



PCSing to USAG Rheinland-Pfalz, Baumholder

Questions and answers for a smooth transition

By: USAGRP Housing Division
October 2019

Thank you for taking on the responsibility of sponsoring a new family in to the Baumholder Military Community. While most Soldiers prefer to navigate the PCS process on their own, engaged and proactive Sponsors have been proven to result in a more successful transition. This set of questions and answers was created to assist you, the Sponsor, in providing accurate information to our Soldiers **prior to their arrival** as it relates to housing. Where a Soldier and their family lives is one of the most personal and emotionally charged aspects of a PCS, and we would like to ensure that each family knows what to expect and is fully prepared to live in Germany. A great place to start is the following housing video:

<https://www.dvidshub.net/video/709458/lets-talk-housing>

Please use the information below to dialogue, engage and assist your Soldier with all of their housing inquiries. As always, please reach out or direct the Soldier to the contact the Housing Division with questions regarding unique situations.

Who is eligible for Family Housing?

To be eligible for Family housing, you must have command sponsored dependents and be on a 36-month tour, or dual military each serving a 36-month tour. If your Family is on deferred travel, the Housing Office will release the travel orders for your Family to join you after you have signed for housing.

How is housing overseas different from housing in the US?

The implementation of the Residential Communities Initiative (RCI) in many stateside locations has increased the availability of very nice, large, modern homes or duplexes for all ranks due to the Army's partnership with privatized management companies. However, the RCI program is a stateside program; no such program exists for OCONUS installations.

In Europe, and specifically Baumholder, renovations have started to improve the quality and size of homes we are able to offer our families. We are in the process of revitalizing and constructing new homes and the first 82 new townhomes were occupied at the end of 2018.

Do you take advance applications for housing?

Advanced applications can be completed but are not required. Soldiers are placed on the waitlist according to the date they departed their last duty station and are not offered housing in advance of their arrival to Baumholder.

When can I apply for housing?

The best time to apply for housing is as soon as possible after arriving to Baumholder. Most times Soldiers are in the housing office within the first three days.

Can I select the area where I want to live?

It depends. Homes are offered based on availability. Housing is required to offer the next available home in all instances but they are not required to offer more than one home per family. If the inventory is available, a Soldier will be offered two or three homes to make a selection from. Refusing to accept a home could result in a forfeiture of TLA entitlements.

Can I live off post?

Currently, all Soldiers with command sponsored dependents are required to live in on post housing. Europe is under a mandatory military family housing assignment policy implemented by USAREUR Commander, Lieutenant General Cavoli.

How long does it take to find housing?

Housing's goal is to offer our families a home within thirty to sixty days. Most times, homes are offered within two to three weeks.

What size are the houses (on-post, off-post) and where can I get/see floor plans?

The majority of homes in Europe are smaller than those Stateside. Typically, the on post homes fall in the following ranges:

Two bedroom apartments: 860 – 1080 sq ft
Three bedroom apartments: 965 – 1420 sq ft
Four bedroom apartments: 1200 – 1575 sq ft

Three bedroom townhomes: 1395 – 1775 sq ft
Four bedroom townhomes: 1505 – 1935 sq ft

Rental homes in Baumholder and on the local economy vary from in price, size and amenities. These factors determine the monthly rental price. For example, yards and garages are often smaller than what is found in the States but may require an additional monthly fee. Some other notable differences are that closets and some appliances are not provided with the home. No need to worry; these items are provided to our Soldiers and their families by the Housing Office.

Who determines the list I am placed on and my placement on the list?

You will be placed on the waiting list based on your grade and bedroom requirement. Your position on the list will be based on your eligibility based on factors such as date of departure of last unit, date of application if not reporting to the Housing Office within 30 days of arrival in Baumholder, and whether or not you are arriving from a dependent-restricted tour. You may elect, in writing, to be placed on a waiting list with less bedrooms than you are authorized. You may only be on one waiting list.

I'm TDY en-route. When can I be put on the waiting list? What will be my eligibility date? Does it start when I depart my permanent duty station, or when I finish the course or when I arrive at my new permanent duty station?

Soldiers will be placed on the waiting list with the effective date of the day they left their last permanent duty station. The application can be done in advance or upon arrival, as this will not affect your eligibility date.

I have two children, one male and one female. How many bedrooms do I qualify for?

We currently provide a bedroom for the Soldier and spouse, plus a bedroom for each child regardless of age and gender. However, if there are housing shortages, we will follow the regulatory guidance where bedroom assignment is based on both the age and gender of your children.

