

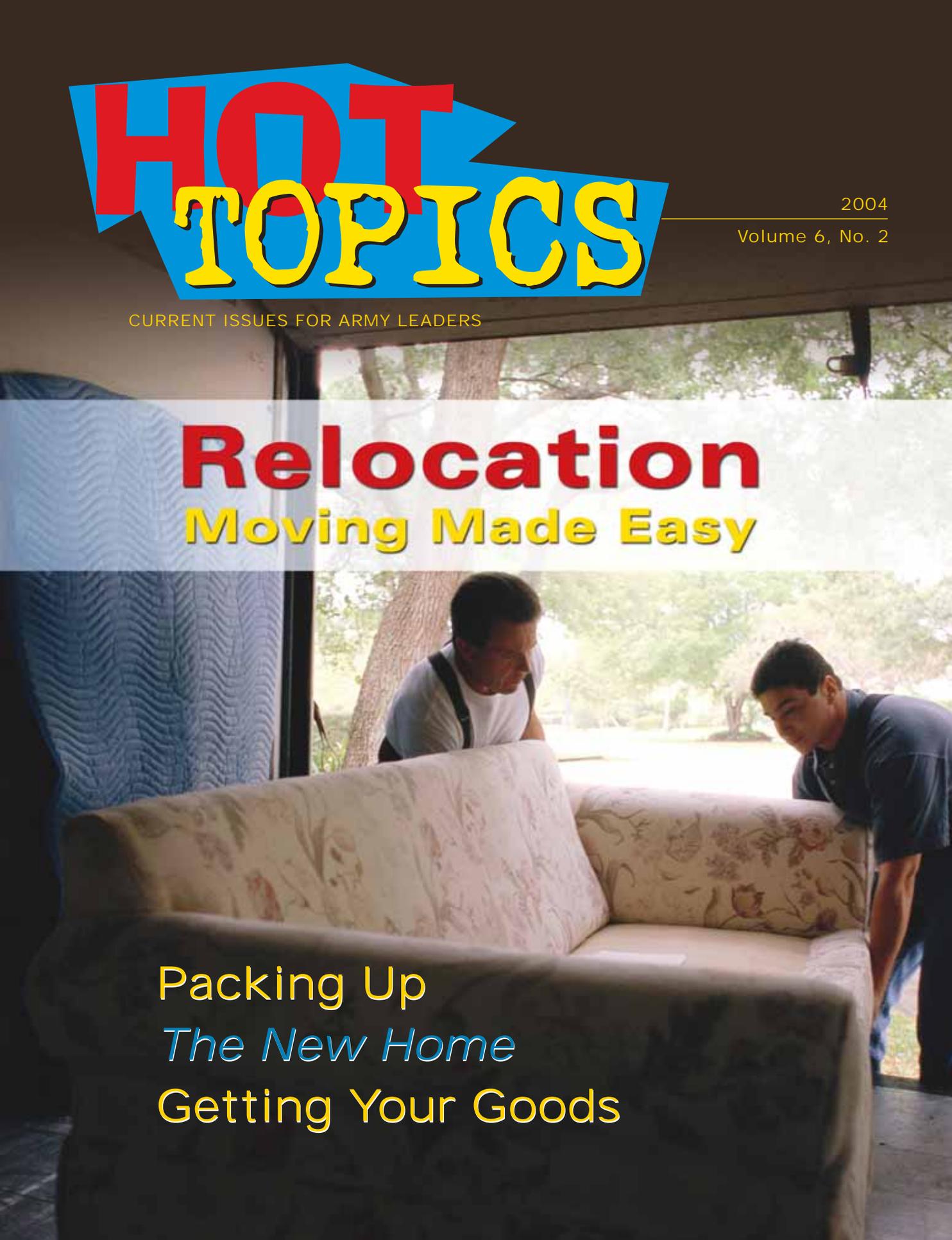
HOT TOPICS

2004

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CURRENT ISSUES FOR ARMY LEADERS

Relocation Moving Made Easy

A photograph showing two men in a room, likely a living area, moving a large, floral-patterned sofa. One man is on the left, leaning over the sofa, and the other is on the right, also leaning over. The sofa is covered in a light-colored, patterned fabric. The background shows a window with a view of trees and a lawn. The text 'Packing Up', 'The New Home', and 'Getting Your Goods' is overlaid on the bottom left of the image.

