





	Business hours: Mon–Fri 08h00–13h00, Wed also 13h00–16h00
<b>How soon do I have to pay?</b>	Unless the judgment provides for a payment plan, the amount is due right from the start and must be <b>paid in full within the specified time limit.</b>
<b>What happens if I do not pay the fine?</b>	<p>If you fail to pay within the required time, you will be sent a reminder notice, asking you once again to make the payment without delay.</p> <p>If you choose to also ignore the <b>reminder</b> or if – provided that payment by instalments had been granted - you miss an instalment, the Public Prosecution Service will issue an <b>enforcement warrant and initiate collection proceedings.</b></p>
<b>What do I do if I cannot pay it all in one go?</b>	<p>If you are unable to pay the full amount, you can ask the prosecution service for <b>payment extension</b> or an <b>instalment plan.</b></p> <p>Please apply in writing to the Public Prosecution Service, quoting the case reference number. Click <a href="#">here</a> to download the form.</p> <p>Please note that, even though application forms are provided in a number of languages, you should always give your information in German. Whilst the forms in other languages are intended to give you some orientation about what we want from you, only forms completed in German will be considered. Keep in mind that <b>any payment arrangement request must be supported by documentary evidence.</b></p>
<b>Is it ok to disregard the due date after making an application for extension or an instalment plan?</b>	<p><b>No.</b></p> <p><b>Requesting a payment plan has no impact on the due date!</b> Only if and when your request is granted are you released from your obligation to pay within the specified time frame.</p>
<b>What if I need more time to pay?</b>	<p>You may ask for payment extension.</p> <p>Click <a href="#">here</a> for the application forms</p> <p>You can apply for extension if, for example, you are expecting to shortly receive a sum of money or start a job, so that you will then have enough to pay the fine</p>



<p><b>Do I get to decide the monthly instalment amount?</b></p>	<p><b>No.</b></p> <p>It is entirely up to the Prosecution Service to determine the amount of an instalment as well as the due dates.</p> <p>At the same time, your application may contain <b>proposals</b> about when and how much you could pay each month. Prosecutors will try to take your proposals into account.</p>
<p><b>Will the Prosecution Service let me know exactly when I need to pay what, if and when I get permission to pay by instalments?</b></p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p> <p>If your request to pay by instalments is granted, the Prosecution Service will send you a payment schedule, possibly along with bank transfer slips. You will typically be asked to pay your fine in equated monthly instalments.</p> <p><b>Do not miss the due date!</b></p>
<p><b>What do I do if I cannot pay an instalment in time?</b></p>	<p>If it looks as though you are going to miss an instalment, it would be wise to give prosecutors a ring early on.</p> <p>A break in payment – unless approved by prosecutors – would cancel all payment arrangements and compel you to pay the remainder <b>in full</b> and without delay.</p>
<p><b>Should I set up a standing order if payment in instalments is approved?</b></p>	<p>You are advised to set up a standing order to avoid missing an instalment..</p> <p>Direct debit is not an authorised option.</p>
<p><b>I am receiving benefits. Will it be possible for the managing agency to pay the fine in monthly instalments directly to <i>Zentrale Zahlstelle Justiz</i>?</b></p>	<p><b>Yes.</b></p> <p>That should not be a problem, provided the prosecution service agrees with payment by instalments and the benefits agency goes along with the assignment of the right to benefits. That is because section 53(2) of the <i>SGB I</i> welfare regulations permits the assignment of claims only if the benefits agency deems this to be in your interest.</p>



