



A GUIDE FOR SERVICE FAMILIES ON MOVING

This aide memoire offers general guidance, and acts as a reminder for Service families (both serving and non serving members of the family) who are about to move. Its aim is to cover the essentials for moves both within the UK and overseas and for all levels of experience. It cannot cover all specialist requirements, so it is important that you consult your Services' personnel or admin staff if you are uncertain as to what action is needed. There are many agencies that can give you help and advice and these are mentioned within this guide. Do start to plan your move as soon as possible and do inform support/administrative staff in your new location of any particular needs you have. **Do not wait** until you arrive in your new location. There are certain actions/forms that the Serving spouse is required to complete. If your spouse is away on duty, please seek help and advice from your unit personnel or administrative office. This guide cannot be used as an authority for claims or provision of services. If you have access to the internet this information and links to other useful web sites can be found at www.sftf.mod.uk. There are also individual Service sites that can help:

Royal Navy www.rncom.mod.uk
Army www.army.mod.uk/soldierwelfare/index.htm
Royal Air Force..... www.rafcom.co.uk

If you have any queries about your move your unit contact is:

This guide has been produced by the Service Families Task Force. Any suggested amendments should be sent to the SFTF, Level 7 Zone C, Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB or email sppolsc-families-office@mod.uk.

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Family Guide to the Posting/Drafting Process

Relocation Countdown

Note: unfortunately late notice postings/draftings are sometimes received, or the official posting order can arrive late. Although a posting authority is required for housing applications and other aspects of your move **start planning early**. It maybe possible for your unit to obtain the posting authority ahead of receiving the posting order.

Start

Notification of a Posting
-start the process-

As soon as possible

Children's Schooling?
Moving Overseas? - Passports for all the family
Health issues? - discuss with GP
Special requirements? - notify your new unit
Pets to move?
Private Housing? - consider options, contact agents

Within 14 days

Housing
application

The next steps

Spouse Employment - handing in notice?
- looking/applying for new job?
Adult Education
Benefits

On receipt of new address

Apply for Removals
School Admissions
Pet arrangements
Local Information

8 -6 weeks before move

Mandatory DE-HD Pre Move 'Advisory Visit'
(applies to those in SFA in GB & NI only)
Packers' survey
Disturbance Allowance
Apply for Cleaning Scheme?

28 days before move

Address confirmation
Change of Address
Transit Accommodation
Movements (ferries Flights/tickets etc).
Check entitlement to allowances and travel

Final countdown

Double check arrangements
Prepare for packers
Pets and toddlers
Pack essentials
Fridge/Freezer
Moving Day refreshments
Emergency contact
Check house
Handover house!

Settling in

Takeover house
Unpack
Doctor/Dentist
Information Support

HOUSING

When serving within the Armed Forces the principle is that you will be provided with family accommodation (if you are married/Civil Partnership accompanied, or have care & custody of dependent children) at the duty station of the serving person, if the family require it. There are of course exceptions: some postings/draftings are unaccompanied and in some stations there can be delays in providing suitable accommodation. In GB housing is provided through the Defence Estates Housing Directorate (DE-HD), whereas in Northern Ireland and overseas it is through other housing providers. However, the policy for the provision of family accommodation is the same in the different areas, although there are some differences in procedures. The application form for housing is the **MOD Form 1132**, (for moves overseas and Northern Ireland the form **AFA10** is sometimes still used). This form needs to be signed by the unit and by the serving spouse, but if the serving spouse is away, you should consult your unit for assistance. The main procedures are outlined below. If you need adaptations to your house due to special requirements, then you must supply Authoritative Evidence to enable the housing authority to carry out the works required. If you are uncertain as to the housing entitlement relating to your appointment, rank or family size, please consult your unit personnel staff. If you are intending to use a proxy to perform your move in/out please be aware that you are bound by any decisions they may make on your behalf.

Private Accommodation: If you live in your own accommodation, you may wish to let or sell your property, or you may be considering buying a house on posting. The Joint Service Housing Advice Office (JSHAO) can advise you (tel: 01722 436575). You can also obtain contact details for local estate/letting agent from the HIVE (if there is one in your new location). You may be entitled to assistance with legal expenses or other relocation expenses. Unit personnel/allowances staff will be able to advise. If you wish to move into Service housing at your new location you must submit an application form (MOD FORM 1132). There are many other issues related to buying selling a property. Your estate agent should be able to provide you with a checklist of the actions you need to take.

MOVING TO AND FROM GB

Posted within GB?

In GB, the Defence Estates Housing Directorate (DE-HD) will only be able to start the process of arranging housing once they have received the application form for Service Family Accommodation (normally referred to as SFA). Their aim is to provide you with the address of your new house as early as possible. Applications may be made up to 4 months before the date you require your new house. Within 15 working days of receiving a properly completed application form, DE-HD aim to provide you with either the address of your new house or a Non-Availability Certificate for Substitute Service Family Accommodation. To assist the housing department to operate this service, when you receive your Posting/Drafting Order, you should do the following:

- ❑ Notify your existing housing office that you are posted. This should be done as soon as possible after notification of posting/drafting and must be done **within 14 days** of receipt of the Posting/Drafting Order (unless you are deployed on operations or at sea when this may not be possible, in which case you are to notify the housing office within 14 days of your return). This enables the DE-HD to assist you in making arrangements to vacate your house and also enables them to pre-allocate your house to an incoming family.
- ❑ If you require Service housing at your next location, you must submit a housing application form for accommodation (MOD Form 1132) to the DE Housing Regional Relocation Office for your new duty station, signed by the appropriate authority (there are different procedures depending upon which Service you are with).
- ❑ If there are special circumstances under which you wish to retain your current house, submit a request for retention to your current DE Housing Regional Relocation Office. There are a number of circumstances - such as educational, welfare, medical or other Service related reasons - which may entitle you to retain your existing house. (Your Unit Personnel/Welfare Office can advise you). You can also seek advice from Children's Education Advisory Service [CEAS] on education issues and your Services welfare staff on welfare issues. (See telephone numbers at the end of this guide).

