

# Social Assistance Act

Promulgated, SG No. 56/19.05.1998, amended, SG No. 45/30.04.2002, amended and supplemented, SG No. 120/29.12.2002, effective 1.01.2003, SG No. 18/28.02.2006, amended, SG No. 30/11.04.2006, effective 12.07.2006, SG No. 105/22.12.2006, effective 1.01.2007, amended and supplemented, SG No. 52/29.06.2007, amended, SG No. 59/20.07.2007, effective 1.03.2008, SG No. 58/27.06.2008, effective 1.07.2008, amended and supplemented, SG No. 14/20.02.2009, supplemented, SG No. 41/2.06.2009, effective 1.07.2009, amended, SG No. 74/15.09.2009, effective 15.09.2009, amended and supplemented, SG No. 15/23.02.2010, supplemented, SG No. 9/28.01.2011, amended and supplemented, SG No. 51/5.07.2011, SG No. 32/24.04.2012, effective 24.04.2012, amended, SG No. 15/15.02.2013, effective 1.01.2014, SG No. 66/26.07.2013, effective 26.07.2013, SG No. 98/28.11.2014, effective 28.11.2014, amended and supplemented, SG No. 8/29.01.2016, amended, SG No. 85/24.10.2017, SG No. 7/19.01.2018, SG No. 17/23.02.2018, supplemented, SG No. 77/18.09.2018, effective 1.01.2019, amended and supplemented, SG No. 91/2.11.2018, effective 2.05.2019, supplemented, SG No. 105/18.12.2018, effective 1.01.2019, amended and supplemented, SG No. 24/22.03.2019, effective 1.07.2020 (\*), SG No. 35/30.04.2019, effective 1.08.2019, amended, SG No. 101/27.12.2019, SG No. 71/11.08.2020, amended and supplemented, SG No. 102/23.12.2022, effective 1.06.2023, amended, SG No. 84/6.10.2023, effective 6.10.2023, SG No. 106/22.12.2023, effective 1.01.2025

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\*Note: An update of the English text of this Act is being prepared following the amendments in SG No. 16/10.02.2026, effective 14.02.2026, SG No. 30/27.03.2026, effective 27.03.2026

Text in Bulgarian: Закон за социално подпомагане

## Chapter One GENERAL PROVISIONS

**Article 1.** (1) (Amended, SG No. 32/2012, effective 24.04.2012, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019) This Act regulates the social relations associated with guaranteeing the right of nationals of the Republic of Bulgaria to obtain social support through social assistance benefits.

(2) (Amended, SG No. 120/2002) This Act is intended:

1. to assist persons who are unable to secure by their own efforts adequate resources to meet their basic necessities of life;

2. to strengthen and develop social solidarity in hardship;

3. (amended, SG No. 32/2012, effective 24.04.2012, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019) to assist with the social inclusion of social welfare beneficiaries;

4. to assist the gainful employment of unemployed persons eligible for receipt of monthly social assistance benefits;

5. (repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019).

(3) (New, SG No. 120/2002, amended, SG No. 32/2012, effective 24.04.2012) Social assistance shall be provided in a manner that preserves individuals' dignity and shall be based on social work, while applying a personalized approach and making an integrated needs assessment

of individuals and families.

(4) (New, SG No. 120/2002, repealed, SG No. 32/2012, effective 24.04.2012).

(5) (Renumbered from Paragraph (3), SG No. 120/2002, repealed, SG No. 32/2012, effective 24.04.2012).

**Article 2.** (1) (Amended, SG No. 120/2002, amended and supplemented, SG No. 52/2007, supplemented, SG No. 9/2011) Bulgarian citizens, foreigners holding a long-term or permanent residence permit for the Republic of Bulgaria, foreigners who have been granted asylum, refugee or humanitarian status, and foreigners enjoying temporary protection shall be obliged to make efforts to secure adequate resources for meeting their basic necessities of life.

(2) (Amended, SG No. 32/2012, effective 24.04.2012, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019) Social assistance shall be provided by means of making cash and/or in-kind social assistance benefits available for meeting basic necessities of life to persons who are unable to meet them by working or through property in their ownership.

(3) (Supplemented, SG No. 120/2002, amended, SG No. 32/2012, effective 24.04.2012) Entitlement to social assistance benefits shall accrue to Bulgarian citizens, families and cohabitants who, due to health, age, social and other reasons beyond their control, are unable to meet their basic necessities of life on their own through their own work or on income accruing from property they own, or with the help of the persons whose obligation under article 140 of the Family Code is to provide for their basic necessities of life.

(4) (Amended, SG No. 120/2002, amended and supplemented, SG No. 52/2007, supplemented, SG No. 9/2011, amended, SG No. 32/2012, effective 24.04.2012, SG No. 35/2019, effective 1.08.2019) The receipt of monthly social assistance benefits shall be linked to:

1. community work of unemployed persons of working age registered with the Labor Office Directorate and their participation in literacy and/or qualification training, except in the case of maternity or where the health of the person does not allow this;

2. the regular attendance of a kindergarten or school by the child or pupil of compulsory pre-school or school age according to the form of organisation or training unless where this is impossible due to the child's or pupil's health.

(5) (Amended, SG No. 32/2012, effective 24.04.2012, repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019).

(6) (Repealed, SG No. 120/2002, new, SG No. 32/2012, effective 24.04.2012, amended, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019) The entitlement under Paragraph (3) shall also accrue to foreign nationals who have a long term or permanent residence permit in the Republic of Bulgaria, foreign nationals who received asylum, refugee status or humanitarian status, and foreign nationals who were granted temporary protection, as well as individuals who are provided for in an international treaty that the Republic of Bulgaria is signatory to.

**Article 3.** (Amended, SG No. 120/2002, SG No. 32/2012, effective 24.04.2012, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019) The provision of social assistance benefits shall exclude any direct or indirect discrimination of individuals on the basis of sex, race, nationality, ethnic belonging, human genome, citizenship, origin, religion or faith, education, beliefs, political affiliations, personal or public status, disability, age, sexual orientation, marital status, ownership of property, or any other feature established in a law or international treaty that the Republic of Bulgaria is signatory to.

## **Chapter Two**

# **SOCIAL ASSISTANCE AUTHORITIES**

## **(Heading amended, SG No. 120/2002)**

**Article 4.** (1) (Amended, SG No. 120/2002) The Council of Ministers shall determine the state policy in the sphere of social assistance.

