



Navy Foreign Area Officer **Overseas Life Handbook**



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The Navy Foreign Area Officer Overseas Life Handbook
1st Edition Revision A, April 2023

The Navy FAO Community Leadership and Management Team compiled this Overseas Life Handbook from multiple U.S. DOD, DoS, and other sources. This guide is meant as an initial reference for FAOs and their families to thrive in a career of overseas service.

All information in this handbook is UNCLASSIFIED

We want to thank the following for their help and contributions:

The Department of State Foreign Service Institute

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The Defense Language Institute

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This handbook relies on feedback and is only as effective as our community makes it. Recognizing that there are differences from post to post, if there are additions or updates, please provide those to us via email at:

NavyFAOChair@nps.edu

NOTE: The Navy Foreign Area Officer Overseas Life Handbook provides the most up-to-date information available at time of publication. But it is not perfect.

**Please make note of any errors or out of date information, and send it to:
NavyFAOChair@nps.edu**

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Introduction

The Navy Foreign Area Officer Community created the Navy FAO Overseas Life Handbook as an introductory reference for Navy FAOs and their families moving overseas. This handbook borrows heavily from the JFAOC Spouse Handbook, Military OneSource, Navy Family Readiness, and our collective experiences to provide initial direction and resources for navigating life overseas. This handbook expands information from other sources and informs FAOs going to Embassy AND Staff assignments. As Navy FAOs, our experiences stand apart from the fleet and our colleagues from other parts of the US Government.

Welcome to the FAO Community! You are entering a new world, different but related to what you just left in the Fleet. Foreign Area Officers are the Navy's globally embedded strategic operators. Keeping the fight forward in today's complex global security environment requires persistent forward presence, and FAOs are an indispensable human element of the Navy's global posture. FAOs are on the front lines of strategic competition countering malign influences across geography and across domains and strengthening our worldwide network of allies & partners. This requires leadership, regional expertise, local contact, and unity of effort from day-day competition to open armed conflict and war.

Families are integral to what we do, and they are the building blocks of support for our community. Family health is Community health, therefore family preparation for life overseas is **essential** to mission accomplishment, and key to helping FAOs thrive in new and often challenging environments.

We have combined references and resources from the Department of Defense and the Department of State to provide as comprehensive a picture as we can. Things to keep in mind:

- **You represent the U.S. Navy and the United States.** The FAO mission requires iron clad ethics and morals, hold yourself to the highest ethical standards, and take fierce pride in being above reproach. The farther you serve from the Fleet concentration areas, the more important it is to conduct yourself above reproach.
- **Navy Core Values are FAO values.** Our values guide our behavior and are immutable whether you are working overseas or with people from a different culture. You will be exposed to people, cultures, and situations that may be different than what you are used to--perhaps even things you disagree with. Remember: respect is the minimum. We treat **all** people with respect whether they are US citizens or from a different culture or in the US military or interagency partners.
- **There are numerous resources and references to assist FAOs, both with and without families.** We encourage all FAOs to become familiar with the resources contained in this guide. There is no one way to thrive in overseas service. Your needs will likely evolve over the course of your career, and you will likely be called to provide guidance to people from a variety of backgrounds and walks of life.
- **Senior FAOs, views on life and society may have changed from what you first put in your sea bag.** Know the instructions and references, but also realize there may be alternative views on living that are still well within the moral, legal and ethical center of our world.

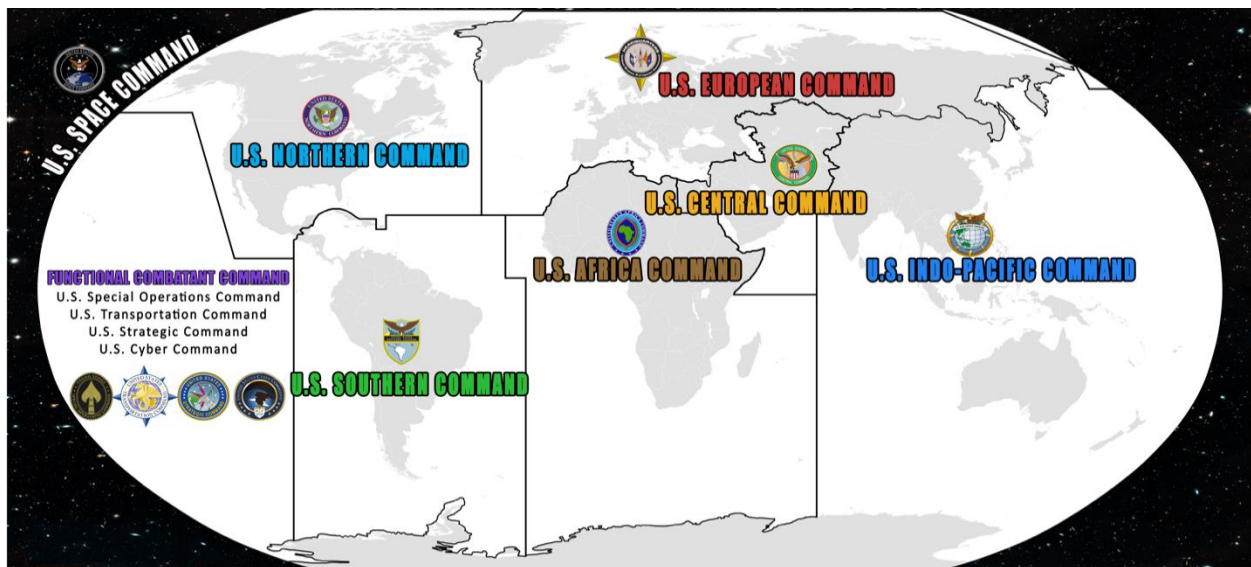
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Where We Serve

Navy FAOs by design serve the majority of their assignments overseas. As a community, we are regionally focused within five regions including Africa (AFRICOM), Europe (EUCOM), Asia (INDOPACOM), the Middle East (CENTCOM), and South America (SOUTHCOM). Successful FAOs demonstrate sustained superior performance with increasing responsibilities across three lines of work: security cooperation, defense attaché service, and regional and operational planning on Navy, Joint, and Interagency staffs.

A FAO should expect most of their overseas assignments to be in their assigned region. Cross-region assignments can happen. Pending needs of the Navy, detailers will typically not offer cross-region opportunities prior to completion of an O-5 Milestone tour. FAO qualification, proven performance, and success in your assigned region are the keys to success in the Navy FAO community.

We are a global Fleet with world-wide operations, activities, and interests. Evolving global strategic priorities will shift our national focus and force posture over time. Fleet Commanders and Joint Force leadership rely on FAOs in country to build relationships and advance our access, influence, and information advantage in the *next* hot spot. This section provides a high-level orientation to your region and highlights resources for your first PCS overseas.





US Africa Command

A full-spectrum combatant command, U.S. Africa Command ([USAFRICOM](#)) is responsible for all U.S. Department of Defense operations, exercises, and security cooperation on the African continent, its island nations, and surrounding waters. U.S. Africa Command, with partners, counters transnational threats and malign actors, strengthens security forces and responds to crises to advance U.S. national interests and promote regional security, stability and prosperity.



USAFRICOM's maritime component is U.S. Naval Forces Africa ([NAVAF](#)) Headquartered in Naples, Italy as part of U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa/U.S. 6th Fleet. NAVAF is postured to support counter-terrorism operations, provide maritime security, and build capacity with our African partners to achieve an enhanced security environment. Personnel are shared with U.S. Naval Forces Europe.



Africa is a uniquely vast and diverse place. The area of responsibility consists of 53 African states, more than 800 ethnic groups, over 1,000 languages, vast natural resources, a land mass of 11.2 million square miles (three-and-a-half times the size of the U.S.), and nearly 19,000 miles of coastland. Life on the continent is vibrant with many cultures mixing and mingling throughout.

Those assigned to USAFRICOM Headquarters will be stationed in Stuttgart, Germany. Those assigned to the NAVAF staff will be stationed in Naples, Italy. Navy FAOs in security cooperation organization (SCO) assignments will report to the AFRICOM J5 for command direction and admin support; take a look at the Office of Security Cooperation In-processing link below. Navy FAOs in Attaché assignments will be supported through DIA's Middle East and Africa Regional Center and DIA's Navy element.

[USAFRICOM](#)

[AFRICOM in Stuttgart](#)

[AFRICOM In-processing in Stuttgart](#)

[Office of Security Cooperation In-processing](#)

[USAG Stuttgart Newcomers page](#)

[US Naval Forces Africa](#)

[US 6th Fleet](#)

[NSA Naples Welcome Aboard Information Packet](#)

[Welcome to Naples guide](#)



US Central Command

[USCENTCOM](#) directs and enables military operations and activities with allies and partners to increase regional security and stability in support of enduring U.S. interests. USCENTCOM is responsible for all U.S. security interests in 20 nations that stretch from Egypt and the Red Sea through the Arabian Gulf Region, into Central Asia. The U.S. CENTCOM area of responsibility (AOR) spans more than 4 million square miles, three continents, and is populated by more than 550 million people from 22 ethnic groups, speaking 18 languages with hundreds of dialects and practices multiple religions which transect national borders.



U.S. Naval Forces Central Command ([NAVCENT](#)) consists of the U.S. 5th FLEET and Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), serving together to maintain the stability and security of the region's maritime environment. NAVCENT is headquartered at Naval Support Activity Bahrain. U.S. Naval Forces Central Command and Commander, 5th Fleet's area of operations encompasses about 2.5 million square miles of water area and includes the Arabian Gulf, Red Sea, Gulf of Oman and parts of the Indian Ocean and includes three critical choke points at the Strait of Hormuz, the Suez Canal and the Strait of Bab el-Mandeb at the southern tip of Yemen.

As a Navy CENTCOM FAO, you can expect a staff tour in Bahrain, as well as tours throughout the CENTCOM region as SCOs, attachés, component liaisons, and students at partner foreign war colleges. Tours in this region can be rich and fulfilling experiences for the FAOs and families and are always operationally paced.

CENTCOM Resources:

[CENTCOM Website](#)

[CENTCOM FAMILY CENTER](#)

[CENTCOM FAMILY READINESS](#)

[CENTCOM Welcome Guide](#)

Bahrain Resources:

[NSA Bahrain](#)

[NSA Bahrain Sponsorship Program](#)

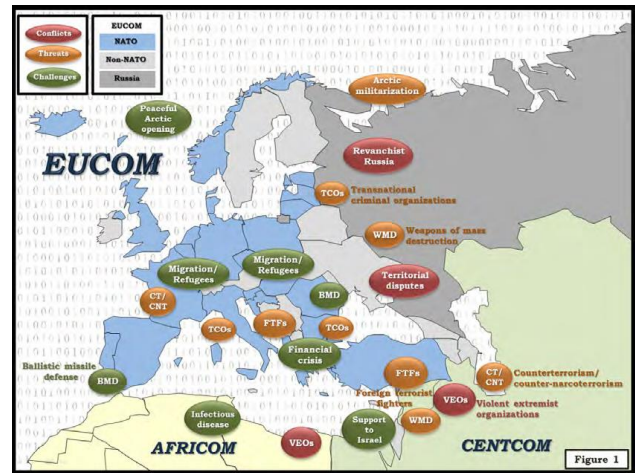
[Bahrain's Welcome Aboard Package](#)



US European Command

[USEUCOM](#) is a combat-ready, war-fighting theater that is postured, relevant and ready. We are united

with our Allies and partners, prepared to execute the full range of combined and Joint military operations, and capable of delivering decisive battle space effects, at speed, and in all domains. USEUCOM executes a full range of multi-domain operations in coordination with Allies and partners to support NATO, deter Russia, assist in the defense of Israel, enable global operations, and counter trans-national threats to defend the Homeland forward and fortify Euro-Atlantic security. Should deterrence fail, USEUCOM is prepared to fight alongside Allies and partners to prevail in any conflict.



[U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa \(NAVEUR-NAVAF\)](#) AOR covers approximately half of the Atlantic Ocean, from the Arctic Ocean to the coast of Antarctica, as well as the Adriatic, Baltic, Barents, Black, Caspian, Mediterranean, and North Seas. It also covers all of Russia and Europe and nearly the entire continent of Africa, encompassing 105 countries with a combined population of more than 1 billion people and includes a landmass of more than 14 million square miles.

General Europe Resources

[About the Region](#)

[EUCOM Trifold](#)

[CNIC Europe](#)

[EUCOM HQ Newcomers Info](#)

[EUCOM Welcome Packet](#)

[USAG Stuttgart Newcomers page](#)

Fleet Specific Resources

[US 6th Fleet](#)

[NSA Naples](#)

[NSA Naples Welcome Aboard Information Packet](#)

[Welcome to Naples guide](#)



US Indo-Pacific Command

[USINDOPACOM](#) integrates United States forces within the AOR to achieve U.S. national security objectives while protecting national interests. In concert with other U.S. government agencies, USINDOPACOM protects and defends the territory of the United States, its people, and its interests. With allies and partners, USINDOPACOM is committed to enhancing stability in the Asia-Pacific region by promoting security cooperation, encouraging peaceful development, responding to contingencies, deterring aggression, and, when necessary, fighting to win. This approach is based on partnership, presence, and military readiness. The USINDOPACOM commander is supported by multiple component and sub-unified commands including: [U.S. Forces Korea](#), [U.S. Forces Japan](#), U.S. Special Operations Command Pacific, U.S. Pacific Fleet, U.S. Marine Forces Pacific, U.S. Pacific Air Forces and U.S. Army Pacific.



The [U.S. Pacific Fleet](#) headquartered in Hawaii is USINDOPACOM's naval component. U.S. Pacific Fleet is the world's largest fleet command, nearly half the Earth's surface, from Antarctica to the Arctic circle and from the West Coast of the United States into the Indian Ocean. The operational elements of the U.S. Pacific Fleet are the [U.S. 7th Fleet](#) headquartered in Yokosuka, Japan and the [U.S. 3rd Fleet](#), headquartered in San Diego, California.

The 36 nations comprising the Asia-Pacific region are home to more than 50% of the world's population, 3,000 different languages, and five formal U.S. allies. The world's three largest economies are in the Indo-Pacific, along with ten of the fourteen smallest countries in the world. The AOR includes the most populous nation in the world, the largest democracy, and the largest Muslim-majority nation. The region is a vital driver of the global economy and includes the world's busiest international sea lanes and nine of the ten largest ports. The Asia-Pacific is heavily militarized, with seven of the world's ten largest standing militaries and five of the world's declared nuclear nations.

[INDOPACOM Newcomers Info](#)

[PACFLT Newcomers Check-In Info](#)

[7th Fleet Welcome Aboard](#)

[CNIC Japan Region](#)

[CNIC Yokosuka Japan Welcome Aboard](#)

[US Forces Korea / Commander Naval Forces Korea](#)

[US Forces Japan / Commander, Naval Forces Japan](#)



US Southern Command

[USSOUTHCOM](#) is responsible for contingency planning, operations, and security cooperation in Central America, South America and the Caribbean. The command is also responsible for force protection of U.S. military resources in the AOR and for ensuring the defense of the Panama Canal. US SOUTHCOM headquarters is located in Doral Florida, just outside Miami.



NAVSOUTH/ U.S. Fourth Fleet is USSOUTHCOM’s Naval Component, headquartered at Naval Station Mayport, Florida. NAVSOUTH employs maritime forces in cooperative maritime security operations in order to maintain access, enhance interoperability, and build enduring partnerships that foster regional security in the U.S. Southern Command Area of Responsibility (USSOUTHCOM AOR).



The USSOUTHCOM AOR encompasses 31 countries and 16 dependencies and areas of special sovereignty. The culture in the SOUTHCOM AOR is very vibrant and exciting. The food, people, and atmosphere can be very warm and welcoming. Along with amazing culture, SOUTHCOM has a vast and expansive geography.

[SOUTHCOM Newcomers](#)

[Newcomers to Overseas Locations](#)

[4th Fleet Welcome Aboard Package](#)

[Naval Station Mayport](#)

[NAVSOUTH/Fourth Fleet Facebook Page](#)



[US Northern Command](#) is responsible for theater security cooperation with Canada, Mexico, and The Bahamas. **For Navy FAOs headed to Mexico or the Bahamas, work with Navy FAO detailers and SOUTHCOM regional representatives for points of contact and reference information.**

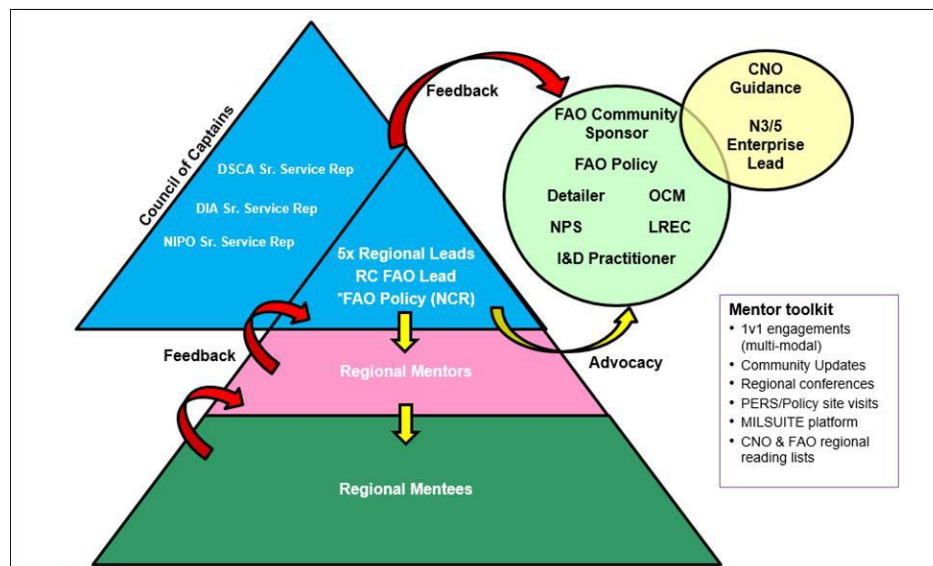
Navy FAO Community Leadership Team

Inspirational and capable leadership, a strong community mission and vision, sound policies and practices, and effective mentoring are essential elements to the continued success of the Navy's Foreign Area Officer (FAO) Community. The Community Leadership and Management Team (CLMT) and Council of Captains (CoC) are dedicated working groups of Active Component (AC) and Reserve Component (RC) FAOs who leverage their functional and regional areas of specialty to ensure the Foreign Area Officer community is manned, trained and equipped to provide the Fleet with strategic effects operators on the front lines of Strategic Competition.

Community Leadership and Management Team (CLMT) Composition

The CLMT consists of the following 10 members under the leadership of the Community Sponsor:

- FAO Community Sponsor (Senior FAO Flag Officer)
- FAO Chief of Staff and Deputy FAO Policy (OPNAV N51)
- FAO Reserve Component Lead
- FAO Active and Reserve Component Officer Community Managers
- FAO Junior and Senior Detailers
- Navy Foreign Area Officer Chair, Naval Postgraduate School (NPS)
- Deputy Director, Navy Language, Regional Expertise and Culture Office (OPNAV N13F)



Community Links and Language Resources

- MilSuite FAO page: <https://www.milsuite.mil/book/groups/navy-fao>
- Navy FAO Bubba list: <https://intelshare.intelink.gov/sites/1710/>
- DLI Headstart 2 (ONLINE/PDF/MP3) <https://hs2.dliflc.edu/>
- GLOSS (Global Language Support System): <https://gloss.dliflc.edu/>
- DLI Field Support <https://fieldsupport.dliflc.edu/>
- DLI Language Technology Evaluation and Application: <https://ltea.dliflc.edu/#>
- MIT NetProf: <https://netprof.ll.mit.edu/netprof/>
- DLIFLC Overdrive: <https://dliflc.overdrive.com/>

US Department of State (DoS) Resources

This section borrows directly from the [Foreign Service Assignment Notebook, 2022](#)

Most FAOs will spend at least one tour working with the U.S. Department of State in an American Embassy abroad, as an Attaché, a Security Cooperation Officer, or a similar position on a Country Team. The U.S. Department of State leads America's foreign policy through diplomacy, advocacy, and assistance by advancing the interests of the American people, their safety, and economic prosperity. The Department of State (DoS, sometimes the State Department or "State") is the Executive Branch Department of the U.S. Government and exists to assist the President, through the Secretary of State, in formulating and executing the foreign policy and relations of the United States of America. The State Department is the counterpart of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in many other countries.

A U.S. mission exists to manage U.S. diplomatic and consular activities within a country. A "mission" may consist of an embassy, consulate general, consulates, and other offices. Where the United States does not have full diplomatic relations with a nation, it may be represented by a liaison office or interests' section. More than one U.S. mission may exist in a country if the United States has a multilateral mission, which is a delegation to an international organization such as the United Nations. Since Ambassadors also head multilateral missions, two or more U.S. Ambassadors might work in the same country but in different missions. The United States maintains more than 270 embassies, consulates general, consulates, and special missions in over 190 countries.

The U.S. embassy is the basic unit for conducting U.S. diplomacy overseas. The Chief of Mission (usually an Ambassador) personally represents the President of the United States, while reporting to and receiving instructions through the Secretary of State. The Chief of Mission directs all U.S. programs and personnel, except for those under the command of a U.S. area military commander, under the authority of another U.S. diplomatic post, or detailed to an international organization. The chief of mission thus carries ultimate responsibility for executing U.S. foreign policy goals and coordinating and managing all U.S. government functions in the host country.¹ In short, no U.S. activities should happen in a foreign nation without the ambassador's awareness and approval.

The Embassy Staff and Sections

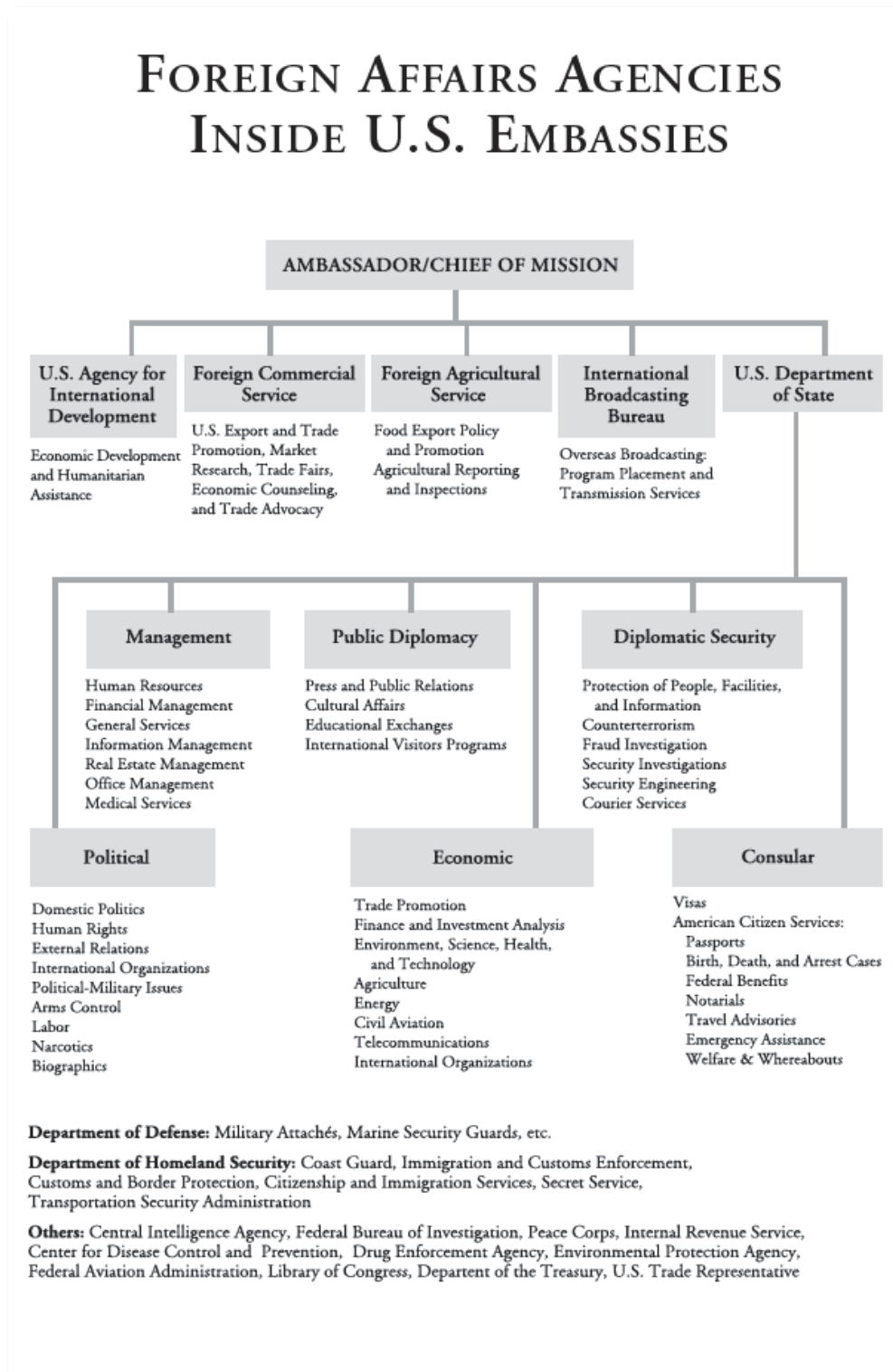
At an Embassy or Special Mission, if the Ambassador leaves post even temporarily, the person acting in the Ambassador's place is called the Chargé or Chargé d'Affaires (CdA). At Consulates and Consulates General, the Consul or Consul General is in charge and reports to the Ambassador at the Embassy in country. Heads of consulates are also known as Principal Officers.

Ambassadors manage the work of a mission through the country team, which is made up of the heads of each Department of State section and representatives of all other agencies. The country team meets

¹ Excerpt From: United States of America Department of State - Foreign Service Institute. "FSI Transition Center - Foreign Service Assignment Notebook Revised 2022." Apple Books.

regularly to discuss local conditions and mission activities, review management and security issues, coordinate programs, and plan and evaluate progress on meeting mission goals.

The Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) is the second most senior person in the mission. The DCM has primary responsibility for the day-to-day operations of the mission and coordination between the various agencies at post under chief of mission authority.



The number of people assigned to an embassy or consulate usually depends on the size of the foreign country and depth and breadth of U.S. bilateral relations with that country. "In addition to the head(s) of the mission, staff includes employees from the four foreign affairs agencies - the Department of State, Agency for International Development, Department of Commerce, and Department of Agriculture - and other U.S. government agencies. The largest group of employees by far consists of locally employed staff (LES), hired within the country. U.S. missions employ eligible family members (EFMs) of foreign affairs agency employees, U.S. citizens living in the host country, and citizens of other countries, known as third country nationals. Every mission includes at least one U.S. Citizen employee from the Department of State.

Note: Between the Dept of State and Dept of Defense, there is a false cognate acronym. In DoS, an EFM is an Eligible Family Member, in DOD an EFM usually refers to an Exceptional Family Member, someone in the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP).

Management Section: The management section provides the support that allows the other sections and agencies to do their jobs. Management handles areas such as:

- Financial management
- Information management, including radio, mail services, telephone, and computers
- General services (buildings, maintenance, purchasing, supplies, customs and shipping, and transportation)
- Health and medical provisions
- Community issues, often through the community liaison office (CLO) coordinator

From a FAO perspective, especially early on, you will work with this section almost daily. Management will be responsible for your housing, your immediate office infrastructure, and all of the things that you use in the mission. Management will also be the ones who own much of the labor, know-how, and connections that you will need to accomplish your mission. Your Operations Coordinator, or Ops Support Staff will usually work through the Management Section to ensure your office pays its bills and keeps things running.

Consular Section: The consular section provides services and assistance to U.S. citizens living in or visiting the country. 'Consular' also issues visas to citizens of other countries who seek entry to the United States for the purposes of work, travel, business or immigration. Consular duties include issuing and renewing passports, reporting births, deaths, and marriages of U.S. citizens, registering Americans who are in the country, visiting U.S. citizens who have been arrested, assisting in emergencies such as deaths or natural disasters, and providing U.S. voting and tax information.

FAOs will work with Consular monthly, ensuring host nation international military students and senior leaders are able to travel to the United States for training and events. Consular will have a hand in Leahy vetting procedures for foreign personnel receiving security assistance and will help you keep awareness of what is going on outside of the capital. They will also be your first call for American Citizen Service help when you have American teams who need passport or departure help.

Political and Economic Sections: The political and economic sections analyze political, social, and economic developments within the host country and region. Employees working in these sections meet

with political parties and non-governmental organizations, make recommendations on foreign policy, and work with foreign government officials to promote U.S. interests.

FAOs will work with the Political section routinely and should be hand in hand with them concerning security cooperation efforts, political and local reporting, and overall awareness of events and trends in country.

Public Affairs Section: The public affairs section administers cultural and educational exchange programs, manages information research centers, and serves as the official media contact point, handling all inquiries from the local news media.

