

Anchors Aweigh

Changing Home Ports: Moving in the Navy

When you are in the Navy, moving is a fact of life. You might move to a nearby town, across the country or across the world. It can be both exciting and daunting — frequently at the same time. Because everyone moves, the Navy has developed excellent support programs and services to help you. And remember that other spouses have done this, have had good experiences and not so good experiences, and probably have a few pointers for you if you ask.

Takeaways

- Have a plan
- Know your resources and entitlements
- Be flexible

WAVE TOPS

- Types of Moves
- Things to do when you get PCS Orders
- Preparing to Move
- Moving Day
- Relocation Services
- Entitlements and Allowances
- Housing

Types of Moves

There are two basic “types of moves” with the Navy, either within the Continental United States (CONUS) or Outside the Continental United States (OCONUS). OCONUS locations are both in foreign countries and the United States, e.g. Alaska, Hawaii, Guam.

Each location has different entitlements and requirements. Moves to OCONUS countries, for example, require medical screenings, passports, quarantines for pets as well as other considerations.

For CONUS moves you have different options for how it will be handled.

Government arranged moves are the most common. The Navy will arrange and pay for a contractor to pack and ship your household goods (HHG) from one duty station to another.

Personally Procured Moves (PPM) allows you to make your own arrangements. (Also known as DITY moves.) You can handle the move however you like. Packing your belongings, renting and loading the truck yourself, and driving it to the new duty station or hiring contractors to handle any part of that. You are authorized reimbursement for 95% of what the Navy would have paid a contractor.

Partial PPM allows for the Navy to arrange for the shipment of most of your household items while you receive payment for transporting a portion of your HHG. Check out this link for doing a PPM.

https://www.navsup.navy.mil/site/public/household/documents/USN_USMC_PPM_May_2018.pdf

Overseas, or OCONUS, moving is handled by the government, and can be broken down by three types of shipments:

The household goods shipment will contain the bulk of the items that you will be receiving at the new duty station overseas/OCONUS.

An Express Shipment of Unaccompanied Baggage consists of items you will need immediately upon arrival at your new duty station. It should contain appropriate clothing, baby crib or other children's items you may need, essential cooking utensils and dishes as well as basic linens. Hospitality kits, which contain some basic household items, may be available to borrow at your new duty station from the Fleet and Family Support Center. (Be aware that the weight of these items will count towards your overall allowance.)

Short term or long term storage may be authorized depending on the type of orders issued. Ask the Transportation Office or the transportation specialist if you are authorized for either of these types of storage.

If authorized, one personal vehicle may be shipped overseas at the government's expense. Make sure you check for any country restrictions/prohibitions on vehicles.

Things to Do When You Get PCS Orders

When you receive Permanent Change of Station (PCS) orders, visit the Defense Personal Property System website at www.move.mil. This site provides helpful information on moving topics. It includes a moving guide, video tutorials, customer service assistance, and a list of tools and resources available, including an HHG weight estimator and PPM reimbursement estimator.

Military OneSource has a tool to help you create a moving calendar and relocation checklist to stay organized. <https://planmymove.militaryonesource.mil>

Create a moving budget taking into account fuel, meals, lodging, move-out cleaning costs, etc.

Visit the military installation's website to learn about your new duty station. This website includes information on housing, schools, and family support resources as well as telephone numbers and contact information for offices there.

Submit an "intent to vacate" to your landlord or housing office.

Preparing to Move

A successful move doesn't happen by chance; it is the result of careful planning and hard work. The Navy has many resources available to make planning easier and prepare you for the move.

Fleet and Family Support Centers offer free moving workshops to help you prepare for your move. They cover topics such as who pays for what, how to ship your personal property, and command sponsorship programs.

Plan My Move on Military OneSource provides you with information about your entitlements and benefits, points of contact, checklists, planning tools and information on education and spouse employment at your next assignment.

If you are using a government arranged move pre-inspections are sometimes scheduled by the moving company that has been assigned to move your household goods. They will help the company plan the number of supplies and people they will need to provide for your move.

Final check out of housing (rental or government) will require you to pass a cleaning inspection. Plan to either hire cleaners or allow time to do the job yourself. Make sure to check your lease for check out cleaning requirements and procedures.

