



Francis Dale Phillips  
VA Accredited Service Officer  
American Legion  
Department of France

Friday, January 24, 2020

# Veterans Commissary and Exchange Privileges INSTRUCTIONS



**Preface: WASHINGTON** -- Beginning New Year's Day, 2020, commissaries, post exchanges and recreational facilities across the Department of Defense will open their doors to more than 4.1 million additional veterans.

Privileges will be extended to veterans who are Purple Heart recipients, former prisoners of war, and all who have [any level of service-connected disabilities](#). Individuals who are designated, as primary family caregivers of eligible veterans will also be granted privileges if they are recognized under the Department of Veterans Affairs' Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers.

Source: [https://www.army.mil/article/231261/commissaries\\_exchanges\\_welcoming\\_more\\_veterans\\_in\\_2020](https://www.army.mil/article/231261/commissaries_exchanges_welcoming_more_veterans_in_2020)

## Currently for Germany only

Following this checklist will assist you in obtaining your privileges. Please complete each question.

- Question: Do you have a Veteran Affairs Claim Decision letter stating that you have a Service-connected disability of 0% or above?**
- ➔ If you do have a service-connected condition, continue to next question.
  - ➔ **If not:** Visit your nearest Veteran Service Organization or VA Office to submit your Claim.
    - Proceed to next question when accomplished.
- Question: Do you have a Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC)?**
- ➔ If you have a VHIC card, proceed to the next question
  - ➔ 1. **If not:** you must be enrolled in the Veteran Health Care System! You can accomplish this by filling out the VA Form 10-10EZ or calling 001 877 222 8387.  
<https://www.va.gov/health-care/how-to-apply/>
  - 2. Plan to visit the States to obtain a VHIC card.
    - a. Prior to departing to CONUS, you should contact the local VA hospital in the area you are visiting. Visit <https://www.va.gov/directory/guide/allstate.asp> Ask them if your records are on file in their system and make an appointment. (If your files are in the system, you will not need a copy of your decision letter)
      - i. Please be aware that it takes 5 to 10 working days to receive, via mail, your VHIC card.
      - ii. They will not send the card overseas; they only send the card to an APO address or to a local US mailing address (relative).
        - a. Proceed to next question when accomplished.



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**Question: Do you have an Installation Access Card (IAC) to access a military installation?**

→ If you have a base installation pass, please proceed to next question.

→ **If not:** You will need the following documentation in order to apply for your installation pass

**Veterans residing in Germany:**

- Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC)
- Valid Passport
- PGCC (German Police Good Conduct Certificate (Führungszeugnis)
  - This may be obtained at your local city hall (Rathaus)
- Current German residency permit (Aufenthaltserlaubnis).
- AE Form 190-16A (Application for Installation Access)
  - AE Form 190-16A can be found online at <https://www.aepubs.eur.army.mil/>
- AE Form 604-1B (Security Questionnaire)
  - AE Form 604-1B can be found online at <https://www.aepubs.eur.army.mil/>
- LNSP – Local National Screening Program (If residing in the EU - will be submitted through IACS)

**Tourist visiting Germany up to 90 days:**

- Valid Passport
- Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC)

→ Contact your nearest military IACS office for an appointment or walk in possibility.

- Visit <https://home.army.mil/imcom/index.php/garrisons> Then search IAC
  - Be aware that the Installation Pass will limit you to access Landstuhl Regional Medical Center and one US military installation.
    - Proceed to next question when accomplished.

**Question: Do you have a German “Pink” customs card?**

→ If you have your German Customs Form, please proceed to last question.

→ **If not:** Contact the nearest US military customs office.

- Visit <https://home.army.mil/imcom/index.php/garrisons> Then search “customs”.

**Veterans residing in Germany:**

- You will need the following
  - Valid Passport
  - Current German residency permit (Aufenthaltserlaubnis).
  - VHIC (Veteran Health Identification Card)

**Tourist visiting Germany up to 90 days:**

- Flight Itinerary showing when you entered Germany and when you leave
  - Must use privileges a minimum of 30 days or more!

Once you visit the local US Customs Office, on base, and have met the requirements, you will be issued a **Status Verification** form that you must take to the local German Tax Office (Zollamt): You will be issued a German Customs **Certificate** (Pink Card). At the end of each month, you must take the receipts of all US purchases (Commissary and PX) to the Zollamt and pay German taxes on your purchases.

- Proceed to next question when accomplished.

**QUESTION: Why are you not shopping yet?**

Frank Phillips (Francis Dale Phillips) USAG ANSBACH MPD VSO, UNIT 28721 BOX 6511, APO AE 09177  
Tel: +49 9802 83 2269 Wed & Fri 1300-1600 email: francis.phillips2@va.gov