FAOs should maintain good connections with the public affairs section to ensure that Mission, Combatant Command, and fleet messaging efforts are aligned and amplify each other.

Security Section: Typically known as the Regional Security Officer (RSO), the security section develops and maintains systems to provide a safe, secure workplace for everyone at the mission and safe, secure homes for U.S. staff and their family members. This section provides access controls such as guards, security for visiting dignitaries, and security information to U.S. businesses situated in the country. The RSO will liaise with local law enforcement and will manage all law Enforcement interactions between local police and Mission personnel. The security section also liaises with local schools attended by U.S. mission children. The Marine security guard detachment plays an important role in protecting many U.S. missions.

FAOs will routinely coordinate with the Regional Security Office for movements, visits, and threat awareness in the host nation.

DOD at an Embassy: Our Navy FAOs and their families will fall under the responsibility of the Senior Defense Official/Defense Attaché (SDO/DATT). The SDO/DATT is the direct representative of the Secretary of Defense and senior military representative at post. The SDO/DATT provides support and military advice to the ambassador and is responsible for all U.S. military in country not under combatant command authority. U.S. military under combatant command authority are required to coordinate their bilateral activities in the host country with the SDO.

The SDO will usually have a defense attaché office (DAO) and security cooperation organization (SCO) to engage with the host country and any other countries for which they are regionally accredited and responsible. Servicemembers assigned to a combatant command or component command, e.g. Fleet Liaison Officers, Special Operations Forces Liaison Elements, Civil Affairs Teams, etc. are also responsible to the SDO/DATT and will coordinate with the DAO or SCO.

The Marine Security Guard (MSG) DOES NOT report to the SDO/DATT, instead they are supervised by the Embassy Regional Security Officer (RSO). Though a direct chain of command relationship does not exist, MSGs will still look to the DOD Senior NCOs and Officers in the Embassy for advice, mentorship and leadership.

DoS Support Before Departure and at Mission

The Embassy and State Department provide a robust complementary support network for families and individuals serving abroad. The DoS places specific emphasis on Family Resiliency and Spouse Employment. Some of the best resources you can access from DoS are the Overseas Briefing Center (OBC) and Community Liaison Officer (CLO) at post.

Overseas Briefing Center: Once you have official orders to a U.S. Embassy placing you under Chief of Mission authority, the [Overseas Briefing Center \(OBC\)](#) is available to assist U.S. Government employees and their family members with preparation for an assignment to a U.S. Mission abroad. To support entry into the Foreign Affairs community, transitions from post to post, and a return back home, the OBC creates, curates, and collects resources for successful transitions.

Note - Keep in mind the OBC materials apply a Department of State perspective and practices. Specific policies and funding mechanisms may differ from approved DOD or service administration. Please reach out to your service representative for service-specific information.

The CLO: At a U.S. Mission, the [Community Liaison Office \(CLO\)](#) provides morale-enhancing support to U.S. government employees and family members of all agencies who are assigned to U.S. embassies and consulates abroad. The CLO is primarily focused on eight areas of responsibility: providing community liaison, crisis management and support services, education liaison, employment liaison, events planning, guidance and referral, information, and resource management, welcoming and orientation.

CLOs serve as community advocates for employees and family members. They advise post management on quality-of-life issues, recommend solutions and family-friendly post policies, and assist in crises.

The CLO coordinator at post is one of the first contacts you should make when you receive your new assignment—well before you arrive at post. The CLO is your “eyes and ears on the ground,” and is best equipped to give you post-specific and up-to-date information you need to know before you pack your bags. The CLO will provide pre-arrival information, a sponsorship and orientation program, and assistance with settling in after you arrive at post. You can expect to get relevant information about life at post, school options, the employment situation for family members, housing, and more. At most posts, you are assigned a social sponsor shortly before arrival. The social sponsor will be able to help you navigate your arrival logistics; answer questions about your neighborhood, schools, shopping, and points of interest; and help you settle into your new community.

Community liaison office coordinators (CLOs) and assistant CLOs are positions that are filled by eligible family members (EFMs) of employees serving at post and are advertised through a vacancy announcement when a position becomes available. Get to know your CLO!

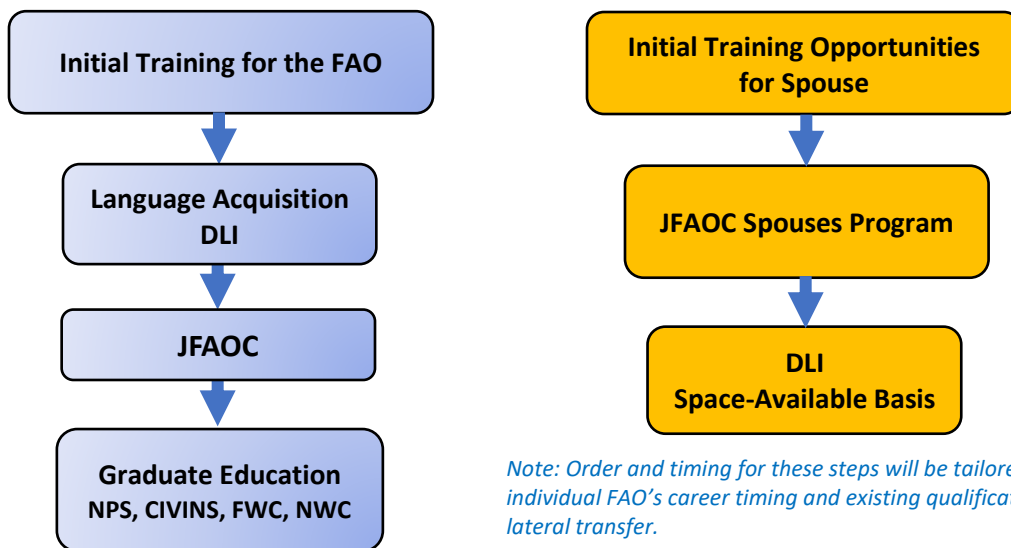
Note 1 - *The CLO position requires a security clearance; many spouses serve as CLOs and gain a federal security clearance. This clearance can be stored between diplomatic assignments through membership in the Family Reserve Corps; see Chapter 8 for more information.*

Note 2 – *All CLO emails follow the same format CLOPostName@state.gov*

Training Opportunities

The first training opportunity for most newly transitioned FAOs is some combination of initial language acquisition at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC) and graduate education at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS), both in Monterey, California. Alternatively, depending on timing and language capabilities, new FAOs and their families may head to the Naval War College (NWC) in Newport, Rhode Island, foreign war colleges overseas, or scholarships to civilian institutions. During this initial training and education, FAOs are encouraged to attend the required Joint Foreign Area Officer Course (JFAOC) and JFAOC Spouse program held twice a year in January and June.

Initial FAO Training Opportunities



The Defense Language Institute (DLI): Most FAOs will receive their initial language training with the [Defense Language Institute](#), either at the Defense Language Institute-Foreign Language Center ([DLIFLC](#)) in Monterey, CA or at [DLI-Washington](#) in Washington, D.C. [High density languages](#), like Arabic, Chinese-Mandarin, French, Russian, Japanese, Indonesian or Korean will usually be taught in Monterey. Less common languages (to the DOD) like Turkish, Portuguese, Hindi and others will usually be taught through contracts managed by DLI Washington. Depending on assignments and language expertise there may be other opportunities for FAOs and spouses to attend DLI again during a FAO's career.

Spouses may have the opportunity to attend DLI on a **space available basis**. Spouses will need to complete a Defense Language Aptitude Battery test (DLAB) and commit to the entirety of the course. If you would like to attend training, have the member reach out to the Navy DLI representative a few months prior to the language training start date to inquire about space available for your spouse. Since our spouses are often times the primary agent for routine errands in country, they will have opportunity to use the target language as often or more than the FAO. Therefore, we encourage spouses to take advantage of DLI courses when able to make the transition overseas as smooth as possible for the whole family.

JFAOC: The [Joint FAO Orientation Course](#) provides newly assessed FAOs and their spouses from the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines with an orientation to the FAO community. JFAOC includes briefings from senior FAOs and other experts on a wide array of topics concerning the FAO career field. JFAOC discusses FAO roles and responsibilities, cross-cultural competence, national security policy, security cooperation, strategic political-military planning, introduction to the country team, attaché roles and responsibilities, and cross-cultural negotiation. Additionally, the course includes the FAO life cycle, family issues, an introduction to the Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multinational (JIIM) environment, personal security, and an orientation to each region. This course affords an opportunity for FAOs to develop their personal training plan, establish working relationships with their career managers, training officers and fellow newly accessed FAOs, and understand the varied roles played by FAOs around the world. Our primary Navy instruction, OPNAVINST 1301.10 requires FAOs to complete JFAOC for full FAO qualification.

JFAOC Spouses Program: FAO spouses are highly encouraged to attend the Spouse Program that is conducted in parallel with the JFAOC. This can be a great opportunity to get acquainted with the FAO Community, answer many of your initial questions about FAO life, and network with other FAO spouses and community points of contact. The JFAOC Spouses Program runs concurrently with the service member's JFAOC but is conducted separately. There is no dedicated website for the JFAOC spouses' program. If you are travelling to JFAOC with children, you may be able to arrange [childcare](#) with the [CDC in Monterey](#).

The Naval Postgraduate School: Graduate education is usually the next stop for most FAOs. The [Naval Postgraduate School](#), also located in Monterey, hosts FAOs as full time graduate students as they earn their regionally-focused master's degree and Joint Professional Military Education Phase 1 (JPME 1). FAOs without a regional studies graduate degree complete to one of four regional security studies curricula corresponding to their assigned region. FAOs with general political science or international affairs advanced degrees may only require a one-quarter regional certificate. All curricula are hosted by the [Department of National Security Affairs](#). The master's program offer either a comprehensive exam or thesis track that, when combined with JPME 1, require 15 and 18 months to complete. Comprehensive track students that graduate DLI are eligible to receive their degree upon successful completion of the comprehensive exam.

The Naval War College: FAOs with existing language capability may have the opportunity to go to the [Naval War College](#) in Newport, Rhode Island for their master's degree and JPME. FAOs preparing for Navy staff assignments may attend the Maritime Operational Planners Course or the Maritime Staff Officers Course as an intermediate stop in route to their permanent duty station.

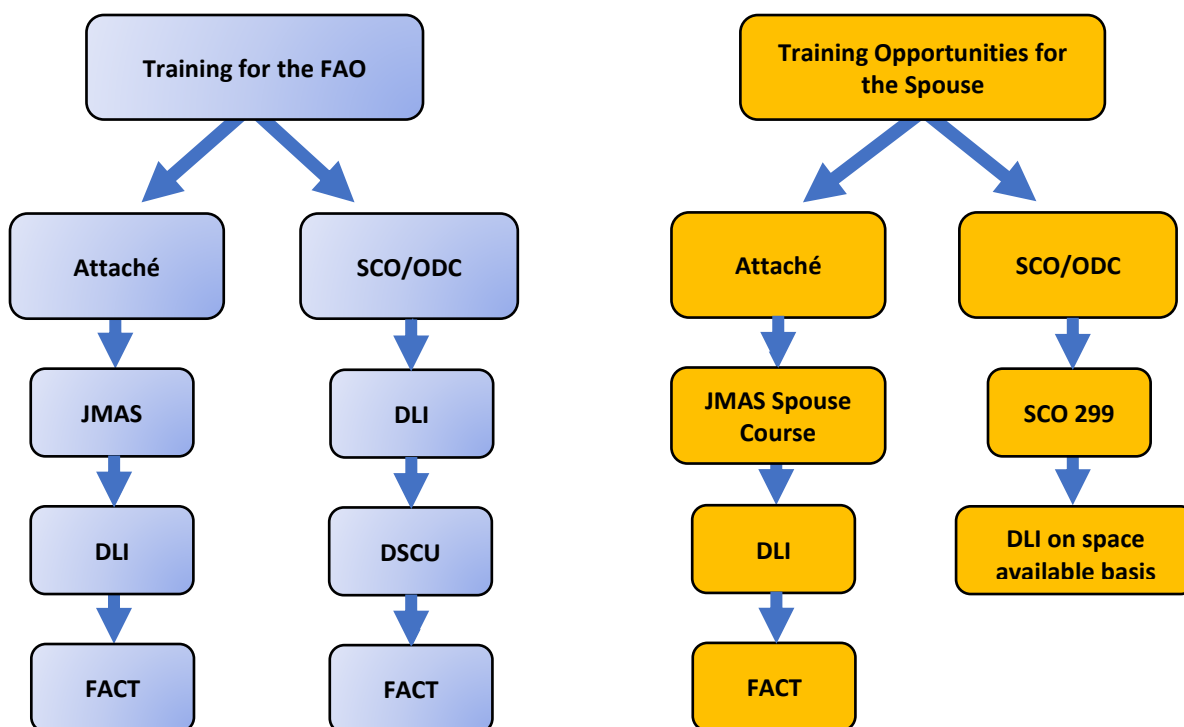
The [Maritime Operational Planners Course \(MOPC\)](#) (13 weeks) develops Navy planners capable of performing in dynamic, complex, and high-tempo maritime operational environments. This course produces officers that are capable of forming, organizing, and leading operational planning teams and are proficient in the detailed application of the Navy Planning Process on navy component/numbered fleet staffs.

The [Maritime Staff Operators Course \(MSOC\)](#) (5 weeks) provides education in the application of the Maritime Operations Center concept, organization and processes; maritime operational level of warfare

concepts, terminology and processes; and the Navy Planning Process in order to produce graduates capable of immediately supporting the commander’s decision cycle at the operational level of warfare in a dynamic and complex environment on navy component/numbered fleet staffs.

Job-Specific Training Tracks

SCO and Attaché billets are inherently different for the service member, but the training pipeline and timing for the spouse are somewhat comparable. These additional billet-focused courses are primarily for Navy FAOs headed to embassy assignment. Training is typically conducted as stand-alone PCS orders vice intermediate stops in route from one permanent duty station to the next. NOTE: Language training can occur before or after JMAS/DSCU depending on school availability. Language instruction is sometimes curtailed or waived altogether.



Joint Military Attaché School

Attaché Training Program (ATP)

ATP prepares selected military officers and Department of Defense (DOD) civilians for duty as Senior Defense Officials/Defense Attachés (SDO/DATT), Service Attachés, and Assistant Defense Attachés (A/DATT). These highly visible and influential positions require dynamic critical thinking, strong communication and leadership skills and an ability to remain diplomatic under pressure.

Attaché Staff Training Program (ASTP)

ASTP prepares selected officers, warrant officers, non-commissioned officers and civilians for Defense Attaché Office (DAO) staff positions as Operations Coordinators. The Ops team manages the daily operations of the DAO and serve as the critical backbone. These positions require individuals to multitask while maintaining an eye for details in a fast-paced setting.

Spouse Training Program (STP)

STP provides tailored training to U.S. citizen spouses of military and civilian Attachés and Attaché Staff. STP is designed to support in-person participation by students from every background and walk of life.

You can find out more about Joint Military Attaché School programs by clicking the "View JMAS Brochure" button on the link found here: <https://www.dia.mil/Training/Joint-Military-Attache-School-JMAS/>

Defense Security Cooperation University: DSCU provides online and in-residence training to support personnel working in security cooperation organizations (SCOs) from their main campus on Wright Patterson AFB, in Dayton, Ohio. There is also a virtual SCO Spouse training course. The latest information on DSCU courses is available here: <https://www.dscu.edu/courses>

SCO-220: Fundamentals and Application of SCO Operations Fundamentals and Application of SCO Operations (currently SCO-220) is a six-week in-resident Instructor-led Training (ILT) course located at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. The course is mandatory, by DOD directive, for all personnel assigned to a Security Cooperation Organization. The course provides crucial instruction for executing security cooperation activities with our international allies & partners in support of the National Defense Strategy. SCO-220 is a full-time course.

SCO-262: Operational Engagements Operational Engagements is a three-day course involving a series of whole-of-government briefings and consultations in Washington, D.C. Students spend a day at the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA), a day at the Pentagon, and a day at the Department of State. The number and nature of the engagements include operational briefs from the military departments, Department of State, military planners, and Defense Security Cooperation Agency regional experts. At the conclusion, students will have initiated and developed relationships with interagency personnel who support SCOs in the field. This course (along with SCO-220) is mandatory, by DOD directive, for all personnel assigned to a Security Cooperation Office.

SCO 299: Security Cooperation Organization/Officer Spouse Course The Security Cooperation Organization/Officer Spouse Course is a four-week virtual course with synchronous (live) and asynchronous (self-paced) lessons. On average, students will have 4-6 synchronous (live) lesson hours/week and 4-5 asynchronous (self-paced) lesson hours/week. The course provides spouses of DoD SCO personnel with an in-depth understanding of the challenges, opportunities and resources related to living overseas and supporting the U.S./Department of Defense diplomatic mission. We recommend that spouses take the course as soon as the service member has received orders to allow for maximum preparation time for these unique assignments. More information can be found at <https://www.dscu.edu/courses/>, under SCO-299.

Foreign Affairs Counter Threat Training (FACT): FACT training is a general security awareness program designed to prepare personnel and adult family members from all backgrounds to live and work overseas while serving under the Department of State (DoS) Chief of Mission authority. The program is a student-centered approach to security awareness and situational response training which includes classroom sessions and practical applications culminating in final exercise scenarios.

Many of the topics covered are listed on the [FACT website](#).

Attendance at FACT training is highly encouraged for spouses heading to overseas assignments under Chief of Mission authority. Family members attending JMAS will have FACT funded for them. Family members moving on other orders can try to attend via Space-A, check with FACT organizers. This training is considered highly valuable for the spouse because oftentimes, the spouse is the primary agent for conducting routine business and errands out on the economy. FACT is also often a requirement for EFM employment at the mission.

PEP tours, Foreign War Colleges and other tours: Several early overseas FAO assignments are available through the Personnel Exchange Program ([PEP](#)), Foreign War Colleges, or other tours and will also require DLI and FACT training. Again, it is highly encouraged that spouses participate in the applicable training when offered, because often times these tours are the most remote and farthest from US installations and support. During many of these tours, it may be possible that your member is serving with a host nation unit and you and your family will be reliant on the host nation for means of support.

2

Preparing for the Move

Congratulations on your next orders overseas! You are headed to your first FAO assignment. Many elements of your first FAO tour PCS will be similar to your previous experiences in the Fleet. However, an overseas PCS and PCSes into an embassy environment present some distinct differences that will be covered in this section.

Nearly every situation is covered by a DOD instruction. Reference **DOD Instruction 1315.18** (Oct 28, 2015), the Procedures for Military Personnel Assignments, for what is, or is not, allowed in terms of transfers and dependent orders. This is implemented by the Navy under [OPNAVINST 1300.15B](#), Navy Military Personnel Assignment Policy.

Reference the **Joint Travel Regulations** for weights, travel methods, travel allowances, <https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/Docs/perdiem/JTR.pdf>. The JTR implements policy and laws establishing travel and transportation allowances of Uniformed Service members and Department of Defense (DOD) civilian travelers. The JTR applies to Uniformed Service Active and Reserve Component members and their dependents.

- Local Travel at the Permanent Duty Station (PDS), Chapter 2
- Temporary Duty (TDY) Travel, Chapter 3
- Government-funded Leave Travel, Chapter 4
- Permanent Duty Travel (PDT), including Permanent Change of Station (PCS) Travel, Chapter 5
- Evacuation Travel, Chapter 6

Orders

Everything begins with orders. Broadly speaking, your orders tell you where you'll be moving – either CONUS or OCONUS. CONUS moves are inside the CONtinental United States. OCONUS moves are Outside the CONtinental U.S. These are typically international destinations, but also include Alaska, Hawaii and U.S. territories. Your orders will also include issue date, an issuing command's name, an order number, and an authorized location or locations. You will need this information handy as you coordinate your move through the military.

Your PCS orders are legally binding and trigger many processes within the US Government. Most importantly, they contain funding information to pay for things like passports, household goods shipments & storage, tickets, and many other things.

Occasionally, your detailee will not be able to issue a set of orders right away. In those cases, they may offer a Letter of Intent (LOI). An LOI is an official memo stating that the Navy INTENDS to send you to a new location. Note that your PCS is not final or official until your actual orders have been published. A

Letter of Intent lets you start some processes to move your PCS along. Don't be surprised, however, if there are administrative items that still require formal orders to setup or execute.

Command sponsorship is the permission needed for your family to accompany you overseas if you have recently gotten married during an assignment. If you are recently married or have a change in family members, you should apply for [command sponsorship](#) as soon as you can, especially if expecting PCS orders. If approved, you'll receive an additional allowance, reimbursement for moving expenses and more weight in your moving shipment. Follow all instructions carefully when applying and keep strict records of your expenses once approved.

Family members command sponsorship status will directly impact reimbursement of Non-DoDDS Schools or DoDEA eligibility if the sponsor departs. Contact NDSP before making decisions

<https://www.dodea.edu/nonDoD/index.cfm>

Delayed Dependent Travel authorizes dependents to remain at and draw Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) at their current permanent duty station. This can be helpful in allowing children to finish the school year before executing a government-funded move. However, financial care must be taken in that the servicemember will NOT receive additional housing compensation at the new permanent duty station. The location can affect how long a dependent may remain. Some SOFA's will limit the amount of time Dependents can remain in country without the sponsor.

The Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) formerly known as the Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act, is a federal law enacted in 2003, that restricts or limits actions against military personnel currently serving on active duty. The Act was designed to ease the financial burden for active-duty service members, active reservists, and active Guard—especially those who are deployed. This can be helpful in terminating home rental, car leases, and utilities contracts.

Military personnel are eligible for SCRA benefits starting on the date when their active-duty orders are received, and SCRA coverage typically terminates within 30 to 90 days after their date of discharge from active duty. Find out more information at <https://militarybenefits.info/servicemembers-civil-relief-act-benefits/>

Finances

Build savings and have an emergency fund or emergency credit line to dip into if needed. Many moves will require initial upfront expenses that are reimbursed (sometimes only partially) later on. Having savings available to dip into allows for immediate decisions and immediate actions if events demand while you are overseas. Contact your installation or command [Personal Financial Management Program](#) office for more information and assistance

Pays and Benefits

In addition to support offered by your installation [Relocation Assistance Program](#), here are some benefits and resources available when you are moving OCONUS:

- **Dislocation Allowance (DLA)** is meant to help with miscellaneous moving costs. It is generally paid once per PCS. It is not paid if you are reassigned to government quarters or are unaccompanied. Learn more about [DLA FAQs](#), or contact your installation [Finance Office](#) for more details.

- **Overseas Housing Allowance (OHA)** may be available to offset the cost of living off-base. It is based on rank and dependents and is available to unaccompanied service members only if government housing is unavailable.
- **Move-in Housing Allowance (MIHA)** helps cover the cost of miscellaneous expenses like appliances, lease taxes, or one-time rental or security-related expenses. It varies by currency rate and location. Check with your installation [Housing Office](#) for more details about MIHA.
- **Family Separation Allowance (FSA)** is paid when your family members can't live with you at your permanent duty station – most commonly when transportation isn't authorized, housing is unavailable, you're aboard a ship, or your family can't move because of a medical condition. This allowance is paid as a flat, monthly rate. Check with your installation [Housing Office](#) or the [Defense Finance and Accounting Service](#) for more FSA details.

In more adventurous locales, or depending on the orders, Navy FAOs may also be eligible for special, and incentives pays. These may include:

- **Hardship Duty Pay (HDP)** for service members assigned to places where the standard of living is significantly below that of the continental United States. HDP Locations are listed in [this link](#).
- **Hostile Fire Pay/Imminent Danger Pay (HFP/IDP)** for those assigned to specific regions where they may be subject to hostile actions like enemy fire or mines.
- **Assignment Incentive Pay (AIP)** for service members on extended tours or certain unusual assignments. This is primarily focused on assignments in Iraq and Afghanistan, however some tours in South Korea may be eligible as well.
- **Hazardous Duty Incentive Pay (HDIP)** for those on specific types of duty such as flying, parachute jumping, flight deck duty or experimental stress duty.
- **Combat Zone Tax Exclusions (CZTE)** depending on the TAD orders, and some PCS orders (looking at you Djibouti), earnings received while in the combat zone are excluded from taxable income. This exclusion is limited to \$7368.30 per month for officers. If you spend a single qualifying day in the combat zone, your pay for the entire month is excluded from taxable income. CZTE locations are listed [here](#), Designated Direct Support Areas of a Combat Zone are listed [here](#).

Advances are available to help cover the cost of moving. Remember, these must be paid back upon arrival and that garnishment usually starts on the paycheck following your arrival at post. You can apply for an advance of basic pay to cover:

- Basic allowance for housing
- Overseas housing allowance
- Moving-related expenses
- Travel allowances (varies by service branch)

Before taking an advance, be sure to do some research about repayment, and contact the experts at your [Personal Financial Management Program office](#) to help with budget planning. Financial counselors can also help with information about financial aid organizations and emergency assistance.

Passports

Almost all diplomatic posts require FAOs and accompanying dependents to hold a black diplomatic passport. FAOs going to overseas staff assignments will usually require a brown official passport for themselves and blue no-fee tourist passports for dependents. Diplomatic passports and blue no-fee passports require PCS orders for the passport application. Check your orders and the Foreign Clearance Guide for details on entry requirements into your country

Note: While FAOs assigned to embassies hold black “Diplomatic” passports, typically only attachés and SCO chiefs are fully credentialed with diplomatic privileges. Other personnel are generally classified as “Administrative & Technical” staff and do not enjoy full immunity from host nation laws such as Value-Added Tax and limits on car ownership.

All applications must be submitted through the local DOD Passport and Visa Acceptance Agent. The local Agent may be located in the NAVPTO, the local PSD, or like in Monterey, may be a separate office and person. The local Passport Agent will provide you with detailed submission information. The key with all Passport Agents is to make contact early and adhere to the recommended timelines for submission for passports and visas (generally at least 45-60 days from travel) and passport applications (as soon as you get your orders).

Complete entry requirements for your country can be found in the [Foreign Clearance Guide](#).

Visas: Many countries require entry visas on official and diplomatic passports, even for those countries where we have reciprocal tourist entry exemptions or where we have Status of Forces Agreements that only require a CAC and orders. FAOs will need to submit visa applications through their parent organizations. A country-by-country list of general visa requirements is kept here: [DOD Passport Matters](#). Ensure full compliance with guidance in the eFCG. Information contained within this site is not all inclusive with what is in the [Foreign Clearance Guide](#) (FCG). Therefore, be sure to check the FCG for any additional information. This is only a listing of the most frequently traveled to countries. If there is a conflict with what's in the FCG and this site, please call DSN 312-426-1710/6889 for clarification.

For both passports and visas, reach out early and often. Do not underestimate the time these processes can take. Pay attention to the Foreign Clearance Guide; follow the detailed instructions and do not show up at the airport or in your host country without the appropriate documents.

NAVPTO: The Navy Transportation Offices (NAVPTO) in the various servicing Personnel Support Detachments (PSDs), take care of most transportation needs when it comes to executing a PCS. If leaving a Navy command, they will help you apply for official or diplomatic passports, help coordinate any visas you may need, and they will issue your commercial air tickets for you and your command sponsored family members.

NAVPTO can also assist with Circuitous Travel. [Circuitous travel](#) is when a service member takes leave in conjunction with an OCONUS PCS move. This means you can procure your travel, through [CWT SATO Travel](#) and in accordance with the [Fly America Act](#) meaning you must use a U.S. flagged carrier when available, fly wherever you want to take leave, and the Navy will cover what it would have cost the U.S. government to send you and your family directly to your next duty station.

Before you and your family will be authorized to execute circuitous travel, NAVPTO must endorse your orders with a government cost estimate. This endorsement will tell your next PSD and NAVPTO how much

it would have cost the US government to fly you and your family to your next duty station. Without this endorsement from NAVPTO, you will not get reimbursed for your travel expenses (up to what it would have cost the government) from your gaining PSD.

***Disclaimer – before you spend your money for circuitous travel on your next PCS, read the Joint Travel Regulations, specifically Chapters 2 and 5 and talk with your losing and gaining commands.**

Shipments

All moves overseas, whether to a staff or to an Embassy, will start by logging into [DPS](#), easily accessed through that link or through the [Military One Source](#) webpage. The DPS site will direct you to the initial setup of your PCS shipments. For most FAO moves, you will need to consider several different shipments, including: a Household Goods (HHG) shipment, an Unaccompanied Baggage (UAB) shipment, a Non-Temporary Storage (NTS) shipment, and potentially a consumables shipment and vehicle shipment.

The DPS application will require order information and desired moving dates. The application will also help prepare several forms for your move. You will need hard and soft copies of these forms for move counseling and tracking your shipments throughout their shipment.