Many medical records are transferred directly from doctor to doctor electronically. If you are seen at a Military Treatment Facility, check with the medical records department for the procedure to move the hard copy of your medical record. If you are moving from one TRICARE region to another, do not change your region until after you arrive at your new duty station.

Moving Day

If you have scheduled a government procured move, the moving company will pack your things, move them, and deliver them to your new duty station. A good practice is to have one *brightly colored box* (could be wrapping paper or colored packing tape) labeled "Open First" for things your family will need the day you arrive. A shower curtain, towels, sheets, coffee pot, drinking glasses, small tool kit, and remote control for the TV can make that first day in a new home a little more pleasant. Make sure you review the inventory sheet with the movers and have signed copies. Also have the contact information for the Transportation Office in case any problems arise during the move. If damage does occur, make sure you document the damage and keep damaged items until the settlement is complete. Be aware that there are time limits for filing claims so be sure to pay attention to this.

Relocation Resources

Individual Fleet and Family Support Centers have Relocation Assistance programs to help make the moving process run as smoothly as possible for you and your family. Visit your local FFSC or find them on the web for more information on the program in your area.

Entitlements and Allowances

Temporary duty to look for housing can be given at the Commanding Officer's discretion. Your Sailor may be allowed to take up to 10 days of Permissive Temporary Additional Duty (not leave) to look for housing at the new duty station. The Navy does not fund this trip so you will be covering the expense of this trip.

Family Separation Allowance (FSA) is for service members whose family is unable to relocate to the new duty station. FSA is a flat rate of \$250 a month.

Dislocation Allowance (DLA) is intended to cover some of the additional expenses of moving not covered by other entitlements. Your Sailor must specifically ask for DLA; it is NOT automatic. DLA must be requested prior to leaving the current duty station. To receive DLA, the block for DLA must be checked and all appropriate information filled out. DLA is not taxable and is not paid back.

Temporary Lodging Allowance (TLA) applies to overseas moves and varies depending on location and situation. The amount varies depending upon the number of family members, the local per diem and rate, and the availability of dining or cooking facilities. The Personal Support Detachment (PSD) will assist with information about TLA in your new location.

Temporary Lodging Expense (TLE) is an allowance to cover the temporary costs incurred during a stateside (CONUS) move. The amount varies like TLA, and to find specific rates check with your PSD office.

Per Diem is paid during a move for the Sailor and family members. The rate per family member will vary by age and whether they are traveling with or separate from the service member.

Monetary Allowance in Lieu of Transportation (MALT) is a mileage allowance for authorized travel by car from one duty station to the next. The military plans your rate of travel and pays a set rate per mile. If you are authorized two vehicles the driver of the second car will also receive the service member's rate per mile.

Move-In Housing Allowance (MIHA) is available only in OCONUS locations. It helps cover the cost of miscellaneous expenses common in overseas locations. MIHA rates vary depending on currency exchange rates and by location.

Housing

At your new duty station you may decide to move into "base" housing or rent/buy in the community. The decision to live in base housing is a personal one and not all locations have housing available immediately for all service members. The length of waiting lists varies according to location. If you decide you are interested in base housing, the service member must complete an Application for an Assignment to Military Family Housing (DD Form 1746) as soon as they receive orders.

Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) is an allowance for the cost of housing and varies by rate/rank, dependents and location. You may end up paying more or less for your rent or mortgage depending upon your choice of housing. If you live in a Private Public Venture Housing (PPV) community you will still receive BAH then pay it directly to the owner of the housing community. For BAH rates worldwide visit <https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/bahCalc.cfm>

Overseas Housing Allowance (OHA) is available for service members whose families will be living with them on a command sponsored (accompanied) tour. If your family remains in the United States they will receive BAH based upon their geographic location. Unaccompanied service members can only receive OHA if government housing is unavailable.

The Housing Service Center (HSC) offers personalized housing services specializing in finding both temporary and long-term apartments, condos and home rentals. Other services include home buying counseling and local area information.

A Military clause in your residential lease can allow the lease to be broken in the event of a recall to active duty (for reservists), reassignment to another duty station or other military related issues. Make sure to read the military clause carefully to understand your responsibilities. Your local Military Legal Services office can review a lease for you.

