

# USAG RP September 2019 Town Hall Q&A

## Directorates

Click on hyperlink to go to directorates

## Command Group

DPW

DFMWR

S6 - IT

DHR

## **CMD Group**

**Q: Will there be a consideration to make a shoppette for Wetzel?**

A: At this time, there are no plans to open an Express on Wetzel. AAFES typically does not build Express stores in housing areas. *(Response coordinated with AAFES General Manager)*

**Q: Why doesn't the medical staff get four-day and training holidays?**

A: Per MEDCOM guidance, because hospital personnel are not typically conducting field training exercises in the same approach taken by operational and maneuver units, it becomes incumbent upon us to remain open during their training holidays to offer access to care on days that are more convenient to our service members. However, typically on training holidays, MEDCOM has approved minimal manning days, affording leaders the opportunity to keep their clinics/sections open with the minimum amount of staff needed to conduct required operations. *(Response coordinated with Landstuhl Regional Medical Center Public Affairs)*

**Q: Is there any plan for reopening the Sembach commissary? It would really be needed over here.**

A: *This question was forwarded to Defense Commissary Agency for review but a response was not received by the time of posting. The commissary is not managed by the garrison.*

## **DPW**

**Q: What would it take for Baumholder to get trash cans in their parks for the kids? New parks too. Wetzel parks look horrible, too many weeds and dirty playground.**

A: We can and will assess the playgrounds for overall condition and take action if they need mowing, for example. Depending on the location the playground may be the responsibility of the housing residents or sponsored by an organization, but we will look closely at those on Wetzel as mentioned. Unfortunately, trash cans are not placed on playground areas because DPW does not have the manpower to empty trash cans on a regular basis, and historically residents or off-post residents use them in an unauthorized manner. The garrison has an Adopt-A-Playground program, where a military unit adopts a playground and has responsibility for cleanliness and submitting work requests for equipment repairs. If a playground is around a housing apartment area, then the upkeep and cleanliness of the area is the responsibility of the residents and building manager. Playground patrons are asked to remove their trash and utilize dumpsters in the housing common areas. If additional information is requested, please contact the DPW Work Reception Desk at 0611-143-531-3060.

**Q: Do all the other communities have to pick up their own trashes? Or do they have trash cans? I just don't know why Baumholder is different – especially with how many young families there are. Dumpsters are usually across the street and no one wants kids running across the street.**

A: Yes, other military communities ask their residents to police their trash and dispose of it properly around playgrounds and other organizational sites. Baumholder is not different than other Army kasernes in Europe or Army camps in Asia. Most kasernes have consolidated areas where trash cans are located and it is the responsibility of the patron to collect and dispose of their trash at one of these consolidated areas. For Army sites in the Kaiserslautern Military Community, playgrounds are only constructed at child development centers. The CDC staff is responsible for ensuring the playgrounds are cleaned (DPW does not provide trash cans).

**Q: Has the new school construction on Wetzel been delayed due to budget cuts?**

A: As of Sept. 27, 2019, DPW is not aware of any delays to this project due to budget cuts. NOTE: This project is being executed by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on behalf

of the Department of Defense Education Activity. This is not a USAG Rheinland-Pfalz managed project.

**Q: DPW doesn't answer their phone. Can we get an online form for work orders and link it on the website's homepage? Please don't just put up the phone numbers. We want an online form because it works better for people who can't call during the day because of work hours.**

A: Currently, DPW does not have an online system to receive work requests. We can accept work requests in Baumholder via email at the following address: [usarmy.rheinland-pfalz.usag.mbx.dpw-bmcssubmit4283@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.rheinland-pfalz.usag.mbx.dpw-bmcssubmit4283@mail.mil). If you have trouble contacting the DPW Baumholder office, you can get assistance by contacting the USAG Rheinland-Pfalz main DPW Office at 0611-143-541-4000.

We currently do not have a call-waiting system with our DPW phone system. If our service order clerks are on the phone with a resident and someone else calls, our current phone system does not have the capability to put the caller on hold and/or into a waiting-queue. When the phone is not answered, the clerk is probably on the phone with someone else. We are researching technical and IT solutions but at this time a resident can call two locations or email their request.

