

## **Guidance for Fort Hood Soldiers / Families Affected by COVID-19 Stop Move PCS Backlog 29 May 2020**

The DOD-Directed COVID Stop-move implemented through 30 June 2020 has created a significant permanent change of station (PCS) backlog affecting US Service members around the world. While the current stop-move order is under review, Fort Hood already has a backlog of over 3,200 PCS moves - more than double the installation's peak monthly movement capacity. This backlog will continue to grow while the stop move remains in effect, and could carry over to 2021.

This means that Soldiers currently on PCS orders from Fort Hood should expect a significant delay in their move unless they fall into one of the Army-directed priority movement categories below:

- Assignment to/from Brigade and Battalion Command (Commanders and CSMs)
- Assignment to/from Primary Military Education
- Assignment to/from Drill Sergeant/Recruiter Duties
- Assignment to/from Senior Service College
- Soldiers who Reenlisted for a PCS Move

Soldiers on PCS orders in one of these categories should prepare to move on or near your originally assigned or HRC-adjusted report date (for more information, see Advice for PCS Movers, #1 below).

For all other Soldiers on PCS orders, four factors will determine the actual date of your move:

- Any HRC adjustments to your PCS report date (see Advice for Delayed PCS Movers, #1 below)
- The availability of installation movement resources
- The date your request for movement resources is received at the Installation Transportation Office or Move.mil.
- Soldiers encountering exceptional circumstances or extreme hardship should contact their chain of command to pursue an exception to policy

### **– Advice for Delayed PCS Movers –**

We recognize that the PCS backlog has added uncertainty to an already stressful movement process. The Fort Hood Leadership is working diligently with both FORSCOM and the Department of the Army to reduce the PCS backlog in a timely and efficient manner.

For Soldiers on PCS orders from Fort Hood, there are actions they can take now to prepare for the delayed move and to make their PCS move as smooth as possible when it occurs:

- 1. Verify your Report Date:** HRC is currently modifying Soldier report dates to flatten the backlog curve and make delays more predictable. Soldiers should check with their unit S1 to see if their report date has been changed.
- 2. Schedule your Move as Soon as Possible:** Soldiers should contact the Installation Transportation Office or go to Move.mil ASAP to schedule their move. The Installation Travel Office schedules movement resources on a first-come, first-served basis using the date they received the soldier's move request.
- 3. Consider a Personally Procured Move (PPM):** For a CONUS PCS, a PPM can accelerate a Soldier's move timeline. Opting for a full PPM allows a Soldier to forgo waiting for limited installation movement resources and move to their gaining installation as soon as they are ready in accordance with their report date. To help ease the PCS backlog, full PPMs are now 100% reimbursed. For more information, contact the Installation Transportation Office.
- 4. Consider a PCS Deletion or Deferment:** If a Soldier is on orders to move solely due to time on station, they may consider requesting to defer or delete their PCS move. Soldiers should consult their chain of command, unit S1, and family to determine if a deletion or deferment is right for them.
- 5. Speak to Your Landlord / Leasing Agent:** Landlords share some of the uncertainty caused by the COVID Stop-move. If a Soldier's delayed PCS requires that they extend their lease, an early conversation with their landlord is warranted.
- 6. Register Your Children for School at or near Current Duty Station:** If a Soldier's adjusted PCS report date is beyond 15 August, they should consider registering school-age children for school in the local area. Registration helps ensure school age children have a seat reserved in the local school district for the upcoming school year.

While delays to PCS moves are a reality as we adapt to a COVID-19 environment, we remain committed to providing both predictability and support to our Soldiers and Families throughout the PCS move process.

Additional Resources

- Enclosure 1 – Army G-4 Article on the new Army PCS Move App
- Enclosure 2 – Army G-1 FAQ on the Stop Move and PCS
- Enclosure 3 – III Corps SJA Article on COVID-19 and Leases

PHANTOM LETHAL!

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Approved by MG Scott L. Efflandt, III Corps & Ft Hood Deputy Commanding General

# Army Rolls Out New App to Improve PCS Move Experience in COVID-19 Era

By Army G-4 April 22, 2020



WASHINGTON -- The Army released today “**Army PCS Move**” -- a mobile knowledge-based app designed to enhance the relocation experience for Soldiers, Families, and Department of the Army Civilians.

Those preparing for a permanent change-of-station (PCS) move now have access to an organized central hub of information on entitlements, types of moves, how to plan/schedule a move, claims, and important moving information related to COVID-19. The app also helps educate users regarding allowances and responsibilities in the event a claim for loss and/or damage needs to be filed.