Packing Up
The New Home
Getting Your Goods

TAKING care of Soldiers and their families means more than ensuring the programs and services they need are available at their installations. It also means providing timely, targeted assistance when they take on the challenges of a military move.

Reassignments and relocations are a fact of Army life for Soldiers and their families. Permanent change of station moves can be unsettling for everyone involved as old friends and routines are left behind for an unknown, new destination.

An important resource to help Army families through these busy and taxing periods is the U.S. Army Community and Family Support Center's Relocation Readiness Program. Through this important program, and in concert with our partners in housing and transportation, Soldiers and their families have expert advice, practical tips and caring professionals ready to help make any move easier.

There are more than 250 of these professionals at 102 Army installations worldwide providing more than 200,000 welcome packets, 140,000 lending-closet items and conducting more than 30,000 orientation classes every year. These experts know the importance of looking after the needs of every family member, including children and pets, during a move.

The program has grown tremendously to meet the expanding needs of Soldiers and families since its inception. What began as a few services in 1965 has blossomed into comprehensive and varied services including newcomer orientations, pre-departure counseling and automated destination housing information through Army Housing OneStop.

So when it's time for your next permanent change of station move, use the resources you'll find in this guide and make sure you visit the Army's Relocation Readiness Program professionals at your installation Army Community Service. They will help you travel a smooth road to your next destination.

BG Robert L. Decker
Commander
U.S. Army Community and
Family Support Center



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Credits



Relocation Readiness Program:

Your Link to a Successful Move

MOVING can spark great anxiety and stress at a time when there is much to do between leaving one duty station and settling into another. The emotional impact can be hard for every member of the family. Spouses may fear the search for new employment. Children may resent having to leave behind friends and adapt to new school settings. And Soldiers may feel guilty for putting their families through yet another move.

The high cost of moving can make relocation even harder. Many Soldiers report that the costs they pay to move exceed the compensation they receive. Research also shows that single parents, families of first-term Soldiers, and those with two or more children have more struggles than other families during relocation. The same is true for families with foreign-born and working spouses.

The Army's Relocation Readiness Program helps Soldiers and families meet the challenges of moving. From lending closets to cultural-adaptation classes, RRP counselors can help improve the success of your move. It is a one-stop resource providing information on topics ranging from housing and changing schools to moving overseas and financial assistance.

Start your move with a trip to the local RRP office for these services:

- Up-to-date orientations on the new duty station
- Newcomers' briefings
- Loan closets
- Financial counseling
- Sponsorship
- Relocation planning
- Referral services

The Army's focus on force stabilization also plays a role in relocation. The goal of stabilization is to provide increased levels of readiness and combat effectiveness for Army units by implementing an array of turbulence-reducing manning initiatives. Force stabilization will therefore reduce moves and provide predictability for Soldiers and families.



Get Started with a Checklist

AS soon as you get orders, get a “moving” notebook and start planning. Make a master to-do list and establish a timetable that extends from the beginning to the end of the move. Use this checklist as a general guide.