However, check with your Unit Personnel staff as to whether there are any implications and costs in not moving to your new duty station e.g. eligibility for Continuity of Education Allowance

- ❑ Contact your local DE-HD housing office to arrange a mandatory Pre-Move Out Advisory Visit at least 2 months before your intended date of vacation. This is to assist you in preparing your house for vacation, enables the housing staff to explain how the occupant-funded 'opt in cleaning scheme' operates, and helps them to establish the extent of any works needed on the house before it can be re-occupied. You will be requested to confirm your move out date at this visit.
- ❑ Notify the housing office of the date you are moving out of your house as soon as you know.
- ❑ If you wish to opt into the Pre-Payment Cleaning Scheme operated by DE-HD in GB and have not yet applied to do so, you must contact your local DE-HD Customer Care Centre at least 28 days prior to move out.

Posted into GB from Northern Ireland or from an overseas location?

The DE Director Housing only operates in GB; housing overseas or in Northern Ireland is controlled through the local command. This means the procedures can be slightly different. If you are posted into GB from Northern Ireland or an overseas location, you should do the following:

- ❑ Tell your local Service housing authority that you are posted and ensure that you understand the local instructions regarding the vacation of your house.
- ❑ Contact the housing (DE-HD) office in the location to which you are being posted in GB. Submit an application form for housing (MOD Form 1132), and ensure that the housing office understands any particular circumstances which need to be taken into account in the allocation process - for example timings, special requirements and personal preferences. You may submit an application form up to 4 months before the date you require your house in GB, and the housing staff will attempt, whenever possible, to provide you with either the address of your new house or a Non-Availability Certificate for Substitute Service Family Accommodation (SSFA) within 15 working days of receiving a properly completed housing application form. (Note SSFA is where appropriate accommodation is rented for you instead of having a Service house. Your unit or the DE-HD will be able to give you more details)
- ❑ Vacate your house in accordance with local instructions. If you are posted from Northern Ireland you will be able to take advantage of the Northern Ireland Move Out scheme which will deep clean your house after you have vacated it. In Northern Ireland you will also need to book a pre-move out advisory visit through the housing staff, who will be able to advise on the standard required to meet the Move In/Move Out scheme, thus preventing unnecessary cleaning before handover.
- ❑ If you are posted from Germany, you will be able to opt into the occupant-funded cleaning scheme operated in that theatre. In other areas overseas check with your local housing representative on what local cleaning arrangements might be in operation.

Posted from GB to Northern Ireland or an overseas location

If you are posted from GB to NI or to an overseas location, you should do the following:

- ❑ Notify your existing DE-HD Office that you are posted within 14 days of receipt of the Posting/Drafting Order (unless you are deployed on operations or at sea when this may not be possible, in which case you are to notify DE-HD within 14 days of your return). This enables DE-HD to assist you in making arrangements to vacate your house and also enables DE-HD to pre-allocate your house to an incoming family.
- ❑ If appropriate, submit an application for a Service house to the housing authority at your new duty station (Families Housing Service in Northern Ireland and Service housing authority in other overseas locations). You will then receive an information pack which explains the procedures for moving into Service housing at the respective location. If you are posted to Northern Ireland, you will be able to take advantage of the Northern Ireland Move In scheme which enables you to specify the interior decoration of your house.

- ❑ If appropriate, submit a request for retention of your existing Service house to your current DE-HD Office, if there are educational, welfare, medical or other Service related reasons which would entitle you to retain your existing SFA.
- ❑ Contact the DE-HD to arrange a mandatory Pre-Move Out Advisory Visit at least 2 months before your intended date of vacation. This is to assist you in preparing your house for vacation, enables DE-HD to explain how the occupant funded opt in cleaning scheme operates, and helps DE-HD establish the extent of any works needed on the SFA before it can be re-occupied.
- ❑ Notify DE-HD of your vacation date.
- ❑ If you wish to opt into the Pre-Payment Cleaning Scheme operated by DE-HD in GB and have not yet applied to do so, you must contact your local DE-HD Customer Care Centre before the 28-day point.

Transit Accommodation - You may be entitled to transit accommodation to help your move to your new locality (up to five nights). Consult your unit personnel staff on eligibility. If there is no Service-provided transit accommodation, the Central Hotel Booking Service should be used to book accommodation, tel: 08457 585376. Please note that if you make private arrangements you may not be entitled to a full refund. The Services Cotswold Centre can also supply 3 or 4 bedroom chalets. Contact through your Service welfare staff or direct on 01225 810358.

Further information. More information on SFA in the UK can be found by looking at the DE website, www.defence-estates.mod.uk/sfa/intro.htm. If you require any further information, you should contact your local housing staff.

Pets - You should check whether there are any restrictions on keeping pets in your new location - also see the advice for moving to/returning from overseas below.

Applying for Removals - On receipt of your posting or movement authority, or within 8 weeks of your planned move date, you should obtain the relevant removals application form (F MOV 713 Overseas/AF P9727 UK) from your unit. Different rules apply depending upon where you are moving to, so check with your unit what you are required to do. If your future Service house/delivery address is not known, the form should be annotated as such with 'Address to be confirmed' and then forward the application as directed to prevent a delay in it being processed on time. You should also contact your current and future DE-HD Customer Care Offices to discuss your move in/out appointment before making arrangements for removals as difficulties can occur if dates are not co-ordinated.

- ❑ Within the UK and NW Europe, married and single homeowners and householders may normally move up to 67.92 M³. Ask your unit for the full details of your entitlement. (Exceptional authority can be sought for excess baggage or weekend moves in special circumstances. Seek advice through your unit). The unit will contract a removal firm to undertake the move.
- ❑ Once you have been informed which removal firm will be used, you will be required to liaise with them directly to organise the move itself. The contractor will carry out a pre-move survey to estimate the amount to be moved: they will require access to all areas of your house/garage/shed/cellar. You should tell them if you require boxes to allow you to pre-pack prior to this survey, so that the surveyor can deliver them at the time of the survey.
- ❑ Insure your belongings in transit; do not assume you are already covered.
- ❑ You should also check what items the company will move - pianos and garden sheds may need special arrangements. You should note that for some overseas locations you may not be able to move all your possessions with you and some may have to go into storage. There is an allowance for storage in the UK - your unit will be able to advise you. You should also be aware that there are restrictions on first and last moves - check with your unit personnel staff.