	<p>If you consider assigning your right – or parts thereof – you are free to turn to the Justice Service's Welfare Clinic (<b>ambulanter Sozialer Dienst der Justiz, Fachbereich Gerichtshilfe</b>) at the Regional Court for advice and assistance. .</p>
<p><b>What kind of enforcement action can the prosecution service take if I fail to pay?</b></p>	<p>The prosecution service can send in the bailiffs with a <b>distrain</b> order or move to garnish your wages or money you have in the bank, in other words, instruct third parties who owe you money to hand it over to the service.</p> <p>The bailiffs may require you to <b>disclose your assets</b> in a statutory declaration or affidavit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>→ Disclosure of your assets will give creditors a comprehensive overview of everything they can move to have seized. <b>The information so obtained may be used for three years!</b></li><li>→ If you fail to turn up for the asset disclosure declaration without good reason, a <b>warrant</b> may be issued, directing police to pick you up. If you go on refusing to make the declaration, you can be held in <b>contempt and jailed</b> for up to six months.</li></ul> <p><u>Please note:</u></p> <p>If you provide false or incomplete information (either with intent or through negligence), you are committing a criminal offence and could even be convicted again.</p>
<p><b>What happens if enforcement action yields no results?</b></p>	<p>If prosecutors conclude that you are definitely unable or unwilling to pay up, they are compelled to send you to jail for a <b>substitute prison term</b>.</p>
<p><b>Can the prosecution service impose the jail term without prior enforcement action?</b></p>	<p><b>Yes.</b></p> <p>If prosecutors deduce from the case file that the fine cannot, or will not, be paid, they can send you straight to prison.</p>
<p><b>When, where and how long will I have to serve the substitute jail term?</b></p>	<p>You will find the information on the <b>summons to begin your prison term</b> (<i>Ladung zum Strafantritt</i>), sent by the prosecution service.</p>



	<p>At the same time, the length of the prison term can be calculated from the original court or summary judgment. As a rule, for each day-fine imposed, you must serve one day of substitute jail time. If, for example, you were sentenced to <b>30 day-fines</b> at 10 euros each, you need to <b>serve 30 days</b>..</p>
<p><b>Is it possible to avert jail time by paying up, even after receiving the summons?</b></p>	<p><b>Yes.</b></p> <p>The summons will also indicate the amount you must pay to deal with the fine and avoid prison.</p> <p>When paying, do not forget to quote the <i>Geschäftszeichen</i> reference number. Otherwise, the payment might not be properly allocated to your case, and enforcement action will be initiated.</p>
<p><b>What happens if I neither pay the fine nor follow the summons to begin the prison term?</b></p>	<p>If you fail to report to the jail, not having paid the fine, the prosecution service will, once the specified deadline is expired, issue an arrest warrant and direct the police to pick you up.</p> <p>You may then be arrested anywhere and at any time, and detained at the nearest jail.</p>
<p><b>What do I do if I cannot pay an instalment in time?</b></p>	<p>If it looks as though you are going to miss an instalment, please phone or otherwise get in touch with the prosecution service. Please quote the reference number to get quick assistance.</p>
<p><b>Is it possible to avert jail time by doing unpaid work?</b></p>	<p><b>Yes, it is!</b></p> <p>If you cannot pay or have been summoned to report to prison, you still have the option to avert jail by performing unpaid work.</p> <p>To do that, you need to make an <b>application</b> to the prosecution service within a week of receiving the summons. Click <a href="#">here</a> for the required forms.</p> <p>If you carry out the work as instructed, the fine will be deemed to be paid off.</p> <p><b>If you do not make the application, you must follow the summons and report to prison without being asked again!</b></p>
<p><b>Am I allowed to pick between paying the fine and doing unpaid work?</b></p>	<p><b>No.</b></p>



	<p><b>‘Paying off’ the fine by performing unpaid work is only an option if you are genuinely unable to pay. This inability to pay must be shown by producing the necessary evidence. It is not a matter of choice.</b></p>
<p><b>Can I decide where to work?</b></p>	<p><b>No.</b></p> <p>We are talking about unpaid community service at not-for-profit or similar institutions such as church or welfare organisations, hospitals, care homes or conservation groups.</p>
<p><b>How long do I have to work to pay off the fine?</b></p>	<p>As a rule, it takes five hours of work to pay off one day-fine.</p> <p>If, for example, you were sentenced to 30 day-fines at 10 euros each, you need to perform 150 hours of work (30 x 5 hours).</p> <p>In exceptional cases, the prosecution service can reduce this from five hours to three.</p>