- Start collecting information about the new duty location with a visit to the Relocation Readiness Office.
- Sit down as a family and discuss feelings about the move.
- Explain to children why you have to move and provide as much information as possible about their new home.
- Deal with goodbyes and express sadness so you can move on emotionally as well as physically. Consider throwing a moving party and let children create address and autograph books with friends.
- Make a list of things you’re looking forward to at the new location and good memories from the location you’re leaving.
- Get approval from your supervisor and unit commander for permissive TDY to go on a house-hunting trip.
- Notify the post office, creditors, insurance companies, automatic-investment programs and the Internal Revenue Service of your change of address as soon as possible.
- Know the bank name, address and account number for each of your financial accounts.
- Do not close financial accounts until new ones have been established at the new location and any allotments and/or electronic fund transfers have been shifted to the new account.
- Have money immediately available during and after the move, but avoid pay advances unless they’re absolutely necessary.
- Save all documents and receipts relating to the move in case you have some unreimbursable moving expenses that may be deducted on income tax forms.
- Comparison shop for new insurance policies, especially for auto coverage.
- If you are transferring overseas, ask your auto insurance company to provide a letter stating that you have been claim-free for one, two or three years. This may decrease your insurance rate by up to 30 percent.

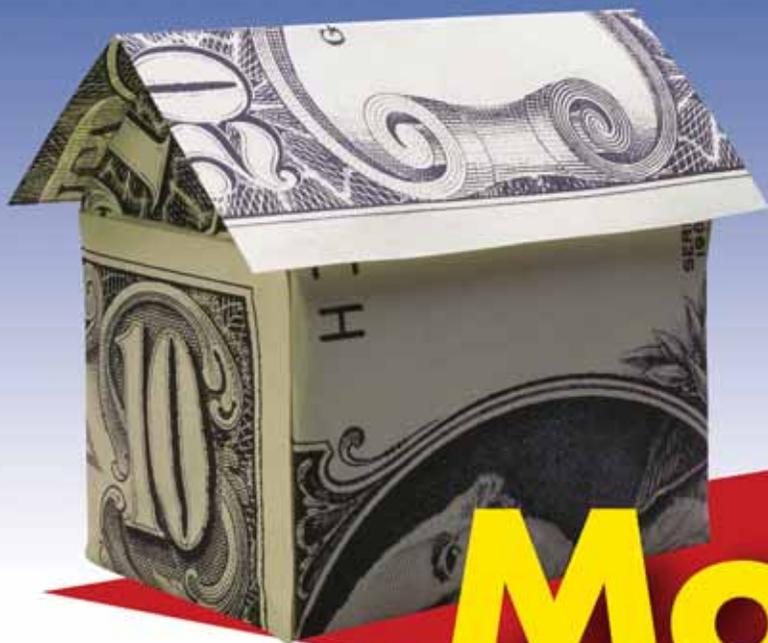
- ❶ Obtain reference letters from current utility, cable and telephone companies to reduce security-deposit costs at the new location.
- ❷ Identify items you aren't taking along. Donate them to charity or schedule a yard sale.
- ❸ Make a video of your household goods for insurance purposes.
- ❹ Arrange for someone to care for your children and pets on moving day.
- ❺ Find out what your responsibilities will be on moving day, as well as what the movers' responsibilities will be.
- ❻ Use cleaning supplies and frozen foods that can't be taken on the move.
- ❼ Make sure your family's ID cards are up to date.
- ❽ Make lodging arrangements for time spent at your current duty station, after outprocessing with housing. Also make arrangements for lodging at the new duty station.
- ❾ Determine how you will provide healthcare for your dependents at the new duty station. If you are currently enrolled in Tricare Prime, stay enrolled at the old duty station until you arrive at your new duty station and have contacted the Tricare Service Center to transfer enrollment. If you are not enrolled in Tricare Prime, learn about healthcare facilities available at the new duty station.
- ❿ Make sure all immunizations for you and your family are current, especially if traveling overseas.
- ⓫ Obtain children's most recent school records.



Family Records

CREATE an “important-document kit” to hand-carry to your new location. Include:

- ❶ Birth certificates,
- ❷ Social Security numbers,
- ❸ Military and insurance ID cards,
- ❹ A copy of medical, dental and optical records,
- ❺ School transcripts and referral letters,
- ❻ Marriage and divorce papers,
- ❼ Pet immunization records,
- ❽ PCS orders,
- ❾ Power-of-attorney records,
- ❿ State and federal income tax records,
- ⓫ Deeds,
- ⓬ Copies of wills,
- ⓭ Bank account and credit card information,
- ⓮ A list of stocks, bonds, mutual funds and other investments,
- ⓯ Car registration and title,
- ⓰ Adoption papers,
- ⓱ Letters of credit from previous utility companies to waive utility deposits,
- ⓲ Passports,
- ⓳ A copy of your last leave and earnings statement, and
- ⓴ Spouse's resumes, certificates, professional licenses and transcripts.