MOVING TO/RETURNING FROM OVERSEAS

Moving Overseas:

Start Planning Early! there are extra arrangements and considerations for overseas moves, which will depend upon which country you are posted to; but you should note the following:

- ❑ Ensure your unit has completed F/Mov/564 and if travelling as a family an F/Mov/546. This is sent to the Defence Passenger Reservations Centre (DPRC). You should then receive an information pack from them. If you do not contact your movements clerk. DPRC tel no is 0207 305 4800.
- ❑ Complete a MOD FORM 1132 for a Service house if required.
- ❑ Complete and return the 'Certificate of Willingness to travel' to DPRC which they will have sent you.
- ❑ Apply for/or renew passports (these are supplied free to family members, or costs can be reimbursed when your spouse is posted overseas): spouses and children (even babies) need separate passports, although passports which currently include children on a spouse's passport will remain valid until renewal. Non-EEC spouses will need to have their passports endorsed with a status stamp. DPRC can advise. If you intend to travel through other countries there may be other entry requirements. You can also seek advice through the National Passport Helpline tel: 0870 521 0410.
- ❑ Finance: Make sure your financial matters are in order - you will need to open a bank account overseas. You are advised to maintain your UK bank account to enable you to pay out outstanding debts or receive payments from the Department of Work and Pensions and Inland Revenue such as Child Benefit and child tax credits, if entitled. Maintenance of a UK bank account will also help you to keep your credit rating in the UK. You can make arrangements as to how much of your pay is paid into each account. There are also a number of other financial issues you need to be aware of when on an overseas posting/drafting, such as rates of local overseas allowance, cost of living, local banking arrangements. You will need to speak to your unit personnel/welfare/admin staff to find out the details.
- ❑ Voting: don't lose your right to vote. Service personnel and their spouses need to be on the electoral register to vote in UK elections or referendums. You can register to vote as a Service, ordinary or overseas voter. If you are based overseas you can register as a Service voter by filling in an electoral registration form for members of the Armed Forces. If you are based in the UK, as well as having the option to register as a Service voter, you can chose to register as an ordinary voter by filling in a standard registration form which is obtained from your Electoral Registration Officer. Full details on how to register and the voting options open to you are contained in JSDCI01/05. Additional information, details of Electoral Registration Officers and application forms and instructions to register as Service voters are contained on the Electoral Commission website www.aboutmyvote.co.uk.
- ❑ Travel/health insurance: The MOD will supply medical care at your posting/drafting location. However, if you are travelling to, or through, other areas whilst abroad, you will need medical insurance. If travelling within the EU you should have a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC), which allows for free emergency treatment whilst travelling between EU countries, but it is advisable to also have your own medical insurance whilst travelling. You can obtain an EHIC application form from the Department of Health website www.dh.gov.uk/travellers or your local post office. You may need vaccinations depending upon where you are going or which countries you intend to visit - check with your GP or unit medical officer.
- ❑ Baggage Insurance: Insure your belongings in transit - do not assume you are already covered. You will receive a copy of the baggage guide F/Mov/713 from your unit, which will tell you how to move your belongings. It will be your responsibility to complete and submit the relevant form as instructed in the baggage guide. You should note that you may not be able to move all your possessions with you overseas and some may have to go into storage. Your entitlements include storage in the UK at public expense.

- **Pets:** Make arrangements for your pets. The Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) (tel: +44 (0)870 241 1710 (Monday to Friday - 8.30am to 5pm UK time) can advise you on the Pets Passport Scheme. If you are moving pets, make sure you have the appropriate cage/means of transport. You should note that there are restrictions on the keeping of pets depending upon the country you are going to (for example certain types of dogs are banned in Germany), so consult the unit where you are being posted, or the Garrison Station Staff Officer.
- **Medical:**
 - ✚ Check that you have all the appropriate medical documents. If you are pregnant or have recently had a baby, there will be restrictions on travel.
 - ✚ If any of your family have any special needs or medical requirements you must inform the unit personnel staff, as there can be limited facilities/medical care available overseas (especially Cyprus) and not all specialist care is available. However, the sooner you inform the personnel staff, the more likely it is that arrangements can be made to provide the care.
 - ✚ Patients with ongoing health needs should ensure an adequate supply of medication before posting/drafting, as some drugs need resourcing from the UK, which can cause a delay.
 - ✚ You should take your NHS card with you - if you don't already have one, you can get one from your GP.
 - ✚ If you have a complex medical history, request a copy of your computer record to take with you. This will help your new GP whilst records are being forwarded.
- **Education:** Check with CEAS on the education facilities at your overseas posting/drafting. You must inform them if you have any children with special educational needs. It is not possible to provide the full range of specialist educational help overseas, due to the limited numbers of children being educated compared to a UK local authority. There are also not the resources to provide the full range of specialist staff. You should take your children's educational documents with you and not put them in storage. If you have children in boarding school, you are advised to contact your unit personnel/admin staff to advise you on school children's visits. You are only covered for 3 visits (the school holidays) a year. Half terms are not covered and you are responsible for any escort arrangements for your children. Children in higher education will only get one paid flight a year.
- **Employment:** You should take original copies of any qualifications you have in case they are needed in applying for a job.
- **Social Care:** If you or your family are receiving any ongoing Social Services advice you discuss with your advisor how this is to continue overseas - they may need to contact the Headquarters of the Sailors, Soldiers, Airmen and Families Association (SSAFA) who provide the statutory social services for the Armed Forces overseas.
- **Uniform:** If the posting/drafting is to a warm weather location there are specific uniform requirements for the serving spouse. There can be long lead times to order the specific clothing so early contact with the appropriate unit department is essential.
- **Compassionate Leave Travel:** There are specific rules and arrangements in place for compassionate leave travel. A guide on the action close relatives should take in the event of an emergency are available from your unit. Please make sure you obtain and pass a copy to them.
- **Loan Service:** Check you have seen the Blue Book on your posting location and have as much local information as possible. Blue Books are available from your Personnel Desk Officer at your Postings Branch.

Returning from Overseas

You will need to consider similar factors when moving back to the UK, remember:

- **Housing:** complete and submit your MOD FORM 1132.
- Make sure your passports are in date.