Department of State (DoS)-Arranged Moves: [Appendix F](#) from the Defense Transportation Regulation, Part IV outlines responsibilities for the movement and processing of the household goods (HHG), privately owned vehicles (POV), consumables (CNS), and unaccompanied baggage (UB) of Department of Defense (DoD) military personnel to, from, and between DoS diplomatic missions for customers who are assigned under the Chief of Mission, and delineates responsibilities where DoD continues to arrange the movement of personal property shipments to, from, and between remaining locations worldwide.

DOD to DoS moves use the same forms used in DOD only moves. DOD services will provide the front end management of DOD service member shipments and will provide coordination with the DoS. These shipments are started in Move.mil the same way a DOD-only move is started, but once handed off to DoS, the shipment in Move.mil will be cancelled. DOD will remain responsible for settling any move claims from the service member and will also collect any over-weight charges the service member owes.

DoS will manage the movement of DOD shipments once received at DoS departure points, will provide the most cost effective method of shipping, and will provide initial move counseling for DOD service members as they depart their diplomatic post. DoS will reference DOD weight allowances from the JTR for movements to and from diplomatic posts.

- EUCOM, AFRICOM, CENTCOM, and moves to India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka use Baltimore as their point of departure. Their organizational email is: DODPP@state.gov
- Eastern INDO-PACOM shipments are dispatched through Seattle. Their organizational email is: dispatch_agency_seattle@state.gov
- Shipments for the Western Hemisphere are shipped from Charleston. Their organizational email is: dispatch_agency_miami@state.gov

Reference table F1 on page IV-F-18 from Appendix F (linked above) for contact information for shipment management offices.

Technique Only: Awareness of the shipping route and offices for your shipments can provide the opportunity for intervention in the middle of a move should orders change. Navy FAOs should only contact intermediate shipping offices in dire or emergency circumstances. This is NOT the method for checking up on the status of your shipments.

Household goods (HHG) move, is a move completed by a government-furnished moving company, also called a transportation service provider (TSP). During a HHG move, your TSP is responsible for packing all of your belongings and transporting them to your new location.

Note: If your HHG shipment includes storage-in-transit you may have the option to request the use of a container. Shipments in containers are dependent on what the moving and storage industry is able to provide at the time of your move. To learn more about shipments in containers, visit the Crating section of [Frequently Asked Questions for PCS and Military Moves](#).

Table 5-37. PCS and NTS Weight Allowances (Pounds) JTR, 11 Jan 2021, 5C-8			
Grade		With Dependents	Without Dependents
1	O-10 to O-6	18,000	18,000
2	O-5 or W-5	17,500	16,000
3	O-4 or W-4	17,000	14,000
4	O-3 or W-3	14,500	13,000

Of note, assignments to Diplomatic missions are governed by a specific table for weight allowances. Copied below and available here: <https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/Docs/AP-AW-01.pdf>

Diplomatic Missions From PDTATAC, Administrative Household Goods (HHG) Weight Allowance Locations, 21 July 2020		
Service and Traveler	Tour Type	Administratively Reduced Allowance
USA Service member	Accompanied	25 percent of the full HHG weight allowance. Note: If required to reside in Family Housing, consider shipping less than the authorized weight allowance due to the small size of the rooms
USA Service member	Unaccompanied	25 percent of the full HHG weight allowance. Unaccompanied Baggage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If assigned to furnished Government quarters, then unaccompanied baggage is limited to 10 percent of the full weight allowance. ● If assigned to unfurnished Government quarters, then unaccompanied baggage is limited to 2,000 lbs or the administrative weight limit, whichever is less. Of this baggage, up to 1,000 lbs may be transported by commercial air, if required. A copy of the advance written authorization from the new PDS housing officer must be provided to the Transportation Officer before transporting the unaccompanied baggage. Note: If required to reside in Unaccompanied Personnel Housing, consider shipping less than the authorized weight allowance due to the small size of the rooms.
All Service members and civilians assigned to the Defense Attaché Office	Any	If assigned to furnished post, then personnel are limited to 35 percent of full HHG weight allowance. If assigned to unfurnished post, then personnel are normally authorized full HHG allowance. If assigned to Special Shipment Allowance post (i.e. Afghanistan, Somalia, Sudan), then personnel must abide by Department of State (DoS) designated allowance. COCOM-sourced Senior Defense Official/Defense Attaché are normally authorized full HHG weight allowance, unless otherwise directed by source agency and/or post is identified as a Special Shipment Allowance post. Note: DoS determines Special Shipment Allowances for designated posts. Weight allowances are listed in the DoS periodic memorandum.

Administrative Weight Limitations: weight allowances can be administratively restricted at a PDS OCONUS based on factors at that location. Such factors include whether HHG is supplied at the PDS, if there is limited space for HHG in Government quarters or private-sector housing, and if there is limited storage for excess HHG in the area. See Administrative HHG Weight Allowance Locations. Services establish item allowances for a specific location. Services must coordinate so that allowances are uniform for all Service members of all Services by grade and dependency status in the area.

When the new PDS is an administrative-weight-limited location, the Service member is authorized HHG transportation to a designated place or to NTS for the remainder of the HHG weight allowance in Table 5-37 that could not be shipped to the new PDS.

When Administrative weight limits does not apply: HHG shipments from non-foreign areas OCONUS to any location where there is no administrative weight limitation. Service member assigned as a **COCOM Senior Defense Official/Defense Attaché**, unless otherwise directed by the source agency, or if the post is identified as a **Special Shipment Allowance Post**.

Check JTR section **051402 paragraphs C through F** for specific situations and procedures for exceptions.

Unaccompanied baggage (UB or UAB): is an option for shipments where a small subset of your total weight allowance is expedited to your new location, typically while you wait for the rest of your belongings to arrive at a later date. UB shipments are approved for CONUS TDY and OCONUS TDY and PCS. Unaccompanied baggage is part of the Service member's authorized HHG weight allowance. When the shipment is to an area that has an administrative weight limit for HHG, the unaccompanied baggage weight is part of the administrative HHG weight limitation. Unaccompanied baggage is subject to specific limitations. If the new PDS is a location with an HHG administrative weight limit, the unaccompanied baggage weight is the lesser of either the administrative weight limit for the PDS location at Administrative HHG Weight Allowance Locations, or one of the following:

1. 2,000 pounds for an active-duty Service member with command-sponsored family members. The 2,000-pound weight limit is for the entire family, not for each traveler.
2. 10% of the authorized weight allowance for an unaccompanied active-duty Service member normally assigned to furnished Government quarters.
3. 2,000 pounds for an unaccompanied active-duty Service member not normally assigned to furnished bachelor enlisted quarters or bachelor officer quarters.

Unaccompanied baggage transportation is authorized by an expedited transportation mode when necessary to enable the Service member to carry out assigned duties or to prevent undue hardship on the Service member or a dependent. **The unaccompanied baggage, including any PBP&E, is limited to a maximum of 1,000 pounds when transported by commercial air.** If unaccompanied baggage is shipped by expedited commercial air, the remaining weight, limited to the unaccompanied baggage weight allowance authorized in this paragraph, may be shipped by regular transportation methods. **Non-temporary storage (NTS):** is long-term storage of your belongings generally used instead of shipping your items to your new duty station. Expect the storage location to be located near the origin or pickup location where items may remain for the duration of your tour. When you return and have established a new address, you can request retrieval and shipment of your stored belongings. There may be restrictions on CONUS NTS, so be

sure to contact your [local transportation office](#) if you have any questions. NTS is approved for CONUS PCS (exceptions may apply) and OCONUS PCS.

Note: *For retirement: NTS may be authorized for 1 year beginning with retirement date and may be extended for up to five years.*

Note: *For separation: NTS may be authorized for 180 days and may be extended one time for an additional 180 days.*

Privately Owned Vehicle (POV) shipment and storage: is available for some moves. In general, if you are traveling overseas or outside of the contiguous United States the government may pay to ship one POV to your new duty station or store one POV during your OCONUS tour. You will need to make an appointment with the global POV contractor, International Auto Logistics (IAL), and take it to a vehicle processing center, or VPC, for transportation to your new duty station or to a contracted storage facility. You can find global VPC locations, schedule your turn-in or drop-off appointment, and view POV shipping and storage documentation requirements on IAL's website, [PCSMYPOV](#).

Note: *Some OCONUS countries do not allow POV transportation into the host country. Check with your local transportation office for country-specific restrictions. In these situations, you can store your POV at government or personal expense for the length of your OCONUS tour. Contact your [local transportation office](#) for storage authorizations and reimbursement options.*

Note: *Due to the frequent turnover of embassy personnel, many missions will have a supply of second-hand vehicles available for purchase. Contact the CLO or check the embassy newsletter.*

Consumable Goods Allowances Eligibility: Many Navy FAOs, when assigned to certain remote overseas locations will be able to ship "consumable goods". This shipment provides an opportunity to stock those items you want or need that cannot be found on the local economy and cannot be shipped in via mail. The consumable goods must be for the Service member's or a dependent's personal use. Experienced hands recommend using the consumables weight allowance for specific items you may want that you know you cannot purchase locally or ship into the destination.

A Service member assigned to a PDS OCONUS listed at [Consumable Goods Allowance](#) is authorized transportation of consumable goods in addition to HHG. The number of pounds of consumable goods authorized for shipment is at [Consumable Goods Allowance](#), and is in addition to the authorized HHG weight allowance. Consumable goods are transported using the same methods as HHG, with the same originating location. An alternate shipping origin for consumable goods in unusual circumstances may be authorized through the Secretarial Process, as well as consumable goods transportation for tour extension or IPCOT at a PDS listed at [Consumable Goods Allowance](#). See JTR 052002 para. F.

A Service member assigned to a permanent duty station listed in the table in AP-CG-01, 24 Mar 2021 is authorized to ship up to 1,250 pounds of suitable consumable goods for each tour-year.

For example, for a 12-month tour a Service member is authorized 1,250 pounds and for an 18-month tour a Service member is authorized 1,875 pounds. A Service member authorized a consumable goods allowance is allowed two consumable goods shipments a year, but he or she may not exceed the maximum allowance of 1,250 pounds for each tour-year.

Pets

Pets are important members of each of our families. However, please realize ahead of time pets are not provided for or considered in terms of orders, transportation expenses, or housing considerations by the US Government. International travel with pets will require detailed planning for their shipment, health certification, documentation, micro-chipping, and vaccination requirements. When planning your PCS travel with pets, consider several of the factors mentioned by DoS's Overseas Briefing Center [here](#).

The [JTR](#) considers household pets to be cats or dogs. Transportation for a household pet is not a reimbursable expense **unless the transportation is due to an evacuation from a foreign PDS in accordance with JTR para. 060204**. See JTR para 050107 for normal travel considerations.

During PCS, some pet quarantine expenses are covered. A Service member on a PCS order is authorized reimbursement for mandatory quarantine fees for household pets. Reimbursement for the actual cost of quarantine fees is authorized, limited to \$550 per PCS move. See Pet Quarantine Information and the DTMO website for more details.

International Pet Travel on American Carriers: This information pertains to cats and dogs. Airline policies regarding other pets may vary. The information below provides only general guidelines. Contact the airlines directly for additional information. The travel policies of U.S. airlines regarding shipping animals are subject to change at any time. If your pet must be shipped as cargo using a commercial shipper, contact one early in the moving process, using [IPATA](#). Review all considerations with the airline and, if necessary, the pet shipper you plan to use. OBC recommends that you request written confirmation of reservations you make for the shipment of your pet.

There are three ways you can ship your pet via the airlines:

1. **Your pet can travel on the plane with you** (either in-cabin, as accompanied baggage, or as cargo). Your pet will be charged accordingly. Some airlines no longer offer this option and some countries do not allow pets to enter the country in-cabin.

Note: If checking as baggage, most airlines have strict guidelines regarding forecast temperatures for embarkation/debarkation and layover locations. If forecast temperatures exceed, or are below published guidelines, the airlines will not accept your pet and you will have to rebook. This can be extremely difficult to manage when trying to make a report no later than date overseas.

2. **You can book your pet on a separate flight.** You will be charged the cargo rate, which is considerably more than excess baggage. However, most airlines no longer allow pet owners to book their pets directly with the airline as cargo.

Note: Most foreign countries will only allow animals to enter from certain specified points of embarkation. Check with CLO to know which ones your country expects. This can be difficult to manage unless Circuitous Travel is authorized.

3. **You can have your pet shipped through a licensed commercial shipper.** You will be charged the cargo rate plus the pet shipper's fee. Many airlines now require this method unless your pet is small enough to fit in the cabin.

Note: This can be extremely expensive (thousands of dollars). Careful planning is necessary in order to avoid financial pitfalls, particularly when establishing a new household abroad.

As a rule, animals 100 lbs. or larger (**including** the weight of the cage) will be charged as cargo even if they travel on the same plane as you. Check with the airline if your pet is close to that weight and to determine if the airline policy may vary from this general 100 lb. rule.

When heading to staff, information for bringing pets into country at US bases should be available from your new command's arrival information. For Navy FAO's headed to Embassies, contact your sponsor and new Community Liaison Office for local post requirements to bring pets into country.

For FAOs returning with pets to the United States, please visit OBC [Returning to the United States with Pets](#) and USDA-APHIS [Bring your pet into the United States from a foreign country \(Import\)](#) webpages. There will likely be micro-chip requirements, exams, and travel health certifications required immediately before travel. We encourage pet owners to review and carefully plan their international travel or international moves with pets.

Mail Overseas

On base, you will almost certainly have access to **Fleet Post Office** or **Army Post Office** services. This service ships to a PO Box at your base through the normal US Postal Service as if you were at home. When overseas, and shipping to another overseas location, you may be able to take advantage of the Military Postal System as well, for point-to-point mail and parcel service. Most online ordering services and retailers will ship to FPO and APO addresses. Visit the USPS website for more information here: <https://www.usps.com/ship/apo-fpo-dpo.htm>

At Post, you may have either a **Diplomatic Post Office** service (almost exactly equivalent to FPO/APO) or you may need to rely on **Diplomatic Pouch** service. Employees assigned to a post that provides DPO service must send and receive all personal mail and packages via the U.S. Postal Service through the DPO system rather than the unclassified diplomatic pouch. If a vendor will not send items to a DPO address, then customers must find alternate means or vendor. Parcels or flats sent by FedEx, UPS, Airborne, DHL or any other private carrier cannot be addressed to a DPO address. Packages are limited to 70 pounds and 108 inches (length and girth combined).

Addressing Military & Diplomatic Mail: Each shipment to an APO/FPO/DPO needs the recipient's name, rank, and unit, and the APO/FPO/DPO address with the 9-digit ZIP Code™. Always include a return address. Mail and shipments must be addressed to a specific person; addressing to "Any Service Member" is no longer permitted. To prevent mail from entering foreign mail networks, do not include city or country names in APO/FPO/DPO shipping addresses. Here are properly addressed shipment examples:

Army/Air Post Office (APO)	Fleet Post Office (FPO)	Diplomatic Post Office (DPO)
MAJ JOHN DOE	LCDR JOSEPH SMITH	JOHN ADAMS
PSC 3 BOX 4120	UNIT 100100 BOX 4120	UNIT 8400 BOX 0000
APO AE 09021	FPO AP 96691	DPO AE 09498-0048

The term “diplomatic pouch” includes both the official pouch (which has a Washington, DC 20521 ZIP Code) and the personal mail for pouch-only locations (which has a Dulles, VA 20189 ZIP Code), which is only used for posts without a DPO assigned. Mail sent to this address will not be irradiated. For DoS locations without a DPO, U.S. citizen direct-hire members of the foreign affairs community and their family members may receive letters and packages via the personal pouch address. The following size restrictions apply - add length + circumference – if length < 36 inches, then length + circumference NTE 135 inches – if

length > 36 inches + NTE 48 inches, circumference is NTE 44 inches. No parcels can exceed 48 inches in length and maximum weight.

Note: Some posts have additional size and weight restrictions in effect because of host government decisions or aircraft size limitations.

Realize there are often extensive restrictions on what can be received via diplomatic pouch, including liquids. Also, diplomatic pouch deliveries are often more unreliable than via DPO/FPO/APO.

Mailing out from post via diplomatic pouch is also often severely restricted and unreliable.

Take a look at **Chapter 21** in the [Foreign Service Assignment Notebook](#) for more information and references.

Additional Pre-Move Information Resources

- [Monterey FAO Spouses Coffee](#)
- [Monterey Bay Spouses Club](#)
- [Navy FAO Spouses Club](#)
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/269701986495480/>
- <https://usnwc.edu/News-and-Events/News/Naval-War-College-hosts-evening-lecture-for-spouses-significant-others>
- https://www.cnic.navy.mil/ffr/family_readiness/navy-spouse.html
- https://www.cnic.navy.mil/ffr/family_readiness/fleet_and_family_support_program.html
- <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/moving-housing/oconus-moves/life-overseas/life-overseas-the-essentials/>

3

Housing

“Where will we live?” is usually one of the first questions that comes to mind when you hear of a new set of orders. Overseas housing options will vary tour to tour, whether on a staff or moving to an Embassy. A plethora of factors play into where you will live, many of them well outside your control.

Communicate with your sponsor at your new post, on staff, or at an Embassy, to find out what you need to bring and what you need to leave behind. Asking what appliances are provided, what power sources are used (110V or 220V, 50 or 60Hz), how much furniture can you bring, or do you need to bring? What kind of car makes sense there? What does your sponsor wish they had or had not brought?

Military Community Housing

If moving to an overseas staff, you may be living on base or out in town. Many times, that decision will not be entirely up to you and will depend on the base, your grade, housing availability, family-size, timing, and the local security situation. Most military bases overseas have information available online through their newcomer sites describing the housing locations, conditions, and expectations for new arrivals. Early research and conversation with your new command will help point you in the right direction.

Off-Base housing, or living on the economy, will be handled through the base housing office. The ability for service members to live on the economy will often be dependent on how full on-base housing is at the time. If you’re able to live off, the base housing office, or an associated rental and leasing office will help with finding housing options on the economy and help ensure that local landlords comply with local and DOD requirements and regulations.

When living off-base overseas, you will likely be entitled to Overseas Housing Allowance (OHA), rather than BAH. The Overseas Housing Program enables military members assigned overseas to privately lease housing on the economy. This program encompasses a reimbursement system designed to partially defray housing costs when on-base or government leased housing is not available. This allowance will pay up to a set amount for rent and whatever utilities may be included with the lease. Outside utilities that are not captured in the lease are not figured in the OHA amount or allowance. You may also be eligible for Move-In Housing Allowance (MIHA). MIHA is available only outside the continental United States. It helps cover the cost of miscellaneous expenses, like appliances, lease taxes, one-time rent-related expenses or security expenses. It varies by currency rate and location.

[Check the DTMO site](#) for more information.

Embassy Housing

For diplomatic assignments, for DOD members under Chief of Mission authority, housing availability will depend on the particular Mission. Most Embassies maintain a housing pool, with a set of houses or apartments that are routinely rented or owned by the Embassy for Embassy members to live in. If service members are assigned to a U.S. mission abroad under chief-of-mission (COM) authority, they may receive housing in U.S. Government-owned/-leased (GO/L) properties, or through the Military Overseas Housing Allowance (LQA and OHA) programs. The objective of the housing program is to provide safe and secure housing that meets the personal and professional requirements of employees, at a cost most advantageous to the U.S. Government. Adequate housing is defined as housing comparable to what an employee would occupy in the Washington, DC Metropolitan Area, with adjustments for family size and locality abroad. The Foreign Affairs Manual chapter discussing housing pool details and policy is here: [15 FAM 211: HOUSING ABROAD POLICY](#).

After receiving orders to an embassy, contact the Community Liaison Officer (CLO) (found on the Embassy website) to ask for a housing questionnaire. Most embassies have housing pools and assign housing according to your State Department-equivalent rank and family size. Unless reporting for particular positions like SDO/DATT, the embassy's interagency housing board will determine your housing assignment.

Your responses to the housing questionnaire are an important factor in the board's determination for your residence. Prior to submitting the form, try to find out about distance to the Embassy, the community, and other essentials like schools, supermarkets, or shopping. Do you like big vibrant communities, or would you rather have a quiet place? Do you have pets and need a yard? Is a pool your #1 requirement? Or is it being close to the Embassy? The questionnaire will ask you to rank the characteristics most important to you, so carefully consider what that means for you. The housing board will do its best to put you in a residence that suits your priorities; but realize that in hardship areas, housing will always be limited, and you may not get everything you want.

When you've settled on the priorities for you and your family, ensure you talk with your housing board representative. That person is your advocate, arguing for your housing assignment. Finally, approach your housing assignment with an open mind and realize that being reassigned will only be done for health or safety reasons. FAO duty overseas is an adventure! And your housing assignment is one of the biggest. General details and policy guiding Embassy housing overall can be found in [15 FAM 230](#), realize this general guidance is then interpreted and applied to local conditions.

Once you have a house assigned, your sponsor can work with the General Services Office to conduct a walkthrough and send you pictures. This person will conduct a pre-move walkthrough, schedule any maintenance, ensure your welcome kit arrives before you do, and pick-up initial groceries for your arrival. This is part of the sponsor's job, and something you will perform when you are established at post as well.

Welcome Kits: Post usually provides basic welcome kits with sheets, towels, pots, pans, tableware and miscellaneous kitchen items to allow employees to immediately occupy their assigned housing prior to the arrival of their air freight and/or household shipment. To minimize temporary housing costs, every effort is made to move incoming employees directly into their assigned housing upon arrival at post. Employees are strongly encouraged to use their air freight allowance to include those items needed immediately upon arrival at post. Welcome kits must be returned to GSO in clean and usable condition.

Embassy Furniture: If posts maintain Government owned or Leased Housing, the post usually maintains a furniture pool for household furnishings. This means you will have restricted weight allowance and will NOT need to pack furniture in your HHG. For details on furniture pool standards, check <https://fam.state.gov/fam/06fah05/06fah050510.html> for more details.

The Interagency Housing Board: Once you've settled into post, you may be offered an opportunity to be a member of the post's Interagency Housing Board (IAHB). The IAHB oversees the implementation of the housing policy and ... ensures they are equitably applied to employees of all agencies. Because of its representative composition and familiarity with local housing conditions, post's IAHB is the best vehicle to administer housing policy. The IAHB consists of personnel representing all U.S. Government agencies at post, and should include the range of personnel assigned, i.e., large and small agencies, senior and junior personnel, and families and singles. Agencies' representation on the board should reflect their respective number of U.S. personnel at post. Post's IAHB should exercise its best collective judgment to reconcile employees' housing requirements with the intent of U.S. Government regulations and to make decisions that are in the best interests of the U.S. Government. See [15 FAM 212](#) for more information.

Domestic Staff

A creature comfort and benefit of living overseas is the potential of hiring domestic staff. Whether you require a maid, chef, driver, nanny, and/or gardener, domestic staff can be a godsend when living so far from family, friends, and established support networks, but can also be a headache. The two most important resources when deciding whether to accept house help are the Regional Security Office (RSO) and the Community Liaison Office (CLO). All domestic staff has to be cleared by the RSO who conducts a background check on prospective personnel. The CLO maintains a database of cleared people who have worked within the Embassy community. The CLO database should have the prospect's curriculum vitae, any references, and the RSO clearance along with a copy of the person's national identification (host nation dependent). It is very important that you hire cleared personnel who come with a lineage of positive recommendations that you can call to verify.

Oftentimes, domestic staff are Third-Country Nationals. The CLO can help ensure that their passport and work visa are in order along with ensuring that they are legally sponsored to work in host nation.

If you are looking forward to hiring domestic staff, read Chapter 22 in the Foreign Service Assignment Notebook. Also, if you are assigned to a Chief of Mission position you are subject to [3 FAM 4128](#) which stipulates that all personnel under chief of mission (COM) authority (including family members and members of household) are expected to ensure that any personal domestic workers employed in their homes are treated fairly. In addition, [3 FAM 4128.2-2](#) stipulates that personnel under COM authority who locally hire personal domestic workers to work for more than 20 hours per week are required to have a written contract. All employee contracts with a locally-hired personal domestic worker must be in accordance with local law and post policy, and must include the terms of description of duties, hours of work, wages, overtime work, and living conditions. Please take the time to review these important regulations to ensure you are compliant with post requirements as they can open you to significant legal and security jeopardy if not scrupulously adhered to.

Another important step in the hiring process is creating a contract that contains duties to be performed and salary, keeping in mind host nation employment laws. The CLO is your resource for this. Many countries require income tax to be paid by either the employer or employee. Ensure your contract states who pays this. Also, in the contract, there should be a clause that allows you to terminate employment. In some countries,

fortune favors the employee. This clause may save you from someone who looked good on paper but is just not working out. Another clause to consider is an observation period where you observe performance over the course of month and then determine whether to continue service and a “military clause” if you receive orders unexpectedly.

Once you have hired domestic help, keep in mind this person may be in your home for significant periods without observation. Trust is a very important part of this relationship to build. This is often complicated by the fact that English is not their native language. Build trust through open and frequent communication. Determine what the most effective communication method is. Often writing your requirements down will help your local staff interpret what you mean. Culturally, it might be very difficult for your house help to ask questions when they do not understand you verbally. Written communication can often alleviate this. Having a written record will also come in handy should complications arise, trust is broken, and employment terminated.

4

Moving to a New Culture

In cross-cultural training and living, the goal is learning about yourself and others. Just as you want to learn another language so that you can communicate with local people and make sense of the new world around you, you will also want to learn the silent language of cultures— your own and others. Cross-cultural training involves not only learning about the new country you're going to, but comparing it to where you've come from, to include the assumptions and values that have shaped you. In other words, knowing what you think, feel, and believe and why. This will help you understand how others view you and your culture. Recognize that others think, feel, and believe differently than you for various reasons. Neither of you are necessarily right or wrong, but your openness to understanding these differences is a requisite attitude to increasing your knowledge, developing your cross-cultural skills, and improving the quality and effectiveness of your communication and behavior. Taking the time to expand your cross-cultural skills will pay dividends during your family's FAO tour.

Take a look at the brief exercises in APPENDIX 1 of this handbook. These exercises are not comprehensive; however, they are an excellent way to begin your self-reflection and cross-cultural comparisons.

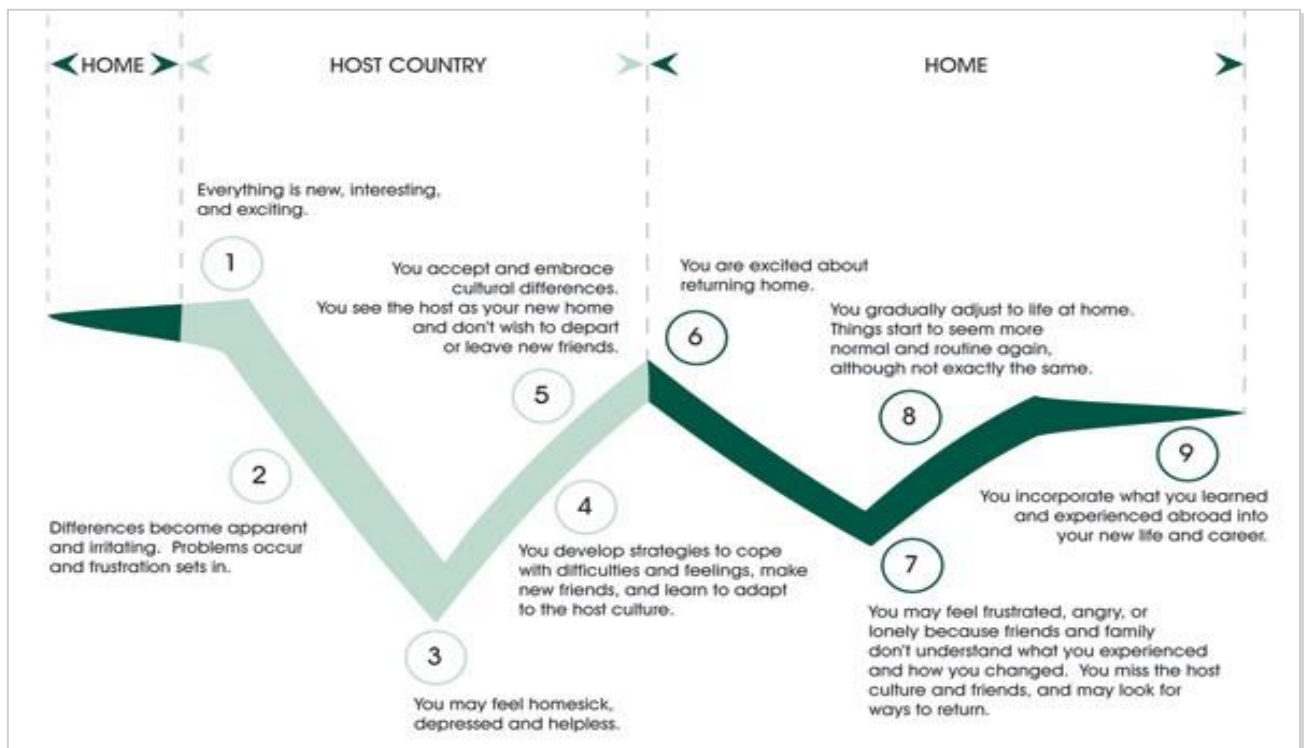


Figure 1 Graphic sourced from Culture Shock: A Challenge of International Travel Experiences (<https://www.globalexperiences.com/blog/culture-shock>)

Handling initial culture shock

People who enter a new culture can expect to go through a process of cultural adjustment. If you experience “culture shock” (emotional or physical discomfort experienced when dealing with unfamiliar environments and cultural dissimilarities), you are not alone – other FAO families have had similar experiences. Experiencing culture shock is normal. Even though the adjustment process is described in stages, not all people go through each stage and not necessarily in the order mentioned. The length and intensity of each stage will vary with each individual. Sometimes people go through these stages more than once.