Major General Michel Russell, Director of Operations for HQDA, G-4 said, “By using the app you will become very familiar with the PCS process, your entitlements, and resources available to improve your household goods experience.”

The idea of the app began as part of the Chief of Staff of the Army's people first philosophy and the Army's pursuit of innovative initiatives to ensure Soldiers and their Families have predictable, flexible, and adaptable quality of life programs.



Army G-4 and CASCOT worked to develop the app prior to the COVID-19 pandemic with input from nearly 100 Soldiers, spouses, and Civilians. The Army incorporated several of their recommendations that provide an improved user experience such as a checklist to keep track of the steps to take for a successful move. The checklist covers everything to do -- from the time orders are received to after a move is complete. Highlights of the app include: deadline reminders, a weight allowance calculator, instructional videos, and important documents and forms.

The primary goal of the **Army PCS Move** app is to educate and make information widely available to positively impact Soldiers, Families, and Civilians. A PCS move can be stressful; however, it doesn't have to be if properly prepared. Equipped with this new app, those moving can be better informed, leading to a less challenging move.

**Download the free Army PCS Move app now in the [Google Play Store](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.CASCOT.MovingApp)**

**[\[https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.CASCOT.MovingApp\]](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.CASCOT.MovingApp) and the [Apple App Store](https://apps.apple.com/us/app/army-pcs-move/id1507393349?ls=1)**

**[\[https://apps.apple.com/us/app/army-pcs-move/id1507393349?ls=1\]](https://apps.apple.com/us/app/army-pcs-move/id1507393349?ls=1).**

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS** page 1 of 3  
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**Q1. What are the quarantine requirements associated with my TDY or PCS?**

A1. Force health protection procedures are independently managed by each installation and driven by local requirements. Typically, force health protection measures require either early reporting or a period of quarantine after reporting to the installation. Contact the destination unit or school for details, and include necessary time in your travel requests.

**Q2. My PCS report date is after the stop move window (30 June 20). Do I still need an exception to policy to prepare for my move?**

A2. If you plan to initiate travel (sign out of the installation) after the end of the stop movement window, currently June 30, you do not need an exception to policy or memo stating your move is exempt. You may proceed with clearing, HHG scheduling, and other such tasks as normal because your move is not subject to the stop movement policy. However, if you plan on initiating travel before the window expires, you do need an exception to policy, regardless of your report date.

**Q3. I need to submit an ETP for travel during the stop movement window. What is the process?**

A3. See matrix below for overview of ETP process outlined in ALARACTs:

	Action	ETP Initiated & Submitted by	Coordination with	ETP Approval Authority based on Soldier's current jurisdiction (UCMJ)
ALARACT 045 (PME Inbound)	PCS - Attend PME or Functional Courses (Losing Unit under SA Auth)	Losing ACOM/ASCC/DRU (ATRRS Reservations)	TRADOC/TOMA	VCSA
	PCS - Attend PME or Functional Courses (Losing Unit under CCMD/Joint Auth)	Losing Command (Follow Cmd Guidance)	TRADOC/TOMA	CCMD Commander/Joint Delegated Authority
	TDY - Attend PME or Functional Courses (Unit under SA Auth)	Assigned Command (Follow Cmd Guidance)	TRADOC/TOMA	ACOM CG/ASCC CG/HQDA Principal Official
	TDY - Attend PME or Functional Courses (Unit under CCMD/Joint Auth)	Assigned Command (Follow Cmd Guidance)	TRADOC/TOMA	CCMD Commander/Joint Delegated Authority
	PCS - Training with Industry or Advanced Civil Schooling (Losing Unit under SA Auth)	Soldier initiates, Losing Command submits	RFO verified by unit	VCSA
	PCS - Training with Industry or Advanced Civil Schooling (Losing Unit under CCMD/Joint Auth)	Soldier initiates, Losing Command submits	RFO verified by unit	CCMD Commander/Joint Delegated Authority
ALARACT 036 (PME Outbound & CSL)	PME Departure	TRADOC/AWC (Losing Unit)	Gaining ACOM/ASCC/DRU	VCSA
	To CSL (Losing unit under SA Auth)	Gaining ACOM/ASCC/DRU	Losing ACOM/ASCC/DRU	VCSA
	To CSL (Losing unit under CCMD/Joint Auth)	Gaining ACOM/ASCC/DRU	Losing ACOM/ASCC/DRU	CCMD Commander/Joint Delegated Authority
	Drill Sergeant / Recruiter (Losing unit under SA Auth)	Gaining ACOM/ASCC/DRU	Losing ACOM/ASCC/DRU	VCSA
	Drill Sergeant / Recruiter (Losing unit under CCMD/Joint Auth)	Gaining ACOM/ASCC/DRU	Losing ACOM/ASCC/DRU	CCMD Commander/Joint Delegated Authority
ALARACT 038 (ETP Process)	PCS - Hardship (Losing Unit under SA Auth)	Soldier initiates on DA 4187, Losing CMD submits	Gaining ACOM/ASCC/DRU	VCSA
	PCS - Hardship (Losing Unit under CCMD/Joint Auth)	Soldier initiates on DA 4187, Losing CMD submits	Gaining ACOM/ASCC/DRU	CCMD Commander/Joint Delegated Authority
	PCS - Mission Essential (Losing Unit under SA Auth)	Gaining Command	Losing ACOM/ASCC/DRU	VCSA
	PCS - Mission Essential (Losing Unit under CCMD/Joint Auth)	Gaining Command	Losing ACOM/ASCC/DRU	CCMD Commander/Joint Delegated Authority