- ❑ Education: if you have school children apply for a school. The local HIVE can give you details of schools in the new area. CEAS can also provide advice. If your child is at a SCE school before leaving you will need to collect a school transfer folder to pass to the new school.
- ❑ Insurance: Make sure you have the necessary insurances for your goods (and yourself if required).
- ❑ Pets: If you are bringing pets back into the UK, check on the requirements. You can obtain advice by ringing +44 (0)2411710. Your unit personnel staff may also be able to advise. If you are using the Pets Passport Scheme you need to start early, as it can take 6 months to put into effect, because of various vaccination requirements. If bringing plants or foodstuffs back check whether there are restrictions by ringing +44 (0) 1904 45 5174 (for example, there are strict rules on the import of meat and dairy products into Northern Ireland).
- ❑ Cars: There are rules on the importation of cars into the UK. More information can be obtained by ringing the Helpline +44 (0) 208 929 0152. If moving from Germany you must contact the German licensing office at least 28 days before your move. Failure to adhere to regulations may result in prosecution.
- ❑ Check with your unit on any other local requirements that you may have to comply with.
- ❑ Medical: If you are undergoing medical treatment speak with your GP/consultant to ensure that they have identified a suitable provider to take over your care in your new location. De-register with your Medical Centre, informing them of your new location.
- ❑ Money: Close any bank accounts opened overseas (this is not mandatory but advisable. Consult the pay staff as to an appropriate date, to avoid closing an account before payments are made into it). Settle any outstanding debts. Pass details of your new address to the unit, firms etc.

EDUCATION

Moving schools can be difficult and there are a number of issues you may need to be aware of:

- ❑ Availability of places at the preferred school
- ❑ School starting ages differ between Scotland, Northern Ireland and England and
- ❑ Differences in curriculum in Scotland, Northern Ireland, England & Wales
- ❑ Differences in examinations
- ❑ Differences in provision for children with special needs between Local Education Authorities

But don't worry; there are solutions to these issues. If you have concerns, or do not understand the education system in the area you are moving to, you are advised to contact Children's Education Advisory Service [CEAS] for advice. CEAS is a joint Service organisation which exists specifically to give advice and help on all Service children's educational matters including special educational needs. It is advisable to start early to give more time to resolve problems. If you are moving between areas within the UK, especially at critical times in your children's education, or have children with special needs, or have difficulties you cannot solve locally, then contact CEAS.

The CEAS Helpline is available for any Service children's education questions. Tel: 01980 618244 or visit their website www.ceas.mod.uk.

Note: If your child is at a critical stage of their education e.g. in their GCSE, AS or 'A' level year, you may be able to retain your house in your current posting/drafting to avoid having to disrupt their education. Seek advice from CEAS, and as necessary apply to your local housing office for retention of your Service house.

Overseas. In the major overseas areas there are Service Children's Education (SCE) schools which follow the English model of education. In other areas your children may have to go to the local school. Contact CEAS who will advise you what the education provision is for the area that you are posted to.

Finding a school

These are some basic steps to follow in finding a school:

- ❑ Find out details of schools in the new location. There are a number of sources including the Local Education Authority (LEA) (or equivalent body depending upon which area of the UK you are moving to), your new unit, HIVE (HIVE hold education packs on schools in their area) & CEAS. There are also many internet sites that can be of help, visit www.sftf.mod.uk to find some of them.
- ❑ If possible arrange to visit schools - inspection reports do not tell you whether the school will be suitable for your child. OFSTED reports are available on line, or from CEAS.
- ❑ Inform the old school (if appropriate) that your child will be moving this helps their planning. Don't worry, if you don't move, you will not lose your place in the school.
- ❑ Apply as soon as possible for your preferred school - there are different systems for each area with some schools (such as foundation schools) not under the admissions control of the local authority. The local authority will be able to advise you. The sooner you apply the sooner any problems can be sorted out. Do remember that although the law in England allows you to state a preference, it does not require the local authority to allocate your preferred school. The system for allocation of school places in Scotland and Northern Ireland differs, and there are also some differences in entry age to primary school and transfer age to secondary school as well as differences in curriculum. There are also some differences in Wales. You can obtain details from your local HIVE or through CEAS who can help you if you are worried about the education of your children. The problems are not insurmountable and your child's continuity of education can be assured - but please seek advice.
- ❑ If you are not satisfied with the school place offered you may appeal - you are advised to contact CEAS for advice on appeals if you wish to take this course of action. They can offer advice on the process, help in the wording of the appeal and they may be able to attend the appeal. However, before appealing,

do look at the school being offered - it may satisfy your requirements.

Pre-School Education

The statutory provision of pre-school education for 4 year olds is available throughout the UK, but provision for 3 year-olds is not yet available (normally 2 ½ hrs a day five days a week). Overseas, it is provided in areas where there is SCE provision. In areas overseas where there is no SCE provision, there is an allowance available to help offset the costs. Speak to CEAS for advice. Childcare/childminding is the responsibility of the individual, this can be difficult to find, so you are advised to make enquiries as to what is available in your new area as soon as possible, so that you can get your child on a waiting list where necessary. HIVEs can give you advice on availability. Childcare (tel: 0800 096 02 96) is a useful source of information on all aspects of childcare in England, Scotland and Wales. For pre-school education in Northern Ireland speak to your local HIVE or contact the appropriate Education and Library Board - telephone numbers are listed at the end of this aide memoire.

Special Education Needs (SEN)

If your child has SEN, then you are advised to contact and register as appropriate with the CEAS who can help in transferring between areas and ensure that the needs of your child are met. It is the responsibility of the local authority to provide suitable teaching for those children who have been statemented.

If you are posted overseas and have a child with SEN **you must inform CEAS**. Although SCE schools will try to meet the needs of your child they cannot cover all SEN requirements. Local authorities in UK are dealing with a far higher number of children, and consequently have the resources to offer a range of specialists. Please note that if you arrive overseas without having informed CEAS you may find that you are returned to the UK if they cannot meet your child's needs.

Other assistance for children who have special needs can be obtained from the SSAFA Forces Help Special Needs and Disability Advisor tel 0207 463 9234.

For advice on playgroups that welcome and cater for children with special needs, speak to the Tri-Service Early Years Development Officer tel 01722 436563. (See also advice under special equipment needs below).