Cultural Adjustment

The Joint Military Attaché School Spouse Training Program developed this table to describe the various stages of adjustment to life at a new post in a new cultural.

<i>Time²</i>	1 month	1-3 months	3-12 months	13-24 months	24+ months	Month before PCS	
Pre Departure	Arrival	Realization	Shock	Recovery	Adaptation	Preparation	
<i>Significant Events</i>	Planning. Packing. Processing. Partying. Parting.	Big welcome. New office. New peers. New housing. Eager to ‘get going.’	Increased interaction with culture. Unfamiliar starts to stand out (sights, sounds, smells).	Expected to know responsibilities. Unfamiliar may become offensive, or unacceptable. Reality of cost of living sinks in.	Similarities and differences recognized and legitimized. Increased understanding of people.	Full duty. Internalized appreciation of host nation.	May feel less invested in work. Anticipation of next activity.
<i>Emotional Reactions</i>	Excitement. Anticipation. Enthusiasm. Trepidation (of the unknown). Sadness about leaving.	Enthusiasm. Feels culture is fascinating. Excitement. Positive. Enthusiasm for colleagues.	Discouraged. Bewildered. Disenchanted. Restless. Inpatient. Uncertain. Neutral towards host country.	Negative feelings peak. Lethargy. Homesick. Irritability/Anger. Resentful. Feels “stuck.” Boredom.	Emotions even out and return to one’s “normal” baseline state. More comfortable. May have some burnout. Less lonely.	May occasionally feel burnt out. Emotions should feel more stable.	Disinterest in local affairs. Worry. Disenchantment. Distracted.
<i>Observable Responses (Behavior and Attitudes)</i>	Feeling that you don’t want to leave. Doubting decision to leave. Detaching from friends. Interest in current responsibilities wanes.	Strong sense of mission. Tourist activity. Attempts to use language. Curiosity towards nationals. Suppresses negative views of country.	Complaining. May want to go home. Wishing for security in familiar activities. Withdrawal. Skepticism. Questions values (self, others, job). Increased alcohol use. More critical of culture.	Distrust of local nationals. Withdrawal. Rebellious attitudes towards local norms. Hostility. Hypercritical of local customs. Antagonistic. Antipathy toward host country. Stereotypes others.	More interest. Sense of humor about mistakes. May have resignation. More objectivity. Emerging, constructive attitudes and ideas. Feeling more competent with the language & customs.	More competent with host culture. Accepts one’s own cultural mishaps. May prefer host country to one’s own culture. May adopt new values or behaviors.	Move Planning: Household organization, packing, new location, schools, turning over job. Decrease in productivity. Lack of interest in job or the opposite (high production).
<i>Physical Responses</i>	Trouble sleeping.	GI distress. Restlessness. Sleep problems.	Colds headaches. Increasing fatigue.	Insomnia/Excessive sleeping & fatigue. Appetite Changes. GI Distress,	Health stabilizes to “normal.”	Health stabilizes to “normal.”	Trouble sleeping.

² This table was developed by the JMAS Spouse Training Program.

Ethnic Identity and Adjustment

-Dr. Karen Eberwein³

Where are you with your adjustment to living overseas as an American? Have you considered your ethnic identity? Ethnic identity is a concept that refers to developed aspects of self that are the result of integrating values from the cultural environment. Where we were born and have lived, our upbringing, language, religion, media, food preferences, and celebrated holidays all contribute to the concept of ethnic identity.⁴

Integrating and adjusting to living overseas is an exciting opportunity for personal growth. If you have always lived within the same country that you ethnically identify with, the values and culture you inherited from your parents and the environment may not have ever been challenged. As we adjust to the host nation, we are forced to take inventory of our ethnic identity and develop, manipulate, or ignore aspects of who we are.⁵ We must consider what behaviors and values will we stick with or hold onto, and which will we either temporarily or permanently discard. We may question who is right and whether we should compromise or alter our ways of thinking about the world. At the very least, we must determine how we will manage to temporarily adapt to the new environment and new realities in which we find ourselves. Whether you choose a temporary change in thinking or behaving; or adopt a more permanent outcome depends on many factors, including how culturally, socially, and psychologically committed you are to your ancestry and personal beliefs or values.⁶ It may also depend on how much distance there is in the differences between our cultural identity and the general culture of the host nation.

For some, the host country values or beliefs and yours, to say it bluntly, may clash. You may be living in an environment where changing or being flexible with your ethnic identity is just asking too much. You may find it challenging to adapt to the host nation's sense of time, fashion preferences, and or social restrictiveness. You can decide to remain committed to the culture and values of your ancestry and coexist; however, when doing this, it is important to consider the psychological side effects that naturally result and remember not to completely detach.

³ Dr. Karen E. Eberwein, Doctor of Psychology, developed this content for JMAS.

⁴ Phinney, J. (1990). "Ethnic Identity in Adolescents and Adults: Review of Research." *Psychological Bulletin*, 180(3), 499-514.

Phinney, J. (1992). "The Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure: A New Scale for Use with Diverse Groups." *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 7(2), 156-176.

Laroche, M., Kim, Ch., Tomiuk, M., & Belisle, D. (2005). "Similarities in Italian and Greek Multidimensional Ethnic Identity: Some Implications for Food Consumption." *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences*, 22(2), 143-167.

Unger, J., Gallaher, P., Shakib, S., Ritt-Olson, A., Palmer, P., & Johnson, C. (2002). "The AHISMA Acculturation Scale: A New Measure of Acculturation for Adolescents in a Multicultural Society." *Journal of Early Adolescence*, 23(3), 225-251.

⁵ Ruble, B. (1989). "Ethnicity and Soviet Cities." *Soviet Studies*, 41(3), 401-414.

⁶ Constant, A, Gataullina L, & Zimmerman, K. (2006). *Ethnosizing Immigrants*. Institute for the Study of Labor. Bonn Germany

Consider the following:

- Our behavioral expectations (if I do “x,” I can expect “y”) are influenced by our ethnic identity. Learning as much as possible about the host nation will help your sense of efficacy and confidence when navigating the social and cultural terrain.
- Being different from the host or dominant culture impacts our sense of belonging and may leave us feeling lonely, different, and isolated. Because of this, it is very important to find a group of people with whom to identify; as tempting as it may be, do not isolate yourself.
- Consciously look for the reasons behind everything in the host culture that seem strange, difficult, confusing, or threatening. There are reasons the behaviors exist within the culture— seek to understand rather than criticize.
- Try to take every aspect of the experience and consider it from the host culture’s perspective.
- Venting is fine, but be careful not to commiserate with those in a permanent state of culture shock and only focus on the negative. Additionally, keep in mind to whom you are speaking and in what context.
- Don’t disparage the host culture. If possible, laugh off your mistakes and the cultural faux pas.
- Make friends with foreign nationals and try to develop connections to them – at your discretion and with a mind to safety and security.
- If feeling culture shock, strategize ways to stay connected and to give your mind and heart some respite.

Reverse Culture Shock.

Whether you choose to integrate the host country’s cultural values, assumptions, and beliefs with yours or not, and even if you are returning to your country of origin, know that you and your ethnic identity have changed. The process of reentry is different for different people. Many factors contribute to what you may experience when you return:

- Length of time away
- Positive or negative attachments to the country or post you are leaving
- Positive or negative attachments to the country or post you are returning too
- Is this a voluntary or involuntary return?
- Is this the first, third...time one is returning to the US?
- In addition to the cultural environment, have stages of life issues changed you while abroad (your age, your work role(s), did you become a parent or empty nester, are you facing the challenge of aging parents, etc.)?
- What are your extended family’s circumstances now that you are returning to the US?

It is not uncommon to have reentry myths. Consider the following:

- Things work better at home (or in the US)
- It’s cleaner at home (or in the US)
- People are more efficient at home (or in the US)
- Things will be the same as they were
- The personal relationships you left will be resumed
- People will be interested in hearing about our experiences
- People will value us because of our experiences
- People will be interested in our experiences
- We can cope more easily because it’s “our” culture
- We have kept up to date with what is going on and know what to expect
- We can readily apply what we learned overseas to live in the US

To help with your reentry, make sure you get proper closure at your present location and attempt to avoid leaving with “unfinished business.” Accept the stress that is coming, remember it is normal, and try to keep the trials and tribulations in perspective. Set your expectations low to make it easier on yourself. Consider the physical environment you are leaving; tasks as “simple” as shopping at the grocery store may feel overwhelming because of the sensory differences you experience on reentry. Remember to be patient and not expect too much too soon.

Some resources on reentry (courtesy of Department of State):

- Pascoe, Robin. **Culture Shock! A parent’s guide**. Portland, OR: Graphic Arts Center Publishing Company. 1993
- **Homeward Bound: A Spouse’s Guide to Repatriation**. North Vancouver, BC: Expatriate Press Limited. 2000
- Pallack, David C. and Van Reken, Ruth E. **Third Culture Kids**. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, Inc. 2001.
- Storti, Craig. **The Art of Coming Home**. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, Inc. 2001.
- The Expat Expert: www.expateexpert.com
- Outpost Expatriate Information Center: www.outpostexpat.nl
- Expat Exchange: www.expatexchange.com
- Global Nomads Virtual Village: www.gnvv.org
- Escape Artist: www.wscapeartist.com
- Families in International Transition: www.tckfamily.com
- Interaction International: www.tckinteract.net
- Associates of American Foreign Service Worldwide: www.aafsw.org

Other Useful Websites & Resources

- **What’s Up With Culture?:** <http://www2.pacific.edu/sis/culture/index.htm>
Organized in modules, this excellent site is designed for American university students planning to study abroad and has sections related to adjustments overseas and upon return to the US as well as additional resource referrals.
- **Tales from a Small Planet:** <http://www.talesmag.com/rprweb/home.shtml> Expat post-reports that provide a supplemental perspective on various overseas locations.
- **Culture Shock!** This book series offers country specific information for individuals living and working abroad – they even offer a volume on the U.S.

Cross-Culture Etiquette and Protocol Resources

In addition to globally accepted norms within the diplomatic community, there are also many regionally specific cultural customs and norms with which you should begin to acquaint yourself. We recommend starting your research well ahead of time and casting a wide net. Below are a few websites that will help you get started. Keep in mind the intended audience of any site you visit as some information may not apply to your exact situation and circumstances. One of your best assets -- both before you go and during your time overseas -- is your curiosity. While we hope that we have answered some of your questions during our time together, our larger objective is to provide you a foundation for future questions.

WEB RESOURCES FOR ETIQUETTE & PROTOCOL

To find the national and local national holidays for your country, visit: www.usembassy.gov Click on the link for the embassy of your choice. Under the tab "About Us" click on "About the Embassy". From this page you can click on Holidays and find the list of holidays observed.

www.etiquettescholar.com provides information for the many challenges of the international dining events you may participate in. Note that the international dining etiquette button on the sidebar provides information on dining customs in individual countries.

www.kwintessential.co.uk provides global information on cultural customs and etiquette.

www.ediplomat.com a useful reference for country or region-specific protocol. While not every country is represented, every region is covered. You can also discover the demographics and country information in the Post Reports. While they are not as current as those listed on the State Department's intranet, they are more accessible.

www.etiquetteinternational.com is a general source of information on a variety of protocol, entertaining and etiquette topics. Targeted for the business community, but relevant to FAO families as well. An added benefit is the free access to tip sheets and articles on focused topics.

CROSS-CULTURAL RESOURCES

- CIA World Fact Book: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html>
- Library of Congress Country Studies: <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/cshome.html>
- Overseas Security Advisory Council: <http://www.osac.gov/>
- Peace Corps: <http://www.peacecorps.gov/>
- Travel Advisories and Consular Information Sheets:
<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html>
- United States Agency for International Development: <http://www.usaid.gov/>
- Websites of U.S. Embassies, Consulates, and Diplomatic Missions: <http://www.usembassy.gov/>
- State.gov: Explore and discover regional and country specific information for everything from US policy to travel guidelines. <http://www.state.gov/>

Tips for Helping Adults Adjust to a New Culture

Tips for Thriving:

The Department of State has opened a new group of coaches for overseas family living. Check out the [Big Purple Blob](#) for resources and video podcasts discussing overcoming challenges of life overseas.

Keep your family traditions going to provide a sense of stability and continuity (e.g. pizza/movie nights, Saturday pancakes), but also look for new adventures to build your memories. CLO trips are a great way to ease into local outings, but also ask some of the local staff what they recommend and how/where you might be able to best enjoy their country.

Keep an eye on weight limitations but make room for the pieces of your home that make it a home. Take the pictures, books, games, hobbies or gym equipment that you rely on. Ensure you can make your new place your own home at your new post.

This is a great time to try new things, activities, outings. Join a poker group, host a game night, or participate in a local sports group. You don't have to be good at it, just be willing to keep an open mind. If you would rather do something on your own, what a great time to take up a new hobby – Embassy tours have created many a home brewer or cake decorator. See what you might be capable of doing when you can't just run to the store and buy it.

Conversely, have a special skill to teach others? More than likely there are at least a couple of folks interesting in learning from you.

Stay flexible, keep cool. Problems and frustrations will happen! Things might not get fixed on your timeline; American customer services is well, American. You might run into a herd of cows on the highway. Things happen, and while often frustrating at the time, they might just become some of your favorite memories of your time there.

Try local foods, different foods from the grocery store. Yes, you can buy almost anything on Amazon these days, and it's a blessing. But you might also find something new to love, and years later, randomly find it elsewhere and experience the enjoyment all over again. Stretch yourself.

Feeling homesick? That's OK, we all do at some point. 6 months into a tour tends to be the low-point. The honeymoon period has worn off, and everything is annoying you. Take a step back, breathe. That's a great time to start planning a FEMLE trip or other travel; something to look forward. Need to order a bunch of peanut butter and re-watch all of Friends? Do it, give yourself some time, but don't wallow. It will get better, and believe it or not, you might even come to miss some of the things that were annoying you so much.

Potluck power: What's your potluck superpower? If you have something that's a winner every time, make that your "thing" for Embassy potlucks. Don't hesitate to share your culture and heritage with others! And head's up, international days at the international schools are the best!

Single or Dual-Military Parenthood

MILPERSMAN 1300-1000 CH-70, 13 Jan 2020 should be your first stop for instruction and Navy policy references. From the MILPERSMAN:

Single Parents: Single parents are assigned using the same procedures as other Service members. Navy Personnel Command recognizes the unique situations that occur when single parents are assigned to some types of duty and duty locations; however, a preferential assignment policy regarding single parents would be discriminatory toward other members.

Dual-mil parent considerations: Every reasonable effort will be made for military couples to move together and establish a joint household whenever possible. Assignments will be made to fill valid Navy requirements, considering the needs of the military family, as well as the manning of the losing and gaining activities; therefore, collocation and immediate reassignment may not always be possible.

Family care plans: [The family care plan](#) is a blueprint that describes how your family should be cared for while you're away. Although family care plans aren't required for all service members, they are required if you're a single parent, a dual-military family with children younger than 19, or if you have sole responsibility for caring for a disabled or elderly family member. You and your designated caregiver should work together on this document to be sure it includes all necessary information.

Also keep these documents current and available to your designated caregiver:

- **Power of attorney:** This authorizes your caregiver to make parenting decisions on your behalf for a specified period of time, including decisions related to medical care. A POA is required as part of your family care plan.
- **Military ID cards:** Make sure each family member age 10 and older is registered in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System and has a current ID card. Caregivers do not get their own ID cards while caring for your family. If heading overseas, service members may be able to obtain ID cards for their children younger than 10. Check with your local CAC office.
- **Agent letter of authorization:** Caregivers can access on-installation facilities to support your family members in their care, but they must have a letter of authorization signed by the commanding officer of the installation. You can request this letter through the ID card office at your installation.

Military OneSource also hosts a [“Parenting skills for the Single Service Member”](#) webinar. The webinar discusses the single parents' personal expectations, positive discipline and communication techniques, family separation and support systems.

Tips for Helping Kids Adjust to a New Culture

This section borrows directly from the [Foreign Service Assignment Notebook, 2022](#).

Once you have your assignment, continue your research and get your child involved. Learn as much about your new country as possible, using books, videos, websites, and other resources. Ask the community liaison office (CLO) coordinator, or your sponsor, to put you in contact with others at post with children of similar ages so your child can begin connecting to new friends. If possible, obtain photos of your new house and school. Help alleviate any fears by providing your child with visuals of your new environment.

GETTING READY FOR THE MOVE: For those headed to Diplomatic Posts, The Overseas Briefing Center provides KidVids, videos made by young foreign service videographers between the ages of 10 and 18. Videos illustrate life at post from a kid's perspective and cover housing, schools, activities, shopping, and more. Find them on the OBC websites. Kids who watch these videos can better envision what life at post might be like, helping to calm fears and set realistic expectations.

For those going to Overseas Staffs, work with your sponsor, explore the available online resources, and reach out to the Fleet and Family Service Center, MWR, and local schools for information about life at that base.

Arrange for some training to support transition to your new location. In a study of what Foreign Service youth liked least about overseas life, 35% mentioned moving, 28% leaving behind friends, and 28% language barriers. How do you make moving less stressful? Encourage curiosity and discovery, arrange for age-appropriate language training, whether via videos, books, phone apps, computers, tutors, or formal classes. Register them for family classes at the Transition Center so they learn what to expect of embassy and overseas life.

In our community, we know that assignments can change at the last minute due to the needs of the service. Wait until the FAO has orders before making definite statements about your destination. For children, reality sets in when a move timetable is put in place. Share with your child what that timetable looks like for the family. Are you moving directly to post with no stops after leaving your present home? Are you visiting family and friends along the way? What plans involve your child's preferences? Keeping kids involved, even at an early age, can help them to find the excitement in moving to a new place.

Moving is a process and does not happen in one day or even one week. Moving involves preparation, packing and shipments, airplane travel, and arrival at a new post where it takes several more weeks until shipments arrive. Talk with your child about every aspect of the move, the projected timing given where you are assigned, and the different shipments that may be involved.

The Transition Center also offers a downloadable resource. [The Amazing Adventures of \[Me\]: A Children's Guided Journal to an International Move](#). For elementary school-aged children, this resource helps facilitate discussion between children and parents as they process and prepare for an international relocation. Journal activities encourage curiosity and discovery and games prompt discussion and exploration. The journal, based on resilience literature, leads children through the phases of an international move and grows their sense of belonging in the process. In addition, the journal offers quotes from real kids who live overseas! Parents will also find a Parent's Companion Guide which provides information and context to help facilitate discussion and understand the emotional process and journey of your child.

No matter what their age, encourage conversation about how your child is feeling. Listen carefully to them. It is normal to be sad about leaving friends, excited about going to a new place, worried about a new school, anxious during move day, and more. Try to maintain the daily routine; this can help children feel more secure. You may want to start new rituals or traditions that can be continued wherever you are.

During the rush of pre-departure preparations, take time to help your children say goodbye to the people and places they love most. Suggestions from families include collecting contact information from friends, creating a family online webpage so friends can follow new adventures, and having a goodbye party for each child and his or her friends. Creative ideas for maintaining connection abound in today's interconnected world.

How to say goodbye is a great conversation to have. Saying goodbye, in itself, makes your child focus on "who" they consider as their good friends. Pay attention to how your child is feeling about not seeing their best friend every day. Talk with your child as they take time to consider which people in their life they will miss. Find ways to give closure by saying goodbye to friends, neighbors, teachers, babysitters, and extended family. Emphasize to your child that it does not necessarily mean these important people are gone forever. It is important for your child to understand that although you are moving, their immediate family will remain the same. Family goodbyes are a bit different because you most likely will see family again.

A technique that can help over the long term is emphasis to young children that they will see friends again in other parts of the world. Then, make the effort to stay in touch and in contact with friends you've met at post or on staff. This can help ease apprehension for subsequent tours overseas and reinforces friends are made for life, not just a tour.

PACK OUT TIPS: Involving your kids in the pack out can help provide them a sense of control, the ability to make some decisions on their own, and letting them generate ideas about how to decorate their new rooms or what items they can show and share with new friends.

Visual aids like checklists or charts of things to be done can be helpful; draw pictures and use stickers for the youngest kids.

Allow your child to select items for their suitcase. For the unaccompanied air baggage (UAB), allow your child to "include one small box of their favorite items (toys, books, favorite pillow, etc.). The rest comes as household effects (HHE). Use the [Children's Guided Journal](#) to help your child understand the differences in shipping speeds and involve them in small choices about the shipments.

You may also identify some items that your child can donate or give away to charity. Knowing that belongings are going to a good cause encourages the gift of giving, kindness, and social responsibility. Make this event collaborative within your family.

Pack outs and the actual moving day are always very intense times. Explain the moving process to your child. As a parent, consider what happens to your child during moving day. Do they watch the packers or stay at a friend's or relative's house? If they are home, who keeps an eye on them? If you feel it is important for your child to be part of the pack out day, explore letting them stay home from school (with the school's permission and understanding of the emotional importance of being home for the big move day!).

Some suggested items for inclusion in your air freight (unaccompanied air baggage or UAB) or carry-on bags:

- Children’s books, especially large story collections, which give lots of mileage
- Tablet, MP3/4 player, laptop computer, and/or e-book reader
- Audio books, very comforting in a new environment
- A few videos or DVDs (while old technology, many families still rely on DVDs overseas, with DVD player – you can check with post to see if streaming U.S. channels is possible)
- Building toys (LEGO®-type bricks), they are small, light, and enjoyable for a range of ages
- Extra clothes and shoes for the start of the school year
- Board games, travel sizes are best
- School supplies, Crayons, markers, colored pencils, sketchbooks, coloring books, sticker books
- Stuffed animals for comfort and familiarity in a new bedroom
- Lightweight sports equipment, other small outdoor toys
- Decorations for your child’s bedroom that make the new house feel like home

If your household effects are delayed—and it is wise to assume that this may happen—find out if you can mail additional packages to yourself. Since storage space at post’s “mail room is typically limited, check with someone at post and arrange for boxes arriving early to be picked up.”

TRAVEL WITH CHILDREN: When able, take your children’s needs into account when scheduling travel. Some families prefer to arrive shortly before school starts so children will have the chance to make friends and adjust to their new time zone and routine. If arriving during a holiday period, try to arrange for your children to meet others their age. Single parents may want to make prior arrangements for time off upon arrival to locate childcare options, help children adjust, or schedule travel for a time when a trusted friend or family member can come along and help out for a week or two.

Make sure you know the regulations concerning rest stops, upgrades, and other travel details so that you can choose the best option for your family. Check the JTR. Some families prefer to travel directly to post, feeling that they are all too exhausted to enjoy a vacation. Other families plan travel breaks to enjoy time for family togetherness and relaxation after the rush of getting everything ready. If you expect a long wait at an airport, research the facilities in advance. Make note of observation decks, play areas, hotels that allow you to use the facilities (many now offer “day passes”), or other kid-friendly features.

Advance planning can make long journeys easier. Below are tips from seasoned travelers:

1. Explain your travel plans in advance at each child’s level, including length of flights, stops, what you will do, people you will see, and so on. It may help to write plans on a calendar so they can visualize the trip. Agree upon and review an easy-to-remember contingency plan in case your family gets separated at any point. If you have a pet, explain to your child the pet travel plan (when the pet will arrive).
2. Expect challenges. Your children may not sleep well, they may be fidgety, they may be nervous and curious at the same time and exhibit different behavior. Being attentive to their needs can help make for a smoother flight and travel experience.
3. Get as much help from the airline as possible. If you have a stroller or infant carrier, ask to gate check it so you can use it right up until boarding the plane. Request help if you need to change planes, particularly if you are traveling alone with children. The airline may be able to transport your family in a motorized airport vehicle.

4. Some families make a point of requesting bulkhead seats. These seats offer advantages such as more leg room and a place for smaller children to take a break from sitting. There is no one in front of these seats to be annoyed by talking or kicking. There are, however, downsides to bulkhead seats that may negate the advantages: inaccessible carry-on bags during take-off and landing; arm rests that cannot be raised; the fact that other passengers may cut through the space; and the policies of some airlines that require the floor to be clear at all times. Weigh the advantages against the disadvantages and determine what will work best for your family.
5. Pack at least one change of clothes for each person (including adults) in accessible carry-on luggage. Increase this to two or more outfits for longer trips. Consider putting your children in “disposable clothes,” old t-shirts and leggings that you can throw away at the end—or in the middle—of the trip. Pack sweaters or sweatshirts for cold planes and air-conditioned airports.
6. Order children’s meals from the airline when you confirm your flights but bring enough food for mealtimes anyway. Meals may not arrive when your child is hungry, and the food offerings might not be to your child’s liking.
7. Technique only: bring cups with lids or sports bottles for each person (including adults). Immediately transfer any airline beverages into these containers to avoid spills. Bring plenty of water, especially if you are traveling to or through countries without potable water. Keep in mind that airport security rules may dictate that your containers must be empty at the check points, and then can be filled afterwards.
8. For small children, many airlines allow for the installation of car seats in the standard airline seat. If your child is used to sacking out in the car, you may want to bring your car seat into the cabin for the trip. Adapters such as from gogobabyz.com convert car seats into a rolling seat that make air travel much easier. For older kids, Child Airplane Travel Harness adapters are key pieces of kit to keep your little ones safe.
9. Let your children choose some items for the carry-on bags, then finish packing them yourself. Adapt the following suggested items to the most recent security constraints, your child’s interests, and your tolerance for cleaning up:”
 - Snacks, drinks (something for your children to eat, drink, or chew during takeoff and landing to help relieve ear pressure)
 - Wipes
 - Thick paper towels or whatever you prefer to clean up spills and messes
 - Resealable plastic bags (for wet or dirty clothes, trash, wet towels used to clean up spills, etc.)

Toys or activities that have worked for other families include:

- Books
- Travel-sized magnetic drawing boards
- Tablet or laptop computer with games or movies (remember the charger!)
- Other electronic handheld games, with extra batteries
- E-book readers and headphones
- Paper, coloring books, or sticker books, crayons, markers, colored pencils, or small packs of other favorite art materials
- Travel-sized board games

ARRIVAL AT POST: During the first few days, be considerate of your child’s “settling in” experience. If invited to “no kids” social events, feel free to decline such invitations until you can identify a reliable caregiver to watch your children. Ideally, you have already explained your circumstances to your sponsors or new colleagues before arriving, and they have thoughtfully scheduled events accordingly.

Explore your surroundings with your children. As soon as you can, find something new and fun to do as a family. It will help turn your minds away from what you left behind and toward the new adventures ahead. Also schedule in some quiet family time together to do the same sorts of activities you have done in the past. Keep up the family rituals. Something as simple as reading a chapter each night from a long book that you started in the United States can give a sense of continuity and sameness during the upheaval of moving.

Age-Related Issues

INFANTS AND PRESCHOOLERS: This age group is the easiest to move in terms of their adjustment to a new country. Young children take their cues from their parents. If you are comfortable with the move, they usually will be too. Young children may regress for a time during a move. Do not be surprised or upset if toddlers behave badly, wet the bed, want bottles, cling to your legs, or become weepy and cranky. Routines and familiar objects and food will help ease the transition to the new, unfamiliar environment. Give them extra loving care and attention and take care of yourself. Moving is stressful so take a deep breath and give yourself and your family time to adjust.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN: From this age on up, schools play an important part in choosing assignments. Children are a wonderful bridge to the people your family meets at a new post. School communities are often an important part of a U.S. mission community. Recognize that kids will more readily explore this new community without fear and be eager to introduce you, as parents, to their newfound friends. Embracing these new friendships gives work/life balance to your family setting. Getting together with other families teaches children how to interact with people of all ages and to create new bonds where extended family is absent.

Children in this age group may have difficulty leaving a familiar house or packing up their things. They are beginning to develop lasting friendships which make separations more difficult. Find ways to help them stay in touch with the friends they are leaving while developing new friendships at your new post.

Since there will be many things they do not know how to do in a new country, focus on acquiring abilities that make them comfortable in their new country such as what coins look like and counting in a new currency. If school is a challenge initially, work with the school to identify a tutor, get books that support their learning, use the school library, and meet with your child’s teacher on a regular basis.