(2) (Amended, SG No. 120/2002) The Minister of Labour and Social Policy shall develop, coordinate and conduct the state policy in the sphere of social assistance.

(3) (Amended, SG No. 120/2002, supplemented, SG No. 15/2010) The state policy in the sphere of social assistance shall be implemented in cooperation with the state bodies, the regional administrations, the bodies of local self-government and the not-for-profit legal entities pursuing public benefit activities, which create conditions and facilitate the implementation of programmes and projects in this sphere.

(4) (Amended, SG No. 120/2002, SG No. 74/2009, repealed, SG No. 15/2010, new, SG No. 102/2022, effective 1.06.2023) The Minister of Labour and Social Policy and officials authorised thereby shall be entitled to access data from the information systems, registers and databases in the sphere of social assistance maintained by the Social Assistance Agency, in compliance with the requirements of the Electronic Government Act and the Personal Data Protection Act.

(5) (Repealed, SG No. 15/2010, new, SG No. 102/2022, effective 1.06.2023) To determine, conduct, develop, coordinate and control the state policies in the sphere of social assistance, the persons under Paragraph (4) shall receive information and data in an electronic form from the Social Assistance Agency.

(6) (New, SG No. 102/2022, effective 1.06.2023) The scope and the type of the information and data under Paragraph (5) and the time limits and frequency of their provision shall be determined by the ordinance referred to in Article 6 (4).

**Article 5.** (Amended, SG No. 120/2002) (1) For implementation of the state policy in the sphere of social assistance, there shall be established a Social Assistance Agency with the Minister of Labour and Social Policy.

(2) (Amended, SG No. 15/2013, effective 1.01.2014) The Social Assistance Agency shall be an executive agency with the Minister of Labour and Social Policy, and shall be a legal person with a head office in Sofia.

(3) The Social Assistance Agency shall be represented and managed by an Executive Director.

(4) There shall be established an Inspectorate with the Executive Director of the Social Assistance Agency.

(5) (Amended, SG No. 18/2006) The territorial branches of the Social Assistance Agency shall be regional social assistance directorates in the administrative regional centres and Social Assistance Directorates.

(6) There shall be established Child Protection Departments at the Social Assistance Directorates.

(7) (Amended, SG No. 18/2006) The operation, structure and staff size of the Social Assistance Agency, the number and territorial coverage of its branches shall be determined by Rules of Organization adopted by the Council of Ministers on a motion by the Minister of Labour and Social Policy.

**Article 6.** (Amended, SG No. 120/2002) (1) (Previous text of Article 6, SG No. 15/2010, amended, SG No. 32/2012, effective 24.04.2012) The Social Assistance Agency shall perform the following functions:

1. implement the state policy of social assistance;

2. (amended, SG No. 8/2016) provide social assistance benefits;
  3. develop a single system to assess and control the performance of Social Assistance directorates and implement specialized control on those directorates through the Inspectorate of the Social Assistance Agency;
  4. (supplemented, SG No. 8/2016, repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019);
  5. (amended, SG No. 8/2016) collect, process, systemise, store, and use information within its functional competence, by law, in an integrated information system;
  6. (supplemented, SG No. 8/2016, repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019);
  7. (repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019);
  8. (amended, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019) prepare consolidated annual reports and analyses on activity in the sphere of social assistance benefits and provide the said reports and analyses to the Minister of Labour and Social Policy;
  9. (amended, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019) participate in the preparation of drafts of statutory instruments in the sphere of social assistance benefits;
  10. (amended, SG No. 106/2023, effective 1.01.2025) maintain registers of endorsed foster families through the regional social assistance directorates;
  11. (new, SG No. 105/2018, effective 1.01.2019, supplemented, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.01.2019) improve the criteria and indicators for the performance of individual needs assessments of persons with disabilities in accordance with the Persons with Disabilities Act;
  12. (new, SG No. 105/2018, effective 1.01.2019, supplemented, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.01.2019) be in charge of arranging the activities related to the conduct of individual needs assessments of persons with disabilities in accordance with the procedure laid down in the Persons with Disabilities Act;
  13. (new, SG No. 105/2018, effective 1.01.2019, amended, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.01.2019) shall provide analyses and aggregated data from the individual needs assessments of persons with disabilities in accordance with the Persons with Disabilities Act and the outcomes thereof to the Minister of Labour and Social Policy for a certain period, for a certain region or nationally;
  14. (new, SG No. 105/2018, effective 1.01.2019) shall publish on its official website information on the guidelines and access for the fulfilment of the rights of persons with disabilities;
  15. (new, SG No. 105/2018, effective 1.01.2019) shall participate and issue opinions as a matter of obligation in the drafting of regulations relating to the rights of persons with disabilities;
  16. (renumbered from Item 11, SG No. 105/2018, effective 1.01.2019) perform other activities defined by law or by an act of the Council of Ministers.
- (2) (New, SG No. 15/2010, amended, SG No. 66/2013, effective 26.07.2013, SG No. 98/2014, effective 28.11.2014, supplemented, SG No. 8/2016, amended, SG No. 102/2022, effective 1.06.2023) To perform the functions under Item 2 of Paragraph (1) and Paragraph (10), the Social Assistance Directorate, the regional social assistance directorates and the Social Assistance Agency shall be entitled to free access to data from the primary data administrators – the Civil Registration and Administrative Services Directorate General, the Registry Agency, the Employment Agency, the Ministry of Education and Science, the National Social Security Institute, the National Revenue Agency and other state and municipal authorities, and natural

persons and legal entities, and all of the above shall be obliged to provide such information ex officio within 14 days of the date of the request.

(3) (New, SG No. 32/2012, effective 24.04.2012) The Minister of Labour and Social Affairs approved an ordinance for career development and social workers in the Social Assistance Agency.

(4) (New, SG No. 8/2016) The Minister of Labour and Social Policy shall issue an ordinance concerning the contents and functioning of the integrated information system under paragraph 1, subparagraph 5.

(5) (New, SG No. 102/2022, effective 1.06.2023) The Social Assistance Agency shall administrate and maintain the integrated information system under paragraph 1, subparagraph 5 and shall make proposals during the development and amendment of the ordinance under paragraph 4.

**Article 6a.** (New, SG No. 32/2012, effective 24.04.2012) (1) While performing their official duties, the employees of the Social Assistance Agency and the Agency's local offices are entitled to a cash amount for business attire for each calendar year.