**Q4. Can I travel to attend professional military education or functional courses during the stop movement window?**

A4. If you have a confirmed ATRRS reservation, recommend your schools/quota manager confirm the class will be conducted. Your ACOM/ASCC/DRU will use ATRRS reservations to build a list of all Soldiers scheduled to attend courses and request an exception to policy to allow you to travel. TRADOC will inform you and your command of any quarantine or force health protection measures required by each school. If your exception to policy is approved, ensure your travel orders include the time necessary to meet force health protection requirements. (ALARACT 045/2020)

**Q5. I am currently on orders to an OCONUS location within the next 120 days and understand there is a backlog on processing of passports. What should I do?**

A5. Due to the impacts of COVID-19, the Department of State's ability to process passport applications is severely limited. The Department of Defense is actively engaged with the Department of State to provide assistance to Soldiers and Family members scheduled to PCS to an OCONUS location. Soldiers, DACs, and command-sponsored dependents on PCS orders to OCONUS locations who require a no-fee passport will submit their passport applications to a local passport acceptance facility no earlier than 60 days and no later than 45 days from OCONUS departure date. If visa is required, the passport application will be submitted no earlier than 80 days and no later than 65 days prior to departure date.

If there are extenuating circumstances that require expedited processing of a passport application, Soldiers should submit memo (HQDA EXORD 144-20, FRAGO 27, Annex CCCC) through chain of command for ACOM/ASCC/DRU/HQDA Principal approval.

Soldiers that have already submitted a passport application with an approved ETP do not need to submit an expedite memo identified in Annex CCC, as DoS is currently focused on processing the current backlog of passports already submitted. Soldiers on assignment to an OCONUS location should contact their gaining command to verify passport and/or visa requirements. Failure to do so may result in command-sponsored dependents traveling separate from their sponsor.

**Q6. What if my family members' passports or visas will not be ready in time to travel?**

A6. Soldiers may request deferred family member travel through the Military Personnel Division (MPD) when insufficient time remains for processing passport or visa applications. Insufficient time is defined as that period when the sponsor has less than 30 days remaining between the date of receipt of orders and availability date or reporting date. The overseas commander will be advised of this approval. Exceptions should be coordinated with the gaining ACOM, ASCC, or DRU. Soldiers authorized deferred travel for Family members are not entitled to move the Family to a designated



place. Any travel of Family members while in the deferred-travel status is at personal expense. (AR 55-46, para 1-7a(8))

Alternatively, Soldiers may request an assignment deferment from HRC based on financial or medical hardship if concurrent travel is deferred. This request is initiated via DA Form 4187 through the Soldier's S1. If the commander recommends approval then the MPD will forward to HRC for final approval (AR 600-8-11, para 2-13).

**Q7. Will I be entitled to Family Separation Allowance if my family member travel is deferred because of passport processing times?**

A7. When concurrent travel is authorized for family members, but is delayed for more than 30 days and the delay is caused by the government, then family separation allowance may be authorized. (DoDFMR, Vol 7a, CH27, Table 27-2, Rule 4)

**Q8. Do compassionate reassignments fall within the Expedited Transfers stop move ETP approval process?**

A8. No. Soldiers with an HRC approved compassionate reassignment (AR 614-100 or AR 614-200) must initiate an exception to policy to travel restrictions via DA Form 4187 through their chain of command requesting either a hardship or humanitarian waiver IAW ALARACT 038/2020. For time sensitive compassionate reassignment cases, follow processing procedures in ALARACT 038/2020 para. 4.B.4.A.1.B. However, if the basis for the approved compassionate reassignment is for the purpose of long term medical treatment, then no ETP is required, since medical travel is exempt as outlined in the SECARMY Delegation of Authority to Approve Travel of Army Personnel memorandum, paragraph 4b, issued 23 April 2020.