Boarding School

Some parents may wish to consider boarding school for their child to ensure continuity of education. A continuity of education allowance (CEA) is available which can help towards the school fees (there is a minimum parental contribution of 10% of the fees; however, the amount that you have to pay can be greater, depending upon the school fees and other extras). There are special rules which apply to this allowance - ask your pay/administration office for details. CEAS can also advise you.

Need Education Advice? Ring CEAS: 01980 618244

HEALTH

Waiting Lists.

If you are on a waiting list for a consultation or an appointment take action **now**. Recent guidance from the Department of Health for England has shown that if a patient is transferred, the time already spent on the waiting list at the original hospital has to be taken into account at the new hospital. This should ensure that Service families are on a level footing with civilians who are not moving - (it will not resolve the general waiting list problem which is being dealt with under the NHS Plan). Unfortunately this requirement does not extend to other parts of the UK. However, irrespective of where you are moving within the UK, you are advised to take the following action (if moving overseas you must inform your unit personnel staff of any family medical problems).

You may have the option to:

- ❑ Remain on the waiting list of the original hospital for inpatient/outpatient treatment/appointment
- ❑ Arrange to transfer your care to a hospital in the area to which you are moving

You should discuss these options with your GP before coming to a decision. GPs should be aware of waiting times at the hospitals they may refer patients to. In addition, to help make an informed choice, patients can telephone the College of Health's Waiting List Helpline or NHS Direct to obtain information on waiting times both locally and in their prospective location. These telephone numbers are given below.

The College of Health Waiting List Helpline	0208 983 11 33
NHS Direct (England, Wales & Northern Ireland*)	0845 46 47
NHS 24 (Scotland although does not yet cover whole area)	0845 4 24 24 24

Note: advice on hospital waiting lists in Northern Ireland will be limited. However, they should be able to give you the number of the local hospital in the area you are going to. Alternatively visit or telephone your local HIVE who will be able to give you contact numbers.

If you choose to remain on the waiting list of the original hospital you should:

- ❑ Inform your GP, or equivalent, that you are about to move but have chosen to still have your inpatient/outpatient treatment at the original hospital.
- ❑ Inform the hospital you are about to move but have chosen to remain on the waiting list of the original hospital. Give new contact details so that the hospital can arrange a suitable date for treatment.
- ❑ Register with a new GP, or equivalent, upon arrival in the new location, inform the GP, or equivalent, that you are waiting for inpatient/outpatient treatment at the original hospital.
- ❑ Tell the original hospital the name and address of the new GP, or equivalent, so that post-operative continuity of care is assured.

If you have asked for your care to be transferred you should:

- ❑ Inform your GP, or equivalent, that you are about to move and have asked that your inpatient treatment be transferred to a hospital in the area to which you are moving.
- ❑ Keep in touch with the original hospital to get details of the hospital, (including name of consultant) to which you have been transferred.
- ❑ Register with a new GP, or equivalent, upon arrival in the new location, inform the GP that you are awaiting inpatient treatment at the new hospital.
- ❑ Tell the new hospital the name and address of the new GP, or equivalent. Confirm with the new hospital that you are on a waiting list for treatment. Also confirm that the length of the original wait will be taken into account and that treatment will be within the current maximum waiting time standard.

It is important to follow these steps so that health professionals are aware of your situation and can assist you in this transition. You should always ensure that you notify your GP and the hospital about a change of

address so that they can contact you swiftly. If you are experiencing problems then please notify your unit personnel staff.

Special Equipment Needs

If you need special adaptations to your house, please inform the DE-HD or equivalent housing authority for Northern Ireland or overseas. You will need a report from an occupational therapist so that suitable adaptations can be made to your new house. Community equipment (with the exception of wheelchairs), should be transferable between Local Authority areas. **Do not** accept any difficulties placed upon you by the local authority. Speak to your personnel staff in good time to allow them to assist you prior to your move.

There is not the same provision for the transfer of wheelchairs. However, NHS Executive Guidance HSG(96)34 states '*if a person who has been provided with a powered indoor/outdoor wheelchair moves into an area, where under local eligibility criteria they would not be eligible, the wheelchair should not be withdrawn unless there is a good clinical reason for doing so*'. Again, seek assistance from the unit personnel office and do not take no for an answer.

Orthodontic Treatment

Obtaining orthodontic treatment can be difficult and it is not always possible to transfer treatment between orthodontic specialists. This can cause difficulties due to the length of some treatments. You are advised to consult the orthodontist early on if any of your family is undergoing treatment to see how it can best be continued. If you have children at boarding school it is often best to have any treatment carried out at the school location so it can continue irrespective of moves. It is extremely difficult to find treatment on the NHS, and long waiting times should be expected.

Moving Overseas Please see the advice on page 7.

SPOUSE NATIONAL INSURANCE

Check that spouses/Civil Partner's National Insurance contributions are up to date. If you are working in the UK or for a UK company abroad (e.g. UKSC(G), NAAFI, SSVC) then you should be paying UK National Insurance class 1 contributions. If you are claiming Child Benefit in spouses name and the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) has their National Insurance number, they will usually get Home Responsibilities Protection (HRP). If the spouse has paid into the Social Security scheme of another country or thinks there may be a gap in their National Insurance contributions, please contact the local Inland Revenue office or the Inland Revenue's Centre for Non-Residence (on 0845 9 154 811 or, if outside the UK +44 191 225 4811) for guidance as additional payments may be advised. Further information can be found in the DWP Social Security booklet 'GL26 Service Families' and the Inland Revenue leaflet 'NI38 Social Security Abroad'.

SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT

There are a number of schemes in operation to help spouses find new employment. Check with your new unit to find out if there is a scheme in the area you are moving to - you may be able to register before you go. Alternatively, contact the local Jobcentre Plus. There are also a number of training schemes that are run to help spouses acquire new skills; find out more from your local HIVE. Your Service family association may also be able to help. The Army Families Association run Training Centres and an Employment Advice Service for spouses in various locations in GB, and publish a National Employment Handbook.