(2) (Amended, SG No. 102/2022, effective 1.06.2023) The cash amount per Paragraph (1) herein that is made available to civil servants working with the Social Assistance Agency and the Agency's local offices shall be provided pursuant to the rules, procedures and amounts specified in the Ordinance concerning the official status of civil servants (promulgated, SG No. 23/2000; corrected, SG No. 47/2000; amended, SG Nos. 53, 62 and 89/2000; corrected, SG No. 90/2000; amended, SG Nos. 28 and 35/2001, Decision No. 3901/2001 of the Supreme Administrative Court – SG No. 54/2001; amended, SG No. 108/2001, SG Nos. 15, 67 and 115/2002, SG Nos. 17, 59 and 109/2003, SG No. 18/2004, SG Nos. 50 and 83/2005, SG Nos. 2, 46 and 68/2006, SG Nos. 46, 64, 92 and 101/2008, SG Nos. 21, 95 and 106/2011, SG Nos. 21 and 49/2012, SG No. 27/2013, SG No. 93/2019 and SG No. 105/2020).

(3) The cash amount under (1) herein that is made available to employees of the Social Assistance Agency and the Agency's local offices who were hired on full-time employment contracts under the Labour Code shall be provided pursuant to the rules, procedure and amounts specified in an Ordinance by the Minister of Labour and Social Policy coordinated with the Minister of Finance.

**Article 7.** (Repealed, SG No. 120/2002).

**Article 8.** (Repealed, SG No. 120/2002).

**Article 9.** (Repealed, SG No. 120/2002).

**Article 10.** (Repealed, SG No. 120/2002).

## **Chapter Three**

### **SOCIAL ASSISTANCE BENEFITS**

**Article 11.** (1) (Previous text of Article 11 and amended, SG No. 120/2002) Social assistance benefits shall be resources provided in cash and/or in kind which supplement or substitute own incomes up to an amount sufficient to meet the basic necessities of life or to meet incidental needs of the beneficiary persons and families.

(2) (New, SG No. 120/2002, amended, SG No. 15/2010) Social assistance benefits shall be provided to persons when all other possibilities for self-support and support by the persons covered under Article 140 of the Family Code have been exhausted.

(3) (New, SG No. 35/2019, effective 1.08.2019, amended, SG No. 102/2022, effective 1.06.2023) Parents, adoptive parents, tutors or curators and persons entrusted with the care of

children in accordance with the Child Protection Act shall receive monthly social benefits under this Act only when children of compulsory pre-school or school age regularly attend kindergarten or school according to the form of organisation or training unless where this is impossible due to the child's health.

**Article 12.** (1) Social assistance benefits shall be:

1. monthly;
2. target;
3. lump-sum.

(2) (New, SG No. 120/2002) Social assistance benefits shall be granted following an assessment of:

1. the income of the person or the family;
2. the applicant's property status;
3. the applicant's marital status;
4. the applicant's health status;
5. (supplemented, SG No. 15/2010, amended, SG No. 35/2019, effective 1.08.2019) the employment status;
6. (new, SG No. 35/2019, effective 1.08.2019) the inclusion of children in the system of pre-school and school education when the children are subject to compulsory pre-school or school education;
7. (renumbered from Item 6, SG No. 35/2019, effective 1.08.2019) the age;
8. (renumbered from Item 7, SG No. 35/2019, effective 1.08.2019) other established circumstances.

(3) (New, SG No. 120/2002, amended, SG No. 102/2022, effective 1.06.2023) Social assistance benefits under Paragraph (1) shall be determined based on the amount of the poverty line for the respective year, as laid down in a decree by the Council of Ministers.

(4) (Renumbered from Paragraph (2) and supplemented, SG No. 120/2002, amended, SG No. 15/2010) The terms and procedure for the granting, payment, modification, suspension, renewal and termination of social assistance benefits shall be established by the Regulations for Application of this Act with the exception of target benefits for heating, which shall be regulated by an ordinance of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy.

**Article 12a.** (New, SG No. 120/2002, repealed, SG No. 15/2010).

**Article 12b.** (New, SG No. 120/2002) (1) Unemployed persons eligible for receipt of monthly benefits shall be enrolled in employment programmes endorsed by the Minister of Labour and Social Policy.

(2) (Amended, SG No. 102/2022, effective 1.06.2023) Any persons referred to in Paragraph (1), who have refused to participate in employment programmes, shall forfeit monthly benefits for a period of six months.

(3) The implementation of the programmes referred to in Paragraph (1) shall be carried out jointly by the municipal administrations, the state-owned, municipal and private enterprises and other legal persons, the territorial branches of the National Employment Agency and of the Social Assistance Agency.

(4) Enrollment in employment programmes referred to in Paragraph (1) shall be optional for:

1. persons taking care of children aged under 3 years:
  - a) (amended, SG No. 102/2022, effective 1.06.2023) parents, adoptive parents;
  - b) (amended, SG No. 102/2022, effective 1.06.2023) single parents, single adoptive parents;

c) tutors;  
d) (new, SG No. 102/2022, effective 1.06.2023) persons taking care of children aged under 3 years, placed for raising in accordance with the procedure of Article 26 of the Child Protection Act;

2. pregnant women after the first trimester;
3. persons with permanent disabilities or with certified temporary incapacity to work;
4. persons taking care of a sick family member or of antecessors or descendants up to the second degree of consanguinity;
5. persons taking care of a family member or antecessors or descendants up to second degree of consanguinity who are disabled and need constant attendance;
6. persons suffering from mental diseases diagnosed by the competent authorities.

**Article 12c.** (New, SG No. 18/2006, effective 1.07.2006, amended, SG No. 58/2008, effective 1.07.2008, repealed, SG No. 15/2010, effective 1.01.2011).

**Article 13.** (Amended, SG No. 120/2002) (1) (Amended, SG No. 8/2016) Social assistance benefits shall be granted on the basis of an application statement submitted by the applicant or by a person authorised by the applicant.

(2) Benefits referred to in Paragraph (1) shall be granted by order of the Director of the Social Assistance Directorate or by an official authorized thereby after assessment of all information and circumstances established by means of a social inquiry.

(3) A refusal to grant social assistance benefits must be reasoned.

(4) (Amended, SG No. 15/2010, SG No. 8/2016) The applicant shall be notified in writing about the order granting social assistance benefits or rejecting the request for such benefits within 14 days of the order issue date.

(5) Any orders referred to in Paragraph (2) shall be appealable before the Director of the Regional Social Assistance Directorate according to the procedure established by the Administrative Procedure Code.