Moving

THE Army pays Soldiers certain allowances to help offset the cost of moving. Learn which allowances you are eligible for, then create a relocation budget that accounts for utility deposits, home-closing costs, travel expenditures and vehicle servicing. Also start an expense log that documents the amount you spend. This can be a reference when planning future moves.

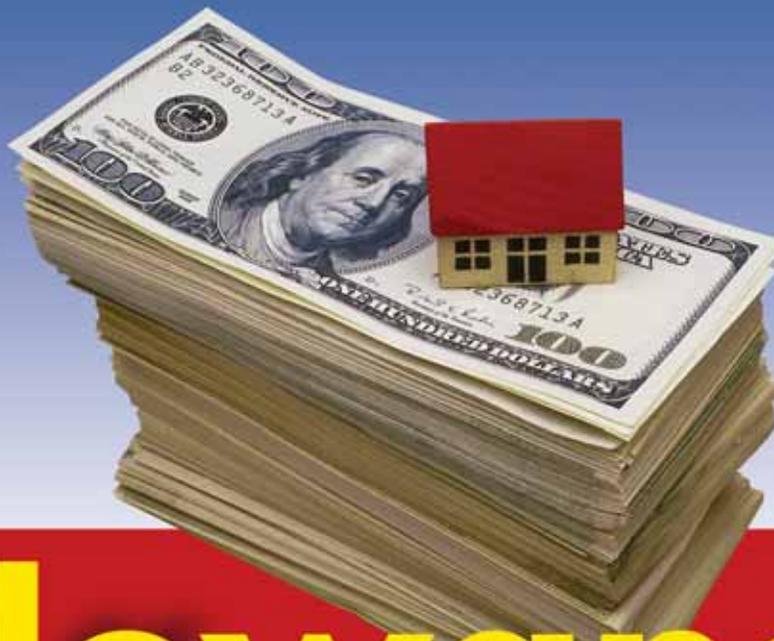
► **Advance Pay** — Soldiers may draw up to three months' advance pay, which is usually repaid in equal installments over 12 months. An advance housing allowance may also be paid if money for rental housing is needed and the unit commander approves it. This allowance is in addition to advance pay and the dislocation allowance. Military finance officials advise Soldiers to keep pay advances to a minimum, since paying them back can cause financial hardships.

► **Dislocation Allowance** — Soldiers and families are entitled to a dislocation allowance to offset such hidden costs as rent deposits and utility hookups. Single Soldiers are eligible for the dislocation allowance when they cannot check into government quarters at their new base or when authorized by their unit commanders to occupy nonmilitary housing at their permanent duty stations. Current rates are available at www.dtic.mil/perdiem/dla.html.

► **Mileage Allowance** — The Monetary Allowance in Lieu of Transportation covers the cost of driving to a new duty station. It is computed using tables of mileage between the old and new duty stations. MALT is also paid to those going overseas if they drive from their stateside permanent-duty stations to the port of embarkation for a transcontinental plane or ship, and from the port of debarkation to the new duty station. Family members driving second cars to their new duty stations are also authorized MALT. Prior authorization is required for third cars.

► **Money for Travel and Lodging** — Soldiers may ask the government to provide tickets, vouchers or reimbursement for air, train and bus travel. The reimbursable amount cannot exceed what the government would have paid, and original receipts must be kept. Check with the transportation or travel offices to be sure the government will pick up the tab.

