



U.S. Army Europe and Africa PCS Town Hall Questions & Answers

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1) Q: Any chance that the expired policy (expired in August 2020) allowing overlap of TQSA/LQA due to COVID-related restrictions will be renewed for GS civilians this PCS season? We are having a hard time clearing our house in one day with COVID limiting the number of people in our house. We need to coordinate with movers (reduced crew size), folks from housing who are picking up their loaner items, our cleaning crew, and our landlord all on the same day. As GS civilians, we only have LQA and TQSA as options for paying for our final days here. But there's no way we can clear our house on one day with no overlap between TQSA and LQA. And now there's no way to get that approved since the policy expired in August.

1) A: *You may be referencing a policy that dealt with an extension of Foreign Transfer Allowance and outgoing TQSA however, overlap remains a topic covered in [Army in Europe Regulation 690-500.592](#) as we fall under Department of State regulations in this case and allowances are not intended to cover 100% of the employee's expenses, please ensure you plan accordingly. These requests are normally covered if you have a stringent cleaning requirement in your contract or in extraordinary cases and would come into the G-1 Civilian Personnel Division after being endorsed by your organization.*

2) Q: How will we be able to prevent COVID transmission with 3 - 5 unknown movers in our homes? Will they be tested before arriving in our homes? What would that look like? Temperature taken & questions asked or an actual test?

2) A: *Transportation Service Providers (TSPs) will have to provide a TSP Certification of Health Protection Protocols (it's a form they have to use) to all customers before they can start work in a residence. Employees will have to be screened according to CDC directives and the TSP must certify that the screening took place. All employees will wear face coverings and clean all surfaces they touched while in your residence. Customers will also have to employ similar practices to protect the workers, so it's a two-way street.*

3) Q: I PCS this summer from one base within Germany to another. Do I need a waiver to travel to my new duty station? Are the offices in Garrison responsible for PCS in and out open or operational?

3) A: *You might need a waiver, depending on the restricted status of where you are leaving and where you are moving. Right now as of May 18, 2021, in Europe, there are four restricted states: Bavaria, Benelux, ASA Black Sea, and Rhineland-Pfalz. If your current or destination duty station are in any of those four areas, request a waiver through your chain of command by following the guidelines published in [ALARACT 101/2020](#). As long as you have a valid waiver, you can make appointments through your local garrison.*

4) Q: Are Family Members allowed to move with Service Members or is there a delay for Family travel?

4) A: *Family Members are not automatically deferred. They can travel with you as long as they are on your orders and command sponsorship has been coordinated with your gaining command. Your sponsor can assist with that process.*

5) Q: What impact will the increase in number of troops assigned with the addition of the MDTF and fires command have on available on post housing?

5) A: *There will be no effect, the Wiesbaden garrison has over 500 excess units and they've been looking at this for over 18 months to ensure there is enough room for all of the inbound Soldiers and Family members associated with regular PCS as well as MDTF and the new Fires Command. There are also provisions for situations where available housing is exceeded allowing off-post housing.*

6) Q: With all of the changes occurring how can I stay updated on the latest travel information during my PCS move?

6) A: *It is imperative you stay in contact with your unit and sponsor as they will keep you informed on the latest changes. Prior to departure, if you are a DA Civilian, you should subscribe to the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#) to receive safety and security alerts and ensure you can be located in an emergency. Military personnel should consult with your local installation transportation office and refer to the [Re-open Europa](#) website as well as the airline's guidelines. Most importantly, remain in close contact with your sponsor who will help you understand the policies in the host nation where you are going. If you're traveling back to CONUS or to another OCONUS location, you should do the same.*

7) Q: As a supervisor, how can I best support the PCS of an employee?

7) A: *Losing commands must conduct a written counseling with DA Civilians outlining COVID standards and expectations for travel. This counseling should include up to date travel requirements. These can be found in the [Electronic Foreign Clearance Guide](#) and by staying in touch with the gaining command on requirements from their end on any recent changes. Also, recommend the employee requests a sponsor through [Army Career Tracker](#) and have them visit our [Newcomers](#) webpage.*

8) Q: I am a Department of Army Civilian required to take a COVID-19 test for PCS travel, can I get reimbursed for the cost of the test?

8) A: *If the COVID-19 testing is required for government-funded travel and the required COVID-19 testing cannot be obtained through a federal dispensary at no cost, an employee may request reimbursement for the COVID-19 testing as Miscellaneous Reimbursable Expenses. Your Government Travel Charge Card may be used for this expense or you can obtain this reimbursement through your travel voucher if you don't have a Government Card. Please note, this is separate from the Miscellaneous Expense Allowance (MEA) Lump Sum entitlement provided to eligible employees. Also, only the cost of the COVID-19 test is reimbursable, not the medical office visit. The receipt must be broken into two parts, the test and the office visit to file with the travel voucher.*

9) Q: What is the current quarantine process for families PCSing into Germany? Are we in temp housing? A hotel? Do we have to quarantine in Ramstein upon arrival off the Patriot Express or will we be taken all the way to our new duty station for quarantine?