(6) (New, SG No. 77/2018, effective 1.01.2019) When the Director of the Regional Social Assistance Directorate has not pronounced on the appeal or has rejected it, the order referred to in paragraph (2) can be appealed before the relevant administrative court following the procedure set out in the Administrative Procedure Code. The judgment of the administrative court shall be final.

(7) (New, SG No. 77/2018, effective 1.01.2019) When the Director of the Regional Social Assistance Directorate has ruled at the case on the merits, the ruling can be appealed before the relevant administrative court following the procedure set out in the Administrative Procedure Code. The judgment of the administrative court shall be final.

**Article 14.** (1) Social assistance benefits shall be exempt from taxes and fees.

(2) The entitlement to social assistance benefits shall be personal. A renunciation of this entitlement, or the transfer to another person, shall be invalid.

(3) No deductions may be made from cash social assistance benefits except for:

1. overdrawn social assistance resources as a result of a technical accounting error;
2. garnishments for child maintenance receivables;
3. (new, SG No. 102/2022, effective 1.06.2023) fraudulently received social assistance benefits, established by an enforced act.

(4) (Repealed, SG No. 18/2006).

(5) (New, SG No. 120/2002, amended, SG No. 18/2006, SG No. 15/2010, SG No. 102/2022, effective 1.06.2023) Persons who have fraudulently received social assistance benefits shall forfeit such benefits until recovery of the amounts due, but for a period not longer than one year.

(6) (New, SG No. 120/2002, amended, SG No. 15/2010) Persons who have failed to use a target benefit for heating as intended shall forfeit the entitlement to such benefit during the next heating season.

(7) (New, SG No. 120/2002) The receivables of persons under this Act shall be extinguished within three months reckoned from the end of the month to which the said receivables apply.

(8) (New, SG No. 102/2022, effective 1.06.2023) No coercive enforcement shall be allowed in respect of the receivables of persons under this Act, with the exception of the ones under Paragraph (3).

**Article 14a.** (New, SG No. 18/2006) (1) (Amended, SG No. 32/2012, effective 24.04.2012) In the event of receipt of alert of fraudulently received social assistance benefits or at the discretion of the Director of the respective Social Assistance Directorate, an inspection shall be performed by a Directorate official.

(2) The inspection results shall be set out in a memorandum of ascertainment, which shall be drawn up by the official referred to in Paragraph (1), who shall submit the said memorandum to the Director of the Social Assistance Directorate within three days.

(3) In case fraud is ascertained, the Director of the Social Assistance Directorate shall issue a reasoned order on recovery of the social assistance benefit received together with legal interest.

**Article 14b.** (New, SG No. 18/2006) (1) The order referred to in Article 14a (3) herein shall be appealable according to the procedure established by the Administrative Procedure Code within seven days of the day of receipt. Such appeal shall stay the execution of the order and no anticipatory enforcement shall be admitted.

(2) (Amended, SG No. 59/2007) The coercive enforcement of the order referred to in Article 14a (3) herein shall be admitted on a motion by the Social Assistance Directorate according to the procedure established by Article 418 of the Code of Civil Procedure.

**Article 14c.** (New, SG No. 18/2006) The parties shall be exempt from stamp duty in the proceedings under Article 14b herein.

**Article 15.** (1) (Amended, SG No. 120/2002, previous text of Article 15, SG No. 15/2010, amended, SG No. 35/2019, effective 1.08.2019) Persons assisted under this Act shall be obliged to notify the competent Social Assistance Directorate in writing of all changes in the circumstances listed in Items 1 to 8 of Article 12 (2) herein not later than one month after occurrence of any such changes.

(2) (New, SG No. 15/2010) Upon non-fulfilment of the obligations referred to in Paragraph (1), the persons shall forfeit social assistance benefits for a period of one year.

## **Chapter Four**

# **SOCIAL SERVICES**

**Article 16.** (Amended, SG No. 120/2002, SG No. 15/2010, SG No. 8/2016, repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019).

**Article 16a.** (New, SG No. 8/2016, repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019).

**Article 16b.** (New, SG No. 8/2016, repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019).

**Article 16c.** (New, SG No. 8/2016, repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019).

**Article 16d.** (New, SG No. 8/2016, repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 -

amended, SG No. 101/2019).

**Article 17.** (Amended, SG No. 120/2002, SG No. 18/2006, effective 1.01.2007, SG No. 15/2013, effective 1.01.2014, amended and supplemented, SG No. 8/2016, supplemented, SG No. 24/2019, effective 22.03.2019, repealed, SG No. 71/2020).

**Article 18.** (Amended, SG No. 120/2002, SG No. 18/2006, effective 1.01.2007, SG No. 14/2009, SG No. 15/2010, supplemented, SG No. 8/2016, repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019).

**Article 18a.** (New, SG No. 15/2010, amended, SG No. 51/2011, amended and supplemented, SG No. 8/2016, repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019).

**Article 18b.** (New, SG No. 8/2016, amended, SG No. 85/2017, SG No. 17/2018, repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019).

**Article 18c.** (New, SG No. 8/2016, amended, SG No. 17/2018, repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019).

**Article 18d.** (New, SG No. 8/2016, repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019).

**Article 18e.** (New, SG No. 8/2016, amended, SG No. 17/2018, repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019).

**Article 19.** (Amended, SG No. 120/2002, SG No. 15/2010, repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019).

## **Chapter Five**

### **SOCIAL WORKERS**

#### **(Repealed, SG No. 15/2010)**

**Article 20.** (Amended, SG No. 120/2002, repealed, SG No. 15/2010).

## **Chapter Six**

### **(Repealed, SG No. 120/2002)**

### **NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS**

**Article 21.** (Repealed, SG No. 120/2002).

**Article 22.** (Repealed, SG No. 120/2002).

**Article 23.** (Repealed, SG No. 120/2002).

## **Chapter Seven**

### **FINANCING**

**Article 24.** (Amended, SG No. 120/2002) (1) Social assistance shall be financed by resources from:

1. (amended, SG No. 15/2013, effective 1.01.2014) the state budget;
2. (repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019);
3. (repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019);
4. (repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019);
5. (amended, SG No. 51/2011) resources from the Social Protection Fund;
6. other sources.