► **Move-in Housing Allowance** — Soldiers assigned to many overseas locations can receive the MIHA to help meet expenses for major appliances or other improvements, or to pay nonrefundable, rent-related taxes and fees. Overseas apartments often come without such basic furnishings as kitchen cabinets and light fixtures.



Allowances

Go House Hunting

At commanders' discretion, Soldiers may be granted up to 10 days off with pay to look for housing at a new duty station. Travel will be under permissive TDY status, and travel expenses will not be paid.

To be eligible for MIHA, Soldiers must also be eligible for the overseas housing allowance. Rates are set by location. To apply for MIHA, complete DD Forms 2556 and 2367, which are available at overseas personnel-support offices. You will need receipts.

➤ **Per Diem Allowance** — Along with dislocation and mileage allowances, food and lodging costs are provided for while on the move, both Stateside and overseas. This allowance is paid at a flat daily rate that depends on the means of travel. The rate ranges from \$25 to \$50 per person.

➤ **Temporary Lodging Allowance** — New arrivals at overseas bases are eligible for TLA to

partly offset the costs of temporary housing and meals, even if they move into temporary government quarters. The amount depends on family size, local per diem rate, actual cost of quarters, whether the quarters have cooking facilities and other allowances the Soldier is receiving. TLA is paid in 10- or 15-day increments, and usually has a 60-day limit for those arriving and a 10-day limit for those departing.

➤ **Temporary Lodging Expense** — TLE is provided to offset the costs of temporary lodging and meals incurred at Stateside locations. TLE amounts can be as much as \$110 per day.

Packing Up



THE first step in arranging for movement of household goods is visiting the command's Personal Property Shipping Office. The PPSO arranges with a moving company to pack, load and ship your property. The earlier you go to the PPSO, the better your chance of moving on the date you prefer, since dates are assigned on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Family members should be included in PPSO visits, especially when the Soldiers' spouse will be the only one present for the packing and loading of property.

Take the following to the PPSO:

- ❶ A choice of moving dates,
- ❷ Estimated date of arrival at the new duty station,
- ❸ A list of large or unusual items,
- ❹ Six copies of permanent-change-of-station orders for Stateside moves or 12 copies for overseas moves,
- ❺ A power of attorney or authorization letter if someone other than the Soldier will handle the move, and
- ❻ A phone number where the Soldier or family can be notified upon arrival of the personal property at the new assignment.

Weight Allowances

PPSO counselors can advise you on how much weight you are authorized to ship, the places you are authorized to ship from and the number of shipments

you are allowed according to the Joint Federal Travel Regulation. Factors governing weight allowances include the Soldier's pay grade, whether or not the Soldier will be joined by family members and the location of the new assignment.

The Soldier — not the transportation officer or carrier — is responsible for staying within the weight allowance. If the weight of items packed, shipped or stored exceeds the weight allowance, the Soldier must pay all charges connected with the excess weight, which can range from hundreds to thousands of dollars. An easy and fairly dependable method for making a weight estimate is to figure 1,000 pounds per room, then add the estimated weight of large appliances and items in the garage, storage rooms, basement, etc. Weight tickets from previous moves may also help.

Accompanied Baggage

Accompanied baggage consists of items carried by you or your family members during the move. These include extra uniforms, personal papers, and high-value or difficult-to-replace items.

Unaccompanied Baggage

Unaccompanied baggage consists of items needed immediately upon arrival at the destination, such as seasonal clothing, cooking utensils, linens and a portable television. It is packed and shipped separately from household goods, but charged against the total weight allowance. Unaccompanied baggage is typically used for overseas moves only.

Remove professional items and authorized consumables from the rest of your property so they may be packed, marked and weighed separately. When properly listed on the inventory, these items do not count against the weight allowance. Fixtures, furniture and sports equipment are not considered professional items.

Storage

THE government also authorizes temporary and long-term storage, depending on the type of orders issued. Long-term storage is generally used when a Soldier gets orders for an overseas location where the amount of household goods is restricted, or when the Soldier chooses not to take all of his property.

