

Eligibility for Veterans living in Germany

Veterans identified as Purple Heart recipients, former prisoners of war, veterans with documented service-connected disabilities or their VA documented caregivers (on their behalf) are granted access to a number of expanded benefits thanks to the signing of the “National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019” and an exception approval granted by German Customs Authorities.

What does this mean?

Since January 2020 the above listed veteran groups and their caregivers are eligible to use U.S. Forces Sales Facilities on U.S. Military Installations in Germany to make purchases when residing in Germany and being in possession of a “Pink Card”.

What if I am not residing in Germany but only visiting?

Visitors have to stay in Germany for at least 30 uninterrupted days to be eligible for a “Pink Card”. It is highly recommended to bring your travel itinerary when registering with the U.S. Army Customs Agency – Europe field office as described in this brochure.

What is the process to obtain approval for shopping?

You will first need to obtain a U.S. Forces Status Verification (AE Form 550-175K) from a U.S. Army Customs Agency – Europe (USACA-E) field office.

The Verification has a maximum validity period of one year.

You will have to present the following documentation:

- **Valid Passport**
- **Valid residence permit for Germany; Immigration stamp for tourists/visitors (if applicable)**
- **Veterans Health Identification Card (VHIC) reflecting the eligibility status**



What is the next step?

The AE Form 550-175K must be presented to your responsible German Customs Office for further processing and issuance of the actual authorization forms 0216 and form 0217 (“Pink Card”).

In order to access U.S. Forces Sales Facilities you will need both your respective VHIC and “Pink Card”.

Remember:

- **Purchase of rationed items is not permitted.**
- **All purchases are for personal use only and resale or transfer is not permitted.**
- **You must present the “Pink Card” no later than the 5th business day of each month to the issuing German Customs Office together with ALL original sales receipts for purchases made in the previous month.**

German customs will levy duties based on the € exchange rate applicable in the month when the purchases were made (for further details please go to www.zoll.de).

For items with a **single item sales price of less than the U.S. \$ equivalent of 50 Euro** German Customs will levy duties calculated by means of a flat rate of duty (currently 17.5%).

For items with a **single item sales price of the U.S. \$ equivalent of 50 Euro and more** duties will be calculated on the basis of the customs tariff and the relevant tax regimes (customs duties, excise duties and import value-added taxes).

For further information on the determination of duty rates for items go to:

www.zolltarifnummern.de

(English and German)

What if I'm not able to shop myself due to a medical condition or handicap?

The entitled person can appoint their VA authorized primary or family caregiver as a **Shopping Assistant** under a separate agreement with Host Nation Authorities.

This Shopping Assistant can register and shop on the behalf of the entitled person. Following (additional) documentation is required at the USACA-E field office:

- **Primary or Family Caregiver Letter issued by Veterans Affairs (VA)**
- **Written request for Shopping Assistant Authorization, dated and signed by the VHIC holder**
- **Passport / Personalausweis of VA authorized primary or family caregiver with valid residence permit or other immigration documents (if applicable).**

Please note: Letters are issued by VA annually in December. This may restrict the validity period of AEF 550-175K and the "Pink Card".

On receipt of the AE Form 550-175K the German Customs Office will issue a "Pink Card" with the remark "Erfüllungsgehilfe". The shopping assistant is the only person authorized to shop on behalf of the entitled veteran. The shopping agent is not authorized to shop on their own behalf (again, as agreed to with Host Nation Authorities).

All forms will be issued on a walk-in basis.



HQ Customs Customer Service
Clay Kaserne, Building 1015
CIV: +49-(0)611-143-537-3955;
DSN: 537-3955



Ansbach Field Office

Bismarck Kaserne, Building 5843-C, room 286
CIV: +49-(0)981-183-7842; DSN: 314-468-7842

Baumholder Field Office

Health Clinic Kaserne, Building 8747, room 7104
CIV: +49-(0)611-143-531-2944/2945; DSN: 314-531-2944/2945

Grafenwöhr Field Office

Grafenwöhr Garrison, Building 621, room 129
CIV: +49-(0)9641-70-569-2896/2897; DSN: 314-569-2896/2897

Hohenfels Field Office

Training Area, Building 10, room 126
CIV: +49-(0)9472-708-3376; DSN: 314-522-3376

Kaiserslautern Field Office

Kleber Kaserne, Building 3245, room 103
CIV: +49-(0)611-143-523-4901/02; DSN: 314-523-4901/02

Ramstein Field Office

Ramstein Air Base, Bldg. 2102, room 141
CIV: +49-(0)6371-47-3720/0100; DSN: 314-480-3720/0100

Spangdahlem Field Office

Spangdahlem Airbase, Bldg. 139, room 106
CIV: +49-(0)6565-61-4500; DSN: 314-452-4500

Stuttgart Field Office

Panzer Kaserne, Building 2913, room 303
CIV: +49-(0)9641-70-596-2657/2732; DSN: 314-596-2657/2732

Wiesbaden Field Office

Clay Kaserne, Building 1025, room 102
CIV: +49-(0)611-143-537-3932/3933; DSN: 314-537-3932/3933

U.S. Army Customs Agency – Europe

HOURS OF OPERATION

0800-1600

**For Customs Information and/or support at
Garmisch and Geilenkirchen contact:**

Garmisch MP Station

Artillery Kaserne, Building 209
CIV: +49-(0)9641-70-521-3601; DSN 314-521-3601

Geilenkirchen

470 ABS/US Customs, Bldg. 84, rooms 8 and 9
CIV: +49-(0)2451-9151; DSN 458-4030/4031

Use of U.S. Forces Sales Facilities

**Information for select veterans in
Germany**



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<https://www.europeafrica.army.mil/customs/>

https://armyetaas.sharepoint-mil.us/sites/USAREUR-AF_OPM_CEA/SitePages/Customs-Services.aspx

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