What is the reception allowance?

A person staying in Finland is primarily responsible for his or her own income and assets. Also spouses have a maintenance obligation towards each other. The maintenance obligation continues even if the spouses live separated for reasons such as work.

If you have no income or assets, you have a statutory right to an allowance. Reception allowance covers food, clothing, minor medical expenses, local transport and telephone calls and similar expenses considering daily living of the person and the family.

The amount of the reception allowance depends on all the income and resources you have at your disposal. Income includes, for example, wages and salaries. Assets mean, for example, savings in a bank account or cash.

You must inform the reception centre immediately of any changes in your family circumstances. Changes that must be reported include:

- starting work
- the birth of a child
- moving to a private housing
- staying abroad
- the beginning or end of a marriage or cohabitation

It is up to you to make sure that your allowance is sufficient for the period for which it has been granted.

The reception centre may grant you a supplementary allowance to meet your or your family's special needs. You can only receive a supplementary allowance if you are entitled to a basic allowance. Supplementary allowances can cover, for example, the cost of medicines prescribed by a doctor, compulsory travel expenses or the purchase of a passport. Children's clothing can be subsidised up to EUR 100 per year and up to EUR 200 per year for a child's hobbies. For adults, clothing and hobby expenses are not reimbursed as a supplementary allowance.

If the reception centre is not informed in good time of a change in your circumstances, you might receive too much reception allowance. If the overpayment is due to false information, concealed information or failure to report a change in your circumstances, this may be a case of abuse. This could lead to a criminal complaint and/or recovery of the payment