(2) The Social Assistance Agency shall administrate the following revenues from own sources:

1. revenue from fines for violations of this Act;
2. proceeds from advertising, information and publishing activities;
3. donations and testamentary dispositions of resident and non-resident natural or legal persons;
4. revenues from other sources.

**Article 24a.** (New, SG No. 120/2002, amended, SG No. 15/2013, effective 1.01.2014, repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019).

**Article 25.** (Amended, SG No. 120/2002, SG No. 51/2011) (1) (Amended, SG No. 15/2013, effective 1.01.2014) For the purpose of funding activities and undertakings related to the social assistance policies pursued, a Social Protection Fund (hereinafter referred to as "the Fund") with the Minister of Labour and Social Policy.

(2) The Social Protection Fund shall be a legal entity having its seat in Sofia.

**Article 26.** (Amended, SG No. 120/2002, SG No. 51/2011) The resources of the Social Protection Fund shall be raised from:

1. (amended, SG No. 15/2013, effective 1.01.2014) an action grant from the state budget whereof the amount shall be determined annually by the State Budget of the Republic of Bulgaria Act;
2. donations and testamentary dispositions of resident and non-resident natural and legal persons;
3. (amended, SG No. 15/2010, SG No. 15/2013, effective 1.01.2014, repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019);
4. (amended, SG No. 51/2011) proceeds from extraordinary and special drawings of the Bulgarian Sports Totalizator;
5. recovery of resources wrongfully and fraudulently received from the Fund and the interest accrued thereon;
6. (amended, SG No. 18/2006, repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019);
7. revenues from other sources.

**Article 27.** (Amended, SG No. 120/2002) (1) (Previous text of Article 27, amended, SG No. 51/2011) The resources of the Social Protection Fund shall be expended on:

1. (amended, SG No. 102/2022, effective 1.06.2023) financing target social programmes for supporting persons and families from vulnerable social groups;
2. (amended, SG No. 102/2022, effective 1.06.2023) financing target social programmes and projects in the sphere of social inclusion;
3. (new, SG No. 91/2018, effective 2.05.2019, supplemented, SG No. 102/2022, effective 1.06.2023) financing projects in support of the conduct of social activity and/or for achievement of social goals of social companies listed in the Register of social companies;
4. (renumbered from item 3, SG No. 91/2018, effective 2.05.2019, repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019);
5. (renumbered from item 4, SG No. 91/2018, effective 2.05.2019) studies and drafting of a regulatory framework in the sphere of social assistance: not more than 2 per cent of the annual amount of the Fund;
6. (renumbered from item 5, SG No. 91/2018, effective 2.05.2019) acquisition of fixed assets and current maintenance of the logistical facilities;
7. (renumbered from item 6, SG No. 91/2018, effective 2.05.2019) construction of new

logistical facilities, remodelling and updating of the existing logistical facilities for provision of social services;

8. (renumbered from item 7, SG No. 91/2018, effective 2.05.2019) maintenance of the operation of the Fund: not more than 5 per cent of the resources raised.

(2) (New, SG No. 51/2011) In the cases referred to in Item 1 of Paragraph (1), the resources shall only be granted after all other statutory possibilities have been exhausted.

(3) (New, SG No. 51/2011, amended, SG No. 15/2013, effective 1.01.2014, SG No. 91/2018, effective 2.05.2019, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019; amended, SG No. 102/2022, effective 1.06.2023) In the cases referred to in Items 2 - 5 of Paragraph (1), resources shall only be granted where the activities are not funded out of the state budget, under programmes or projects funded out of resources of European or other international funds, or through other financial tools.

(4) (New, SG No. 51/2011) The resources referred to in Paragraph (1) shall be expended subject to terms and conditions and in accordance with a procedure determined by a Set of Methods of Allocating the Resources adopted by the Governing Board of the Social Protection Fund and endorsed by the Minister of Labour and Social Policy.

**Article 28.** (Amended, SG No. 15/2010, SG No. 51/2011) (1) The Fund's management bodies shall be the Governing Board and the Executive Director.

(2) The Fund's Governing Board shall comprise five members, including a Chairperson.

(3) The Minister of Labour and Social Policy shall appoint the members of the Governing Board and its Chairperson.

(4) The term of office of the Governing Board members shall be 5 years.

(5) Members of the Governing Board shall be dismissed ahead of term:

1. upon a written request by them addressed to the Minister of Labour and Social Policy;
2. in case they are effectively convicted for a premeditated indictable offence;
3. where they have been members of management or supervisory bodies of legal entities declared bankrupt, in case creditors' claims have remained unsettled;
4. in case they are physically unable to discharge their duties for more than 6 months;
5. where they have culpably caused material damages to the Fund;
6. (amended, SG No. 7/2018, SG No. 84/2023, effective 6.10.2023) upon the entry into effect of an instrument ascertaining any conflict of interest under the Counter-Corruption Act;
7. in case of death.

(6) Where a member of the Governing Board is dismissed ahead of term, within one month thereafter the Minister of Labour and Social Policy shall appoint a new member to substitute for the dismissed one until the expiry of the latter's term of office.

**Article 29.** (Amended, SG No. 105/2006, amended and supplemented, SG No. 15/2010, amended, SG No. 51/2011) (1) The Governing Board shall:

1. (supplemented, SG No. 102/2022, effective 1.06.2023) make decisions on raising and spending the resources of the Fund within the budget endorsed by the Minister of Labour and Social Policy for the respective year;

2. (amended, SG No. 102/2022, effective 1.06.2023) endorse the Fund's annual plan of activities;

3. determine the terms and procedure for allocating the resources and for financing the activities of the Fund;

4. adopt the annual report of the Fund's activities and send it to the Minister of Labour and Social Policy;

5. (amended, SG No. 102/2022, effective 1.06.2023) adopt the annual financial statement

as per the requirements of the Accountancy Act;

6. (amended, SG No. 102/2022, effective 1.06.2023) establish and close down committees, work groups, etc. with the Fund;

7. propose the structure and staffing of the Fund for the Minister of Labour and Social Policy to endorse;

8. supervise the implementation of the projects financed out of the Fund's resources.

(2) The meetings of the Governing Board shall be called by its Chairperson or on the initiative of one-third of its members. The Governing Board shall hold meetings subject to the attendance of two-thirds of its members. Resolutions shall be passed by a majority comprised of more than half of the total number of the Board's members.

(3) Unless otherwise provided for by law, the members of the Governing Board shall be paid remuneration, which shall be determined through an order by the Minister of Labour and Social Policy.