**Q: When will the potholes on Baumholder be filled?**

A: Our DPW In-House Roads & Grounds team continuously inspects the roads on post and prioritizes road repairs based on impact to life/health/safety and availability of funds. For FY20, we will be funding a project to repair Menue Road (between traffic circle and Java Cafe). We have assessed all of the roads on Baumholder, to include the parking lots, and prioritized them. Our goal is to repair roads and parking lots over time with the funds we have available. If you see an area which you deem to be an immediate impact to L/H/S, please report this area to the DPW Work Reception desk at 0611-143-531-3060 or [usarmy.rheinland-pfalz.usag.mbx.dpw-bmcssubmit4283@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.rheinland-pfalz.usag.mbx.dpw-bmcssubmit4283@mail.mil)

**Q: There are many rooms in the barracks on Baumholder that don't have keys making the rooms unusable and a waste of space.**

A: We can replace keys. The barracks manager or 1SG can call DPW to replace keys. In order to obtain replacement keys, contact the applicable barracks/facility manager, who will then submit a work request to DPW.

**Q: Some of the locker/storage spaces in barracks are unusable as well, so the soldiers are having to share spaces.**

A: The barracks manager or 1SG can call DPW who will come out to assess the storage space. In many cases, DPW can repair or possibly replace lockers to make the area usable. If existing locker/storage spaces are in unusable conditions, contact the applicable barracks/facility manager, who will then submit a work request to DPW.

**Q: Many of the mattresses in the barracks in Baumholder are heavily stained. Is there a way to clean them or replace them?**

A: If mattresses require replacement, contact the applicable barracks/facility manager, who will then submit a work request to DPW. DPW has ordered complete furniture replacements including beds/mattresses for 26 buildings in the Baumholder area. These will be exchanged over the next 12 months starting Nov. 12.

**Q: We live in one of the townhouses on Baumholder and my children have slipped on the stairs a few times, almost every time resulting in a cut from the metal lip on the edge of the stairs. One of those times required an ER visit to Landstuhl for my 3 year old. I have contacted housing and requested carpet stair covers be put on them (like we had on our stairs in Graf housing) and, after two months of calls, I was told I could do so at my own cost. I was told it was built to code and therefore isn't dangerous. We plan on doing this, but what about two other households that I know have had the same issue, except they can't afford to pay for the stair runners themselves? The metal lip hurts to walk on unless you're wearing shoes. This really needs to be addressed please.**

A: We are very sorry to hear about the injuries to the children. The information you have been provided is technically correct: the stairs were built in accordance with the design code with slip resistant tiles.

Our main objection to installing carpets on stairs is that carpeted stairs increase fall risks for three reasons:

- 1) Carpet reduces the tread edge (the border of the tread that your foot makes contact with just before stepping into thin air), which reduces your grip. This effect is particularly significant with slippery carpet materials like polyester or olefin.

2) Carpet reduces depth perception since the fabric creates a more complex pattern than that of bare flooring; you might not see where you're stepping until you've already misjudged where your foot was going to land.

3) Carpet reduces the tread depth of stair risers, which can result in up to half an inch less tread depth. Building codes stipulate at least 10 inches of depth in the tread. The less you have, the less room your foot has for steps before being plunged into thin air. Taking everything into consideration, you can add carpet to your stairs at your own cost; however, if you attach anything on your stairs, you are responsible to return your home in the same condition it was received (at your cost).

**Q: With rising temperatures in Germany, do you see any policy changes coming to allow members to use air conditioners on base next year?**

A: IMCOM-Europe recently revised its air conditioning usage policy. The new policy, dated Sept. 4, 2019, states the following:

(1) Family Housing: The garrison commander may approve the use of portable cooling devices in Army Family Housing.

(a) Acquisition, maintenance and safe use of the portable device is the responsibility of the service member. Any damages and/or associated repair costs caused by the acquisition and/or use of the portable device is the responsibility of the SM.

(b) To minimize electrical system impacts and energy costs, portable cooling device use is to be limited to peak heat hours. Fans and natural ventilation are to be used during evening hours.

(c) Portable devices are to meet a European Union Energy Label designation of "A+" or better (which is comparable to and meets the same intent of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency ENERGY STAR label and rating).

(d) Window units, thru-the-wall heat pumps, or installation of cooling units that require modification to government real property is prohibited.

(2) Other than Family Housing: The garrison commander may approve the use of portable cooling devices in spaces other than family housing when justified due to life, health or safety.