PRE-TEENS: Pre-teens are in the process of developing a cultural identity, which will become a big part of who they are. If your family lives primarily overseas during these years, consider frequent trips so pre-teens can reconnect with their “home” culture. Keeping in touch with peers may also help.

Sports teams and sports clubs, youth groups, school clubs, involvement in the school play, the robotics team, musical groups, music lessons, dance and theater, and many more help to keep pre-teens active and engaged in the community.

Finding a peer group is also of great importance. Help connect with other parents to create fun activities for your children. Host or attend family game nights! The resilience lessons of these gatherings - family connection, communication, good sportsmanship, celebration, and forgiveness - create positive memories, teach children problem-solving, and encourage family communication.

A Youth Sponsor can also help with the transition. For our elementary, preteen, and teen community, the Youth Sponsorship Program adds in an element of social support. We strive to make contact with youth before they move, so when they arrive, we can immediately connect them with peers who are already participating in the installation, school, or community programs. Connect through your School Liaison Officer for School-Based Programs and your Youth Program for installation programs.

<https://www.navycyp.org/programs-services/child-and-youth-education-services>

OLDER TEENS: Many will agree that the older a child gets, the harder it is to transition from post to post or post to the United States. The “routine” of their schooling, as well as preparation for college may be disrupted. Families have found success when planning assignments whereby the last two years of high school are not interrupted by a move. Involving your teenager in transition planning and school choice can avoid high levels of frustration.

If your teen will complete high school overseas, be sure to check on potential colleges well in advance. Plan to visit colleges and universities on summer or spring breaks, attend virtual tours and explore websites. If you are transitioning to the United States during high school, make sure that all credits earned overseas will transfer and all requirements will be met for graduation. It is estimated that the average military family moves three times more often than the average non-military family. These frequent moves by can cause children to miss out on extracurricular activities and to face challenges in meeting graduation requirements.

The [Military Interstate Compact](#) will ensure that the children of military families are afforded the same opportunities for educational success as other children and are not penalized or delayed in achieving their educational goals by inflexible administrative and bureaucratic practices. States participating in the Compact would work to coordinate graduation requirements, transfer of records and course placement and other administrative policies. The School Liaison can also help with transition challenges. Contact for any Service School Liaison <https://installations.militaryonesource.mil/search?program-service=12/view-by=ALL>

Getting a driver’s license, having a part-time job, and participating in specialized school activities, including sports teams, are all “normal” teenage activities in the United States. These are not always possible overseas. When looking at new assignments, identify schools with programs that match your child’s interests. Research “on the ground” opportunities to expand your child’s knowledge of the world. Regardless of whether the post is large or small, help your child discover a group of potential friends and activities. Mobility is important for this age group, so try to find places where your teen can get around safely alone, whether walking, cycling, or using public transportation (if post’s security posture allows).

YOUR "HOME" CULTURE: Regardless of where one was born, we all have connections with family in a “home” country with its own unique culture, be that the United States or another country of birth. Make every effort for your children to experience life in the “home” culture. Plan to make trips back to the “home” country and keep in touch with relatives and friends. Make a point of celebrating U.S. holidays in traditional ways or holidays from another country either represented in your family or from a past assignment. Children who grow up overseas do not have a lifetime of experience in the United States or any other country. They only have the experience you provide them with.

LEAVING POST: When your assignment nears its conclusion, make time to follow the same leaving and preparation procedures as before. If assigned to Washington, DC or another U.S. city, your children may face difficulties in returning to the United States. We often forget that after years away, the United States

is another foreign country to them. They are not returning home in the same way that you are. Prepare them as thoroughly as you would for any other post.

OUTCOMES FOR OUR CHILDREN: Children can benefit tremendously from their overseas experiences. They learn other languages, experience other cultures first-hand, enjoy travel opportunities, meet people from diverse backgrounds, and embrace an international lifestyle that ultimately makes them Third Culture Kids (TCKs). Research shows that TCKs tend to become resourceful, open-minded, and flexible. They are adaptable and usually communicate well with adults. They often have a greater understanding and tolerance of differences, as well as a more developed social conscience. They have an extended network of friends and stay in touch via email, social media, and other methods. They enjoy close family ties. They benefit from outstanding educational opportunities. They may gain strong feelings of self-confidence from their abilities to adapt to new situations. Their international experience and expertise may provide a competitive advantage in an increasingly global economy.

It's amazing what children pick up as they move around the world that later impacts who they become as adults. Children are naturally keen observers of all that surrounds them. As a result, children who grow up with the influences of foreign lands display heightened cultural understanding. Adventure abounds when children combine curiosity about the world with the experience of an internationally mobile childhood. And when celebrated and embraced by family, children can thrive. Parents who set a positive example for dealing with the ups and downs of the foreign affairs lifestyle help their children develop a resilient outlook – one that allows them to benefit from the challenges and unique experiences that come from living abroad.

Additional Resources for Helping Kids Adjust Overseas

Military OneSource for [Moving with Children](#) and [Moving Overseas with Children](#).

School Liaison Officers at US bases can also provide support to parents and children acclimating to the new location. POC: Chuck Clymer at charles.s.clymer.naf@us.navy.mil.

From DoS's webpage [Living Abroad and Returning Home](#)

Living abroad

- Gopnik, A., *Paris to the Moon*, Random House, New York, New York, 2000. A personal, good-humored account of one young family living abroad. Much of this was originally published in the New Yorker.
- Jehle-Caitcheon, Ngaire, *Parenting Abroad*, Aletheia Publications, Putnam Valley, New York, 2003. Written by an expatriate who lived abroad for twenty-six years, this guide provides useful insights on the many and complicated issues that arise as one raises children abroad.
- Kalb, Rosalind and Welch, Penelope, *Moving Your Family Overseas*, [Intercultural Press](#), Inc., Yarmouth, Maine, 1992. The authors of this book are Americans who draw on their personal experiences to balance general advice and detailed suggestions as they explore the major issues in raising children in the internationally mobile lifestyle.
- Meltzer, Gail and Grandjean, Elaine, *The Moving Experience: A Practical Guide to Psychological Survival*, [Multilingual Matters, Ltd.](#), Cleveland, England, 1989. This book gives practical suggestions for surviving the psychological stresses and challenges of moving for both local and international moves.

- McCluskey, Karen C., ed., *Notes from a Traveling Childhood*, [Foreign Service Youth Foundation](#), Washington, D.C., 1994. This paperback is an anthology of writings by parents, children, educators, researchers, and mental health professionals about the effects of international mobility on children.
- Parker Elizabeth and Rumrill-Teece Katharine, *Here Today There Tomorrow*, A Training Manual for Working with Internationally Mobile Youth, [Foreign Service Youth Foundation](#), Washington, D.C., 2001. This manual is designed to help facilitators provide a framework for mobile teenagers to interact with each other and to deal with relocation and cross-cultural issues that affect their identity and worldview.
- Pollack, David C. and Van Reken, Ruth, *The Third Culture Kid Experience*, [Intercultural Press, Inc.](#), Yarmouth, Maine, 1999. Based on both research and the personal stories of countless individuals, this book fully explores the various implications of growing up abroad as a “Third Culture Kid.” The authors are internationally considered to be leaders and experts in the field of TCK studies.
- Seaman, Paul Asbury, *Paper Airplanes in the Himalayas – the Unfinished Path Home*, Cross Cultural Publications, Inc., South Bend, Indiana, 1997. (L) An autobiographical account by a “Third Culture Kid” of his journey from his childhood in Pakistan, to boarding school for missionary kids to the struggle in his adult years to find a sense of belonging. It recounts the author’s struggle to come to terms with his overseas experience.
- Taber, Sara M, Of Many Lands, *Journal of a Traveling Childhood*, [Foreign Service Youth Foundation](#), Washington, D.C., 1997. A journal for people brought up in foreign countries. It is designed as a learning and exploration tool to help those of many lands in the long process of putting together the stories of their lives. It consists of excerpts that describe experiences the author had at different ages in different countries, followed by prompts or questions designed to evoke the reader’s own life experiences.
- Westphal, C., *A Family Year Abroad: How to Live Outside the Borders*, [Great Potential Press](#), 2002. This paperback book is part narrative of a family’s year abroad and part instruction manual for individuals and families considering spending an extended period outside their country.
- www.talesmag.com, Tales from a Small Planet with information on countries, schools, etc.

Returning Home

- Copeland, Anne (Ph.D.) and Bennett, Georgia, *Understanding American Schools: The Answers to Newcomer’s Most Frequently Asked Question*, [The Interchange Institute](#), Brookline, Massachusetts, 2001. This book guides newcomers to the United States, or those who have been abroad for a long time, about the challenges of understanding the U.S. school system. Foreign born spouses might find this book especially helpful. info@interchangeinstitute.org.
- Eakin, Kay Branaman, [Bouncing Back](#), Global Community Liaison Office, Department of State, Washington, D.C., 2013. This book is an updated and revised version of **According to my Passport, I’m Coming Home**, and addresses the challenges faced by children returning “home” from another country and discusses their transitional and reentry needs.
- Smith, Carolyn, *Strangers at Home: Essays on the Effects of Living Overseas and Coming “Home” to a Strange Land*, Aletheia Publications, Putnam, New York, 1996. The editor of this book is a Foreign Service spouse who understands well the full implications of the internationally nomadic lifestyle. The compilations of essays by others who have been through it offer many insights, as well as practical suggestions for helping children – especially teenagers – to adjust.

From DoS's Webpage [Child Mental Health Resources](#)

- Davis, P., Headley, K., Bazemore, T., Cervo, J., Sickinger, P., Winfham, M., & Reh fuss, M. (2010). **Evaluating impact of transition seminars on missionary kids' depression, anxiety, stress, and well-being.** *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 38, 186-194.
- Dixon, P., & Hayden, M. (2008). **"On the move":** Primary age children in transition. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 38, 483-496.
- Gilbert, K. R. (2008). **Loss and grief between and among cultures: The experience of third culture kids.** *Illness, crisis and loss*, 16, 93-109.
- Lyttle, A. D., Baker, G. G., Cornwell, T. L. (2011). **Adept through adaptation: Third culture individuals' interpersonal sensitivity.** *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 35, 686-694.
- Inman, A., Ngoubene-Atioky, A., Ladany, N., & Mack, T. (2009). **School counselors in international schools: Critical issues and challenges.** *International Journal of Advanced Counselling*, 31, 80-99.
- Nathanson, J. Z., & Marcenko, M. (1995). **Young adolescents' adjustment to the experience of relocating overseas.** *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 19, 413-424.
- Schuarzberg, C., & Parenteau, S. (2004). **The impact of moves on international school students: A transition study in Argentina.** *International School Journal*, 24, 33-40.

5

Living in a New Culture

Friendships, Dating, and Joint Social Environments

One of the most human things we do is form attachments. It is an essential part of mental health. Establishing your personal life so that you can form those attachments, platonic or not, is perhaps the most important thing you will do at Post. For those of us without a ready-made family, this can feel like a daunting task. Take into consideration embassy size, your rank, position at the embassy, security clearance, and physical security environment. All of these factors influence, and can limit, your potential friendship and dating pool.

As members of the military, we have several regulations that guide and often restrict who we can enter into familiar relationships with. If we seek out foreigners, we may have reporting requirements. If we make connections with other service members, we may run up against regulations that affect those relationships. And connecting with Americans at the Embassy or out in town can have restrictions as well.

So where does that leave us? As FAOs persistently forward, we rely on our good character, moral compass, and intuition to make the right decisions. If in doubt, seek advice from a FAO mentor. Many have gone before you and no doubt have encountered a similar situation.

Love may be blind, but you do not have to be! When beginning a relationship or friendship with a foreigner, consider what motivations that person might have in entering into a relationship with a U.S. military member. Though we may want to believe altruistic motives, that may not be the case. This is why if you enter into “close and continuing contact” with a foreigner, you have to report this through State and Defense channels. Every embassy has a counter-intelligence working group (CIWG). The CIWG will have definite right and left limits on contact with foreigners. The CIWG may further refine what that embassy’s definition of “close and continuous contact” may be, down to the number of nights you spend with that person. This may seem intrusive. As officers with security clearances, we are foreign intelligence targets. This includes people affiliated with our closest allies and partners. Complying with State and Defense Departments counter-intelligence directives is the cost of doing business for FAOs overseas.

As FAOs, we know building relationships to further the defense relationship brings us into contact with foreigners including host nation military and government employees, diplomatic missions, non-governmental and inter-governmental organizations, and expatriates. It is a delicate balance between self-care and effectively doing our jobs. Relationships with foreigners can be very fulfilling. Just realize it is not that simple. You have a host of requirements should the relationship cross into “close and continuous.”

When it comes to the other military members at Post, your position will likely dictate who you can establish friendships with. At smaller embassies, it may very well be that the person you have the most in common with is another military member. But if you are the Senior Defense Official, best to keep it professional. That aside, if the friendship is with another military member in another small unit, you need to consider how this relationship affects good order and discipline. Keeping it professional inside the office is required, particularly when the friendship transgresses enlisted and officer ranks. If the relationship does cross that boundary, be the leader we expect you to be and approach the SDO or FAO mentor for guidance.

Single FAOs Overseas

Being single abroad has its moments. While your colleagues are juggling partner work schedules and children's school events, you can be exploring new countries with no agenda but your own. Being stationed overseas also often creates a tight knit community of colleagues and coworkers that become like family. Dating in a foreign country can be fun as well and provide unique opportunities to immerse yourself in a new culture. Facing a move to a foreign country while single though entails vastly different challenges than moving with a partner and/or family. Not only is it difficult to physically pack and move on your own, but there's a very different set of emotional and social challenges to overcome to achieve a fulfilling single social life abroad.

Single FAO anxiety over moving abroad often revolves around questions of loneliness: How will I make friends? Will I have a social life? Will I be able to date? How will I maintain my current family or partner relationships over long distances? This anxiety is normal but deserves attention. If you're single, it's imperative that you prioritize your social health early on at overseas assignments to ensure you have friends or colleagues you can turn to when struggling. Everyone gets lonely, regardless of their relationship status, but being overseas can make feelings of isolation seem extreme. Distance and time zones make it more challenging to reach out to friends and family in times of social and emotional distress. So, before you move to an overseas assignment, think through your own coping mechanisms for social isolation, plan ahead for maintaining your social health, and consider these tips:

- You won't be the only single one. There will be other single people at your Post/Base and in the diplomatic community you interact with. Opportunities to be social and make friends will be available, so don't panic.
- Utilize Embassy services. The Community Liaison Office (CLO) is there to support all members of the Embassy community, regardless of their familial/relationship status. If you need a boost making friends and meeting new people, ask your CLO to arrange a singles-only event and suggest they coordinate events with other diplomatic missions to widen the social network.
- Research where to live. Having neighbors with similar lifestyles/interest as you or having the ability to easily reach social settings can impact your morale. If you're part of an embassy housing pool, you may not have a choice in housing, but a good housing board will do its best to give you some options and accommodate your requests.
- Keep up your clubs, hobbies, and interests. Wherever you're stationed, you're likely to find a social circle similar to what's in the U.S. based on hobbies and interests. Even in the most remote countries, there will be local sports teams, hash runners, book clubs, churches, cross-fit gyms, etc.

- Make a long-range leave plan. If there are certain holidays or events that are important to your mental and social health, plan ahead to spend those with family and friends. Be upfront with your leadership and mentors about these types of social and familial priorities.
- Dating and marrying foreigners is (usually) ok. Meeting the love of your life while overseas is absolutely possible and does happen. Be smart, though, about deciding who to date and what you share with them (see below for warnings). There are several Navy FAOs who can provide advice on the administrative process for marrying a foreign national if you need it.
- Keep in touch with family and friend back home. Modern technology has made video chatting and maintaining communication over distance easier than ever. If regular communication is important to you, set up a schedule for phone/video calls with your family and/or friends and prioritize maintaining that schedule. If you're struggling with loneliness, consider asking family or friends to visit or even live with you (see Member of Household section below).
- Ask for a mentor in a similar situation as you. Whatever your relationship status and goals are, there is a FAO who will understand. Ask your detailer to help you find a mentor that can provide advice based on your specific circumstances. You should never feel alone.

WARNING. Unfortunately, there are times the romance may drain out of your foreign relationship.

- Counterintelligence and honeytrap threats are real. Be conscious of what you're sharing with new friends and dates. **If you are entering into a relationship with a foreigner, you are required to declare that to your SSO. At an Embassy, you also have to declare that with the RSO and they may request details about your new significant other.**
- Marrying a foreign national can also affect what orders you'll be eligible for in the future. Ask your detailer for specifics.
- If you're at a joint base or an Embassy with a large military presence, be mindful of fraternization and know that fraternization rules differ between services.
- Secrets don't stay secret. This is especially true at small Embassies. Overseas posts tend to create small, close knit communities amongst Americans. The downside of that unity is that gossip and rumor can (and often does) run rampant. Your relationships may not stay private.

Getting Married Overseas

Getting married overseas to a foreign-born spouse is a unique process with special considerations. Below are some guidelines to help you during the process.

Keep in mind that if you are at an embassy and fall under COM authority, you have to report/seek permission from both the military and State Department chain of commands.

Foreign Contact Report: If you're dating a foreigner, you'll need to report this through your various security chains of command. Expect to fill out a DS1887 foreign contact report with the State Department and also an SF 86C to change the most recent SF 86 since your last security investigation. The SSO's office

at the Combatant Command can provide you with requirements. Also touch base with the Regional Security Officer (RSO) at the embassy and/or the AFOSI/NCIS, as required.

Permission/Application: All members contemplating marriage outside the United States to a foreign national will apply for permission to the area commander in the area where the foreign national lives. MILPERSMAN 5352-030 [Marriage of Military Personnel to Foreign Nationals](#) and the pertinent area commander instruction ([1752](#)) series outline the required steps: Counseling, Application, and Background investigations.

The application will need to be endorsed by your command on letterhead and then sent to the pertinent naval component command for approval.

Concurrently with the permission process,

- Get a USCIS account and start gathering the data and fill out an [I-130 Petition for an Alien Relative form](#) to begin the process for your spouse's visa. You cannot file this petition until you are officially married, but a draft of this form is submitted as an enclosure to the permission request.
- Get permission for your spouse to live in embassy housing. This is a separate process that goes through HR/RSO at the embassy and it involves another security screening/background check of your partner.
- The pertinent usembassy.gov website lists the requirements for American citizens to get married in a particular country. You will likely need an Affidavit of Eligibility to Marry which was then signed in front of a consular officer at the embassy and then counter-signed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- Follow other local requirements for marriage in that country, including blood/medical tests and finding/scheduling a registered officiant.
- Once you have approval and have completed all other requirements: **Get Married!**

Additional Nuptial Considerations: Congratulations on your marriage! Now what? Here are a few critical steps for you and your new dependent.

- Get a certified translation of your marriage certificate (if it is not in English). You will need this for the following steps.
- Go to a local ID card office and register your spouse in DEERS
- Update your page 2 RED/DA in [NSIPS](#)
- Apply for command sponsorship. Note that 36 months is required at a duty station to get command sponsorship. If it is not approved, then servicemember's entitlements are for single--not dependent-- rate and dependent is not eligible for FEML or travel allowance (even if they're on your orders due to conflict with the JTR)
- Update [SGLI](#)
- Submit I-130 to start the visa process. Keep in mind that visa processing times are long and have grown longer due to COVID. Once you get orders (it may work with a letter of intent as well), you can request an expedite through USCIS and after the I-130 is approved, USCIS will send your file to the Department of State's National Visa Center (NVC). After completion of more documents and fees (good summary of the process [here](#)), NVC will coordinate the transfer of your case to the US consulate of your country and schedule an interview for your spouse.

- Keep in mind that to apply for the Attaché program, [the servicemember and all immediate family members must be U.S. citizens](#). Residency requirements and naturalization process for U.S. citizenship can take anywhere from 2-5 years. Additionally, to avoid conflict of interest, servicemembers are not placed into a country where the service member or the service member's family was born or previously was a citizen, has family currently living there, or has business ties there.

The process is long and challenging. This article is meant to guide you through the process and make you aware of the myriad factors to consider. If you'd like a sample application memorandum, check with OPNAV N51 FAO Policy, jada.e.johnson2.mil@us.navy.mil

LGBTI+ Considerations and Same-Sex Couples

The United States Navy values diversity and recognizes that through inclusion we are a better military and stronger nation for it. Navy FAOs who are gay, lesbian, bisexual and/or transgender shall be evaluated on their individual merit and performance just like every other officer in the fleet. The Department of Defense shall treat all service members in a professional and neutral manner regardless of sexual orientation to ensure maintenance of good order and discipline. Same-sex couples who wish to receive federal benefits must marry.

DOD Instruction 1315.18, *Procedures for Military Personnel Assignments*, states that assignments will be made for all Service members without regard to color, race, religious preference, ethnic background, national origin, age, marital status, sexual orientation, or gender, consistent with requirements for physical capabilities, except in cases where SOFA protections are not extended to same sex spouses. The responsible Combatant Commander recommendation on command sponsorship of same sex spouses or domestic partners (civilian) is based upon a host nation determination of whether or not to extend Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) protections to same sex spouse or host nation law, safety, or political concerns that might put a same sex spouse at risk. It is DOD assignment policy that all command sponsored dependents should be afforded SOFA protections.

The Combatant Commander's command sponsorship recommendations can be found on the [SOFA Clarification tracker](#). A Host Nation not listed on this tracker, listed as "Pending", or determined "No" from a previous recommendation is not authorized same sex accompanied assignments until a country assessment is completed and reflected in this tracker.

Note: Realize that assignments to Country-Team positions will rely on Department of States policy for assignments and can modify or trump these SOFA considerations. Upfront conversation between the FAO, family members, and the Detailer is essential for assignments to less tolerant locations.

Regarding transgender service members, the Department of Defense has published DOD INSTRUCTION 1300.28 on 4 September 2020 detailing guidelines around policy, responsibilities, and procedures regarding the standards for military service accession, retention, separation, in-service transition and medical care for Service members who are transgender or who have been diagnosed with gender dysphoria, as applicable.

Department of State (DoS) LGBTI+ Information: Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) travelers can face unique challenges when traveling abroad. Laws and attitudes in some countries may affect safety and ease of travel. Legal protections vary from country to country. Many countries do not legally recognize same-sex marriage. More than seventy countries consider consensual same-sex sexual relations a crime, sometimes carrying severe punishment.

Consult the [LGBTI Travel Information](#) page and [Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#) webpages for country-specific potential challenges.

The following resources from DoS are available for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBTI+) personnel:

- Office of Personnel Management (OPM): OPM offers [“Frequently Asked Questions”](#) regarding benefits for LGBTI+ Federal Employees and Annuitants. *Realize benefits may differ between civilian employees and military service members.*

- The Overseas Briefing Center: OBC maintains resources for LGBTQI+ employees and their family members. Members of the foreign affairs community can email FSIOBCInfoCenter@state.gov for more information.

Before PCSing/engaging with the Detailer about orders, have you wondered what a country is like for people in the LGBTI+ community? Even with social media, it isn't always easy to find information for what life is like as a member of a marginalized community. That's where GLIFAA comes in. [GLIFAA](#) is a non-profit, voluntary, membership organization that seeks to advance diversity and equity in US foreign affairs agencies and promote LGBTI+ human rights around the world. While the DOD is not listed as one of the US Foreign Affairs Agencies represented by GLIFAA, LGBTI+ members and allies can still join in GLIFAA events at every mission around the globe. In fact, each post has a GLIFAA representative who can answer any questions you may have about LGBTI+ issues in that country. GLIFAA and its 120 Post Representatives have on the ground knowledge of the LGBTI+ environment at post and can provide additional guidance. Here is a list of [post representatives by country](#).

Additionally, glifaa has also compiled a list of medical and parenting resources for parents of LGBTI+ youth: <https://glifaa.org/2020/03/17/resources-for-parents-of-lgbt-youth-medical-providers/>

- DoS [Resources for LGBTQI Adoptions](#): While the U.S. federal law does not prohibit LGBTI+ U.S. citizens or same-sex couples from being adoptive parents. However, some foreign countries do not permit LGBTI+ individuals or same-sex couples to adopt so additional research is required. Country Specific [LGBTI+ Traveler Information](#): Consular Affairs maintains Country Specific Travel Information. To learn about LGBTQI+ considerations in a specific country, navigate to that country, and click “Local Laws & Special Circumstances.”
- Another resource that FAOs have found helpful is Tales From A Small Planet Magazine (www.talesmag.com) that offers “what it’s really like to live there” reports on life from a variety of lenses (including LGBTI+, race, gender, and disability) in every country with U.S. diplomatic presence. These reports are available to the general public and provide real-time, up-to-date information that may be useful prior to PCSing. You can also fill out a report once you’ve completed your time overseas.

There is no one way to have or be a family and it's important that all FAOs have a sense of belonging to the FAO community.

Military adoption benefits, process and other considerations

Adopting a child can take several months to years and can cost thousands of dollars. But the happy returns of a child are limitless. Military life is no longer a barrier to adoption as it once was, and service members have several military adoption benefits. Check Military One Source's information on [Eight Things Service Families Should Know](#)

Birth of U.S. Citizens and Non-Citizen Nationals Abroad

If you are a [U.S. citizen \(or non-citizen national\) and have a child overseas](#), you should report their birth at the nearest [U.S. embassy or consulate](#) as soon as possible so that a Consular Report of Birth Abroad (CRBA) can be issued as an official record of the child's claim to U.S. citizenship or nationality. This includes all FAOs having children at overseas bases as well.

CRBAs are issued to both U.S. citizens and non-citizen nationals. A CRBA documents that the child was a U.S. citizen at birth. The CRBA neither serves as proof of the identity of the child's legal parents nor is it intended to serve as proof. In general, the name or names listed on the CRBA are the U.S. citizen or national's parent(s) who have a genetic or gestational connection to the child. The name of the parent(s) through whom the child's claim to U.S. citizenship is made must be listed on the CRBA. A parent who is not transmitting U.S. citizenship may be listed on the CRBA with consent of the parent who is transmitting U.S. citizenship.

- You can apply for a CRBA by completing [Form DS-2029](#). For instructions on how to apply for a CRBA, visit the webpage for the nearest [U.S. embassy or consulate](#) in the country where your child was born and navigate to the American Citizens Service section. Please note the application must be signed in front of a consular officer, notary public, or other person qualified to administer oaths.
- If one parent is not a U.S. citizen or if the U.S. citizen parent who is transmitting citizenship to their child is not present when applying for a CRBA, that parent should complete [Form DS-5507](#) as supporting evidence, and it can be used to list the periods of time they spent in the United States.

Learn more about the CRBA

- The Department only issues CRBAs to children born abroad who acquired U.S. citizenship or nationality at birth and, in general, are under the age of 18 at the time of the application.
- The U.S. embassy or consulate will provide one original copy of an eligible child's CRBA.
- You may [replace, amend](#) or [request additional copies](#) of a CRBA at any time.
- Currently, the only gender markers available for Consular Reports of Birth Abroad are M or F. We are working to add an X gender marker for non-binary, intersex, and gender non-conforming persons as soon as possible. We will post updates on this page when the X gender marker option is available. We have more information about selecting your gender on a U.S. passport on the [Selecting Your Gender Marker](#) page.

Divorce

Some of us will be confronted with the challenge of getting divorced while serving overseas. Aside from the very personal and psychological implications, processing a divorce while abroad introduces some unique challenges. Often, divorce proceedings require service members to travel back to the United States to meet with mediators, legal personnel, and courts to finalize the process. For support information, to include legal guidance, FAOs abroad can reach out to their respective combatant command Family Readiness Programs (FRP) who are poised to assist in matters such as this. Point of contact information for each Family Readiness Program will be available through the various command support teams.

In addition to the FRPs, it is critical that FAOs notify their leadership of the situation as soon as possible so the community can support and also so that operational interruptions are mitigated while allowing the service member the time to address the disruptive nature of divorce proceedings. You are not alone in this process.

Lastly, the FAO Community Manager and Detailing team maintains a list of FAOs that are available to discuss their own personal experiences with divorce while serving overseas. These FAOs understand the significant challenges involved and are willing to offer their insights.

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Medical

Overseas Screening: The overseas screening process is designed to identify personnel or family members who have special medical, dental and/or educational needs that cannot be treated at an overseas location due to the lack of medical, educational or other specialists. You should immediately begin the process of overseas screening for you and your family as soon as you have orders in hand. In fact, this is one of the few things that you can accomplish while waiting for orders with a Letter of Intent from the detailee. [BUMEDINST 1300.2B](#) directs that overseas screens must be endorsed by a Naval Medical facility and should be completed within 30 days of the receipt of orders for Service members and 60 days of the receipt of orders for Family members. Be advised that the backlog of appointments attendant to the transition to the Defense Health Agency and requirement for specialist comment on preexisting conditions makes this an extremely time-consuming process. Expect to have to engage early and often. Military Treatment Facility personnel are familiar with the medical screening forms and requirements and are available to assist. Medical staff can also assist with identifying services available at overseas remote duty locations such as embassies.

