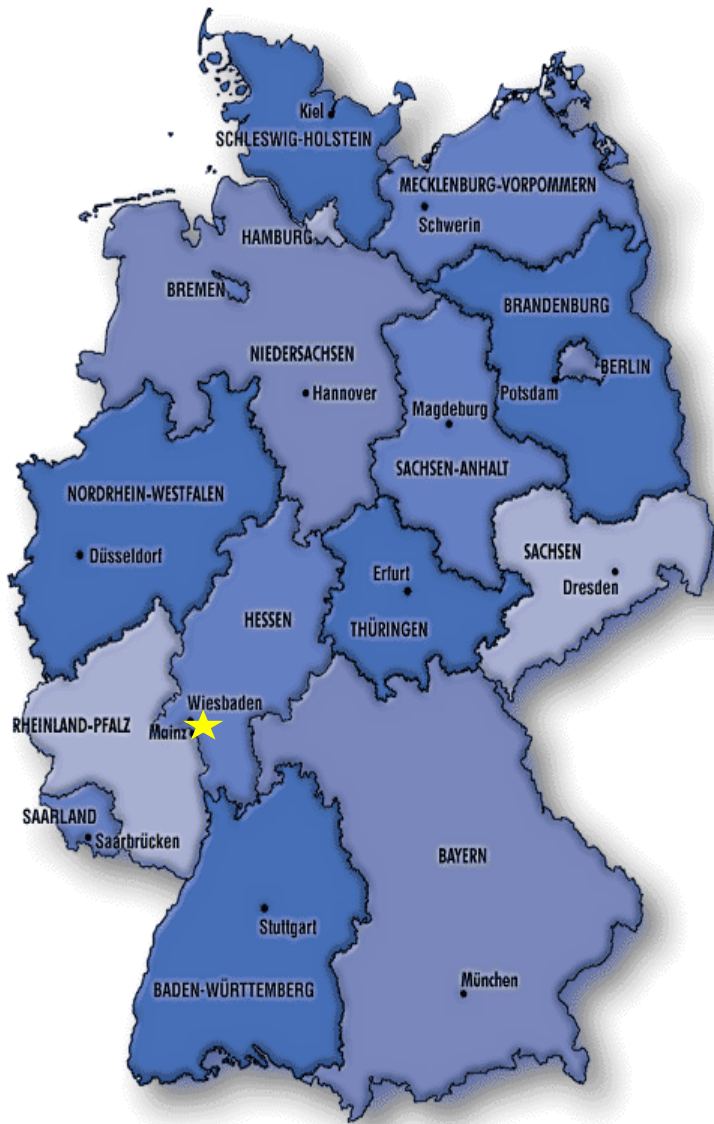


USAG Wiesbaden



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 homeseach 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