Job Seeker's Allowance

Claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) If you have given up your job as a result of your spouse's posting/drafting you are considered to be 'voluntarily unemployed' and have to show 'just cause' for leaving your employment. There are no hard rules on this, each case is judged on its merits. The following may help in justifying your claim:

- ❑ Ask your current employer for a transfer to your new location and get written confirmation if this is not possible,
- ❑ Get in touch with the Job Centre at your next location. Ask them for details of employers and vacancies.
- ❑ Send your CV to any prospective employers, as advised by the Job Centre Plus.
- ❑ Attend interviews offered, or have an explanation if unable to.
- ❑ Do not leave work too early, or your claim for JSA may be unsuccessful. 5 days should be acceptable i.e. day to prepare, day packing, day loading furniture, day cleaning house, day moving.
- ❑ If you have been unsuccessful in finding a job before moving, register with the Job Centre Plus on arrival. Do not delay, as you may miss out on days of possible entitlement.
- ❑ Explain (if appropriate) that you gave up your job because you had lost your accommodation, as Service families living in Service Families Accommodation have no security of tenure.

Moving Overseas:

If going overseas to an **EEA** country you may be able to claim JSA (you will not be able to claim for other countries). However, this can be more difficult, as there are several tests you need to pass:

- ❑ Leaving a job to accompany a spouse overseas will normally be considered 'just cause' and an exemption to the week rule will normally be made. However, it is necessary to have successfully claimed JSA for at least one day before going abroad. You will need to have ceased work at least 4 days before you move (the first 3 days of any JSA claim are considered 'waiting days' in which you will not be entitled to benefit). The problem is that the decision officer may consider that you are not available for work in this period so are not entitled to claim JSA - each case gets dealt with on its merits.
- ❑ You should inform The Pension Service that you are going abroad. Their address is: The Pension Service,

International Pension Centre, Tyneview Park, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE98 1BA. Tel: 0191 218 7777. They will send you form E303 which you will need to give to the equivalent of the Job Centre abroad.

- ❑ Make sure that your employer knows that you are 'leaving work to accompany your spouse on an overseas posting/drafting because otherwise you will be homeless'. Ensure that this reason is put on form ES85.
- ❑ The Job Centre can give you a special letter both in English and the language of the country to which you are moving.

No guarantee for eligibility to JSA can be given

Employers may require formal written leaving notice, check what notification they need. If you haven't contacted the Job Centre/Job Centre Plus at your new location you may wish to do so now. See advice on claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) above.

BENEFITS

Special provision is already made for Service families when overseas and they will normally be regarded as 'Resident in the UK' for benefit purposes. The following benefits should be payable to Service families overseas if all other qualifying criteria are met. However, each case is considered on its merits:

- ❑ Incapacity Benefit
- ❑ Disability Allowance
- ❑ Attendance Allowance
- ❑ Invalid Care Allowance
- ❑ Maternity Allowance is payable in EU countries provided that the claimant has recently been employed and paying UK National Insurance, as required in the rules. This may also apply to some non-EU countries. However, in countries where it is not payable there is an MOD ex-gratia payment scheme; a certificate to entitlement will be issued by the Benefits Agency which can then be used to make a claim through the pay office/Administrative Office.

This is only a summary: different rules of eligibility apply to each benefit. Any queries regarding social security benefit payments when going overseas should be addressed to The Pension Service in Newcastle tel: 0191 218 7777. There have been cases where the local benefit office has given incorrect advice, so do not take no for an answer. There is a social security leaflet **GL26** explaining the rules on benefit payments for Service Families which should be available through your local Social Security office. If you have a problem with benefit payments because you are overseas, please bring it to the attention of the SFTF through your unit/Service.

Working Tax Credit is paid by the Inland Revenue. If you are already in receipt of this Credit, payments should continue when you move overseas. However, you must inform the Inland Revenue of your new address. They should send you a reminder to renew your claim at the end of your current entitlement.

Sure Start Maternity Grant is paid by the Social Fund. You can apply for a Sure Start Maternity Grant if you or your partner have been awarded a qualifying benefit. You can claim this grant using the Sf100 Sure Start claim form, which can be obtained from the [DWP](#) website. Please annotate the personnel detail part of the form with 'HM Forces Staff' and send completed application forms to the Norwich Benefit Delivery Centre; PO Box 158; Norwich; Norfolk; NR1 1XE. For enquiries about the process of your application call +44 (0)845 850 0032 or email NorwichBDC.SFCrisisLoans@jobcentreplus.gsi.gov.uk.

Child Benefit is paid by the Inland Revenue in mainland Britain and overseas, and you need to notify them of your change of address - but not if your bank details remain the same! In Northern Ireland it is paid by the Department of a Health and Social Services. Check where to claim by contacting the Helpline listed below.

If you are moving from Northern Ireland to mainland Britain or from mainland Britain to Northern Ireland you will need to notify your Child Benefit paying department and re-register with the new department.

Contact the numbers below for more details:

- England, Wales and Scotland Tel 0845 30214444
- Northern Ireland Tel 0800 220674

OTHER ISSUES

Adult Education: Liaise with your college, university or Service Education Centre regarding the transfer of courses and exams to an educational establishment in your new area.

Support: If you are experiencing problems at home and the posting/drafting notification is causing distress, contact your unit personnel/welfare staff for help.

Local Information: Hives can give you information on the new local area - you should also receive a welcome pack from your new unit which will provide you with some key telephone numbers if you have any queries. You should also receive a copy of the local Service Community Official Guide.

Allowances: You should be entitled to Disturbance Allowance to help cover the essential expenses when moving. This is payable one month in advance of posting/drafting. Rates vary depending on your circumstances. Contact unit personnel/allowances staff to apply for Disturbance Allowance and to find out what other allowances you may be entitled to, such as Motor Mileage Allowance, and Nightly Rate of Subsistence Allowance.

Change of Address: You will want to inform the various agencies as well as family/friends/firms etc of your new address. You can arrange with Royal Mail in the UK for your mail to be forwarded for a small fee. See the checklist on the last page.

TV Licence: All Service personnel in the UK, or returning from abroad, whether living in Service Families Accommodation, messes or in Single living Accommodation, who use television receiving equipment to watch or record television programme services, are required to be covered by a valid TV licence. Those with existing licences must ensure they notify TV Licensing of a change of address. For further information on how to transfer your TV licence please visit www.tvlicensing.co.uk/moving, or call 0870 242 3349 (ensure you have your licence number to hand). Those returning to the UK from abroad, who need to buy a licence, can obtain one by visiting www.tvlicensing.co.uk or calling 0870 241 6462.