The overseas screening process, if done properly, identifies personnel and family members who would be at increased risk if they were assigned overseas. Overseas screening is required of active-duty service members and their families. Screening must be broad enough to detect a wide range of existing and potential needs. Suitability decision is the responsibility of the transferring Commanding Officer (CO) and must be based on all information available, including but not limited to:

- (1) Medical
- (2) Dental
- (3) Educational
- (4) Psychological
- (5) Behavioral
- (6) Financial
- (7) Professional performance factors
- (8) Family stability
- (9) Completed with a personal interview

As you begin your overseas screening, you will need to complete multiple forms and steps, for both the FAO and the family members. These pieces will include:

- DD 2807-1 Report of Medical History
- NAVPERS 1300/16
- A Physical, Dental, Vaccinations, Audiogram and HIV draw

For the family:

- DD 2807-1 Report of Medical History
- NAVMED 1300/1
- NAVMED 1300/2
- DD 2792-1 Education Summary
- Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and Individualized Education Program (IEP), if applicable.
- Immunizations, per CDC guidelines for dependents

If completing your overseas screen in Monterey while at DLI or NPS, work with the Naval Medical Admin Unit det Monterey.

- <https://nps.edu/web/nmau/operational/overseas-suitability-screening>
- usn.lemoore.navhosplemooreca.list.nhlem-monterey-suitability@mail.mil

CDC recommended vaccinations by location can be found here:

- <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list/>

Exceptional Family Member Program

The Navy FAO community does not typically assess officers into the community with existing EFMP conditions; however, conditions can develop over the course of time. As every Navy FAO negotiates and receives orders to overseas locations, they must perform an overseas/remote duty screening for themselves and their family members. When a FAO's family member is identified with a chronic medical, mental health, or special education need, the member will enroll the family member in the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP). The EFMP is a detailing tool that ensures service availability to the greatest extent possible. Information regarding the [Navy's EFMP](#) is first catalogued in [MILPERSMAN 1300-700](#), additional information can be found in [SECNAVINST 1754.5C](#), [OPNAVINST 1754.2F](#), [DOD Instruction 1315.19](#), [DOD Instruction 1342.12](#) and the [BUMEDINST 1300.2B](#). Navy policy states Family members with medical conditions or disabilities requiring specialized medical, dental, or educational services will not be transferred to areas where those needs cannot be met.

Note: between the Dept of State and Dept of Defense, there is a 'false cognate' acronym. In DoS, an EFM is an Eligible Family Member, in DOD an EFM usually refers to an Exceptional Family Member, someone in the Exceptional Family Member Program.

Normal Medical Care OCONUS on Base

If you are at a location with a strong military presence such as a Combatant Command or Fleet Headquarters, you will receive much of your medical care on base through the local military Medical Treatment Facility (MTF). Similarly, if you are stationed at the embassy, you will receive much of your routine or immediate care at the Embassy. For those in much more remote locations, you will receive your care out in town with a local doctor. It is imperative to understand your TRICARE Overseas plan because you may be billed directly from your provider if you need treatment outside of base or post.

Tricare Overseas: The type of medical coverage and your access to medical facilities will be dependent upon your specific location. You will most likely fall under the [TRICARE Overseas program](#). [TRICARE Overseas Prime](#) works like the stateside TRICARE Prime program with similar benefits, requirements, and costs. [TOP Prime Remote](#) provides TOP Prime benefits to Active-Duty Service Members (ADSMs) and their eligible family members residing with them in remote overseas locations. Enrollment is required, and

there are no enrollment fees. Family members stationed overseas must enroll in TOP Prime or TOP Prime Remote and there are no enrollment fees. It is imperative that you research your specific plan option (TRICARE Overseas Prime or Select) before arriving in country and update your status and plan as soon as you arrive in country. TRICARE resources are available at www.tricare.mil.

Note: When checking into your Military Treatment Facility and your TRICARE region, inquire about local requirements for translators when receiving medical care on the economy. Reimbursement for these required services can sometimes be an issue. Continued staff work on this concern is underway within Navy BUMED.

Depending on the treatment needed and the size of the MTF on base, you may be referred out in town to local clinics or specialists for more specialized care. These referrals will work through a TRICARE/ International SOS referral system. Follow the directions from the referral system at the time and ask pointed questions. TRICARE should generally only send you to someone that is one of their contracted providers.

If you are billed directly, then you will need to ‘[Pay and Claim](#).’ That means you are required to make the payment first, and then submit your claim to TRICARE via the [TRICARE portal](#) (with proof of payment). This process can be lengthy and can add up quickly when you have multiple appointments out in town or multiple family members receiving treatment.

Medical Care at Post

Following health unit check-in as part of the New Arrivals Check-in procedure, the Med-Unit staff will offer advice and explain local medical services, including how to obtain medical care after regular working hours, the location of local hospitals (if recommended for use) and provide you with the duty medical provider emergency contact cell phone.

Note: When checking into your Post and your TRICARE region, inquire about local requirements for translators when receiving medical care on the economy. Reimbursement for these required services can sometimes be an issue. Continued staff work on this concern is underway within Navy BUMED.

In general, any Navy FAO assigned to the Post under Chief of Mission Authority will first start their medical care through the Embassy Health Unit. The level of care available inside the Health Unit will vary post to post. When a FAO or their family needs care beyond the capabilities in the Health Unit, they may be referred out in town. Following that decision by the Health Unit Doctor, you and the Health Unit will work with TRICARE to complete the referral process to ensure the care will be covered. This is all highly dependent on the location.

All posts should publish a Health and Medical Information booklet, updated annually. These are available through the MED intranet website. Navy FAOs will need to reach through the CLO or their on-station sponsor for a copy in advance. Take a look as soon as you have a firm assignment, so that you can adequately prepare for life at post. Many posts offer an annual CPR training, food and safety training, and other helpful courses. Topics to explore for a new assignment might include:

- “Potable” safe drinking water
- Foods to avoid or special preparations needed
- Local restaurant precautions
- Recommended training or pre-employment screening for domestic help

- Laundry procedures
- Health recommendations related to climate (measures to deal with extreme heat or cold, if needed)
- Information on dangerous animals or insects
- Precautions related to swimming pools and beach water safety
- Malaria/Dengue Fever and other mosquito-borne diseases
- HIV
- Tuberculosis
- Common complaints and remedies
- Other post-specific information

Read and review your post's handbook so that you can enjoy a safe and healthy assignment overseas.

Additional services can also be available at post or in region. These services, if offered, will usually be available to all Chief of Mission personnel who need them. They can include:

- Mental Health Services (ECS)
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- Alcohol and Drug Awareness Program (ADAP)
- Deployment Stress Management Program (DSMP)

TRICARE Overseas Additional References

- TRICARE Overseas at <http://www.tricare-overseas.com/>
- TRICARE Overseas Prime Remote at <https://www.tricare-overseas.com/beneficiaries/resources/educational-resources/webinars>
- TRICARE Preventive Services Listing at <https://tricare.mil/healthwellness/preventive> Services that do not require an authorization
<https://www.humanamilitary.com/beneficiary/myaccess/referrals/do-i-need-a-referral>
- TRICARE Overseas Pharmacy Services: Express Scripts at www.express-scripts.com/TRICARE
- TRICARE's Military Health System Nurse Advice Line is available for care advice at any hour or day of the week. <https://www.tricare.mil/ContactUs/CallUs/NAL> They can assist you in finding local care services as necessary. If you're traveling overseas, you may contact the MHS Nurse Advice Line for health care advice. If you need care outside the military health system, the MHS Nurse Advice Line will coordinate with the TRICARE Overseas Managed Care Support Contractor. Overseas resources are available at <https://www.tricare.mil/ContactUs/CallUs/OverseasResources>
- Dental: United Concordia at <https://www.uccitdp.com/dtwdws/member/landing.xhtml>

Emergencies

Emergency medical care on base or at post will first stabilize the patient at the local MTF (at a base) or the local Post Health Unit and then use local facilities as needed. Follow-on specialty care will then be directed and coordinated by the MTF or Health Unit. Contact International SOS and TRICARE after the initial emergency but before leaving the treatment facility to help coordinate continued or follow-on care. Contact information is below.

Emergency Care: A medical emergency is anything that threatens life, limb or eyesight. Prior authorization is not required. If you are admitted, you must call International SOS before you leave the facility, preferably within 24 hours or on the next business day to coordinate authorization, continued care and

payment. The ISOS call center can be reached at toll-free: 0800-589-1599 or CIV: 0044-20-8762-8384 (International rates apply).

Urgent Care: Is defined as an illness or injury that would not result in further disability or death if not treated immediately but does require professional attention within 24 hours. PRIME beneficiaries must contact International SOS before receiving urgent care after hours on the economy. Obtaining pre-authorization is required.

<https://www.tricare-overseas.com/beneficiaries/resources/traveling-beneficiaries>

MEDEVACS

Authorized medical travel, often referred to as a medical evacuation (medevac) or Out of Country Medical Referral (OCMR), occurs when adequate medical facilities do not exist at post to treat an individual's medical problem and medical care cannot be postponed until an individual's next scheduled travel. For DOD members, medical travel will usually be to a regional military treatment facility like Landstuhl, Yokota, or Tripler but may also bring the FAO or family members back to the states or to an international hospital elsewhere. This section is biased towards Navy FAOs at Embassies; medical travel for FAOs and Families on staff will normally be managed through your local servicing MTF.

Medical Travel for service members is outlined in JTR 03301. If the traveling patient is a family member (especially a child), they can also be eligible for travel and per diem expenses, as well as authorization for a medical attendant. Please see JTR Chapter 3, section 033101 for Dependent Medical Care Travel OCONUS. It is important to note that OCMR dependent travel expenses are funded by the Navy vice DAO/SCO administrative commands. All travel is authorized/funded by the Navy's Field Support Activity at the Washington Navy Yard. The GCC J5 or DIA will start the liaison process with FLDSUPACT and then turn the conversation over to you and FLDSUPACT.

In cases of Emergent MEDEVACs from Posts, most all immediate travel will be arranged through International SOS and admin details will be completed afterwards. If the MEDEVAC is merely Urgent or Routine, there will be a coordination conversation between the FAO, the Embassy Health Unit, the parent administrative Command, International SOS, TRICARE, and the receiving medical treatment facility.

Reference [OPNAVINST 7200.1A](#) for further medical travel details.

Having a Baby in Remote Locations

When you learn that you are pregnant, work with you provider to ensure that you know the recommended times for pre-natal examinations and how you are going to access that care. The number and timing of visits are determined by you and your provider. Higher risk pregnancies may require more frequent visits. In general, expecting mothers in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East will bias towards Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany for obstetric care. In the Pacific, mothers may head towards US Naval Hospital Okinawa or US Naval Hospital Yokosuka. Mothers in the western hemisphere will bias back towards the United States if they decide to give birth away from post.

For FAOs in SCO assignments, they will need to work through their servicing combatant command J5 office for assistance. For FAOs in Attaché assignments, they will work with DAS headquarters to arrange initial assistance. Both offices will reach back to Field Support Activity (FLDSUPACT) Washington to determine the best way to accommodate families. Once a destination is determined, a medical support timeline is

developed and a DTS authorization is available, FLDSUPPACT will fund and approve orders for the mother, and potentially a medical escort, to a military medical facility. Orders will authorize members the following, Airfare, Lodging, and actual meal expenses up to the cost of the local per diem rate (must save itemized receipts). If member returns to CONUS they will only be reimbursed for travel

Orders start from 34 weeks gestation until 6 weeks post-partum. Additional days will be authorized on a case-by-case basis. Only the stork-nester will be on orders. The spouse will not be placed on orders unless there is a need for a medical escort (non-medical attendant), a dependent is command sponsored & incapable of self-support (Commander approved) or the unit commander authorizes permissive TDY.

Service member spouses can use leave, paternity leave (10 days), or FEMLE. Again, reference [OPNAVINST 7200.1A](#) for further medical travel details.

From TRICARE's Note:

Active-Duty Service Members - Inform your Command at the earliest possible time to ensure that your duty activities are appropriate for pregnancy. You will be required to deliver at the medical facility recommended by your military health care provider. If enrolled in TRICARE Global Remote Overseas (TGRO), this recommendation will come from the TAO-Pacific Medical Director and the recommendation will either be the nearest capable host nation medical facility or a military treatment facility (MTF).

Active-Duty Family Members - You should determine where you wish to deliver your child. For those in areas with robust medical support, you can usually remain in place for delivery. For others in areas of limited medical support or for those with higher risk pregnancies, we will recommend that you move to a more capable location. International SOS and the TAO-Pacific will advise you on choosing a location. If you decide to move to another location for delivery, you can go to the nearest capable civilian facility, or MTF with Stork's Nest (lodging) capability awaiting delivery. You may also elect to return to a U.S. location to deliver where you may have more support such as family and friends. For health and safety reasons, pregnant patients cannot fly after a certain point in their pregnancy and there are specific dates and requirements depending on the airline. For most uncomplicated pregnancies, that travel needs to occur before 36 weeks of pregnancy. If this is a high risk pregnancy, then the "Travel No Later Than Date" may be much earlier, perhaps 30 weeks or earlier, depending on the mom's particular needs.

TRICARE covers the medical costs of prenatal care and delivery, as long as the provider is a TRICARE/TGRO-authorized provider. To ensure coverage, TGRO patients should coordinate care through the TGRO Call Center or, if the intended delivery location is in the States, the TAO-Pacific. If care is arranged outside of a TRICARE/TGRO-authorized provider, there may be a significant out of pocket expenses.

Travel and per diem costs for the patient and any attendants are covered by the Sponsor's unit/service if the delivery is at the nearest capable medical facility or an MTF. The Sponsor should work with his/her command to arrange the funding no later than one month before the anticipated travel date. Travel and per diem costs for patients electing to travel back to the United States are the responsibility of the Sponsor and the Sponsor should inform their Command of this intention and seek any support available.

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Children's Education

When overseas, Navy FAO families can expect education for their children to be provided by either a DOD Educational Activity (DODEA) run school, or education to be paid for by the DOD through the Non-DOD Schools Program (NDSP). FAOs at overseas fleet concentrations or headquarters staffs will usually have a DOD school to take advantage of. FAOs at diplomatic missions will typically have either an Embassy-sponsored international school available locally or may have the option to home-school or send kids to international boarding schools. These options will vary post-to-post and will almost always be covered by NDSP.

***Note:** Pre-K is any education provided more than a year prior to kindergarten. Pre-K is not authorized under the NDSP. DoDEA is only authorized to enroll and provide financial assistance to eligible dependents in grades K-12. The only exception is when a child between the ages of three and five is identified with special education needs and Pre-K services are included in the Individual Education Plan (IEP). This policy is consistent across DOD and DoS.*

DODEA operates 160 schools in 8 Districts located in 11 foreign countries, 7 states, and 2 territories across 10 time zones. There are more than 66,000 military connected children of all ages enrolled worldwide in DoDEA schools, taught by more than 8,000 educators. All schools within DoDEA are fully accredited by U.S. accreditation agencies. Follow this link for the full DODEA website here <https://www.dodea.edu/index.cfm> or regional websites at the following links:

- <https://www.dodea.edu/Americas/index.cfm>
- <https://www.dodea.edu/Europe/index.cfm>
- <https://www.dodea.edu/Pacific/index.cfm>
- <https://www.dodea.edu/dvs/index.cfm>

The Non-DoD Schools Program (NDSP) provides academic support and funding for the education of authorized command sponsored dependents of the U.S. Department of Defense military members and civilian employees assigned to overseas areas where no U.S. Department of Defense Education Activity School (DoDEA) is available. Typically, NDSP will fund attendance to the international school attended by DoS kids as well.

https://content.dodea.edu/teach_learn/partnership/ndsp/ndsp_orientation/4/index.html

Department of State provides assistance to 193 overseas schools through direct and indirect support programs designed to promote an American-style program. Below are links to detailed information on each assisted school and a link to the Worldwide Fact Sheet. <https://www.state.gov/schools-worldwide/schools-worldwide-assisted-schools/>

Separately, Dept of State maintains a list of ALL available schools near their posts. This list contains schools at posts, both assisted and non-assisted. Schools assisted by the U.S. Department of State are highlighted in red. All other schools are neither assisted by nor have official endorsement from the U.S. Department of State but may be an option for families. This list includes U.S. and non-U.S. curriculum, religious, proprietary, and local public schools. <https://www.state.gov/schools-worldwide/schools-worldwide-schools-at-post/>

Wider concerns and tools for helping children of all ages cope with moves, shifting schools, and other educational topics, can be found on the DoS GCLC website here: <https://www.state.gov/global-community-liaison-office/education-and-youth/>

The Interstate Compact: The Interstate Compact makes changing schools easier for military children. When moving to a new duty station means going to a new state as well as a new school for your kids, rest assured that the [Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children](#) is designed to make the transition smooth. The Department of Defense, in collaboration with the National Center for Interstate Compacts and the Council of State Governments developed the compact to address the educational transitions for military families. All 50 states have committed to helping your children enroll in school, register for the classes they need, and graduate on time.

Through the compact, states are working together to provide a consistent set of policies that will make getting started in a new school, joining extracurricular activities and meeting graduation requirements as easy as possible for military children. Military parents can help their families access this support with a few simple steps. Visit the [Military OneSource Interstate Compact page](#) for additional resources and links.

EFMP and Particular Educational Needs: A particular focus for the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) is special educational needs that require specific attention or care that may not always be available at more remote overseas locations. Identification of these requirements prior to arrival at the overseas post is part of the overseas screening process (covered in Chapter 6) and is important for identifying ensuring dependents get the care or support they need. Realize that Navy FAO does not normally assess officers into the community who have an EFMP concern, however conditions or challenges can develop over time.

There is a wealth of resources available for military families working with special or particular educational needs. The below links document what is available for students while overseas. Follow this hyperlink for an overview of [Military OneSource's Education Resources](#) for military families with special educational requirements.

- In DoDEA, special education and related services are available to eligible students, ages 3 through 21 years of age. <https://www.dodea.edu/Curriculum/SpecialEducation/index.cfm> DoDEA schools provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to students with disabilities by implementing reasonable 504 Accommodations upon establishing that a student has a disability requiring such 504 Accommodations. 504s are accommodations for students with documented disabilities that do not require additional resources, e.g. desk placement in the classroom, additional time for tests/homework, perhaps for ADHD, anxiety, and dyslexia).
- DODEA schools are also prepared to assess students into special education programs and [accommodate individual education programs](#). IEPs (Individual Education Program) are for students whose disabilities require additional resources, e.g. classroom aid, speech therapy, etc., think more along the lines of autism or physical disability.

- [NDSP Special Education Provisions](#): The NDSP is committed to the provision of appropriate special education and related services for DOD dependents who are space-required and eligible for NDSP. Availability of services varies from site to site, so careful planning and open communication with your [NDSP Education Specialist](#) is critical to meeting the educational needs of your child. Special education services in overseas schools can be limited and require advanced approval for reimbursement. Many NDSP sites do not have adequate special education services in place, and schools are not required to follow the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

International schools will approach available services on a case-by-case basis. The peculiarities of each case will require early discussion with post to evaluate and advise if the receiving school can support. This conversation needs to be between the receiving school, with the parent GCC or Fleet and with the Detailer to see if particular concerns can be addressed in that location.



Family Member Employment

Employment opportunities for FAO spouses will often be one of the overarching concerns after initial arrival at post or on staff. Employment opportunities, like most all things, will vary from location to location and will often be subject to local agreements and guidelines. Please realize there is a distinction between employment resources open to Navy FAO families assigned to an Embassy and those assigned to an overseas military staff.

FOR DIPLOMATIC ASSIGNMENTS, IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT SPOUSES MUST OBTAIN PERMISSION FROM THE EMBASSY TO WORK AND/OR VOLUNTEER OUTSIDE THE MISSION. THE CLO AND HR OFFICE AT POST CAN ADVISE MORE ON THIS TOPIC.

Employment while overseas can present unique challenges – what you experience in one country may look very different in another. It is important to start early to understand the employment circumstances at your post – Are you eligible to work on the economy? How competitive is the embassy job market? Can I continue to telework? What is the timeline from application to start date? Will I be able to work during our in-region/country training due to the shortened timeline?

It is important to think creatively and to work proactively to research your options. A good place to start is the Department of State, Global Community Liaison Office (GCLLO) and their [Global Employment Initiative \(GEI\)](#). Please bear in mind that access to many of the experts and resources from the Dept of State are restricted to individuals who are at post under Chief-of-Mission Authority.

Lastly, a word on volunteering. When options at post are limited, consider strategic volunteering as a way to bolster your resume, contribute to your community and improve your future employment prospects.

In and around the Embassy

Borrowed from Department of State's Global Community Liaison Office; the GCLLO encourages you to start early and learn about employment programs and resources at:

<https://www.state.gov/global-community-liaison-office/family-member-employment/overseas-family-member-employment/>

DoS Guide to Overseas Employment

- Obtain a Copy of the Family Member Employment Report (FAMER)
- Contact Post Early
- Reach Out to the Global Employment Initiative (GEI)
- Consider Applying for Special Employment Programs
- Explore Training and Distance Learning Opportunities
- Inquire About Teleworking Your Present Position

Employment Options

- Family member employment at diplomatic posts overseas is divided into two categories:
 - **Employment [Inside the Mission](#)** refers to jobs held by family members working at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate. Specific eligibilities and requirements pertain to these positions.
 - **Employment [Outside the Mission](#)** refers to employment opportunities to include, but not limited to, self-employment, telework, jobs on the local economy, etc.

Research: Request a copy of the Family Member Employment Report (FAMER). The FAMER is a post-specific overview of both inside and outside the mission employment. The FAMER is available through GCLO or post's Community Liaison Office (CLO) Coordinator. It includes filled, pending, and vacant positions and work permit information at the time of the report. Before moving, attend briefings, watch webinars, and contact GCLO's regional Global Employment Advisor (GEA). Ask your sponsoring employee to download the FAMER for your current or prospective post(s) from the Department of State intranet site or contact GCLOAskEmployment@state.gov. FAMER reports are a great resource when considering follow-on assignments if spousal employment is a priority. Watch this short video to learn about useful employment resources. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vxih1JRaebQ>

Working Inside the Mission

Prepare: Visit the Family Liaison Office (FLO) website to learn about the Foreign Service Family Member Reserve Corps (FSFRC), hiring preferences, special employment programs, and Professional Development Fellowships available to Eligible Family Members serving overseas.

Contact Post Early: The Community Liaison Office Coordinator (CLO) at post is a great source of information on post-employment. Let the CLO know you are interested in working. If you are interested in federal employment at post (inside the mission) contact the HR office at post to find out how jobs are advertised and when you can apply. Request to be added to the CLO distribution list to view job announcements and employment information. Every CLO has a unique email that is CLOCityName@state.gov

Reach Out to the Global Employment Initiative (GEI): Global Employment Advisors (GEAs) provide free career coaching, resume assistance, networking support, and mock interview practice. They facilitate skills development for a job search inside the mission and on the local economy (outside the mission). Email GEI@state.gov for contact information for the GEA responsible for advising family members at your post.

The Foreign Service Family Reserve Corps (FSFRC) was created to improve efficiency in the hiring of U.S. citizen spouses (see definition for AEFM). Joining the FSFRC allows an AEFM to keep their DoS security clearance while moving from post to post. When family members are accepted into the FSFRC, they will be in a nonpaid status until accepting a position at a local assignment. Family members who join the FSFRC will be permitted to remain in the FSFRC as long as they continue to meet eligibility requirements. FSFRC members in Categories One or Two will retain their eligibility for access to classified information on the basis of their FSFRC position as they move from post to post. To determine eligibility and apply for the FSFRC visit the [FSFRC Website](#) and use [form ds5137](#).

If you leave a post and are not directly going to a new post but will likely return to an Embassy position in the future, the FSFRC will need additional documentation from the Navy. The Navy FAO Policy office has a template. Contact OPNAV N51 FAO Policy Deputy.

The Expanded Professional Associates Program (EPAP) provides professional level, full-time Foreign Service positions to U.S. citizen EFMs serving overseas. These positions can range from medical, to facilities management and direction, to political or economic reporting, through public relations and diplomacy, to education. Program information is available through the hyperlink above or via email GCLOAskEPAP@state.gov

The Consular Affairs-Appointment Eligible Family Member (CA-AEFM): Consular Program provides opportunities for family members to fill entry-level Consular officer positions at select posts. Applications are accepted by CA year-round.

Inquire About Teleworking Your Present Position: Finding employment overseas in your chosen field can be challenging. Telework can be one of the best ways to maintain your skills, salary, benefits, and professional contacts. Discuss this option with your current employer. Through the CLO, contact HR at post regarding any restrictions and approvals.

Working Outside the Embassy or Consulate

Many Navy FAO family members assigned to US diplomatic posts have professional skills and qualifications that may be better suited for employment outside of the embassy or consulate when they are assigned overseas. The experience of working overseas outside of the embassy or consulate can provide challenging and unique opportunities for family members who wish to maintain or broaden their professional skills. Family members are encouraged to explore all their options when moving overseas. Most employment options for working outside the embassy or consulate fall into two categories: [working on the local economy](#), or [pursuing a portable career](#).

Working on the local economy means physically working in an office of a private sector company, non-government organization, or volunteering for an organization in the host country. The host country must have an established [Bilateral Work Agreement \(BWA\) or de facto work arrangement](#) in order to pursue this option.

A portable career is taken from post to post and is not dependent on a BWA. There are numerous avenues for pursuing this option including consulting, self-employment, telework, teaching, etc. Employment outside an embassy or consulate may provide family members the freedom to continue in a chosen field and/or the opportunity to pursue a new field. Employment opportunities eligibility, compensation, and taxes will likely vary depending on the country of assignment and in some cases may be significantly different than comparable employment in the United States.

Employment while Overseas at the Staff

Navy Family employment information is available from multiple locations, including the MyNavy Family App, the [CNIC Navy Family Employment](#) page, and [Military OneSource](#). Realize these programs will often provide a Navy- or DOD- wide overview and not all services may be available at a particular overseas location.

[Commander, Navy Installation Command's \(CNIC\) Family Employment Readiness Program \(FERP\)](#) provides no cost consultations, programs and services to help families in the job search process. Consultants are available to guide spouses and family members on career planning, job seeking and resume writing, as well as help preparing for interviews and negotiating offers.

Military OneSource provides comprehensive education and career guidance, support and resources to military spouses pursuing employment or an advanced degree. Explore the site regularly for fresh content related to career exploration; education, training, and licensing; and employment readiness and career connections. Check out tips and strategies for military spouses that help match your interests, skills and goals with a degree or occupation that's compatible with your mobile military life.

<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/education-employment/for-spouses/>

Military OneSource's Information and links are available for a range of topics and highlight the standing benefits for military family members overall. Links include:

- [MyCAA: Scholarship for MilSpouses](#)
- [Career Exploration](#)
- [Education, Training & Licensing](#)
- [Employment Readiness](#)
- [Career Connections](#)
- [Managing Your Career](#)
- [Career Coaching](#)

Particularly tailored information on Military OneSource for overseas support is available at [Military Spouse Jobs Overseas](#). Additionally, the [Military Spouse Employment Partnership, or MSEP](#), can connect you with employers worldwide that are interested in providing you with long-term meaningful employment opportunities.

The Military Spouse Preference program: With the help of the [Military Spouse Preference program](#), you could be eligible for certain preferences when applying for Department of Defense civilian jobs, including civil service careers overseas. Learn how to [find portable employment overseas](#). Contact the human resources office at your new duty station or visit Military OneSource's [MilitaryINSTALLATIONS](#) to apply for the Priority Placement Program for military spouses.

Working on the installation: Depending on your interests and skills, there could be job opportunities on your new installation. Be sure to check [the installation's website](#) for job listings.

Working off the installation: Chances are you can also work locally off the installation. Before applying for jobs:

- **Check the Status of Forces Agreement:** In some foreign countries, the Status of Forces Agreement allows military spouses to work in the local economy.
- **Consider taxes and fees:** Before starting work in the local economy, make sure you have a clear understanding of what local taxes or other fees you may have to pay.

Flexible jobs, telecommuting and home businesses: Be open to the possibility of working a nontraditional career:

- **Home business:** Be sure to consider any licenses, permits or housing requirements you may need. Meet with the Family Service Center or Legal Assistance Office at your installation to make sure you're covering all your bases.
- **Virtual work:** Moving overseas might be the perfect opportunity to develop a telecommuting career.
- **Volunteer work:** Volunteering is a great way to test out new career tracks, learn about your new community and meet new friends. It can often be a great way to break into a new field and potentially earn a paying position.

[Transferring Your Professional License:](#) The 2018 National Defense Authorization Act allows each service branch to reimburse spouses up to \$1,000 for re-licensure and certification costs resulting from relocations or PCS moves that cross U.S. state lines – to include OCONUS to stateside moves.