(4) The members of the Governing Board shall be jointly liable for the material damages which they have culpably caused to the Fund.

(5) The Governing Board shall adopt Rules of the Social Protection Fund's Organisation and Activities, to be endorsed by the Minister of Labour and Social Policy.

**Article 29a.** (New, SG No. 51/2011) (1) The Fund's Executive Director shall be appointed by the Minister of Labour and Social Policy under an employment contract.

(2) The Executive Director shall:

1. represent the Fund personally or through an official specifically authorised by him/her;

2. organise the Fund's activities, perform its operating management and manage its property in accordance with the powers conferred on him/her by the Governing Board;

3. organise the holding of the Governing Board's meetings;

4. ensure that the Governing Board's resolutions are implemented;

5. draft the Fund's annual plan of activities and present it to the Governing Board to approve;

6. (repealed, SG No. 102/2022, effective 1.06.2023);

7. design the Fund's structure and staffing and propose them to the Governing Board to approve;

8. draft the annual report of the Fund's activities and table it before the Governing Board to consider;

9. sign and terminate the employment contracts with the Fund's officers, as well as freelance contracts;

10. (new, SG No. 8/2016, repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019).

**Article 30.** (Repealed, SG No. 51/2011).

## **Chapter Eight**

# **CONTROL AND ADMINISTRATIVE PENALTY LIABILITY**

**Article 31.** (1) (Amended, SG No. 120/2002) The Minister of Labour and Social Policy shall exercise overall control as to compliance with this Act and with the other statutory instruments in the sphere of social assistance.

(2) (Amended, SG No. 120/2002, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No.

101/2019) The specialised control of the lawful implementation of the statutory instruments in the area of social assistance in the territorial branches of the Social Assistance Agency shall be exercised by the inspectorate referred to in Article 5(4).

(3) (Amended, SG No. 120/2002, repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019).

**Article 32.** (1) In the discharge of the controlling functions thereof, inspectors shall have the right:

1. to visit without restraint the social assistance authorities and the places where social assistance activities are carried out;

2. (new, SG No. 8/2016, repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019);

3. (renumbered from Item 2, SG No. 8/2016) to require explanations and the provision of documents, fact sheets and information;

4. (renumbered from Item 3, supplemented, SG No. 8/2016, amended, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019) to obtain the required information directly from the beneficiaries.

(2) (Amended, SG No. 45/2002) Inspectors shall be obligated to observe the regulatory requirements for protection of classified information with regard to any such information as may have come to their knowledge in the course of, or in connection with, an inspection conducted, as well as to respect the honour and dignity of beneficiaries.

(3) (Amended, SG No. 8/2016) Upon ascertaining violations which fall within the competence of other authorities, the inspector shall immediately notify them, and in the case of violations of the law which indicate a criminal offence, the inspector shall immediately notify the prosecution authorities.

**Article 33.** The state bodies and the competent officials shall be under an obligation to provide information and to cooperate with inspectors in the discharge of the functions thereof.

**Article 34.** (1) (Amended, SG No. 120/2002) For the prevention or cessation of violations of social assistance legislation, inspectors shall impose the following coercive administrative measures:

1. (supplemented, SG No. 8/2016) issue mandatory instructions for the elimination of violations and set an appropriate time limit for the implementation of the instructions according to the severity and degree of the violation;

2. (amended, SG No. 120/2002) stay the execution of wrongful decisions;

3. (amended, SG No. 120/2002, repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019).

(2) The coercive administrative measures covered under Paragraph (1) shall be appealable according to the procedure established by the Administrative Procedure Code.

**Article 35.** (1) (Previous text of Article 35, SG No. 15/2010) In the municipalities, there shall be established public councils by resolution of the Municipal Council to facilitate and assist the performance of social assistance activities and to exercise public control over the implementation of the said activities.

(2) (New, SG No. 15/2010, repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019).

**Article 36.** (1) Any official, who culpably breaches the social assistance legislation, shall incur administrative penalty liability without prejudice to the disciplinary liability and property accountability for the same offence.

(2) (Amended, SG No. 120/2002, SG No. 18/2006) The sanction under Paragraph (1) shall

be a fine of BGN 600 and, for a repeated violation, BGN 1,200.

(3) The sanction referred to in Paragraph (2) shall furthermore be imposed on any persons who fail to act on the mandatory directions referred to in Item 1 of Article 34 (1) herein.

(4) (New, SG No. 8/2016, repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019).

**Article 37.** (1) A violation shall be ascertained by a written statement drawn up by an inspector.

(2) (Amended, SG No. 120/2002) A penalty decree shall be issued by the Executive Director of the Social Assistance Agency or by an official thereby authorized.

(3) The ascertainment of violations, the issuance, appeal and execution of penalty decrees shall follow the procedure established by the Administrative Violations and Sanctions Act.

(4) (Repealed, SG No. 120/2002).

**Article 38.** (Repealed, SG No. 120/2002).

## SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISION

§ 1. Within the meaning given by this Act:

1. "Basic necessities of life" shall be sufficient food, clothing and housing conforming with the socio-economic development of Bulgaria.

2. (Supplemented, SG No. 102/2022, effective 1.06.2023) "Cohabitees" shall be the joint occupants of a dwelling, irrespective of whether they are related or not, registered at the same current address.

3. (Amended, SG No. 120/2002, SG No. 8/2016) "Social inclusion" shall be the creation of conditions and opportunities for a highest degree of participation of persons in public life.

4. (Amended, SG No. 120/2002, supplemented, SG No. 41/2009, effective 1.07.2009, amended, SG No. 15/2010) "Persons with permanent disabilities" shall be persons in respect of whom a degree of durably reduced working capacity has been determined or with a type and degree of disability determined at 50 or more than 50 per cent.

5. (New, SG No. 120/2002, repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019).

6. (New, SG No. 120/2002, amended, SG No. 8/2016, repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019).

7. (New, SG No. 120/2002, amended, SG No. 15/2010, repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019).

8. (New, SG No. 14/2009, repealed, SG No. 15/2010).

9. (New, SG No. 120/2002, renumbered from Item 8, SG No. 14/2009, amended, SG No. 8/2016, repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019).

10. (New, SG No. 120/2002, renumbered from Item 9, SG No. 14/2009, supplemented, SG No. 15/2010, repealed, SG No. 102/2022, effective 1.06.2023).