House Insurance: - You will need to move your house insurance to your new house. However, make sure the house you are handing back is still covered in case there is damage that you may be able to claim for on your insurance (depending upon the type of insurance you have taken out).

Credit Issues: - Some Service families find they have difficulty obtaining new credit when living or having lived overseas. To enable credit reference agencies to access information about you, it is advisable to keep a UK bank account open and in use even whilst overseas. To check that the information held by the credit reference agencies is correct you need to send a written request, stating all names you have been known by (including maiden name), your date of birth and all addresses at which you have lived over the past six years, together with a cheque for £2. Two of the more common credit reference agencies are Experian Ltd and Equifax Plc. You can contact these at:

Consumer Help Service,
Experian Ltd,
P O Box 8000,
Nottingham.
NG1 5GX
www.experian.co.uk
Tel: 0870 241 6212 (telephone service fee,
which requires credit or debit card is £2.50)

Credit File Advice Centre,
Equifax Plc,
P O Box 1140,
Bradford.
BD1 5US
www.equifax.co.uk
Tel: 0870 010 0583 (option 2)

Final Countdown

1 Week Prior To Move

Children's Education: Have you got the record of your child's education to take to the new school? (see Education advice at page 10)

Double Check Double-check all arrangements with the many agencies that you have dealt with up to this point. This offers an opportunity to clarify details and rectify potential problems, such as will the removal company remove pianos or garden sheds.

Pack: Your removal company will offer guidance in this area.

Pets: - What are the travel arrangements? Your veterinary surgeon can give help and advice. If taking a pet make sure you have enough pet food with you!

Telephone/TV: - You will need to arrange disconnection of your telephone and reconnection in you new location with your telephone provider. In the UK, BT can arrange call diversion for a short period if required. You will also need to arrange for cable television to be disconnected/reconnected and change you TV licence address. In some housing in Germany, you will not be allowed to use a satellite dish. Check with the local unit or Station Staff Officer.

3 Days Prior to Move

Pack Essentials - Pack a bag with a change of clothes and essential toiletries. Include a survival kit for the other end: light bulbs, toilet rolls, screwdriver and pliers, matches, paper towels, cash and a note of important telephone numbers. Do not forget any medication you might need. Passports/insurance/driving licence/foreign currency? Remember the boredom threshold of children on moves, especially those involving long journeys bag of 'goodies' to produce at critical and stressful times is a good idea!

2 Days Prior to Move

Fridge/Freezer. - Empty, defrost and dry out your fridge /freezer.

Moving Day Refreshments - Arrange for refreshments for the next day, bearing in mind that your cooker may be disconnected. Pack a carton of tea and coffee, UHT milk, juice cartons, biscuits etc. Plan the evening meal for the move day - it may be easier to eat out. Keep a kettle and tea handy for the packers! You are under no obligation to provide refreshments to the packers but a little bit of hospitality may assist in your smooth move!

Toddlers Keep small children occupied and out the way for their safety.

Pets - Also give thought to what is to happen to pets when the packers arrive. They will need to leave doors open and will be moving around. Keep them out of harms way.

Move Day

Emergency Contact - Give your removers an emergency contact number so they can get in touch in case of delays.

Check House: - Walk around the house to ensure all items to be moved have been placed in the removal vehicle. Do not forget to check the sheds and garages and behind doors! Make sure items belonging to the house are kept separately and not removed.

Handover the House: - Make sure that the house is ready for handover - it is always best to discuss any major problems with the housing staff *prior to handover*. You do not want to be delayed due to disagreements on damage for example. Any necessary repairs need to be planned by the housing staff - remember someone else like you will be moving into the house. Make sure you take a note of utility meter readings so you can check the final bill when it comes.

Settling In

Takeover your House: at the pre-arranged time as agreed by you and the housing authority. Make sure you check the condition of the house. Note any damage carefully and inform the housing authority (you normally have a period of grace in which to do this, check with the housing staff) - you do not want to be charged for any defects when you move out. If you are dissatisfied with the condition of the house make sure you raise it at the time with the housing representative. You may refuse to take the house if it does not fulfil the laid down entitlement or standard. In the event of dispute the unit commander of the unit you or your spouse are attached to will act as an arbitrator. Take note of the utility meter readings.

Unpack : Your removal company may undertake this task. Check if they are required to do so under the contract. If you intend to unpack your own belongings you will be asked to sign the release form - ensure you state on the form that there was insufficient time to unpack belongings. Make sure you report any dissatisfaction with the service - your removers have been contracted and are paid to provide a certain level of service. Do not sign any forms without checking.

INFORMATION SUPPORT - Contact your local HIVE Information Centre if there is one in your new location (you can find where HIVEs are sited by going onto www.hive.mod.uk), or unit personnel staff who will provide you with local information support and a Service Community Official Guide (if not already provided in your house).

Doctors: Register with a new doctor as soon as possible: your welcome pack or unit personnel staff will be able to advise you of the local surgeries. You can arrange temporary registration with a GP if there is an emergency. If you have problems registering please inform your unit personnel staff.

Dentists: It is not at present possible for patients everywhere in the UK to have the same relationship with a dentist as they can with a family doctor. However, all callers to NHS Direct *in England* *(tel: **0845 4647**) should gain access to NHS dentistry either to:

- receive emergency dental treatment (in Accident and Emergency); or
- receive urgent treatment (within 24 hours) to relieve pain and subsequently to be offered treatment for dental problems identified at examination); or
- have an oral examination followed by a course of treatment for identified dental problems (routine treatment, within 8 weeks & 10 miles of patients home).

* Arrangements differ depending on where you live in the UK. In some areas there are major problems in finding an NHS dentist (consult your local HIVE or unit personnel staff). Overseas dental health care will normally be provided by the Service dentists. If there is no Service dentist then other arrangements will have been made to provide both dental and medical health care. You will need to check with your administrating unit.

Education - If your child has problems in settling in to the new school then discuss this with the school. You can also obtain advice from SCE(UK) on the steps you can take to help your child settle in.

Pets - You need to keep an eye on pets, particularly cats, until the animal is settled. If the animal has been micro chipped, inform the relevant agencies of the change of address. If overseas, you may have to register your pet with the Station Staff Officer/Garrison staff. In Germany, this is a requirement, as is subsequent owner and pet training.