9) A: Check the [Re-open Europa](#) website as well as the airline's guidelines as rules change frequently. Currently, all new Families/Soldiers will be under 10 days of quarantine upon arrival to Germany. However, that policy is likely to change after 30 June 2021. There is one exception: vaccination status. If you are fully vaccinated or have recovered from COVID-19 and have proof of either, you will not have to quarantine. If your spouse is fully vaccinated, they will not have to quarantine either. However, anyone in your family who is eligible to receive the vaccine but hasn't yet must quarantine. By the time you arrive, all quarantine situations will occur at either your new home at the gaining location, your off-post home (if authorized), or the lodging/hotel at your destination. When you get off the Patriot Express and check in with the Ramstein Gateway, they will coordinate for your transportation to your destination. Your sponsor should have all of the latest details and again, check the [Re-open Europa](#) website as well as the airline's guidelines.

10) Q: Although we would normally take commercial aircraft for our PCS, should we make plans to take the Patriot express instead (commercial is much easier from our location, however)?

10) A: All Service Members (Soldiers, DA Civilians, DA Contractors, and Family Members) are required to fly to Germany on the Patriot Express unless you receive a waiver for extenuating circumstances from your chain of command. See [AE Command Memorandum 2020-021](#) for more information. Your local [SATO](#) office and your unit will assist you with arranging travel from your current duty station or location to the Patriot Express.

11) Q: What will be the projected process for those PCSing to Germany this summer? Quarantine, testing, etc.?

11) A: All airline passengers entering Germany must present proof of a negative test result. This can be from the PCR test no more than 72 hours prior to arrival, or via an antigen rapid test taken no more than 24 hours prior to arrival. This is regardless of whether or not you are vaccinated. It is imperative that you stay in contact with your unit and sponsor to understand the requirements and be flexible. Check the [Re-open Europa](#) website as well as the airline's guidelines as rules change frequently.

12) Q: What are the current mask-wearing requirements both on- and off-post?

12) A: Currently, all non-vaccinated personnel over the age of six must wear a mask while indoors at DoD facilities. At most garrisons, they are not required while outdoors. However, if you are fully vaccinated (at least 14 days after your final dose) you are no longer required to wear a mask indoors or outdoors at DoD facilities. Most European countries still have rules for wearing masks on public transportation, in stores, and in busy outdoor places where minimum distance cannot be kept at all time. They may also require a FFP2, KN95/N95 mask or surgical mask. Check with your sponsor, check the host nation's policies and check our [Coronavirus](#) webpage for more information.

13) Q: How does the quarantine process work if my wife and I (DA Civilian and dependent) are fully vaccinated but our children are not?

13) A: *You and your wife will not have to quarantine, but your children will.*

14) Q: The paperwork requirements are confusing. What documents do I have to have with me when PCSing?

14) A: *You must have your passport and PCS orders. In addition, there are digital registration requirements for most European countries that you can find by referring to the [Re-open Europa](#) website as well as the airline's guidelines. You should also bring your vaccination cards if you are fully vaccinated. Garrisons in Germany have a memorandum, along with your vaccinations card, that you should carry as well if you are fully or partially vaccinated. Some places in Germany don't accept the U.S. CDC card but with the memo, they should. Your sponsor can provide you with that memorandum and more information.*

15) Q: For moving to Germany from the US, is a CDC vaccination card sufficient to forego getting a COVID test prior to/after arrival into Germany?

15) A: *Yes. If you are fully vaccinated and have proof you will not have to test prior to arrival in Germany. This applies only to travelers aged six years or older.*

16) Q: Do all children have to quarantine? There has been some confusion for kids under six.

16) A: *Yes, all children who are not fully vaccinated will have to quarantine. Fully vaccinated means at least 14 days after your final dose.*

17) Q: With me receiving the vaccine, which included both series. Will I need to receive a COVID test 48 hours to arriving, or would I have to show my Vaccine Card?

17) A: *If you are fully vaccinated and have proof, you will not have to test prior to arrival in Germany. Fully vaccinated means at least 14 days after your final dose.*

18) Q: What if you have SM vaccinated but spouse isn't?