- Where can I learn more about the Navy’s reimbursement policy? Read the Navy’s [announcement about the new policy](#), along with [eligibility information and application procedures](#).
- What is the reimbursement process? Sailors can apply for reimbursement after their spouse receives their new license or certification. See [Steps for Filing a Claim](#) for more about the process.

Licensing overseas: In some occupations, your state-issued license — no matter where it’s from — is valid for government and contracting jobs. To learn more about transferring certifications overseas, check with that installation’s hiring authority.

Tips for transferring certifications: The Department of Defense is committed to making it easier for military spouses to find and follow a meaningful career.

- Find information about the progress of licensing issues that affect military spouses in your state on the Defense-State Liaison Office’s website, [Military State Policy Source](#). DSLO partners with state policymakers and leaders to help reduce or eliminate licensing barriers for military spouses as they move with the military.
- Connect with other military spouses on the [Blue Star Networks](#) to share professional information and get the scoop on state licensing requirements.
- Identify occupations with good job portability. Search for open positions with hundreds of employers committed to hiring military spouses through the [Military Spouse Employment Partnership Job Search on MySECO](#).

Moving overseas can open new and exciting opportunities. Just remember to do your prep, give yourself time to get settled and investigate all your options.

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TRAVEL AND LEAVE INFORMATION

Funded Environmental Morale Leave: FEML provides Government-funded transportation from the duty location to the designated FEML destination. FEML is established for locations where conditions of life are such that the Service member and his or her family are subjected to significant, identifiable difficulties having a harmful effect on physical well-being or mental health of sufficient severity to justify temporary relief during a period of assignment. The Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Military Personnel Policy (DASD(MPP)) shall designate the authorized FEML duty locations, which shall be limited to those locations that are truly isolated, austere or unhealthful, and designated FEML destinations. Normally, FEML applies to Service members assigned to a prescribed tour outside the United States (typically at an embassy) who incur a tour length of at least 24 consecutive months, to include voluntary extensions.

A member assigned to a 24-month tour is eligible for one round trip under FEML. A member assigned to a 36-month tour is eligible for two round trips. No more than two FEML trips are authorized for any overseas tour including extensions to that tour. In addition, the Service member's dependents, in order to participate, must be command sponsored. FEML travel may not be taken within 6 months of the beginning or end of the Service member's tour of duty. The Combatant Commanders are authorized, on a case-by-case basis, to waive the 6-month rule, when appropriate. See [DOD Instruction 1327.06](#) for more details.

FEML programs and locations are managed by each of the Combatant Commands but funded by each of the services. FEML travel will provide a cost-constructed amount from the overseas location to an American port of debarkation. That amount then provides the cap for cost-construction to other locations. [AP-FEML-01](#) outlines the connections worldwide, planned back to U.S. airports.

- MILPERSMAN 1050-210 discusses Navy elements of Environmental Morale Leave.
- JTR 040401, Nov 2021

Note: There are wide differences between DOD and DoS over FEML and funded R&R travel entitlements.

Consecutive Overseas Tours: Service members stationed outside the continental United States (OCONUS) who are ordered to a consecutive tour of duty at the same duty station or reassigned permanent change of station (PCS) to another overseas duty station may be paid travel and transportation allowances in connection with authorized leave from their last duty station.

Travel expenses are funded for the service member and accompanying dependents from the overseas location back to the Service member's home of record (HOR) or an alternate place to which transportation is no more expensive than to the HOR. If transportation to the selected alternate place is more expensive than transportation to the HOR, the Service member is financially responsible for the additional cost, unless transportation to the more expensive alternate place is authorized or approved by the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (OPNAV), Military Pay and Compensation Policy Branch (N130C).

When planning COT travel between tours, review [MILPERSMAN 1050-410](#), and then coordinate procedures with your detailer. Meanwhile, [AP-TL-01](#), outlines Tour Lengths and Tours of Duty Outside Continental United States (OCONUS) and Navy specified prescribed sea tours (PST) per MILPERSMAN 1301-110, MILPERSMAN 1300-308, and current sea-shore flow NAVADMIN.

Circuitous Travel: A Service member or dependent who performs PCS travel to, from, or between locations OCONUS over an indirect or circuitous route at personal expense and convenience is authorized travel allowances unless he or she was directed to use Government transportation and did not use it when it was available. See JTR section 050204 for more details. Also refer to [MILPERSMAN 1050-150](#) discussing Leave en Route in the Execution of Orders, and [MILPERSMAN 1050-083](#) discussing the Computation of Leave.

Military Travel Services: [CWT SATO Vacations](#) can book leisure travel for service members using the same travel booking system for official PCS or TAD travel. Availability will vary but these prices can dampen out the price swings you may experience with international travel otherwise.

Military Space-Available travel is available to service members and their families when on a leave status and allows service members and families to fly onboard US military flights from location to location if there is room. Service members must remain on a leave status throughout the trip. Space-A works best when flying between military hub locations (i.e. Ramstein, Yokota, Rota, Hawaii, etc.) and with time available for flight scheduling hiccups. Follow this link from [USAF's Air Mobility Command](#) for additional information and tips on Space A travel.

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EVACUATIONS

Yes, it can happen to you! Evacuations are not just an event for higher threat locations; they can be triggered by a natural disaster, pandemic, civil unrest, foreign invasion, etc. There are common threads that run through all emergency situations. Preparation and information are key to managing the crisis. Thinking through plans ahead of time will make responding easier. No two evacuations are the same, some evacuees have had weeks to prepare, while others only hours. Some service members, employees, and family members return to post after a short time, while others do not. Some initial thoughts to consider:

- **Many FAOs will be deemed essential and required to remain at post or shift to a Combatant or Component headquarters to carry on work during or after an evacuation. Otherwise, they may be expected to evacuate to DIA or service headquarters in the Washington area to continue the fight from there.**
- Realize that DoS biases for all of their employees to evacuate back to the Washington DC area. This is effectively higher headquarters and evacuated FSOs will continue working at Main State.
- Determine the “who” and “where” with your family. Who should be contacted in the United States and where should you and your family go during an extended evacuation? This is particularly important for single parents and dual-military couples.
- Families can usually go to a location of their choosing, so consider where your family might be best supported during a tumultuous time. Nearby or with family, friends, former neighborhoods and schools? You don’t have to pre-commit to any of those but thinking through the process ahead of time will pay dividends should your family need to depart quickly. Make arrangements for who might care for your children if an evacuation occurs and one or both parents need to remain at post and the children must leave.
- Financial preparedness: If on an authorized or ordered departure, you will receive lodging and per diem for each family member at the designated location, and the allowances are usually more than sufficient. However, there could be a delay between the outlay and reimbursement. Try to avoid making an already stressful situation even more stressful by adding money worries. We recommend maintaining a good emergency savings amount in case of such contingencies.
- Pets are family too! Whether you bring a pet with you, or adopt one overseas, that’s another family member to account for. The JTR does provide for some limited pet transportation costs in the event of an evacuation. Ensure that your pet records are kept current throughout your tour and that you have the right kennels, etc., for ready transport. Keep your pets in mind when considering possible safe haven locations.

STAY BAGS & GO BAGS

Borrowed from the Foreign Service Assignment Notebook 2021

When a major crisis at post occurs, employees and family members may be asked to shelter in place. Evacuation procedures may follow.

Stay Bag: Your stay bag is your shelter in place home emergency kit. Supplies should last for three to four days and be stored in an easy-to-carry container such as a backpack or duffle bag. A stay bag should include:

- Water - three-day supply per person.
- Food - three-day supply of nonperishable ready-to-eat items.
- Supplies and medication - all prescribed and over-the-counter aids.
- Sanitation - toilet paper, paper towel, soap, wipes, sanitary products.
- Clothing - shoes and rainwear.
- Pet Supplies - see [Ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov) for more information.

Go Bag: Your go bag is your evacuation emergency bag. It is your bag that is ready to grab-n-go when you get a phone call to evacuate. One of the most important things to hand carry in a go bag are your personal documents and records. Your go bag should include:

- Documents (passports, important records, account passwords)
- Photos and digital records (can be on a portable hard drive)
- Prescriptions, medications, and vaccination cards
- Phone charger
- Keys (unless otherwise instructed by GSO)
- Cash
- Clothes
- Medical kit
- Batteries for digital devices
- Toys, books, and games
- Water and snacks
- Pet supplies (if they can come) - see [Ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov) for more information or view resources from the Overseas Briefing Center's handout.

It is also important to consider setting up Power of Attorney for parents traveling separately with children.

More details on go bags, evacuations and building resilience, and a customized personal crisis preparedness aid, can be found in the Transition Center's free online resource [Overseas Crisis Readiness](#).

EVACUATION AUTHORITIES AND ENTITLEMENTS

Overall authority and responsibility for the safety of US citizens overseas rests with the Secretary of State, who is supported by the Secretary of Defense. This relationship is codified in the "Memorandum of Agreement [Between the Departments of State and Defense on the Protection and Evacuation](#) of U.S. Citizens and Nationals and Designated Other Persons from Threatened Areas Overseas." From a DOD perspective, this relationship and definitions are further defined in DOD Directive [3025.14](#) "Evacuation of US Citizens and Designated Aliens from Threatened Areas Abroad."

Also useful; State's roles, allowances and general procedures are easily accessible in the DoS Foreign Liaison Handbook, ["You've Been Evacuated, Now What"](#). Realize that the contact information is useful but many of the allowances and procedures are specifically for Foreign Service civilians. There are often parallel, but differently titled allowances and authorities for military members. Check the JTR Chapter 6.

Evacuation will generally correspond to protection and evacuation plans established by DoS as follows. It is important to note that diplomatic or other considerations may make the use of certain terms, such as "noncombatant evacuation operation" (NEO), inadvisable and require the use of other terms instead. These definitions are from the DODD 3025.14:

Standfast: All military dependents, nonessential DoD civilian employees and their families, families of essential DOD civilian employees, and DOD Dependents Schools (DoDDS) staff and faculty are required to shelter in place and take appropriate precautions to limit harm since immediate movement will involve unacceptable risks.

Stop Movement: DoD issues an order to stop forward movement of military dependents, nonessential DOD civilian employees and their families, families of essential DOD civilian employees, and DoDDS staff and faculty.

Authorized Departure: Voluntary departure of command-sponsored military dependents, nonessential DoD civilian employees and their families, families of essential DOD civilian employees, and DoDDS staff and faculty to an announced safe haven is encouraged and authorized at government expense, with return also at government expense. These government authorized expenses do not apply to local U.S. citizens who do not have service agreements for return transportation to the United States at government expense.

Ordered Departure: Mandatory departure of some or all categories of personnel and dependents (such as military dependents, nonessential DoD civilian employees and their families, families of essential DOD civilian employees, and DoDDS staff and faculty) to designated safe havens is directed by DoS, with implementation of the theater evacuation plan. Historically, DoS accomplishes most ordered evacuations using commercial transportation (scheduled or chartered), without the use of military personnel or assistance. However, DoS may request a DOD-assisted NEO (using DOD organic or chartered transportation assets) based on the nature of the threat or the lack of availability of alternative forms of transportation.

Drawdown: (This is a DoS term and may be used at Post) The evacuation of family members and non-emergency staff; emergency personnel remain at post. One of the tasks of the Emergency Action Committee at post is to determine which staff positions would be necessary during a crisis. In an evacuation, the post would be drawn down to that number, unless the crisis required the temporary closure of the post.

Realize that any of these events will trigger movements of DOD dependents out of a particular location. They will also trigger certain evacuation allowances to be provided, outlined in the JTR.

Once a Post is evacuated, DoS will re-examine conditions at post every 30 days to see if families may return. By law, an evacuation cannot exceed 179 days. Once it is deemed safe for return, DoS will publish a cable and DOD will follow with a memo that outlines how long evacuation allowances will continue, usually an additional 10 days from the date of the DOD memo. Should DoS determine it is not safe for

families to return to the host country, DoS will declare the post unaccompanied and families will not be allowed to return to post. This decision can come at any time during the evacuation but usually does not happen until the evacuation has gone the entire 6 months. Families will need to stay in constant contact with their Command POC and their service member during these procedures.

For military families, if the post is declared unaccompanied, they will be directed to find a designated place and can either convert their safe haven to a designated place, or they can relocate to a permanent location at government expense. Families are given 30 days to make the necessary arrangements and settle into their designated place/permanent location. Orders will need to be cut and families may qualify for Dislocation Allowance (DLA.) Families can have their HHG shipped from station and/or non-temporary storage (NTS), as well as their car.

From the JTR: An evacuation is the authorized or directed departure from an area threatened by unusual or emergency circumstances in the continental United States (CONUS), at a non-foreign location outside the CONUS (OCONUS), or at a foreign location. The authority to evacuate an area depends on whether it is in the CONUS, a non-foreign location OCONUS, or a foreign location.

JTR - 060101 Authority to Order an Evacuation

A. Eligibility. A Service member's dependent, a civilian employee, or a civilian employee's dependent may leave a threatened area at their own expense. However, the Government authorizes evacuation allowances when one of the individuals or agencies identified in [Table 6-2](#) or [Table 6-3](#) orders or authorizes an evacuation.

C. Foreign Locations. The DoS decides when the United States evacuates personnel from a foreign location. The DOD and DoS agree to share the responsibility in specific situations or locations in [Table 6-3](#). If the DoS is not present in the affected area or cannot be contacted within a timely manner, then the Combatant Commander (CCDR), the senior commander in the country concerned, or the DOD Attaché is responsible for ordering or authorizing an evacuation.

JTR - 060102. Identifying Evacuees

A Service member is placed on a temporary duty (TDY) order or permanent change of station (PCS) order rather than placed in an evacuation status when required to leave a permanent duty station (PDS).

Table 6-4 identifies individuals who may be eligible to receive evacuation allowances when the designated Service or Agency in Table 6-2 or Table 6-3 orders or authorizes an evacuation.

Table 6-4. Who Can Be Evacuated at Government Expense				
Individuals		Location Being Evacuated		
		CONUS	Non-Foreign Location OCONUS	Foreign
1	Service Member	No	No	No
2	Service Member's Dependent	Yes	Yes	Yes
3	Dependent of Reserve Component (RC) Member on Active Duty or National Guard Member on Full-Time Duty under 32 U.S.C. §502(f)	Yes	Yes	N/A
4	Civilian Employee	Yes	Yes	Yes
5	Civilian Employee's Dependent	Yes	Yes	Yes
6	Non-Command Sponsored Dependent	Not Applicable	Yes (transportation only)	Yes (transportation only)
7	Authorized Escort for a Dependent or Civilian Employee	Yes	Yes	Yes

GENERAL DOD EVACUATION INFORMATION

This section is drawn extensively from [DLA's Evacuation and Safe Haven Guidance](#) and uses the JTR Chapter 6 as its primary reference.

The information provides basic tools for planning and can be modified for local and specific conditions while OCONUS. An evacuation can be declared due to political unrest, war, natural disaster, epidemic or any other hosts of reasons. Although no one can predict when or where an evacuation may happen, knowing what steps to take to prepare for an evacuation, and knowing what to expect after you have evacuated will help to ease your anxiety and worry. Everything in this guide is addressed in both the Joint Travel Regulation (JTR) chapter 6 for military members and families. When an evacuation occurs, military members will be placed on TDY/TAD orders and family members will proceed as evacuees.

1. **PERSONAL PAPERS:** Always keep important papers together in a safe place, and most importantly, up to date. Keep them in a separate container/briefcase so they will be ready at a moment's notice. Listed below are many (but *not* necessarily all) of those important papers that you will need to hand carry from station to your safe haven:

- Passport, visa, and military identification card
- DD Form 1610 Evacuation Travel Orders (filed at the sponsor's office)
- Will and Power of Attorney
- Medical and dental records, shot records, pharmacy prescriptions
- Insurance policies and financial papers/documents
- Pet records (specifically current shot records)
- School records, transcripts, test scores, recommendations
- U.S. driver's license, auto insurance policies, car registration and title
- Cash in both U.S. and local currencies
- Birth certificate(s), naturalization certificate(s), adoption papers, marriage license
- Spouse's personal papers, resumes

- Household goods inventory list (pictures-digital or hard copy of possessions/furniture)
- Duplicate address book
- Listing of regular billing dates for all recurring expenses
- Listing of names, addresses, and phone numbers of doctors, dentist, lawyers, and other professional services personnel
- This Evacuation Guide

2. FINANCES: Family members should talk now about finances. For example, who will pay the bills and will it be on-line or by check? If the spouse currently works outside the home, how will this affect your family's income? The bottom line is families plan in advance how to handle the money hassles of an evacuation. Evacuees will receive allowances during an evacuation, but families will need to pay most expenses up front and get reimbursed later. Be prepared for the possibility that all expenses may not be covered.

3. PERSONAL PROPERTY INVENTORY: Have an up-to-date inventory of all personal property and household goods with appraised values. The inventory should list the item, quantity, cost, and date purchased of each item. Keep receipts of high-value items. You might want to photograph the more valuable items and either tape the information to the back of the photo or keep a CD of your pictorial inventory filed with the inventory list. Keep one copy of the inventory with you and another copy at a safe location in the U.S. The list should be amended periodically for additions and deletions.

4. POWER OF ATTORNEY: A child's well-being is always of concern during an emergency/evacuation. In case you might be away at the time of an emergency (any kind, not just an evacuation) you should have a Special Power of Attorney prepared. This will give someone on station the authority to make decisions on your child's behalf and to escort your child back to the States if you are absent or unable.

5. TRAVEL ORDERS: Someone in your sponsor's office should prepare a DD Form 1610 Travel Order for your family;(1 form per family) shortly after your arrival on station. For Attaché assignments, the OPSCO should ensure this is prepared for everyone in the DAO. For OSC assignments, this is often managed by the Support Office at the GCC who handles OSC support and admin. This preparation may occur during GCC check-in prior to arrival at post. You will need to provide your name and social security number and your children's names and birth dates. You will also have to decide where you want to safe haven (discussed later in this guide) and provide the location. The DD Form 1610 will be filed and used only if an evacuation is declared. If not used while you are on your overseas assignment, the document will be destroyed upon your departure.

6. AUTOMOBILES: In an evacuation where the Service Member or DOD Civilian employee must also leave station, instructions will normally be given as to what to do with privately owned vehicles. Cars may be gathered together in a safe, central location and reclaimed by their owners at a later date, or if the evacuation becomes permanent, shipped out when conditions permit. It might be necessary for you to leave a duplicate set of keys to the car with a designated person/office along with information on make, year and model of vehicle and the owner's name and U.S. address.

7. PETS: A service member or family on official evacuation orders from an OCONUS permanent duty station (PDS) are authorized funding to ship up to 2 pets to their safe haven location. If the Service member transports the pets at personal expense, then reimbursement is limited to the constructed cost that the Government would have incurred if it had transported the pets. A Service member traveling on a separation or retirement order is not authorized reimbursement for pet transportation or quarantine fees.

No authority exists to reimburse expenses associated with transporting a pet, including its quarantine, for an evacuation in the CONUS or a non-foreign location OCONUS. See JTR 060204.

8. SELECTING A SAFE HAVEN LOCATION: Families should decide now where to go in the event of an evacuation. Department of State (DoS) will declare the United States as the safe haven location for the evacuees, but each family must decide where in the U.S. they want to go. The government will move families only one time to a safe haven location so take into consideration things such as public transportation, availability of temporary lodging facilities, public schools, military support offices, as well as proximity to family and friends. Since evacuations can last as long as six months, it is important to consider carefully where you want to safe haven. For military and DOD Civilian families who are from Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico or other U.S Territories (U.S. OCONUS locations), and for foreign-born spouses who want to safe haven in their native countries (foreign OCONUS locations), an approval process is required. Below are steps you must take and things you should consider if you are deciding this option.

- For foreign OCONUS safe haven locations you must get DoS approval prior to leaving your overseas PDS, a process that usually takes only a day or two. U.S. OCONUS locations (i.e. Guam, Puerto Rico) do not require DoS approval.
- All OCONUS safe haven locations require approval from Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (OUSD) which can take several weeks. Once you have DoS approval you are authorized to travel to the OCONUS location, but in order to get reimbursed for your everyday living (per diem) expenses you must wait for OUSD approval. Although OUSD approves nearly all OCONUS requests, families must understand they are taking a risk. If OUSD does not approve their OCONUS request they will not get reimbursed for their living expenses (but travel expenses are still covered.)
- Support from your Service or Agency in foreign OCONUS and US territory safe haven locations is very limited.
- Department of Defense Education Activity (DODEA) will not fund education costs outside the members PDS. Therefore, any costs at the safe haven location associated with education are the family's responsibility.
- Families do not have access to the U.S. Embassy in the OCONUS safe haven location for things such as postal/pouch service, Health Unit, check cashing, etc.

9. EVACUATION PROCEDURES/PREPARING TO LEAVE POST: When DoS declares an evacuation they will indicate if it is an authorized or ordered departure. If it's ordered, families are required to depart post immediately or at the first reasonably available time. If it is declared an authorized (some refer to this as voluntary) evacuation, families can decide if and when they want to depart post.

Please note: when a DOD family leaves post on evacuation orders (ordered or authorized) they will not be able to return to the overseas location until the evacuation has been officially lifted by DoS and announced by DOD. There will be a designated person in your sponsor's office that is responsible for evacuation procedures, including obtaining your airline tickets. Make sure that person has completed the DD Form 1610 Travel order (and provides you with a copy) and give him/her the following information:

- Safe haven location, city, and state (actual address if you have it) or OCONUS location (if applicable)
- Name, phone number and/or email address of a Point of Contact (POC) for you in the U.S. (preferably at your safe haven location)
- Name and ages of your children

10. FAMILY SUPPORT REPRESENTATIVE: Each family who has chosen a safe haven within the 50 U.S. States and District of Columbia will be assigned a local Family Support Representative (FSR.) This person is located at the nearest military installation and is usually from the same military Service although sometimes from another Service when circumstances call for that. Either way, the FSR will assist the family with whatever needs they have in getting settled in their safe haven location and will remain in contact with the family throughout the entire duration of the evacuation. Civilian family members will be contacted by someone in their sponsor's state-side HQs who may or may not be close to the evacuee's safe haven location but will remain in contact with them throughout the evacuation. If you have not been contacted by a FSR within 2 to 3 days of arriving at your safe haven, contact your sponsor's overseas office or state-side HQ. Each evacuating family must complete a DD Form 2585 Repatriation Processing Center Sheet. Check with the Evacuation POC at your sponsor's overseas office for a copy. Once completed return the form to your command POC.

11. STOP MOVEMENT: When DoS releases a cable declaring an evacuation, DOD will follow with a memo, part of which includes issuing a Stop Movement order. This will immediately suspend travel for all DOD dependents to the evacuated location/country. If a family is preparing to depart on their Permanent Change of Station (PCS) to the evacuated location, they will be prohibited from doing so. The Service member must request permission from DoS to enter the country, which is usually granted, but the family will not be permitted to enter the country anytime during the evacuation. If a family is caught in this situation, one of two outcomes will result.

- If the family has already sold/vacated their house, has an irrevocable contractual agreement for lease/resale of their residence, and/or had their household goods (HHG) packed, the family is identified as having disestablished their residence and will be placed on evacuation orders the day the family was scheduled to depart for their PDS.
- If the evacuation is declared prior to the family disestablishing their residence the family should immediately stop all moving preparations, i.e., vacating/selling their house and packing/shipping their HHG and car. Assuming the Service member is authorized to travel to the evacuated country, the family's situation will be treated the same as an unaccompanied assignment. The Service member will continue to receive a housing allowance for his family (as well as receive housing in the overseas location) and will also be entitled to separation pay.

A Stop Movement can also affect a family that has already PCSed and settled into their overseas location. If the family is away from the host country for any reason (personal leave/vacation, medical travel, Funded Environmental Moral Leave (FEML), etc.) at the time an evacuation is declared, the Stop Movement will

apply to them as well. Again, the Service member will need to request permission to return to post, which is granted most of the time. Although the family can also request permission to return to post, it is rarely granted. Therefore, starting on the day the family had intended to return to post but is now prohibited from doing so, they will be considered evacuees and their evacuation allowances (and travel to their chosen safe haven location if it is different from where they are) will begin.

12. DEPENDENT COLLEGE AND/OR BOARDING SCHOOL STUDENT: If the command-sponsored dependent of a Service member is a student attending school away from post (either in the States or in another country) at the time of the evacuation, the student is not considered an evacuee until such time they would normally visit their family (Christmas break, summer vacation, etc.) at the overseas location. The student's evacuation allowances begin the day he/she departs school. Whether the student joins the family at their safe haven location or moves to a separate safe haven location, he/she is entitled to full evacuation allowances for his/her first 30 days, regardless of whether the family's allowances have already dropped.

13. ENTITLEMENTS: Evacuation entitlements for all command sponsored family members can be found in the JTR, chapter 6. Below is an explanation of these entitlements, you can also look on-line for further information. The sponsor's military Service funds the evacuation allowances for military families. Please note: non-command sponsored dependents are only authorized one-way transportation to their U.S. safe haven. Per Diem allowances and return travel to the PDS are not authorized.

14. PER DIEM – MILITARY: Per Diem allowances for military command sponsored dependents while in a safe haven status are based on the Lodging-Plus System which provides a fixed amount for meals and incidental expenses (M&IE) and reimburses actual lodging costs up to a specified maximum amount. The applicable maximum per diem allowance is the rate prescribed for the safe haven location and depends on the age of the family members.

Example Family and safe haven location: (actual dollar amounts depend on location)

Family Members: Mom, 14-year-old, and 9-year-old.

Per Diem rate: lodging \$100 per day and M&IE \$50 per day:

Family gets hotel suite for daily rate of \$175.00

•COMMERCIAL RATE

First 30 days: The first evacuee is authorized up to 100% of the lodging rate or 150% if they qualify for the Special Family Compensation (see JTR), plus 100% of the M&IE per day. Each additional evacuee 18 years and older is entitled to 100% M&IE and each evacuee under age 18 is entitled to 50% of M&IE.

Please note, only the first evacuated dependent (usually the spouse) is authorized a lodging allowance and receipts are required for the lodging.

For lodging, the Mom in our example family is entitled to \$150 per day (since there are three dependents in the family, she qualifies for the Special Family Compensation.) Since the authorized maximum lodging amount for this family is \$150 per day, Mom will not be reimbursed for the entire cost of the hotel suite (\$175) because it exceeds the maximum allowable rate for the family.

For M&IE Mom is entitled to \$50, first child \$25, and second child \$25 totaling \$100. Family will receive the entire amount.

For days 31-179: The first evacuee's entitlement remains at 100% (or 150% if qualified for Special Family Compensation) of the lodging portion but the M&IE drops to 80% for each evacuee 18 and over and 40% for each evacuee under 18 years of age.

Mom is still entitled to \$150 per day for lodging but since the cost of the hotel suite (\$175) exceeds the maximum allowable lodging amount Mom will not be reimbursed for the entire cost of lodging.

For M&IE the rate has dropped, and Mom is now entitled to \$40 per day, and both children are entitled to \$20 per day totaling \$80. Family will receive the entire amount.

•NONCOMMERCIAL RATE

If an evacuated family is residing with friends or family members, for the first 30 days only, they are entitled to a lodging allowance in an amount equal to 10% of the lodging per diem rate for their area.

The family is also entitled to the same M&IE entitlements as described above; 100/50% for the first 30 days and 80/40% for days 31-179.

16. UNACCOMPANIED BAGGAGE (UAB)⁷: Evacuated families are entitled a UAB shipment in an amount not to exceed 350 pounds for each dependent age 12 and older, and 175 pounds for each dependent under age 12, with a **maximum family limit of 1,000 pounds**. The purpose of the shipment is for families to pack items they will need to sustain a temporary household, i.e. extra clothing, linens, toys, etc. However, please note that while UAB ships expeditiously, many times shipments take longer than expected, a month or two. Do not ship "must-have" items (medications, important papers, etc.) in UAB.

17. AIR FREIGHT REPLACEMENT ALLOWANCE: If UAB cannot be shipped, or the family would rather not hassle with a shipment, an air freight replacement allowance may be authorized to help defray costs of items ordinarily part of the UAB that must now be purchased. The flat amounts are: one evacuated dependent-\$250.00; two evacuated dependents-\$450.00; three or more evacuated dependents-\$600.00. No receipts are required for this allowance. Note: If/when the evacuation is lifted and families are allowed to return to their OCONUS PDS, the family is then eligible to ship the purchased items as UAB using the weight restrictions listed above.

18. LOCAL TRANSPORTATION: Local transportation allowances are paid as a flat rate of \$25.00 per day, per family regardless of the number of dependents in the family. No receipts are required. Command sponsored evacuated dependents are authorized reimbursement for transportation when required to travel from the safe haven location to obtain/renew a passport/military ID, or for medical screening required as a prerequisite to return to the member's PDS.

19. FILING VOUCHERS: To receive reimbursement for evacuation expenses, families need to complete DD-Form 1351-2.

⁷ Paragraph 15 deals with civilian employee per diem and is beyond the focus of the Overseas Life Handbook. Check the reference if this applies to you.

