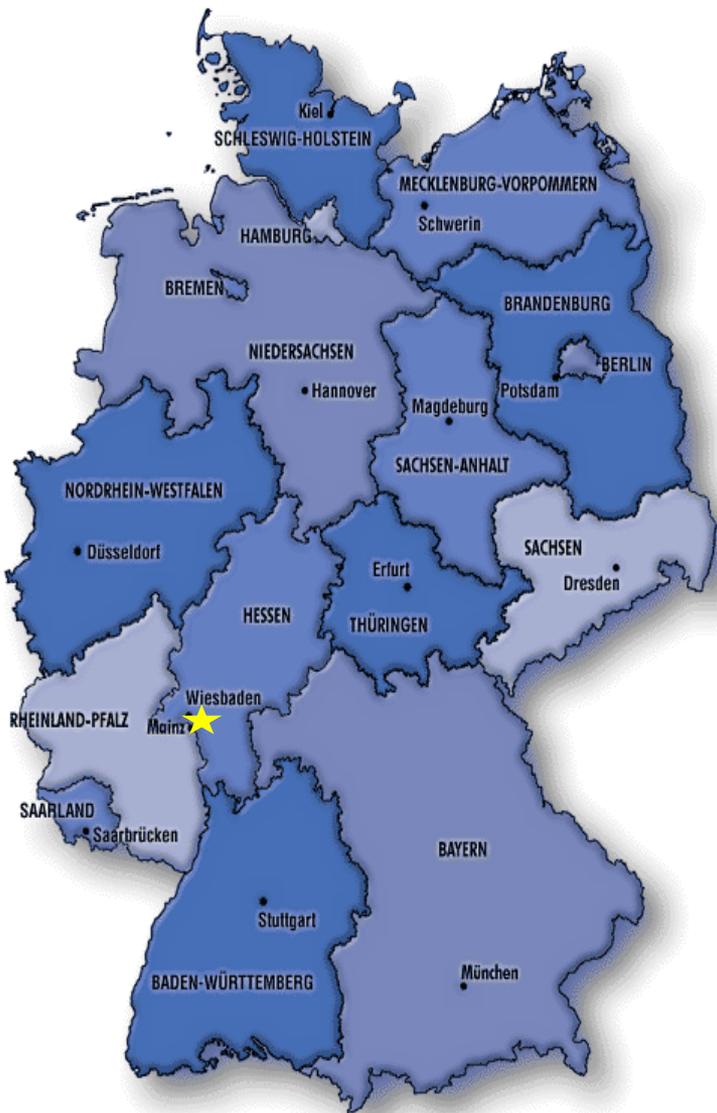


# USAG Wiesbaden



## USAG Wiesbaden Off-post Housing Briefing Wiesbaden: Your Home in Germany!





# Welcome to the Wiesbaden Military Community Housing Services Office (HSO)



# Hours of Operation

**Monday – Friday**

**0800 – 1200  
1300 – 1600\***

**US Federal Holidays**

**Closed**

**WALK-INS**

**Mon, Wed, Fri**

**ONLY APPOINTMENTS**

**Tue & Thur**

**German Holidays**

**Closed**

**Training Holidays**

**0800 – 1200  
1300 – 1600\***

**\*Last sign in at 1530**

**Telephone number 0611-143-548-4430/4460**



# Briefing Hand-Outs

- School bus information
- Rental Contract
- Map with ZIP codes for Wiesbaden and surrounding areas
- Residential Security Tri-Fold
- UTAP Enrollment Pack
- Tenants association (Mieterbund) Information



# Services Provided

- Assistance in locating a home through HSO Listings of available economy housing
- Lease negotiations/non-official verbal translations and review of our bilingual rental contracts
- Move-in/out inspections
- Only non-official verbal translation of bills



# Services Provided cont'd

- Administrative assistance  
(Utilities/furniture/allowances)
- Mediation between tenant/landlord



# Counselors

- Get acquainted & work with one counselor
- Personalized service customized for your needs
- Assistance from initial house hunting to move-in
- Get your counselor's business card



# Referral Service

- <https://www.homes.mil>
- No waiting list maintained
- Pet owners, please inform counselor



# What to Expect on the Market

- Very competitive market in Wiesbaden and surrounding areas
- Landlord or current tenant is obligated to show property to new incoming personnel
- Units could be listed at several other places; i.e., Wiesbadener Tagesblatt, Immo Scout, Immobilien/Realtors (rental agent), bookoo etc.
- The landlord has the option to select the tenant if the property is listed other than with Wiesbaden's HSO office



# What to Expect on the Market Cont'd

- Wiesbaden area has a shortage of single-family houses
- More common are duplexes, town-houses, (row houses), or apartments
- Most homes have stairs, often two or three stories without elevator



# German Housing

- What to expect in economy housing
- Smaller than U.S. housing
- May not have:
  - Built-in kitchen with appliances  
(except when listed with HSO)
  - Built-in closets
  - Light fixtures
  - Window screens
  - Smoke detectors  
(per German rental law mandatory for landlords to provide)



# Realtors/Immobilien

- The Housing office follows the regulatory requirements of the DoD Financial Management Regulations.
- No realtor (Immobilien) fees are reimbursed to Military or Civilian personnel moving to Wiesbaden.
- Any realtor hired by military or civilian personnel for locating private rental housing may have associated costs. Please check with the realtor first!
- Remember which real estate agent showed you the house/apartment!