18) A: *Your spouse will have to quarantine but you will not, if you are fully vaccinated. Fully vaccinated means at least 14 days after your final dose.*

19) Q: You mentioned Rheinland-Pfalz earlier, what was the testing requirement before entry (24-48 hrs.)

19) A: *Germany requires a pre departure negative PCR COVID test dated no more than 72 hours prior to arrival in Germany unless you are fully vaccinated. Fully vaccinated means at least 14 days after your final dose. This information was current at the time it was published, check the [Re-open Europa](#) website as well as the airline's guidelines as requirement change often.*

20) Q: What are current turn-around times for arrival and delivery of HHGs? Has COVID impacted the timeline.

20) A: *You can generally expect your HHGs to arrive in country between 60 and 90 days after shipping from CONUS. Sometimes it takes a little longer depending on the origination. Contact your local transportation office for more details. You can also contact your sponsor.*

21) Q: Will concurrent travel and EFMP approval be expedited this summer for PCS to Europe? Passport/visas/transportation is a significant stressor when you don't have orders yet for summer moves.

21) A: *PCS schedules are pretty much back to normal. Unfortunately, the concurrent travel and EFMP approval process cannot be expedited. Installation Management Command-Europe (IMCOM-E) Family Travel Manager reviews and processes requests within 72 hours of receipt. For SMs with families not warranted (not EFMP enrolled) the approval of family travel is sent to the requesting Military Personnel Division (MPD) within 72 hours of receipt (in most cases). Requests for family members indicated as warranted (EFMP enrolled) are forwarded to Regional Health Command-Europe (RHC-E) for a medical and/or educational screening of need and a determination if services are available within the gaining community. In accordance with [Army Regulation 608-75](#), paragraph 1-23, RHC-E must provide a decision within 30 calendar days of receiving Family travel requests involving warranted family members. All pending cases are monitored by IMCOM-E to ensure this timeline is met. Requests received with less than 30 days to the SM's report date are closely monitored by IMCOM-E and RHC-E to finalize as soon as possible. If a family travel decision has not been received with 35 days of submission to the local MPD, please contact the MPD and request a status update.*

22) Q: If you're PCSing, how early should you arrive regarding your Report Date?

22) A: *Soldiers are authorized up to 30 days early reporting unless you've requested more time from your branch. Report dates are set to provide gaining units and installations predictability to ensure adequate housing and logistical support so it is best to arrive as close to your report date as possible.*

23) Q: Will children under 12 be required to quarantine, as they are not eligible for a vaccine to date? (Both parents are fully vaccinated).

23) A: *Yes, all non-vaccinated personnel must quarantine upon arrival in Germany unless they have recovered from a COVID infection and have proof. 12-17 year old adolescents are currently being vaccinated here in U.S. Army Europe and Africa.*

24) Q: How is the move in process impacted concerning signing a lease and setting up utilities such as internet access?

24) A: *The move in process is not impacted by COVID. Your sponsor can provide specific details about your area regarding how long it generally takes to get housing and utilities arranged and set up.*

25) Q: If you're bringing a POV, is there certain rules about what types of Vehicles are allowed to be in Europe?

25) A: *There are no specific rules aside from ensuring that your vehicle is in good condition and can pass inspection requirements. Contact your local transportation office and your sponsor for more details.*

26) Q: How can someone get an Exception to Policy on getting the Pfizer vaccine, if we have a family PCSing from CONUS who already got the first Pfizer vaccine in CONUS, and need to get the 2nd one OCONUS.

26) A: *The Pfizer vaccine is currently being distributed to Medical Treatment Facilities and should be available to you once you arrive in Europe. As of May 18, 2021 the priority for the Pfizer vaccine is 12-17 year old adolescents.*

27) Q: Regarding air travel, are personnel being reassigned to/from USAG Stuttgart authorized to travel via commercial air?

27) A: *All personnel PCSing to Germany are required to fly on the Patriot Express unless you receive an exception to policy for extenuating circumstances from the first O6 or equivalent commander in your chain of command.*

28) Q: Is the PCR test available to take at the Wiesbaden Clinic?

28) A: Yes.

29) Q: Can you still get tested at the Patriot Express departure airport (i.e. Baltimore International Airport)?

29) A: *Yes, but it is not recommended. You should arrive at Baltimore International Airport (BWI) with a valid test, proof of full vaccination, or a medical proof of recovery from a COVID-19 infection in hand to begin your travel.*

30) Q: With the influx of personnel, will on-base housing change for key essential personnel, for example, will key personnel be re-examined for E-8's and above? Will it change the structure for who lives where based on rank?

30) A: *Wiesbaden has adequate on-base housing available for all personnel who are PCSing into Wiesbaden this summer. We don't anticipate the need for rearranging housing based on rank more than is normal.*

31) Q: Regarding PCSing to Germany are unaccompanied officers going to live off post or have to live on post?