(3) The operation of portable cooling devices is prohibited when the intent is to circumvent obtaining approvals in accordance with this policy.

NOTE: Prior to the next cooling season, DPW will prepare a USAG Rheinland-Pfalz specific SOP with implementing instructions.

## **DFMWR**

**Q: Previously you answered my question regarding preschool at Smith in Baumholder. But here's the issue: It is supposed to be EFMP spots first; once those spots are filled this year it went to E-4 and below. When they still had slots open it only opened to E-9 and below. Can we make preschool not ranked-based? Options would include pulling from your CDC on post that would open a spot for more full-time care and most children in preschool will go to before and after at Wetzel which still generates more income.**

A: If you are referring to the Sure Start program at Smith Elementary School, we recommend speaking with Dr. Michelle Woodfork, the school principal. Sure Start is a DoDEA program and is not managed by the garrison. Please contact your local school if you have questions regarding this program.

Strong Beginnings is a Child and Youth Services part-day program with placement on a first-come, first-serve basis. CYS full-day care program placements are based on employment status. EFMP status is not used as a placement/priority factor for either program. For any questions about your individual childcare situation in a CYS facility, please contact Family and MWR Parent Central Services at 06783-6-7003 or DSN 485-7003 in Baumholder, or 0611-143-541-9065/67 or DSN 541-9065/67 in Kaiserslautern.

**Q: Nothing in Baumholder is open after 7 p.m. Can we talk about extending the library's hours one night a week to include some evening hours? We need a later night for folks who can't get in during normal hours (or spouses who are trying to do homework after kids get to bed). One later night until 8 or 9 p.m. would help. Maybe we can take away from slow afternoon hours or the dinnertime hours and open from 5-9 p.m. one night?**

A: Operational hours at USAG Rheinland-Pfalz libraries are challenging as our two main customers, Soldiers and family members, visit the library at different times. Soldiers need the library to complete mission requirements during the morning hours, while family members primarily use the library after school. Army libraries are funded to open a set number of hours per week, so when we add hours to the evening to accommodate family members it takes hours away from Soldiers using the library in the morning. We reduced Friday operating hours (taking time away from Soldiers), to enable opening on Saturdays (primarily used by family members). Adding a late night (8 p.m.) would take additional hours away from Soldiers. We will review the potential for a Library late night but we first must analyze the effect of taking more hours away from Soldiers before we commit to testing the late night hours. Here are some additional facilities that are open

after 7 p.m.: Warrior Zone, USO, and Mountaineer Fitness Center, and the Express provides some small food items and fuel in the evenings as well.

**Q: Is it possible to ensure that agencies are communicating with each other, such as ACS and CYS, to provide open childcare slots for civilian personnel that are required to have official training for their volunteer positions such as SFRG? CYS states they need two months' notice for childcare for official training but ACS only posts their calendar a week prior to the start of each month, therefore making it very difficult to coordinate two months in advance.**

A: The SFRG training calendar is posted at the end of the month for the upcoming month, and if you'd like to schedule further out or for unit training you can contact the ACS point-of-contact John Henderson or Mike Schack at 0611-143-541-9000 or DSN 541-9000 for projected future training dates. Childcare is challenging because our primary mission is to provide full-day care, but we do offer limited hourly care on a first-come, first-serve basis. We recommend you work with the ACS POCs listed, who can help navigate the training dates so you can coordinate childcare. CYS Parent Central Services can also assist, call 06783-6-7003 or DSN 485-7003 in Baumholder, or 0611-143-541-9065/67 or DSN 541-9065/67 in Kaiserslautern.



## **S6 - IT**

**Q: Why can't I watch this (live stream) on my government computer?**

A: Sorry, network restrictions are mandated by our higher headquarters and not something we can address at the local level.

## **DHR**

**Q: Since Baumholder doesn't have staff for a passport office anymore, can we ask staff from Kleber or somewhere else to come up once a month or so to do passports here?**

A: Unfortunately, passport agents are registered in the data system to a specific site and cannot operate out of multiple locations. We are working hard to get new agents hired and in place soon so we can reopen the Baumholder Passport Office.

In the meantime, there will be another Passport Outreach Event Oct. 23 at Ramstein Air Base. The Department of State and our organization will provide passport services for customers within the Kaiserslautern, Ramstein and Baumholder footprint. See the flyer on our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/army.rp](http://www.facebook.com/army.rp)