# Immobilien Cont'd

- Based on contract stipulations, HSO cannot assist with lease negotiations if a real estate agent is involved.
- Courtesy calls to real estate agents can be made
- HSO provides our customers the same type of services at no cost! Service is free for customers and landlords



# Rental Agreements

- Rental agreements will be negotiated & signed at the HSO office (Bldg. 1023 west)  
Customer + Landlord + Counselor
- HSO Staff will not negotiate between prospective and current tenants
- Bilingual agreements are used & preferred (necessary for OHA)
- If you find a place on your own the lease should still be negotiated in our office to protect your interests!
- Caution: In Germany, verbal agreements made with the landlord or Immobilien/realtor are binding and require a written notice of termination with a 3 month period.



# Rental Agreement Features

- “Open ended” lease, indefinite term
- Military clause: 30 day termination notice with PCS orders, occupancy of US Government quarters, unforeseen emergencies, retirement, early return of family members, or retirement from service/employment
- Termination clause for non-PCS moves  
90 days to the end of the month notice per German law



# Rental Agreement Features Cont'd

- Other expenses not covered by LQA:
  - Property tax, insurances
  - Maintenance of heating system
  - Chimney sweeping
- Utilities:
  - Normally pro-rated with annual reconciliation
  - Paid directly to utility company or landlord, or combination of both
  - Includes trash removal



# Security Deposit

- Security deposit is usually two months base rent rate with the USAREUR rental agreement, but can be as high as three months on the economy:
- Can be paid in full or in 3 monthly installments, negotiable only with landlord
- Strictly used for damages and outstanding utility bills
- Not to be used to offset the last month of rent (violation of German law)



# Before Signing a Lease

- Read and understand it, ask yourself these questions:
  - What does your rent include?
  - When is your rent due?
  - Always have a contract review with your HSO counselor first, before signing the lease.
  
- Ask HSO counselor if your landlord is on the Non-Referral/ Restricted Sanction List (only when found on other homesearch portals)?
- If “Yes”, extreme caution is advised.
- Are all blanks filled-in or crossed out?



# Before Signing a Lease Cont'd

## Caution is advised:

- If your landlord is on the Non-Referral/ Restricted Sanction List:  
Contact the Off-Post Housing Office for advise/further actions
- Are all blanks filled-in or crossed out?
- Did you and the landlord sign all copies of the lease?



# Non-Referral & Restrictive Sanction Lists

- Signing a lease with landlords on the Restrictive Sanctions List is not recommended
- Restrictive Sanction List entries are made for validated discrimination.



# Non-Referral & Restrictive Sanction Lists Cont'd

- Signing a lease with landlords on the Non-referral List will not affect your housing entitlements
- Non-referral-list (Questionable or “sharp” business practices, undesirable conditions)
- Housing will support as best as the situation will permit
- Allowances or furniture support may not be denied



# Furnishings Support

- Furnishings are limited and based on status and Family size.
- Only authorized Military personnel and DOD civilians who are entitled to LQA or OHA receive furnishings support.
- Generally 1 time issue/pick-up when in-bound, 1 time issue/pick-up when out-bound. Missed appointments and requests for additional issue/pick-up may result in monetary charge to the sponsor (also applies when relocating for personal convenience).
- Installation agreement required (signed by landlord at time of lease negotiation). It is up to the sponsor to ensure requested appliances will fit.
- Sponsor is responsible to schedule the pickup of government issued loaner furniture/appliances.
- Submit request 3 working days prior to desired delivery/pick-up date (10 days in advance if residing in area with parking restrictions).



# After Signing Your Lease

- Set up appointment for a move-in inspection: preferably in the morning (8:30 or 10:30)
- Immediately order appliances, loaner furniture, and/or permanent furniture: preferably in the afternoon (1200-1800)
- If no appointment available, conduct the move-in inspection jointly with the landlord. Please take pictures and save them on a Hard drive or USB
- Move-in inspection sheets ( Premises Condition and Inventory Report) available from HSO



# Utility Tax Avoidance Program

- The UTAP program is mandatory for all DOD civilians who receive LQA and utilities allowance
- Program provides tax avoidance for payments on utilities such as heating, electricity, ... Tax free bills
- Residents can register for UTAP in Building 1023 East/  
enrollment fee \$ 99
- If a resident fails to pay their utility bills for a period of 90 days or longer, DFMWR can affect payroll deduction from the resident pay to cover the debt, as listed in the UTAP contract.
- If the resident is no longer active service or working for DOD, a collection agency is assigned to collect the debt.