I have a Family member enrolled in EFMP. How will that affect my on-post housing assignment and wait time?

EFMP enrollment does not always affect your on post housing offer or assignment. If there are specific considerations (i.e. 1st floor requirement) your wait time may be longer. If we are unable to provide a home within a reasonable timeframe, you may be given authorization to reside in private rental quarters. The requirement for special or alternate housing must be verified in the EFMP documentation.

Where do I stay while I wait for housing?

Soldiers who are authorized concurrent travel for their family members or have a rank of SFC and above are authorized to stay in temporary lodging. Temporary Lodging Allowance will be provided in accordance with regulation. Soldiers who have a deferred family travel status or are in the rank of SSG and below will be required to reside in the barracks until housing is signed for.

Can my spouse or someone else accept a home on my behalf?

Yes. Spouses are allowed to sign for housing and furnishings in the absence of the sponsor. A power of attorney or notarized statement is not required. Anyone other than your spouse would need a power of attorney.

Once I am offered a home, how long do I have to accept/decline?

Once the apartment is available, you will be shown the home and a decision is required within 24 hours.

What happens if I decline a home?

If a specific offer of adequate housing is declined, the Soldier's name may either be removed from or placed at the bottom of the waiting list. If declining a home, a statement acknowledging the declination will be signed. Please note TLA allowances will not be paid if an adequate dwelling unit is declined.

My friend who is on the same waiting list as me was able to sign for her quarters before I was. How could this be? Why were they offered a nicer home than I was?

Each Family is offered a home based on their placement on the waitlist. Once a home has been offered to a family, the next unit available will be offered to the next family on the list. Fluctuations in inventory (when homes are available for move in) as well as they type of homes we have to offer causes a bit of variation in the exact assignment of housing.

My Family was assigned to a 4-bedroom home at my last duty station. Will I automatically qualify for a 4-bedroom home?

No. Soldiers will be placed on the waiting list with the number of bedrooms that are required for their family. We currently provide a bedroom for the Soldier and spouse, plus a bedroom for each child regardless of age and gender. However, if there are housing shortages, we will follow the regulatory guidance where bedroom assignment is based on both the age and gender of the children.

We have a lot of furniture. Can I have more bedrooms or additional storage?

Unfortunately, we are not able to house our families based on furnishings. The bedroom requirement is how we determine the size home offered to each family. Secured storage is available in the basement of our apartments and is provided to each family. If additional storage is needed, Soldiers and families can contact MWR for additional storage solutions.

My Family is not command sponsored but I plan on bringing them with me. Will I have problems signing for housing?

To be eligible for family housing, you must have command sponsored dependents and be on a 36-month tour. Arriving with family members who are not command sponsored is **highly discouraged**. Soldiers may be allowed to live off post, but will not be authorized TLA. This can create a financial hardship and additional problems because family members will be considered tourists and are only eligible to stay in country for 90 days.

My Family is on deferred travel but they do not want to wait any longer to join me. Are they authorized to travel at their own expense to Germany?

If your family is on deferred travel, the Housing Office will release orders for your family to travel after you have signed for housing. If your family travels prior to that point, you will be doing yourself a disservice: you will not be reimbursed for travel or passports, will not be authorized to ship HHG, and you will not be entitled to TLA. This can create a financial hardship and additional problems because family members will be considered tourists and are only eligible to stay in country for 90 days.

Are there restrictions on bringing our pets?

USAG Rheinland Pfalz adheres to the Army policy on Domestic Animals. This means that some dog breeds are restricted as are exotic, wild or farm animals. No more than two dogs or cats or combination thereof are authorized per home. Pets are not authorized in unaccompanied personnel housing. More information can be found at: <https://www.housing.army.mil/#!pg=post&sp=petinformation>.

How do I get a list of available rentals in the area?

Once it's determined you are eligible to reside in a private rental, you should start looking for homes at the official Army Housing Rental website, <https://www.homes.mil>. Here you will be able to view homes that are available and of interest to you. Please keep in mind that property availability changes daily and may not be available when you arrive. You cannot officially make any arrangements to sign a lease until you arrive in Baumholder and have reported to the housing office.

What are the Overseas Housing Allowance (OHA) entitlements and rent allotments?

OHA functions similarly to BAH but it is not the same. When stationed overseas, OHA is an entitlement granted to Soldiers who are required to pay rent. OHA is not granted to those who reside in government controlled quarters. Unlike BAH, OHA is only covers the amount of rent and utilities and has maximum entitlement cap based on the Soldiers pay grade.