Useful Contacts/Sources of Information

Army Welfare Service.....	01722 436569
Army & Navy Confidential Support Line:	
UK.....	0800 7314880
Germany	0800 1827395
Cyprus.....	080 91065
Central Hotel Booking Service.....	08457 585376
Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS).....	01980 618244
Childcare	0800 096 0296
Child Benefit Office (England, Wales & Scotland)	0845 302 14444
Child Benefit Office Northern Ireland.....	0800 220674
College of Health Waiting List Helpline.....	0208 983 1133
Cotswold Centre	01225 810358
Defence Passenger Reservation Centre.....	0207 218 1460
Department of Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Importing Pets)	0870 241 1710
Department of Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Importing Plants)	01904 45 5174
Department of Works and Pensions Social Fund	0845 850 0032
Family Associations:	
AFF	01980 615525
Airwaves	01452 712612 ext 6666
NFF	023 9265 4374
HIVEs:	
HIVE GB	01722 436499
HIVE BFG	0049 2161 472 3218
HIVE NI	02892 266335
HM Customs & Excise (Importing Vehicles from Overseas).....	0208 929 0152
Joint Service Housing Advice	01722 436575
National Passport Helpline.....	0870 521 0410
Naval Personnel & Family Service:	
Portsmouth.....	023 92 72 2712
Plymouth.....	01752 555041
Faslane.....	01436 672798
NHS Direct (England Wales & Northern Ireland)	0845 4647
NHS 24 (Scotland).....	0845 4 242424
Northern Ireland Education & Library Boards:	
Belfast	02890 564000
North Eastern	028 2566 2303
South Eastern	028 9056 6200
Southern	028 3751 2200
Western	028 8241 1263
Pensions & Overseas Benefits Directorate.....	0191 218 7777
SSAFA Force Help Special Needs & Disability Advisor	0207 463 9234
Tri Service Early Years Development Officer.....	01722 436563

Service Community Official Guides - can be obtained through the Service Welfare organisations or through your local HIVE

There are many web pages that can provide information and most of the agencies listed above have their own web site. All the information in this aide memoire including links to these agencies can be found by visiting www.sftf.mod.uk

Checklist

TASK	Completed
Packing - If you are planning on doing this yourself, begin at least two weeks before your move. Label boxes with the details of their contents and the room in which they are to be placed at the new address. Pack heavy objects with lighter ones: do not overstrain boxes or backs. Sort out rubbish. Sell unused items, or give them away.	
Bank - Notify your bank of your change of address. Don't forget any items that are retained by the bank for safekeeping.	
Credit/Store cards - Fill in the change of address section of your statement when returning it with your payment and also notify any card protection insurers that you may have.	
Standing Orders - Give your new address to companies with which you have a hire purchase agreement or a loan.	
Premium Bonds - Write to the Bonds and Stock Office with your change of address quoting your bond number. (Don't you just fill in and send back the forms attached to the Bonds?)	
National Insurance /Benefits - Write to your local Department of Welfare & Benefits office and your Tax office (Inland Revenue), with your new address, giving your full name, date of birth, and full National Insurance number.	
Pension - Advise your local Post Office or private scheme of your change of address.	
Insurances - Notify your broker or individual insurance companies of your change of address and any other relevant circumstances: e.g. motor, household contents, life and other insurances.	
Driving Licence - Complete section 1 on your licence and return it to DVLC, Swansea, SA99 1BN. Note: there is a charge for changing your address that can not be reclaimed but is covered as part of your disturbance allowance. If you have an old paper driving licence, you may have to send a photograph and fee for the new photo card licence.	
Stocks and Shares - Notify your stockbroker or each individual Company Registrar of your change of address.	
Mail Redirection - Organise the redirection of mail with Royal Mail for each person receiving mail at your home if in the UK.	
TV Licence - Fill in the change of address part of your existing licence or visit their website. If moving your TV antenna or satellite dish (some companies require it to remain, depending upon rental agreement), make arrangements to have it taken down. Transfer/cancel satellite cable and internet/broadband subscriptions. Note: Permission is required from the housing authority to erect a satellite dish, check with your local housing staff. SKY operates a moving home facility at a small cost to the customer.	
TV Rental - Sets can normally be taken to your new address in GB when renting from a large company and your records will be transferred to the nearest branch.	

TASK	Completed
BUPA/Private Medical - Advise change of address and /or research new schemes.	
Subscriptions - Notify all organisations/clubs/charities/publications to which you subscribe of your new address.	
Firearms Certificate - inform the police of your change of address if you have a shotgun/firearms certificate.	
Telecommunication/Mobile Phone Providers - Contact providers including Internet account and advise your change of address and the date from which you wish your new number to operate.	
Council tax - If you don't live in Service housing, notify relevant authorities in both your current area and the area to which you are moving of your new address.	
Motor Vehicle Licence - Send the appropriate section of your Vehicle Registration Document to the Vehicle Licensing Centre, Swansea, SA99 1AB. De-register your car if exporting it overseas. Take the local action as necessary if leaving an overseas location.	
Electricity/Gas - Contact your existing company and advise them of your move and give them a forwarding address. Contact utility companies to advise of your move-in date (this will be done by the housing staff if moving into Service housing). Don't forget to take meter readings so that you can check bills. If you have changed your electricity/gas supplier and they have fitted their own meter you will be expected to have the original meter restored at your own expense when you vacate your Service house.	
Water (if applicable) - At least 48 hours notice is required by both your existing and your new authority to arrange for disconnection and re-connection of supply.	
Dry Cleaning - Collect all remaining items.	
Prescriptions - Obtain prescriptions to cover the period until you arrange a new doctor.	
Library - Make sure that you take all the books back that you have on loan.	
Milk/Papers - Settle outstanding accounts and cancel supplies.	
Frozen Food - Use up your frozen food supply or give it away.	
Schools - notify both current and new school of your moving date. If you have been offered a place at more than one school make sure you notify them if you are not taking up the place.	
Rental Video/DVD - cancel card and return all videos/DVDs out on loan.	
Child Benefit - notify change of address, (change of registration if moving between Northern Ireland and GB or vice versa).	