Floor plans and photos of Navy housing can be viewed on the Navy Housing Pinterest page at www.pinterest.com/navyhousing/

Moving with the Navy can be a real adventure and opportunity to live in parts of the country and the world we would never otherwise visit. With proper planning and understanding of the process, moving doesn't have to be overly stressful. Remember to be flexible with the changes and situations that do arise!

Tips for Getting Acquainted with your New Community (also review Anchors Aweigh Section 7: Exploring Your Community)

Make sure you connect with your new command Ombudsman. Your service member may be given this information or you can contact your ombudsman through the Ombudsman Registry. <https://ombudsmanregistry.cnic.navy.mil>

Some commands have Family Readiness Groups (FRG), and your command ombudsman will likely have information on how to contact them.

If you are job searching, check with your Fleet and Family Support Center for local resources. Don't forget to research volunteer opportunities in the community - they are a great way to meet people in your new community.

Check out your local MWR for tours and trips in your new area, as they can be a great way to explore your new community.

Moving with Children?

Parents worry how their children will adapt to changing schools and changing locations. History and experience show that kids are more adaptable than we give them credit for.

Moving with kids can be a little like assembling a jigsaw puzzle. A little perspective and patience is needed for you to fit all the pieces together. Here are a few tips to make your next move a smooth one for your kids – and you!

- **Tell you children about the move as soon as possible.** Give your kids plenty of time to adjust to the idea of moving and say goodbye to all their friends.
- **Give your kids space and answers.** They may also have a lot of questions, so listen patiently and answer as best you can. Help your children research their new school, nearby parks and base activities. The adjustment — for you and your kids — will take time.
- **Give them a task.** Depending on the age of your kids, there are many ways to help. Older youth might be able to help plan portions of the move, such as searching for new houses online or researching fun things to do on the new installation. Younger kids can help by packing their own "first day box."
- **Reassure your children.** Let them know they'll have a new home address, but the important things in life — like how much you love each other — won't change. Your kids take their cues from you. Stay positive and make the move fun to help them feel involved and excited.
- **Enjoy your kids' favorite things and places.** Before you go, make a point to visit the park, the frozen yogurt shop or favorite places. You might take something from one of those places to the new house and encourage your child to find a new favorite spot for it.

Sometimes school age children and teens need a little extra help with the transition to a new area. The Navy has a Youth Sponsorship program to help young people adjust to a new location!

https://www.cnmc.navy.mil/ffr/fleet_readiness/child_and_youth_programs/youth_sponsorship_program.html. Look into this before you move as your child will be assigned a sponsor in your new community, and this helps serve as an extra welcome when your child arrives.

Moving with children may also raise issues that must be addressed, including special needs healthcare, individualized education plans (IEPs) developed with schools, and being on the alert for emotional concerns like feelings of isolation and loneliness, excessive sadness, or acting out or other indications of suppressed feelings. The Chaplain Corp is a wonderful resource for helping family members address feelings about moving and adjusting to a new location. FFSCs and Military OneSource also have many resources that are both helpful and free. Visit militaryonesource.mil (search kids and moving) to find numerous articles, posts and resources for you and your children.)

For assistance with specific issues related to schools and medical care for special needs, reach out to:

— EFMP <https://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/support/efm/Pages/default.aspx>

— School Liaison Officer:

http://www.cnic.navy.mil/ffr/fleet_readiness/child_and_youth_programs/navyschoolliaisonofficer.html

Other Spouse-Recommended Resources for a Smooth PCS

Over time you will discover that many military spouses host blogs and discussion boards to help each other. The following recommended resources are from **The Military Wife and Mom Blog** <https://themilitarywifeandmom.com>

- The Emotional, Stressful and Exhausting Reality of a PCS Move
- How to Help You Military Child Adjust to a New School After a PCS (from a teacher).
- 10 Books That Will Help Kids Prepare for a PCS Move
- The Ultimate PCS Checklist for Military Kids Changing Schools (from a teacher)
- 10 Things You Forgot to Put on Your PCS Checklist
- 20 Must-Have Documents for Your Military PCS Move