11. (New, SG No. 120/2002, renumbered from Item 10, SG No. 14/2009, amended, SG No. 15/2010, SG No. 8/2016, supplemented, SG No. 102/2022, effective 1.06.2023) "Social inquiry" shall be an activity to establish the eligibility for entitlement to social benefits, conducted by social workers at the Social Assistance Directorate, which consists in checks at the current address of the person and/or family, perusal of documents, and collection of information.

12. (New, SG No. 8/2016, repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019).

13. (New, SG No. 8/2016, repealed, SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG

No. 101/2019).

14. (New, SG No. 35/2019, effective 1.08.2019) "Fraudulently received social assistance benefits" shall exist where the requirements of this Act or other requirements of the extant legislation that are relevant to the determination of the right to assistance have been infringed, including where the recipient owns property or incurs expenses which do not correspond to the income declared by said recipient and this has been established by an instrument of the competent authorities concerned.

## **FINAL PROVISIONS**

§ 2. This Act shall supersede the Social Assistance Decree (promulgated in Transactions of the Presidium of the National Assembly No. 77 of 1951; amended and supplemented in No. 69 of 1956, No. 65 of 1957, State Gazette No. 51 of 1984).

§ 3. The Council of Ministers shall issue Regulations for Application of this Act.

§ 4. The Minister of Labour and Social Policy shall be entrusted with the implementation of this Act.

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### TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS to the Lev Re-denomination Act (SG No. 20/1999, supplemented, SG No. 65/1999, effective 5.07.1999)

.....  
§ 4. (1) (Supplemented, SG No. 65/1999) Upon the entry of this Act into force, all figures expressed in old lev terms as indicated in the laws which will have entered into force prior to the 5th day of July 1999 shall be replaced by figures expressed in new lev terms, reduced by a factor of 1,000. The replacement of all figures expressed in old lev terms, reduced by a factor of 1,000, shall furthermore apply to all laws passed prior to the 5th day of July 1999 which have entered or will enter into force after the 5th day of July 1999.

(2) The authorities, which have adopted or issued any statutory instruments of secondary legislation which will have entered into force prior to the 5th day of July 1999 and which contain figures expressed in lev terms, shall amend the said instruments to bring them in conformity with this Act so that the amendments apply as from the date of entry of this Act into force.

.....  
§ 7. This Act shall enter into force on the 5th day of July 1999.

### TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS to the Act to Amend and Supplement the Social Assistance Act (SG No. 120/2002, effective 1.01.2003)

§ 32. The Social Assistance Agency, established by this Act, shall be a successor to the National Social Assistance Service and to the municipal social assistance services and shall assume the assets and liabilities thereof.

§ 33. The employment relationships with the employees of the National Social Assistance Service, of the municipal social assistance services and of the social services establishments shall be settled under the terms and according to the procedure established by Article 123 of the Labour Code.

§ 34. The property used by the municipal social assistance services at the date of entry of this Act into force shall be allocated for gratuitous use to the Social Assistance Agency for the needs of the Social Assistance Directorates.

§ 35. The regional governors and the municipality mayors shall create conditions and shall

facilitate the Social Assistance Agency by allocating buildings, premises and other logistical conditions as shall be necessary for performance of the activities of the said Agency.

§ 36. The territorial branches of the Social Assistance Agency, which are accommodated in buildings owned by the State or by the municipalities, shall pay no rent.

§ 37. The existing social services establishments, which subsist on municipal and/or state budget resources at the time of entry of this Act into force, shall pass under the management of the mayor of the relevant municipality, who shall furthermore be employer of the staff at the said establishments.

§ 38. Any persons licensed to perform social services shall be obligated to record themselves in the register referred to in Article 18 (2) [of the Social Assistance Act] within three months after the entry of this Act into force.

TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

to the amendment of Social Assistance Act

(SG No. 18 2006)

.....  
§ 12. The provisions of § 2, § 6, § 7, item 1, 2, item 3 on the words "persons under paragraph 1, items 3 and 4", and 4, and § 11 shall apply from the date of entry into force of the Treaty of Accession of Bulgaria to the European Union.

§ 13. Paragraph 3 shall apply from 1 July 2006.

TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

to the Administrative Procedure Code

(SG No. 30/2006, effective 12.07.2006)

.....  
§ 118. In the Social Assistance Act (promulgated in the State Gazette No. 56 of 1998, amended in No. 45 and No. 120 of 2002, No. 18 of 2006), the words "the Administrative Procedure Act" shall be replaced passim by "the Administrative Procedure Code".

TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

to the Act to Amend and Supplement the Health Act

(SG No. 41/2009, effective 2.06.2009)

.....  
§ 96. This Act shall enter into force as from the day of promulgation thereof in the State Gazette, with the exception of:

.....  
2. § 26, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 65, 66, 69, 70, 73, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 88, 89 and 90, which shall enter into force as from the 1st day of July 2009;

TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

to the Act to Amend and Supplement the Social Assistance Act

(SG No. 15/2010)

.....  
§ 22. Within one month after the entry into force of this Act, the Council of Ministers shall adopt the requisite clauses amending and supplementing the Regulations for Application of the [Social Assistance] Act and the Regulations for Application of the Family Allowances Act (promulgated in the State Gazette No. 67 of 2002; amended in No. 93 of 2004; corrected in No. 97 of 2004; amended in No. 115 of 2004, No. 71 of 2006 and No. 34 of 2009).

§ 23. § 6 shall enter into force as from the 1st day of January 2011.

TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

to the Act to Amend and Supplement the Social Assistance Act  
(SG No. 51/2011)

§ 10. (1) The Social Assistance Fund, being a second-level spending unit with the Minister of Labour and Social Policy, shall be discontinued. The available resources of the Social Assistance Fund so discontinued shall be transferred to the budget of the Social Protection Fund.

(2) The Social Protection Fund shall be the legal successor of the assets, liabilities, rights and obligations of the discontinued Social Assistance Fund as recorded in the balance sheet and the accounts as at the date of this Act's entry into force.

§ 11. (1) Within three months of this Act's entry into force the Minister of Labour and Social Policy shall endorse the Rules of the Social Protection Fund's Organisation and Activities and the Set of Methods of Allocating the Resources of the Fund.

(2) Within three months of this Act's entry into force the Minister of Labour AND Social Policy shall appoint the members of the Governing Board and the Executive Director of the Social Protection Fund.

(3) Until the members of the Governing Board and the Executive Director are appointed as provided for in Paragraph (2), the current members of the Governing Board of the discontinued Social Assistance Fund shall continue discharging their powers.