# Damages – Proper Reporting Procedures

- Residents are responsible for damages caused by themselves or their visitors, incl. movers
- Residents need to record the damages on the inventory sheet provided from the moving company
- No late damage reports accepted from the company



# Elective Insurances

- Household/ Renters insurance (your personal effects)  
“Hausratversicherung” is highly recommended!
  - Liability insurance (should cover damages to the leased property caused by pets, family, guests, accidents, etc.)
  - Rechtsschutz-Versicherung/ Personal Liability Insurance (lawyer & court costs)
  - Pets/ Dog liability insurance
- Check24.de** can be of help: it is a comparison portal – transparent and free of charge.



# Problems? Disputes? Available Options

- Assistance in communicating between the tenant and landlord, as needed
- Amendments to existing lease
- For legal issues/disputes, following are available options:
  - Garrison Legal Office  
(requires a statement from the Off-Post Housing Office of what action has been taken)
  - Rechtsschutz-Versicherung/ Personal Liability insurance



# Equal Opportunity In Off-Post Housing

- All HSO listings on the Off-Post Housing website are non-discriminatory.
- <https://www.homes.mil>
- If you suspect discrimination:
  - Report the details to HSO
  - File a written complaint for investigation
- Reported and validated discrimination complaints approved by Garrison Commander will place the landlord on the Restricted Sanction List



# Civilian Financial Entitlements

- Please check with your personnel office regarding entitlements for:
  - LQA
  - TQSA
  - Miscellaneous expenses



# Military Financial Entitlements

- Overseas Housing Allowance (OHA) rates available from your counselor
- Advance pay available to help pay rent/deposit  
Soldiers must see their local finance office for the DA4187
- Certificate of Non-Availability (CNA) is required for Military personnel to reside off-post and will be issued by the DPW Housing Customer Service Branch (On-Post Housing) prior to being seen by the HSO office.



# Military Financial Entitlements Cont'd

- If Temporary Lodging Allowance (TLA) is authorized
  - Up to 30 days incoming with approved extension up to 60 days
  - TLA will be paid and processed in 10 day increments
  - You must aggressively seek off-post housing while on TLA
  - You must view(in person) 3 listings within the first 15 days and then a minimum of 6 listings each additional week while on TLA
  - Viewing List, all information must be listed and is required to receive TLA
  - Check out of Guest House before going TDY or Leave
  - TLA terminates on the day prior to the effective date of the rental agreement
  - TLA can be stopped if it is determined that the servicemember is not aggressively seeking off-post housing
  - TLA will not be authorized for AirBnb



# Move-In Housing Allowance (MIHA)

- MIHA Miscellaneous
  - To make quarters habitable (lightfixtures, window coverings, etc.)



# Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA)

- All military and DOD civilian personnel:
  - Are not required to register with the city hall
  - Are exempt from television & radio fees (GEZ), excluding cable TV
  - Military are encouraged to participate in tax relief program with utility companies. UTAP is mandatory for civilian personnel.



# Termination

- When you are in receipt of PCS orders:
  - Pick up a termination package from HSO
  - **Review your lease!** Know how many days notice of termination you must provide to the landlord
  - Termination must be in writing and sent by “Einschreiben-Einwurf” registered mail through the German Post Office or can be hand carried to landlord (NEVER e-mail, text (SMS), or fax a termination)



# Return of Deposit

- The security deposit is due back after the tenant fulfills all of their obligations
  - Utility Bills (can be withheld up to 12 month)
  - Damages (can be withheld 6 months up to 1 year)
- German law allow the landlord up to 12 month to reconcile utilities payed to the landlord for the year before
- Per German law the landlord has up to 12 month to reconcile the utilities from the previous year.
- It is German law to submit the reconciliation from the previous year within the next 12 month to the resident.
- Landlord may charge residents for damages caused by movers and may hold Security Deposit until all claims are settled



# Your Opinion Counts

- Customer survey questionnaires:
  - Highly encouraged with each visit to HSO
- Suggestions for improvement and constructive criticism always welcome
- Interactive Customer Evaluation (ICE):
  - <http://www.wiesbaden.army.mil>
- Can be used from home and work



# Welcome to the Wiesbaden Military Community



If we can be of further assistance please contact your counselor

Enjoy your tour in Wiesbaden



# Questions?



# End of Brief