How and who is starting and stopping my OHA?

The OHA paperwork will be completed by the Housing Services Office once a contract has been signed. The Soldier will be responsible for submitting the documents to Finance to start the entitlement. When you are ready to clear your private rental home, the Housing Office will submit the OHA paperwork to stop allowances.

Do I need renter's insurance for on-post or private rental housing?

Renters insurance is not required for on post or private rental housing, however, it is **strongly recommended** for our Soldiers to acquire and maintain a policy to protect their personal property. German liability insurance is useful when living in private rentals. This is essentially renters insurance but can be tailored to include additional protections for damages caused by pets or damages to other people and their property.

I currently live on post but would like to move to a different place. Can we apply for another wait list?

Once you are housed, you are considered adequately housed for the duration of your tour. Requests to move to another home would require an Exception to Policy. This request will be sent to the Garrison Commander for approval or disapproval.

I've heard the electric systems are different in Germany. Will my appliances work or will I have to buy new ones?

The German electrical system is 220 volts, while the United States runs on 110 volts. Some of the homes on post have been renovated to include both 110 and 220 voltage. Off post housing is strictly 220 voltage. If your appliance is dual voltage, you will be able to use your appliance with adapter. You can check the voltage of your appliance by looking near the power source. In the event your appliance is strictly 110 volts, you can still use the appliance in Germany but you will need a transformer. Transformers vary in size and wattage and should only be used when necessary as they use a lot of energy.

I really want to bring my own washer and dryer. Can I?

Please refrain from bringing any large appliances to Germany. This provision should be stated in the PCS orders as it is a JTR restriction, but it is truly unnecessary to ship appliances when being assigned to an installation in overseas. The Furnishings Management Office ensures that all homes are equipped with refrigerators, ovens and washers and dryers. Bringing your own appliances could result in damaging them if they aren't dual voltage or the need to store or sell them.

What is the Loaner Furniture Program?

The Loaner Furniture program provides Soldiers and their families' temporary furniture while transitioning in and out of our community. Arriving families are authorized to request government furniture for a period of 90 days. Departing families can request loaner furnishings for up to 60 days. In many cases, families are able to keep loaner furniture for the duration of their tour.

Is there a Self-Help program?

There is a Self Help Store on post that you may use to fix, repair, or enhance the appearance of your on post home. In order to get supplies from the store, you will be required to attend a 1-hour class and receive a card that you show when requesting supplies. Some of the items supplied are: gardening supplies, lights, and paint in addition to hardware and loaner tools.

What schools are in the area?

The Baumholder Military Community has an elementary school and a middle high school to serve students in grades kindergarten through twelfth. More information can be found at:

Smith Elementary
Grades K-5

<http://www.baum.ess.eu.dodea.edu/>

Baumholder Middle High School
Grades 6-12

<http://www.baum.ess.eu.dodea.edu/>

Opportunities for higher education and college level courses can be explored by visiting the Education Center.

What are the requirements for vacating my home?

There are similar requirements to vacate all homes, but specific details are spelled out below. Please be aware that housing is required to be cleared prior to departure. It is advised to schedule the pre-inspection appointment as soon as you receive your PCS orders. This will allow you the opportunity to address any issues far enough in advance that your installation clearing goes smoothly!

For Soldiers who reside in a barracks room, contact your Barracks Manager to schedule inspection appointments. When vacating your barracks room, it must be ready for the next Soldier to move into.

For Soldiers that lived in family housing, you should schedule a pre-inspection far enough in advance to ensure that you have time to address any discrepancies that may be found. Your final inspection will be based on your departure date. During your pre-inspection you will be informed what repairs, if any, are required to clear the home.

For Soldiers who reside in private rental homes, you are required to provide your landlord with written notice of termination. A pre-inspection appointment is advised but not required. The termination appointment must be scheduled with your landlord. At termination, it is expected that the home be in the same condition it was received with the exception of deficiencies listed on move in inspection report and utility payments have to be settled. The landlord will provide you with a signed document stating that the homes has been cleared, and this document will be provided to housing. Please note, a Housing Inspector is available to you for all inspections or interactions with your landlord.

HELPFUL LINKS

Army Housing Online User Services (All Housing Info)

<https://www.housing.army.mil/#!pg=post&sp=welcome>

USAG Rheinland-Pfalz Newcomer Information

<https://home.army.mil/rheinland-pfalz/index.php/usag-rheinland-pfalz/newcomers/newcomers-baumholder>

Homes.mil (Private Rental Listings)

<https://www.homes.mil>