this by going to:

www.140174.nl (search for 'wijziging uitkering') or call your Integration Consultant if you can't sort it out.

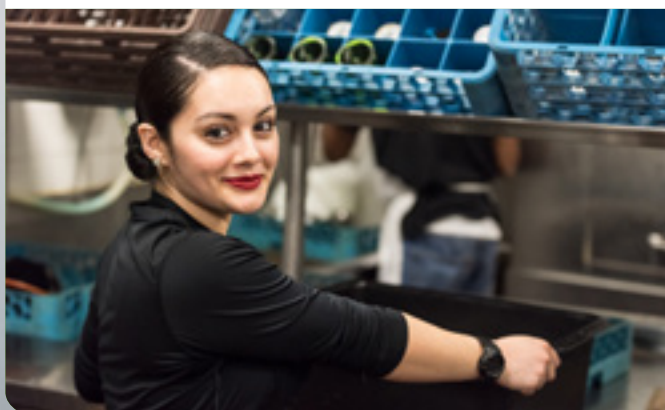
- Any changes in your financial situation must be reported to the municipality within one week. For example:
 - you start receiving a salary,
 - you start receiving other benefits
 - you start receiving alimony
 - you start receiving a tax credit from the Tax and Customs Administration
 - you receive a gift
 - you receive an inheritance
 - you receive a prize in a lottery
 - you come into possession of a car or other financial resources.

You can report this by going to:

www.140174.nl (search for 'wijziging uitkering') or call your Integration Consultant if you can't sort it out.

- you must provide all the information the municipality wants/needs from you.
- arrive at your appointment with the municipality on time. Will you be more than ten minutes late? Then you must make a new appointment.
- you must cooperate with a new investigation.
- you must cooperate with a home visit.
- you must show a valid identity document upon request.
- you must request permission to stay abroad using the application form in good time (four weeks before departure).

If you do not comply with these obligations, this may affect your benefits. You may be fined and/or your benefit payments may be reduced or stopped.



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Need to know

1. Getting work quickly (Participation Act)

During your social integration, we will talk to you about work. If you receive benefits, you are responsible for looking for and finding work. This could also involve doing work that does not fit in with your education and work experience. This is referred to by law as accepting generally acceptable work within and outside the Haaglanden region. Even if this work yields less income than your previous job.

It does not matter whether you were working before, have just left school or have graduated. If you receive social assistance benefits, you must apply for all possible jobs. You must do everything you can to get paid work as soon as possible. The Patijnenburg Employment Consultant can help you with this. Finding work can be done alongside your civic integration. You will make agreements about this, together with the Integration Consultant and the Employment Consultant. They will look at what help you need and what is expected of you.



2. Obligation for both partners

Are you married or living together with a partner? Then, in principle, all the rules apply to both you and your partner.



3. Single parents

The rules regarding work also apply to single parents. Do you need childcare and have you made arrangements about this? Then you must arrange this yourself. If necessary, the social worker at the Dutch Council for Refugees (Vluchtelingenwerk) can help you with this or, if you do not have a social worker, your Integration Consultant can also help.



4. Temporary exemption from applying for a job

It may happen that you are (temporarily) unable to work. You may then be granted an exemption from the job application requirement. You then don't have to apply for a job. This exemption is always temporary and depends on your personal situation.



5. DigiD

To report any changes you need a DigiD. This is a personal 'code'. It allows you to show who you are. With this DigiD, you can also arrange many other things online. Don't you have a DigiD yet? Then request one at www.digid.nl. You will receive the login details for your DigiD within five working days.

Do you need help reporting any changes? Please contact your Integration Consultant.