Short-term storage is used when a Soldier's property has arrived at the new duty station but the Soldier has not yet moved into permanent housing. The initial storage entitlement is 90 days, but can usually be extended an additional 90 days.

Insurance

TO protect against the possibility of loss or damage, Soldiers must decide whether to purchase additional protection from the government or through a private insurance carrier.

If your property is lost or damaged during a move,

you may file a claim against the government. However, the maximum statutory amount the government can pay on a single claim is \$40,000. Despite this amount, there are maximum amounts allowable for specific types and categories of property.

Shipping Autos

SOLDIERS may ship one privately owned vehicle at government expense to and from overseas duty stations. Not all cars can be taken overseas, however, as host nations have their own requirements for the condition of arriving cars. Also, upkeep and parts for American-made autos may be difficult to find in some overseas locations.

Boats, boat trailers and mobile homes are

sometimes authorized for movement, but the weight often exceeds the Soldier's allowance. PPSO counselors can advise Soldiers on entitlements, responsibilities and documents needed for shipping or storing POVs.

The Surface Deployment and Distribution Command allows Soldiers to track the movement of their vehicles at www.whereismypov.com.

Shipping Pets

SOLDIERS are authorized to take their pets with them when moving, but pets travel at their owners' expense. The cost is tax-deductible and depends on the animal's size.

Consult with airlines and animal-welfare organizations to determine the best type of carrier. Also check with airlines and a veterinarian about vaccination and quarantine rules, which differ from country to country.

Do It Yourself

DON'T want to let a stranger move your belongings? Consider a DITY — do-it-yourself move.

Soldiers who conduct DITY moves for less than the government would have paid are awarded cash incentives. The award equals 95 percent of what it would have cost a commercial mover, minus the actual cost the Soldier paid to conduct the move.

The three methods of transporting your household goods are by personal vehicle, rental vehicle or a

commercial carrier (you load, they drive).

To qualify for a DITY move, Soldiers must first obtain authorization from the PPSO. When submitting a claim, Soldiers will need weight tickets for the truck when it is both empty and loaded, as well as receipts for all other expenditures.

You can have a commercial move and also a DITY move for items you will need immediately or prefer to handle yourself. Contact the PPSO for assistance.

Selling Your Old Home?

IF you are selling a home, work with a reliable real-estate agent who will advertise frequently, screen prospects and show your house in a professional manner. Also, take care of obvious repair and maintenance chores before your house goes on the market. Your real-estate agent can help you determine which jobs are most important to achieve a fast sale. For example: paint, fix leaky faucets, shampoo carpets, clean kitchen and bathrooms, repair appliances, refinish/wax floors and spruce up the yard.



Buying a New Home

IF you plan to buy a home at your new duty station, pre-qualifying at your bank or credit union for a home loan can save time and cut down on last-minute stress. Also consider attending a home-buying seminar.

Follow these tips when seeking a home:

- Know what you are looking for in terms of price, type of home, general location and neighborhood.
- Take your time and visit as many homes as possible.
- Learn about taxes, schools, recreation, shopping, transportation, etc., by speaking with real-estate brokers, neighborhood residents, and officials of community organizations and city halls.
- Before you buy, check for a homeowner's warranty.

Leasing: The Process

YOU may be asked to sign an application for a lease and to pay a deposit upon finding a place you want to live. This document isn't the actual lease, so make sure it includes a statement indicating that the money you've deposited to hold the unit will be refunded if the unit does not become available within a stated time period. Get a receipt and a copy of the application.

Before moving in you may be asked to pay a security deposit, usually equal to one month's rent. The cost will vary from location to location and is intended to cover the cost of any damages you may be responsible for when vacating. If you vacate your apartment or house in good shape — so that no repairs are necessary — your deposit should be returned. Keep the receipt for your security deposit or, if you pay by check, note "security deposit" on the face of the check.

A check-in inspection of the unit should specify the

condition of the unit, and should be signed by the landlord and tenant. When vacating, this check-in sheet can be used to determine damages — if any — to be deducted from the security deposit.