(4) Until the Rules referred to in Paragraph (1) are endorsed, the Rules of Procedure of the Governing Board of the Social Assistance Fund (not promulgated) issued pursuant to the repealed Article 30 shall apply.

TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

to the Act to Amend and Supplement the Social Assistance Act  
(SG No. 32/2012, effective 24.04.2012)

.....  
§ 8. All professional foster families, which have a signed employment contract with the director of the Social Assistance Directorate as of the date of entry into force of this Act, have the right to request a change into the contract with the selected supplier of the foster care social service. If a foster family is not willing to change their employment contract, it will remain effective until its period of validity expires.

§ 9. The Council of Ministers shall adopt the necessary amendments to the Regulations for Application of the Child Protection Act and the Ordinance per Article 31 (6) of the Child Protection Act within three months upon the entry into force of this Act.

§ 10. The Council of Ministers shall adopt the necessary amendments to the Rules of Organization of the Social Assistance Agency within one month upon the entry into force of this Act.

§ 11. The Council of Ministers shall adopt the necessary amendments to the Regulations for Application of the Social Assistance Act within three months upon the entry into force of this Act.

§ 12. The Minister of Labour and Social Policy shall issue an Ordinance concerning social workers' career development within six months upon the entry into force of this Act.

§ 13. This Act shall enter into force on the day of its promulgation in the State Gazette.

TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

to the Act to Amend and Supplement the Social Assistance Act  
(SG No. 8/2016)

.....  
§ 15. Any licenses issued pursuant to the Child Protection Act before the date of coming

into force of this Act shall remain valid until they expire. Before the validity period of such licenses expires, the persons under Article 18, paragraph 1, subparagraphs 3 and 4 of the Social Assistance Act shall submit an application for a new license to the President of the State Agency for Child Protection pursuant to Article 43c of the Child Protection Act.

#### TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

to the Social Services Act

(SG No. 24/2019, effective 1.07.2020 - amended, SG No. 101/2019)

.....

§ 36. (Effective 22.03.2019 - SG No. 24/2019) (1) The existing homes for children deprived of parental care managed by municipalities and the existing homes for medical and social care for children managed by the Ministry of Health shall be closed down not later than 1 January 2021.

(2) For each child placed in a home for children deprived of parental care or in a home for medical and social care for children, a plan for removal from the home and preparation of the child for reintegration in a family environment or for the use of a social service shall be prepared under the direction of the Social Assistance Directorate.

(3) The mayor of the municipality responsible for the management of the respective home together with the Agency for Social Assistance shall prepare a plan for the closure of each home for children deprived of parental care.

(4) The Minister of Health, together with the mayor of the municipality on whose territory the home operates and with the Social Assistance Agency, shall prepare a plan for the closure of each home for medical and social care for children.

(5) The homes for children deprived of parental care that are managed by municipalities shall be closed down with an order of the Executive Director of the Social Assistance Agency.

§ 37. (Effective 22.03.2019 - SG No. 24/2019) (1) No new specialised institutions for the provision of social services - homes for children deprived of parental care, homes for adults with mental retardation, homes for adults with mental disorders, homes for adults with physical disabilities, homes for adults with sensory disorders, homes for adults with dementia and homes for the elderly - can be established until the Act enters into force.

(2) By 1 January 2021 it is forbidden to establish new homes for medical and social care for children.

§ 38. (1) The persons who have been entered in the register referred to in the repealed Article 18(2) of the Social Assistance Act before the entry of this Act into force shall be obliged to obtain licences in accordance with the procedure laid down in this Act by 1 January 2021.

(2) Persons which have a licence for a social service for children whose term has not expired on the date on which the application referred to in Article 149(1) is filed shall not owe a fee for issuing a licence in accordance with subparagraph 1.

§ 39. (1) Within 12 months of the entry of the Act into force providers of social services shall take action to bring the social services they provide in line with the requirements of the law and with the quality standards set out in the Ordinance on the Quality of Social Services.

(2) Within the time limit specified in subparagraph 1, the Agency for Quality of Social Services shall provide methodological support to providers of social services.

.....  
§ 44. (1) As of 1 January 2021 social services shall be financed from the state budget in accordance with the standards for financing the social services defined in accordance with Article 45.

(2) By 31 December 2020 social services shall be financed from the state budget in accordance with the standards for financing developed in accordance with the hitherto effective procedure.

(3) Until the rate schedule referred to in Article 46(2) is adopted, the fees for using social services financed from the state budget shall be paid in the amounts determined in accordance with the hitherto effective procedure.

§ 45. (Amended, SG No. 101/2019) This Act shall enter into force on 1 July 2020 with the exception of:

1. paragraph 6, subparagraph 5(a), paragraph 7, subparagraph 2(a) and (b), subparagraph 3, subparagraph 6(a), subparagraph 9 and subparagraph 10, paragraph 18(2) in the part concerning the "homes for medical and social care for children in accordance with the Medical Treatment Facilities Act" and paragraph 20, subparagraph 2 in the part concerning the deleting of the text "and the homes for medical and social care for children" and subparagraph 5(c), which shall enter into force on 1 January 2021;

2. paragraph 3(4)(f), (g) and (h) and paragraph 28, subparagraph 1(a) and subparagraphs 2 and 5, which shall enter into force on 1 January 2019;

3. Article 22(4), Article 40, Article 109(1), Article 124, Article 161(2), paragraphs 3(6), 30, 36, 37 and 43, which shall enter into force as from the day of promulgation of this Act in the State Gazette.

#### FINAL PROVISIONS

to the Act Amending and Supplementing the Social Assistance Act  
(SG No. 35/2019, effective 1.08.2019)

.....  
§ 7. Within three months of the promulgation of this Act in the State Gazette, the Council of Ministers shall adopt the relevant amendments to the Implementing Regulation of the Social Assistance Act and the Implementing Regulation of the Family Allowances for Children Act.

#### FINAL PROVISIONS

to the Act Amending and Supplementing the Social Assistance Act  
(SG No. 102/2022, effective 1.06.2023)

§ 12. (Effective 23.12.2022 - SG No. 102/2022) The statutory instruments of secondary legislation for the application of this Act shall be brought into conformity with it until the entry into force thereof.

§ 13. This Act shall enter into force as from the 1st day of June 2023, with the exception of § 12 herein, which shall enter into force as from the day of promulgation of the Act in the State Gazette.