31) A: *Unaccompanied officers can live off post at most locations. Check with your sponsor for installation-specific rules.*

32) Q: Currently i am a single SSG that receives BAH CONUS. I am PCSing to Sembach, Germany and their policies are that unaccompanied SSG and below will reside in the barracks. I understand their policies and rules for a reason, but is there a process to receive a ETP to receive BAH and live off post so i do not have to sell all my furniture and other house hold amenities?

32) A: *You should coordinate with your sponsor to determine the local rules for BAH ETPs in Sembach.*

33) Q: Can you fly without a no fee passport?

33) A: *Yes, as long as you are not flying to Italy. Italy requires a no fee passport for inbound US DoD Service Members.*

34) Q: What about children under 12 getting shots?

34) A: *Right now, the only vaccines available are for children aged 12 to 17.*

35) Q: What is turnaround time for a garrison clinic test for official travel?

35) A: *The Wiesbaden clinic is anywhere between one and two days, depending on what time of day you are tested.*

36) Q: If we are going on leave to a location without a military base close by prior to taking the Patriot Express flight, will the cost for the COVID test still be eligible for reimbursement or are we excluded because we took leave? If so, can we use any credit card or is it mandatory to use the GTC to pay for it?

36) A: *The cost for the COVID test is reimbursable if there is no medical treatment facility near where you need to take the test. If you have a Government Travel Charge Card (GTCC) you should use that. If not, you can use your personal card. Remember that only the cost of the test is reimbursable, not the doctor's office visit if you receive the test from a doctor's office.*

37) Q: Regarding leave, my SO is wondering about whether or not he is able to take leave if he is vaccinated after ROM? He is PCSing to Germany next week.

37) A: *Each command has been given the authority to determine leave policies. He should contact his sponsor for specific rules for his gaining command.*

38) Q: I believe there was a recent change to the [Foreign Clearance Guide](#) that requires an official (no fee) passport for entry into Germany

38) A: *At this time, a valid passport is adequate for entry into Germany.*

39) Q: I'm headed to USAG-Stuttgart as an accompanied SFC with a German national spouse - will an off-post ETP be needed, or can OHA be approved?

39) A: *If USAG Stuttgart has on-post housing available, you will be required to reside on post. You can certainly submit an ETP if you desire to live off post but it is up to your gaining chain of command to approve or disapprove it. Contact your sponsor for specific rules and guidelines.*

40) Q: For moving to Germany from the US, is a CDC vaccination card sufficient to forego getting a COVID test prior to/after arrival into Germany?

40) A: *Yes. If you are fully vaccinated and have proof, you will not have to test prior to arrival in Germany.*

41) Q: For those of us PCSing to the US from Wiesbaden, it's looking like the current requirements to board either commercial or PE are a negative COVID test within a certain time period prior to the flight. What are our options for getting this done here in Wiesbaden? Some soldiers are shelling out a lot of \$\$ to get their tests done on the economy which seems silly when we should have the capabilities to do that right here on post?

41) A: *The Wiesbaden Medical Treatment Facility will give Soldiers and their Family members a test for free as long as the family member are listed on the Soldiers official travel orders.*

42) Q: What is the Family Travel Request Process after I receive my assignment notification?

42) A: *1. Family is screened for EFMP at losing PDS. Physician will complete and sign DA 5888, Family Member Deployment Screening Sheet.*

2. Losing Reassignment Office will forward the Family Travel request, including EFMP screening, to IMCOM-E Family Travel section for consideration. Request includes the following documents:

- a. [DA 5888, Family Member Deployment Screening Sheet](#)*
- b. [DA 4787, Reassignment Processing](#)*
- c. [DA 5121, Overseas Tour Election Statement](#)*
- d. [DD 2792, Family Member Medical Summary \(if warranted family member\)](#)*

3. If EFMP is not warranted, family travel is approved within 72 hours of receipt. IMCOM-E Family Travel submit approval in UPDB to notify the Housing Office. Based on the availability of housing, IMCOM-E Family Travel generate email notification to the losing Reassignment Office and gaining Housing Office. If housing is available, concurrent family travel is approved and the Housing Office will secure quarters. If housing is not available, family travel is deferred until quarters are available.

4. If EFMP is warranted, IMCOM-E Family Travel will forward the documents to Regional Health Command-Europe (RHC-E) for medical and/or educational needs determination. Once the final determination is made, RHC-E will email IMCOM-E Family Travel group box with the determination results. IMCOM-E Family Travel office will generate email notification to the losing Reassignment Office of the approval or denial of family travel.