The lease is a contract that defines the rights and obligations of both the landlord and tenant. When you sign a lease, you are legally bound to observe its terms.

Soldiers should insist that a **military clause** be included in the lease. This clause generally states that the Soldier can terminate the lease if PCS orders are received. The clause may not allow the termination of the lease just because on-base housing becomes available.

There is no standard military clause. The wording is a matter of negotiation between the Soldier and the prospective landlord. Before signing any lease, Soldiers should consult their legal assistance offices or housing referral offices.

Rental Partnership Program

THE Rental Partnership Program provides military personnel — officer and enlisted, single and married — with affordable, secure, quality rental property.

To help military personnel moving into new areas and to help defray costs, the RPP encourages property owners and property-management companies to give military members a "corporate discount" on market rent, to waive security deposits, application fees and any other up-front move-in costs.

In exchange, property owners save marketing and turnover costs when the military refers them financially prequalified prospective tenants who will sign 12-

month leases. Payment of rental fees via electronic fund transfer ensures a dependable cash flow for the owner. Although no guarantee of rentals is implied, participation in the RPP gives property owners an opportunity to reduce days lost to vacancy while providing an essential service to the military community.

RPP programs are governed by an agreement between each property owner and the local military installation, and are tailored to meet the needs of specific rental markets. Ask your housing referral office for details.



Getting Your Goods

UPON arrival at your new duty station, call the PPSO to give them a contact number even if you don't yet have a delivery address. On the date when household goods are scheduled for delivery, Soldiers must be at the delivery address from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Regardless of how well a carrier may pack your personal property, there's still a chance something may be lost or damaged. If you discover loss and/or damage after delivery, you are required to list it on DD Form 1840, "Joint Statement of Loss or Damage at Delivery." This form also is a notice to the carrier of loss or damage and is a receipt of delivery. If you do not list loss or damage on this form at delivery, you forfeit the chance of being paid for loss or damage.

If you discover additional damage or loss after delivery, you must list it on DD Form 1840R, "Notice of Loss or Damage," which is on the reverse side of DD Form 1840. The completed DD Form 1840R must be delivered to your local claims office within 70 days after delivery.

The amount paid to Soldiers reflects depreciation for age and wear of the goods lost or damaged. Do not throw away damaged items, as both the government and the carrier have the right to inspect the property before completing a claim.

If you think you are not receiving the quality of move the government is paying for at any time during delivery and unpacking, call the destination transportation office before signing documents and before the carrier's representative leaves. At some point during delivery of your personal property, an inspector representing the destination transportation office may drop by to check on your delivery.

Note: Filing the DD Form 1840/1840R is not the same thing as actually filing a claim. Final claims against the government must be received by the claims office at your local staff judge advocate office within two years of the delivery date. Contact your legal claims office for instructions.

It's a good idea to know where you want furniture placed, since movers aren't responsible for moving furniture again once it has been placed.

For Children

SELECTING new schools for children is one of parents' major concerns when relocating. The following steps can ease the transition for parents and children alike.

- ❶ Contact the school liaison office and school counselor at the old and new duty locations for assistance.
- ❷ Visit Web pages for the state's department of education and the county/district school system. If going overseas, visit www.odedodea.edu.
- ❸ Contact the housing office at the new installation to determine the waiting period for on-post quarters, as this may determine the school your child will attend.
- ❹ Be familiar with school eligibility requirements, especially for kindergarten.
- ❺ If you have a child of high-school age, get information on the gaining state's high school graduation requirements and grading systems. Differences may affect your child's class standing and grade-point average.
- ❻ Give the losing school adequate notice of withdrawal. It's Army policy to in- and outprocess with the school.
- ❼ Hand-carry school records.