20. CHANGING SAFE HAVEN LOCATION: Changing a safe haven location can be difficult. It requires requesting/notifying the Service, DFAS, amending the family's evacuation orders and establishing a new per diem rate based on the new location. Make sure you discuss any decision regarding changing safe haven locations with your Command POC.

21. PROCEDURES FOLLOWING TERMINATION OF EVACUATION: Every 30 days DoS reviews the situation in country to determine if it is safe for families to return to post. If it is not, the evacuation will be extended for another 30 days. When it is finally safe for families to return to the PDS, DoS will release a cable indicating on what day the evacuation will be lifted. DOD will follow with a memorandum allowing military families and DOD civilian families to return.

Please note: DOD military and civilian families must wait for the DOD memo authorizing a return to their PDS. This memo usually takes one to three additional days after the DoS cable is released.

The memorandum will also indicate how long evacuation allowances will continue, usually an additional 10 days from the date of the DOD memo. Within this 10-day time frame families must:

- Give notice to vacate their lodging
- Contact travel with their orders (and DOD memo) to receive return tickets
- Contact transportation to arrange for UAB to be packed and shipped
- Disenroll the children from school and obtain their records
- Settle the last claim or save all contact POC information (name of person you've been dealing with, phone and fax numbers, email and mailing address, etc.) so the claim can be submitted after returning to the PDS
- Contact the FSR

If a family wishes to stay at their safe haven location beyond the 10 days following the lifting of the evacuation, they may do so, but per diem entitlements end after the 10th day. However, the evacuation order can still be used to obtain return airline tickets to the PDS even after this 10-day period.

There may be reasons a family cannot return to their PDS following the lifting of the evacuation. Examples of such reasons are:

- Service member/civilian employee has less than 60 days remaining on station and according to the JTR the family's return travel is not authorized. This can be waived but only with OSD approval.
- An evacuated family member is receiving medical care and is either too ill to return, is awaiting the results of a medical test or is waiting for follow-up treatment (get a doctor's statement indicating what the issue is.) Dependent children are nearing the end of their school term (usually within 30 days) and need to finish out the year in their current school (get a copy of the school calendar.)
- If a family cannot return to the PDS, they can request for their safe haven allowances to continue until such time they can return. The request, with justification and documentation must go through the appropriate approval offices (check with your FSR.) If approved, a written authorization will be provided. A copy of this approval must be submitted with the claim that covers the time beyond the 10-day grace period following the evacuation's termination.

22. POST DECLARED UNACCOMPANIED: Should DoS determine it is not safe for families to return to the host country, it will declare the post unaccompanied and families will not be allowed to return to post. This decision can come at any time during the evacuation but usually does not happen until the

evacuation has gone the entire 6 months. By law an evacuation cannot exceed 179 days. Families should be in contact with their FSR during these procedures.

For military families, if the post is declared unaccompanied, they will be directed to find a designated place and can either:

- Convert their safe haven to a designated place
- Relocate to a permanent location at government expense

Families are given 30 days to make the necessary arrangements and settle into their designated place/permanent location. Orders will need to be cut and families may qualify for Dislocation Allowance (DLA.) Families can have their HHG shipped from station and/or non-temporary storage (NTS), as well as their car.

Once the family has established residency, or on day 31 following the date indicated on the DOD memorandum (whichever comes first) they will no longer be entitled to evacuation funding, but the sponsor will begin receiving a housing allowance and separation pay.

For further instructions recommend families review the JTR, chapter 6 and contact their sponsor's office. Please note: DOD families must wait for the DOD memorandum describing the post as unaccompanied and directing them to find a designated place. This memo comes from the Office of Undersecretary of Defense and is needed to generate orders. If families move prior to this memo they could be responsible for all moving expenses.

23. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- What do I do if an evacuation is declared while I am traveling?** Before you travel, ensure your sponsor's office has a complete itinerary of your trip. Also, make sure your papers and documents are gathered into one location and that someone in the office knows where they are located. You might even consider leaving the keys to your quarters and car with someone in the office or American Embassy. If word of evacuation reaches you contact your sponsor's OCONUS office or CONUS HQ.
- Is an advance per diem authorized to evacuated dependents?** An advance payment of per diem is authorized, normally up to 80% of the estimated entitlement for 30 days at the safe haven location. However, usually that advancement is taken out of the first submitted reimbursement claim. Therefore, if an advancement is needed, recommend the smallest amount possible be taken.
- Why does the allowance decrease after 30 days?** The per diem rates were established to cover the cost incurred when living in lodging other than your home. Expenses during the first month are higher when dependents are getting settled (i.e., staying in high-cost hotel while searching for more suitable lodging, cost of utility hook-up, purchase food staples, etc.) Following this initial period 60 percent of the per diem rate is usually adequate to cover the cost of meals, lodging and incidentals. A waiver to increase the reduced per diem can be requested.
- Why do per diem allowances for dependents vary between families?** Per Diem at a safe haven is based on (1) safe haven location, (2) number of dependents, (3) age of dependents, and (4) amount actually spent for lodging. Any one of these factors will change the amount of the allowance.
- What expenses are covered by the lodging portion of the per diem paid?** Besides the cost of a

hotel room or apartment, the lodging portion of per diem covers other charges that may or may not be added separately to your bill such as maid service, mobile home parking, utility connection, use and disconnection charges (electrical, gas, water, oil, sewer, etc.), monthly telephone user fees (not individual call charges), and cost of special user fees (cable TV and/or internet connection.) Please note: Be very careful with signing any kind of lodging lease. Check to be sure it has a special clause permitting termination due to official government orders. Recommend you check with your finance office for specifics.

- f. **What entitlements are authorized to a dependent who turns 21 while at the sponsor's permanent duty station?** A dependent who was moved at government expense to the member's PDS outside CONUS and who turns 21 years of age at the PDS or at a safe haven location, will be considered a dependent for transportation.
- g. **How will I receive medical care while I'm an evacuee?** If you are a DOD civilian family member follow the guidelines for your personal health care coverage. Military family members are entitled to TRICARE prime coverage while at your safe haven. The location of your safe haven will determine where you receive that coverage. Contact TRICARE (on-line or by phone), explain your circumstances and find out what is available in your location. You can remain enrolled in your overseas TRICARE region for 60 days and still receive service anywhere in the US. Recommend after DoS makes the decision to extend the evacuation at the end of the first 30 days that you enroll in your local safe haven region sometime before the 59th day of your evacuation. If you do not re-enroll in the new area, and the evacuation extends beyond 60 days, you will be automatically converted to TRICARE Standard. You may experience difficulties with TRICARE when trying to make an appointment in the States while still enrolled in your overseas TRICARE location. If you are unable to convince TRICARE that you are authorized to remain enrolled in your overseas TRICARE region, show the TRICARE official a copy of the TRICARE Portability Letter signed by the DOD Surgeon General. **Ask your FSR where to acquire this letter.** If you are safe havening in a foreign OCONUS location, there is no TRICARE Prime. TRICARE Prime in US OCONUS locations (i.e. Hawaii, Guam, etc.) varies so contact the regional TRICARE office for details. TRICARE Standard is always available but again, recommend you contact the regional TRICARE office for more guidance.

24. EVACUATION CHECKLIST

Before Leaving Station:

1. You will need a DD Form 1610 travel order for yourself and children (one form per family.) This form may have been completed upon your arrival on station, but double check to make sure it is done and ensure the safe haven location is current/accurate.
2. Admin personnel in your sponsor's office on station will acquire your airline tickets.
3. The PDS admin office will be sending necessary information regarding your family to your sponsor's HQ. You will need to provide him/her with a state-side POC, phone number and email address either at your safe haven location or for a person living in the US with whom you stay in contact. If the personal email address you are using at your PDS is accessible at your safe haven location, be sure and provide it as well.
4. Let the admin person know if someone will be meeting you at the airport of your final destination.
5. Prior to leaving country under evacuation orders, the admin personnel should provide you with a blank copy of a DD Form 2585 (which does not have to be completed prior to leaving post, but

should be done before or shortly after arriving at you safe haven.) You should also receive a copy of the TRICARE Portability Letter.

6. Get an email address and web site from your children's school. Even if you enroll your children in a school in the states, it is important for them to keep up with their classes overseas if there's any chance you might return to your PDS assuming the evacuation is lifted.
7. Normally you are allowed two checked-through suitcases per person (check with the airlines to make sure there are no unusual restrictions.) Recommend you use the full amount of baggage allowed. Since you are on official government orders you should not be charged a baggage fee, but if you are it is reimbursable (keep the receipt.) However, you are not authorized excess baggage or overweight baggage.
8. You are also entitled to an unaccompanied baggage (UAB) shipment. Check with your sponsor's admin office (and this guide) for weight specifics and shipping procedures.
9. If you are unable or don't want to ship UAB you are then entitled to the Air Freight Replacement Allowance. Check with the admin office or this guide for specifics. Note: you get UAB or Air Freight Replacement Allowance, not both.
10. If no one is planning on meeting you at the airport of your final destination let your sponsor's office know so he/she can relay that information to the HQ repatriation POC back in CONUS.

After Arriving at Safe Haven:

1. If at all possible, a DOD representative should have met you at the airport of your safe haven destination (unless the HQ repatriation POC was notified that family or friends were meeting you.) This person will collect the DD Form 2585 (or let you know where to send it) and provide you with his/her phone number and/or email address (if not, ask for it.)
2. Within a day or two of arriving at your safe haven you will be contacted by a Family Support Representative (FSR) from either your sponsor's Service or DOD HQ. This person may be the same DOD representative that met you at the airport or someone different but will stay in contact with you throughout the duration of the evacuation.
3. If you are not contacted within a day or two after arriving at your safe haven by the above individual call your sponsor's designated HQ repatriation POC and let him/her know.
4. Ask what finance office you need to work with for filing your vouchers either through your FSR or your spouse's HQ Repatriation POC.
5. Contact your FSR if you are going to be away from your safe haven for more than a few days and provide a telephone number as to where you can be reached (or make sure your cell phone has coverage in that other location.)

General Reminders:

1. Keep all lodging receipts (hotel bill, apartment rent, etc.) and receipts associated with lodging (electric bill, phone/cable hook-up charges, etc.)
2. If you realize the cost of your lodging will exceed the maximum allowable rate once the per diem drops, (which is most likely if you are a single evacuee (i.e. spouse only, meaning no children) contact your FSR for assistance in the process for requesting the lodging remain at a rate that will cover your costs. Please note: you must also show why you were not able to find lodging that stayed within the per diem rate (i.e. needed lodging close to public transportation, you safe haven

location has seasonal rates which increased after the first 30 days, etc.)

3. You do not need receipts for your “in and around” transportation, or the air freight replacement allowance, but don’t forget to list the transportation on each voucher, and the airfreight replacement allowance on your first voucher.
4. The cost of renting furniture, car seat, vacuum cleaner, and other such items, is reimbursable (check with your FSR and finance officer), but the cost of purchasing these items is not; NO EXCEPTIONS. Keep all receipts.
5. If you are enrolled in TRICARE overseas you are eligible to use TRICARE Prime in the States. If the local TRICARE office questions your eligibility because you are not enrolled in the local region, contact your FSR or the regional TRICARE office. Because this happens quite often, it is recommended that you print a copy of the TRICARE portability letter and carry it with you. It is also recommended you enroll in the local TRICARE region if the evacuation is extended beyond 30 days.
6. Check the expiration date of your passport, visa, ID card, etc. If you think they might expire while you are out on evacuation give yourself plenty of time to renew them.

DOD Resources:

- [MilOneSource link](#) – This site is more focused on natural disasters but points towards many DOD focused resources.
- [DOD Emergency Preparedness Guide](#)

My Culture

Directions: For each feature of culture, think of one example common to people in the United States or in the country where you were born. Afterwards, challenge yourself to understand ‘why’. Then research to learn how your host country would answer, again asking ‘why’ as appropriate.

1. Styles of dress	16. Concept of fairness
2. Ways of greeting people	17. Nature of friendship
3. Beliefs about hospitality	18. Foods
4. Importance of time	19. Greetings
5. Paintings	20. Ideas about clothing
6. Values	21. Facial expressions and hand gestures
7. Literature	22. Concept of self
8. Beliefs about child raising (children & teens)	23. Work ethic
9. Attitudes about personal space/privacy	24. Religious beliefs
10. Beliefs about the responsibilities of children & teens	25. Religious rituals
11. Gestures to show you understand what has been told to you	26. Concept of beauty
12. Holiday customs	27. Rules of polite behavior
13. Music	28. Attitude toward age
14. Dancing	29. The role of family
15. Celebrations	30. General worldview

⁸ The material in Appendix 1 was adapted from: [bridges.features.a.pdf \(peacecorps.gov\)](https://www.peacecorps.gov/bridges/features.a.pdf)

Comparing Cultures

Directions: This activity looks at several aspects of culture and compares the typical American position on these matters with that of your host country. In each case, the American view has been summarized and illustrated for you as adapted from the work of several intercultural experts including Edward Stewart, Milton Bennett, Gary Althen* and several authors in the Interact series from Intercultural Press. Time to do some research and to construct the host country view. How might someone from another culture view and/or judge you? Considering how these differences might manifest in everyday life, what challenges might you face as a result of these differences? How can you overcome these obstacles?

1. Attitude Towards Age

Emphasize physical beauty and youth.
Fire older people to hire younger people for less money. Judge a worker's worth based on production, not seniority.

American View—The American emphasis on concrete achievements and “doing” means that age is not highly valued, for the older you are the less you can accomplish. Age is also suspect because new is usually better in American culture, and the elderly are generally out of touch with what's new.

Host Country View:

2. Concept of Fate & Destiny

You can be whatever you want to be. Where there's a will there's a way.
The American dream is rags-to-riches.

American View—The concept of self-determination negates much of the influence of fate and destiny. Parents tell their children they can be whatever they want to be when they grow up. There are few givens in life, and people have little sense of external limits. Lack of success is their own fault.

Host Country View:

3. View of Human Nature

Courts consider a person innocent until he/she is proven guilty. People should be given the benefit of the doubt.
If left alone, people will do the right thing.
We need to discover how a vicious killer “went wrong.”

American View—People are considered basically and inherently good. If someone does an evil deed, we look for the explanation, for the reason why the person turned bad. People can and should be trusted; and we are fairly open to strangers, and willing to accept them.

Host Country View:

4. Attitude Towards Change

New is better.
A better way can always be found; things can always be improved upon.
Just because we’ve always done it that way doesn’t make it right.

American View—Change is considered positive, probably because Americans believe in the march of progress and the pursuit of perfection. Improvements will always move us closer and closer to perfection. Traditions can be a guide, but they are not inherently superior.

Host Country View:

5. Concept of Face

It’s important to tell it like it is, be straight with people.
Confrontation is sometimes necessary to clear the air.
Honesty is the best policy.

American View—In individualist cultures, no premium is put on saving face because people can take care of themselves. What other people think is not so crucial to survival or success. We can say what we think without worrying about hurting people’s feelings, and we likewise appreciate directness.

Host Country View:

6. Concept of Equality

People try to treat everyone the same.

While jogging, the President stops at McDonald's for morning coffee. Putting on airs is frowned upon.

American View—In a strong reaction to the repressive class structure in Europe, Americans created a culture virtually built around egalitarianism: the notion that no one is superior to anyone else because of birth, power, fame, or wealth. We are not all the same, but we are all of equal value.

Host Country View:

7. Attitude Towards Formality

Telling someone to help themselves to what's in the refrigerator is common. Using first names with people you've just met is fine.

Using titles like "Dr". for someone with a Ph.D. is presumptuous.

American View—Because of the strong egalitarian ethos, Americans tend to be casual and informal in social and professional interactions. Informality is also more necessary in a mobile society where people are always meeting new people. We don't stand on ceremony, nor use titles or rank in addressing each other.

Host Country View:

MILPERSMAN READING GUIDE

All documents referenced below are readily accessible on MyNavy HR at:

<https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/References/MILPERSMAN/1000-Military-Personnel/>

This is a fairly comprehensive list of MILPERSMAN (MPM) articles used in Millington to reference career process policies and procedures. The MILPERSMAN articles also reference the appropriate Instructions and Directives that allow, dictate, or restrict our personnel actions overall.

While chapter and verse reading is unnecessary, general familiarity is essential for educated mentoring of junior FAOs as well as knowledge for your own career. If nothing else, keep this guide saved on a desktop for quick reference.

1. OMPF AND RECORD MANAGEMENT
 - a. MPM 1070-020 (OMPF)
 - b. MPM 1070-111 (OMPF Submissions)
 - c. MPM 1070-170 (Documents Filed in OMPF)
 - d. MPM 1070-180 (Officer Photos)
 - e. MPM 1070-320 (Administrative Remarks)
 - f. MPM 1301-900 (Subspec Codes and Education)
 - g. MPM 1000-150 (BCNR)

2. BOARDS
 - a. MPM 1401-010 (Correspondence to Admin Boards)
 - b. MPM 1420-010 (Correspondence to Statutory Boards)
 - c. MPM 1420-050 (FOS Counseling)
 - d. MPM 1420-070 (Promotion Withhold or Delay)

3. FAO-SPECIFIC
 - a. MPM 1213-020 (FAO AQD Suspension and Removal)
 - b. MPM 1301-809 (FAO Milestone Policy)

4. ASSIGNMENT AND DISTRIBUTION (GENERAL)
 - a. MPM 1300-010 (Flag Level Review of Detailing)
 - b. MPM 1300-035 (Outside DOD Detailing)
 - c. MPM 1300-500 (Reassignment for Humanitarian Reasons (HUMS))
 - d. MPM 1300-600 (Twilight Tours)
 - e. MPM 1300-1000 (COLO and Single Parent Assignment Policy)
 - f. MPM 1300-1100 (Immediate Family Assignment Policy)
 - g. MPM 1300-1200 (Safety Transfers)
 - h. MPM 1300-1205 (Expedited Transfers)
 - i. MPM 1300-1306 (Pregnancy Policy)
 - j. MPM 1301-010 (Transfer for Medical Treatment)
 - k. MPM 1320-300 (Types of Orders)
 - l. MPM 1320-314 (TDY Travel Orders)

5. OFFICER DETAILING POLICY (GENERAL)
 - a. MPM 1301-100 (Officer Distribution – Overview)
 - b. MPM 1301-102 (Officer Distribution – Process)
 - c. MPM 1301-104 (Officer Distribution – Tour Lengths and Rotations)
 - d. MPM 1301-106 (Time On Station (TOS))
 - e. MPM 1301-108 (Retainability)
 - f. MPM 1301-110 (Sea and Shore Tour Lengths)
 - g. MPM 1301-114 (NAVPERSCOM)
 - h. MPM 1301-116 (USNA Instructor Tour Lengths)
 - i. MPM 1301-120 (JDAL Tour Lengths)
 - j. MPM 1301-122 (Operational Screening – Officer)

6. OFFICER SPECIAL ASSIGNMENTS
 - a. MPM 1301-200 (Officer Special Assignments – General)
 - b. MPM 1301-202 (Nominative Billets)
 - c. MPM 1301-205 (USNA)
 - d. MPM 1301-207 (DAS)
 - e. MPM 1301-216 (Joint Duty Assignments)
 - f. MPM 1301-217 (NATO Billets)
 - g. MPM 1301-225 (LIMDU)
 - h. MPM 1301-227 (Officers Without Security Clearances)
 - i. MPM 1301-228 (PFA Failures)
 - j. MPM 1321-040 (COS, EA, Flag Sec, Aide)
 - k. MPM 1321-100 (PEP OBLISERV)

7. PCS ORDERS EXECUTION
 - a. MPM 1320-060 (PCS Delivery, Interpretation, and Execution)
 - b. MPM 1320-090 (Proceed Time)
 - c. MPM 1320-100 (Travel Time)
 - d. MPM 1320-140 (Reporting Policy)
 - e. MPM 1320-200 (TDY Travel Entitlement Policy)
 - f. MPM 1320-210 (Permissive TAD for Househunting)
 - g. MPM 1320-220 (Permissive TDY for Househunting)
 - h. MPM 1320-306 (PCS Transfer Orders Delivery and Interpretation)
 - i. MPM 1320-308 (PCS Transfer Orders Execution)
 - j. MPM 1320-310 (PCS Transfer Orders Endorsement)
 - k. MPM 1320-311 (PCS Mods and Cancellations)
 - l. MPM 1320-312 (PCS Clarifications and Travel Claims)

8. PCS ENTITLEMENT POLICY
 - a. MPM 1300-090 (PCS Entitlements – Overview)
 - b. MPM 1300-100 (PCS Entitlements – General and Specific Policies)
 - c. MPM 1300-130 (Reimbursement for POC Travel)
 - d. MPM 1300-140 (Unique PCS Entitlements)
 - e. MPM 1300-400 (DLA Policy)

9. OCONUS ORDERS POLICY

- a. MPM 1300-300 (Overseas – Remote General Info)
- b. MPM 1300-302 (OCONUS Suitability and Selection)
- c. MPM 1300-304 (Overseas Screen and Reporting)
- d. MPM 1300-306 (OSS Deficiency Reports and Early Return)
- e. MPM 1300-308 (Overseas Tour Lengths and Types)
- f. MPM 1300-310 (Overseas Extensions)
- g. MPM 1050-410 (COT and IPCOT)

10. DEPENDENT OCONUS POLICY

- a. MPM 1300-150 (Overview)
- b. MPM 1300-160 (Applicability and Definitions)
- c. MPM 1300-170 (Criteria and Status)
- d. MPM 1300-180 (Status Change, Prohibitions, and Entry Approval)
- e. MPM 1300-190 (Transportation at Government Expense)
- f. MPM 1300-200 (Overseas Station Allowances)
- g. MPM 1300-210 (Policies on Non-Command Sponsored Dependents)
- h. MPM 1300-316 (Dependent Entry Approval Info)
- i. MPM 1750-010 (Student Dependent Transportation CONUS-OCONUS)

11. LEAVE POLICY

- a. MPM 1050-010 (Leave Policy)
- b. MPM 1050-082 (Leave, Proceed, and Travel Time)
- c. MPM 1050-083 (Leave During PCS)
- d. MPM 1050-120 (Separation Leave)
- e. MPM 1050-150 (Leave Enroute In Execution of Orders)
- f. MPM 1050-160 (Leave During TDY)
- g. MPM 1050-170 (Leave ICW TAD)
- h. MPM 1050-200 (R&R Leave)
- i. MPM 1050-210 (FEMLE)
- j. MPM 1050-250 (Foreign Leave Travel)
- k. MPM 1050-415 (Parental Leave)

12. EFM AND MISC MEDICAL STUFF

- a. MPM 1300-700 (EFM)
- b. MPM 1740-020 (Info Concerning Pregnant Members)
- c. MPM 1740-030 (Maternity Care)

13. ADVERSE MATTERS

- a. MPM 1611-010 (Officer Separations for Cause)
- b. MPM 1611-020 (Officer DFC)
- c. MPM 1640-080 (Officer Transfer for Confinement)
- d. MPM 1920-260 (Officer UA)

14. SEPARATIONS AND RESIGNATIONS

- a. MPM 1900-030 (Surviving Family Member)
- b. MPM 1900-120 (Medical Condition Not Amounting to Disability)
- c. MPM 1920-010 (ADSEP)
- d. MPM 1920-020 (Involuntary Separation Pay – Overview)
- e. MPM 1920-030 (Involuntary Separation Pay – Definitions and Policy)
- f. MPM 1920-040 (Involuntary Separation Pay – Eligibility and Restrictions)

- g. MPM 1920-050 (Involuntary Separation Pay – Reserve Requirements and Obligations)
- h. MPM 1920-060 (Involuntary Separation Pay – Calculation and Documentation)
- i. MPM 1920-080 (Release Prior to Min Required Service)
- j. MPM 1920-090 (Release from AD Procedures)
- k. MPM 1920-100 (Early Release of Officers from AD)
- l. MPM 1920-120 (Separation by Other than Selection Board)
- m. MPM 1920-130 (Officer Separations – General)
- n. MPM 1920-140 (Separation Orders for Officers)
- o. MPM 1920-180 (Separation for Pregnancy – Childbirth)
- p. MPM 1920-190 (Types of Officer Resignation)
- q. MPM 1920-200 (Officer Resignation Procedures)
- r. MPM 1920-210 (Types of Discharge for Officers)
- s. MPM 1920-230 (Officer Separation – Other)

15. RETIREMENT

- a. MPM 1331-010 (Voluntary Extensions on AD)
- b. MPM 1800-020 (Retirement Orders and Authorization)
- c. MPM 1810-020 (Retirement Request)
- d. MPM 1811-010 (Retire/Retain)
- e. MPM 1900-040 (Retirement in a Restricted Status)

16. RESERVE COMPONENT

- a. MPM 1301-600 (RC – Voluntary and Involuntary Recall or Mobilization)
- b. MPM 1321-105 (Indefinite Recall)
- c. MPM 1321-110 (Definite Recall)

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ALUSNA	American Legation U.S. Naval Attaché
A/ALUSNA	Assistant Naval Attaché
AG	Agricultural Office®
AIRA	Air Attaché
A/AIRA	Assistant Air Attaché
ARMA	Army Attaché
A/ARMA	Assistant Army Attaché
ASTP	Attaché Staff Training Program
ATP	Attaché Training Program
Bs & Cs	Briefings and Consultations
CCA	Civilian Clothing Allowance
CCMD	Combatant Command(er)
Chargé	<i>Chargé d’Affaires ad interim</i> ; acting Ambassador
CLO	Community Liaison Office
CODEL	Congressional Delegation
COGATT	Coast Guard Attaché
COLA	Cost of Living Allowance
COM	Chief of Mission (Ambassador)
Comm Ctr	Communications Center
CONGEN	Consul General; head of Consulate
CONS	Consular Section, U.S. Embassy
COT	Consecutive Overseas Tour
CMR	Chief of Mission Residence
DAO or USDAO	Defense Attaché Office
DAS	Defense Attaché Service
DATT or SDO/DATT	Defense Attaché or Senior Defense Official/Defense Attaché
DCM	Deputy Chief of Mission
DHS	Defense HUMINT Service
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DIA	Defense Intelligence Agency
DIAM	DIA Manual
DLO	Defense Liaison Officer
DODEA	Department of Defense Education Activities
DTDT	Domicile to Duty
DTG	Date Time Group; message identifier
DV/VIP	Distinguished Visitor/Very Important Person
ECON	Economic Section of Embassy
E&E	Emergency & Extraordinary Expenses
EFM	Eligible Family Member(s); State Dept employment code
EFMP	Exceptional Family Member Program
FA	Federal Aviation Administration
FAM	Foreign Affairs Manual
FAMER	Family Member Employment Report
FEML	Funded Environmental and Morale Leave
FLPB	Foreign Language Proficiency Bonus
GCLO	Global Community Liaison Office; parent to CLO; formerly “FLO”
FMO	Financial Management Office

FS	Foreign Service, also known as FSO Foreign Service Officer
FSI	Foreign Service Institute
FSH	Family separation Housing
FSN	Foreign Service National
GEI/GEA	Global Employment Initiative/Global Employment Advisor
GSO	General Services Office
HCN	Host Country National
HRO	Human Resources Office(r)
ICASS	International Cooperative Administrative Support services
ITO	Invitational Travel Orders
JTR	Joint Travel Regulation
JMAS	Joint Military Attaché School
LES	Locally Employed Staff; formerly FSN: Foreign Service National
MARA	Marine Attaché
MGT	Management Office(r)
MOH	Member of Household
MSG	Message, also Marine Security Guard
NDSP	Non-DOD Schools Program
NFATC	National Foreign Affairs Training Center
NMFA	National Military Family Association
OBC	Overseas Briefing Center
OHA	Overseas Housing Allowance
OPS ASST/NCO	Operations Assistant or Non-Commissioned Officer
OPSCO	Operations Coordinator
OSO	Operations Support Officer; Reports Officer at DIA
p.f.	<i>"pour feliciter"</i> – To congratulate; used on calling cards
p.m.	<i>"pour memoire"</i> – To remind; used on invitations
PAO	Public Affairs Office/ Press Attaché
Ps & Is	Privileges & Immunities
PIT	Part-time Intermittent Temporary; State Dept employment code
PNG	<i>Persona non grata</i> ; host country demand for an individual to leave
POL/MIL	Political Military Section in Embassy
R.S.V.P.	<i>"Repondez s'il vous plait/</i> Please reply, used on invitations
RMO	Regional Medical Office(r)
RMOP	Regional Medical Officer Psychiatrist
ROE	Rate of Exchange
RSO	Regional Security Office(r)
SDP	Savings Deposit Program
SCO	Security Cooperation Office(r) (also ODC, MILGP, etc.
STP	Spouse Training Program
TLA	Temporary Lodging Allowance
TOP	Tricare Overseas Program
U.S. Res	United States citizen residing in your host country