**Q9. Is dependent student travel authorized during the stop movement window?**

A9. Yes, but an exception to the travel restrictions is required. A sponsor may initiate a hardship ETP request through their chain of command. The approval authority for travel resides with CCMD delegated authority.

# COVID-19 AND LEASES page 1 of 2



**III CORPS OSJA**

**Fort Hood  
Consolidated  
Client Services**

**How To Request  
Legal Help:**

Email the Fort Hood  
Legal Assistance  
Office at:

**USArmy.Hood.III-  
Corps.mbx.SJA-  
Legal-  
Asst@mail.mil**

**TALK TO  
YOUR  
LANDLORD**

**Talking to your  
landlord helps both  
of you plan ahead.**

## **Is Legal Assistance available?**

Yes. The Fort Hood Legal Assistance office is helping clients virtually. If you have a legal issue, you can email the Legal Assistance office at [USArmy.Hood.III-Corps.mbx.SJA-Legal-Asst@mail.mil](mailto:USArmy.Hood.III-Corps.mbx.SJA-Legal-Asst@mail.mil) and a staff member will contact you.

## **I already signed a lease at my new installation. What do I do?**

Servicemembers who have already signed a lease at their duty station should talk to their landlord. The landlord may be able to work with you by canceling or delaying the lease. Unfortunately, the DoD Stop Movement order does not allow you to terminate your new lease. If you need help talking to your landlord, you should contact the Fort Hood Legal Assistance office. A legal assistance attorney can help you by evaluating your options, preparing a notice of intent to terminate the lease, or negotiating with your landlord.

## **Can I use the SCRA to end my new lease?**

Maybe. The Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) is a federal law that gives active duty Servicemembers and their dependents certain protections, including the right to terminate a lease with military orders for a PCS move or for military movement lasting more than 90 days. The orders to your new duty station do not allow you to terminate your lease at that new duty station. Because of this, you may need to work with your command team to request new orders that order you back to your current duty station for more than 90 days.

## **Is it possible to waive my SCRA protection?**

Yes! Even though the SCRA is a federal law, you can still waive the law's protection if you are not careful. Some leases include waivers buried under all the other lease documents. You should read your lease carefully and talk to a legal assistance attorney about whether you waived those protections.



## III CORPS OSJA

### Fort Hood Consolidated Client Services

#### How To Request Legal Help:

Email the Fort Hood  
Legal Assistance  
Office at:

USArmy.Hood.III-  
Corps.mbx.SJA-  
Legal-  
Asst@mail.mil

# We Are Army Strong!

#### **I already told my landlord I'm PCS'ing. What do I do?**

The key is to engage with your landlord early. Talk to your landlord now about the options. Your landlord may be willing to cancel the lease termination OR let you rent on a month-to-month basis. The Fort Hood Legal Assistance Office can help you talk to your landlord.

#### **My landlord won't extend my lease. What do I do?**

Landlords are not required to extend your lease or re-lease the property to you. In some cases, the landlord may already have new tenants waiting to move in. If your landlord can't extend your lease, you will have to move. Luckily, the military can pay for your short distance move into a new residence. If you do have to move, you should consider a place that will let you rent month-to-month or with a short (3 month) lease. Both the SCRA and Texas law require that your orders be dated AFTER you signed the lease. At this time, there is no way to know what date your post-COVID-19 orders will have. To avoid incurring early termination costs during this COVID-19 transition period, you should not sign a 12 month lease.

#### **My landlord is letting me use my orders to cancel my lease, but why do I have to pay 1 more month's rent?**

The SCRA and Texas law require that you give 30 days notice of your intent to end your lease due to military orders. If the 30<sup>th</sup> day is after the next month's rental due date, then you owe rent for the full month. This is true regardless of when you actually move out of the property.

#### **Ughhh! This is so stressful! What should I do?**

We hear you! You are not alone. If you still have questions, the Fort Hood Legal Assistance office is committed to helping you through this difficult time. By working together we can navigate every challenge COVID-19 throws our way!