Additional Steps for Special-Needs Students:

- ❶ Contact the local Exceptional Family Member Program manager, who can help identify resources at the new location.
- ❷ Contact your local special-education counselor for information on what should be done prior to transitioning.
- ❸ Request copies of all information in your child's files — evaluations, assessments, reports, Individualized Education Program reviews, therapists' reports and related documents.
- ❹ Ask professionals who work with your child to provide letters about the experience and any recommendations or observations they may have.
- ❺ Request copies of all medical records.
- ❻ Call the Social Security Administration at (800) 772-1213 for information about benefits available to special-needs children in the new state.
- ❼ Contact the new school and arrange placement meetings for soon after you arrive.

Detecting Trauma

While moving can be traumatic for children, most eventually adjust. Parents should seek help for children who exhibit a loss of interest in favorite things, a loss of energy or appetite, or a frequent desire to be alone.

Job Hunting Tips For Spouses

- ❶ Start looking as soon as your spouse receives orders.
- ❷ Check job listings at the human-resource center if you are near a military installation. If you are already a civil-service employee, you have priority placement if you have applied for stopper lists through the installation or HRC servicing your former job.
- ❸ Check employment ads in the new city or town.
- ❹ Look in the phone book for companies that may need your skills, and call the personnel manager.
- ❺ Tailor your resume to the particular position for which you are applying.
- ❻ Volunteer. Unpaid experience on a resume sometimes leads to selection for a paid position.
- ❼ Search for jobs at www.usajobs.opm.gov/.



RESOURCES

Army Regulation 608-1, “Army Community Service Center” — Outlines services provided by the Army Relocation Readiness Program. Go to www.usapa.army.mil.

Army Relocation Readiness Program — Army Community Service provides oversight and management of ARR. ARR gives Soldiers and families useful information ranging from housing and changing schools to moving overseas and financial assistance. Go to www.armycommunityservice.org and click on “Relocation Readiness.” If you click on “Links” under “Navigation Tools,” you’ll find information on cities and countries, general relocation services, installations, housing information and overseas commands.

Army Housing Onestop — At www.onestoparmy.com users will find comprehensive information about Army housing throughout the world, view pictures and floor plans of family housing, get tips for moving and check their positions on Army housing waiting lists.

SITES — SITES is a Web-based information system providing relocation information on approximately 300 Department of Defense installations throughout the world. Categories of information include installation; local community; education; employment; medical and dental; housing; relocation services; support services; child and teen services; and survival tips for first-term Soldiers. Go to www.dmdc.osd.mil/sites.

Military Acclimate — Designed for military personnel, www.militaryacclimate.com helps users determine the cost of moving and the cost of living in the Soldier’s

new duty location, and provides neighborhood demographics and real-estate advice. The site is provided by the Department of Defense and the Office of Family Policy.

Military Teens on the Move and Military Teens on the Move for Kids — Located at www.dod.mil/mtom, this site helps kids get involved in the moving process. It offers tips for coping with the emotional aspects of moving, details what users can expect from their new communities, and provides ideas for maintaining old friendships while building new ones.

Per Diem Travel — This site offers links to travel regulations and monetary allowance programs and rates. Go to www.dtic.mil/perdiem.

Family Resources — This site, www.nmfa.org was created by the National Military Family Association and Qcorps Residential Inc. Type in the location of your new duty station, then comparison shop for services such as local and long-distance telephone services, cable and satellite television, high-speed Internet providers, newspapers and magazines, movie rentals, bottled water delivery, moving companies, storage facilities and appliance renters.

Military Assistance Program — This site, www.dod.mil/mapsite provides information and interactive resources about relocation, money management and job searching in a new location.



Sponsors: Ask for One!

SPONSORS can help steer and ease newcomers' transitions. Most sponsors are of the same grade and marital status, and hold the same MOS as the newcomer. They can help families with regard to moving, inprocessing, getting settled, and learning about the unit and community.

Sponsors often help newcomers settle into initial accommodations; introduce them to the chain of command, inprocessing personnel and other points of contact; link them with school systems and child care; and help them register privately owned vehicles.

Ask your new command for a sponsor.