



Module 4:

PCS Move Workshop

I. Introduction

This module is designed to provide information to service members and their families with PCS orders to a CONUS duty station. Focus is on coping with relocation, pre-departure preparation, entitlements and benefits, managing the move, and moving with children. Proven tips and techniques for relocation as well as available resources are highlighted.

II. Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this module participants will be able to do the following:

- Describe the phases of relocation.
- List three relocation services provided by Marine and Family Services.
- Identify three items that must be done to prepare for a move.
- List three military entitlements that help lower the financial impact of relocation.
- Name at least two organizations that can assist with the planning and implementation of a CONUS move.
- Describe at least two ways to make moving easier for children.

III. References

The following materials were used in preparation of this module:

- MCCS at <http://www.usmc-mccs.org/index.html>
- SITES at <http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/sites>
- OSD Military Compensation at <http://dod.mil/militarypay/>
- DOD Education Activity at <http://www.odedodea.eu/>
- The Per Diem Committee at www.dtic.mil/perdiem
- MCCS One Source at www.mccsonesource.com
- DOD Relocation Cost Calculator at www.militaryacclimate.com
- DOD Entitlements at www.defenselink.mil/specials/itsyourmove/
- Hunter, R. (2003). *2003 Uniformed Services Almanac*. Falls Church, VA.: Uniformed Services Almanac, Inc.
- National Military Family Association. *Military Families: Money and Mobility* at www.nmfa.org

IV. Preparation and Procedures

- Marketing/Target Audience: This workshop is targeted to individuals with PCS orders CONUS. Marketing directly to commands, TMO, and the housing office is recommended. Posters and flyers should be provided to commands and posted in visible locations such as the commissary and exchange.
- Module Length: Approximately 3 hours. Time may vary depending on the needs of a particular group, the length of the question/answer portion of the workshop, and whether guest speakers are presenting.
- Training Considerations/Options
 1. If presenting to single Marines, “delete” the information on moving with children. You may want to add information on the Single Marine Program,

recreational opportunities, meeting people, and other items of interest to singles.

2. Invite guest speakers from Housing, TMO or other key organizations.
 3. Include a video on relocation. *Money and the Move: Financial Planning for Relocation* and *Mobile Force-Mobile Lifestyle* are among the videos available from the Defense Automated Visual Information System/Defense Instructional Technology Information System at <http://afishp6.afis.osd.mil/dodimagery/davis/>.
- **Registration:** Advance registration is recommended. All registrants should receive a reminder phone call or email at least three days prior to the workshop. Guest speakers should be contacted with participant numbers and venue confirmation two-three days prior to the workshop.
 - **Training Materials and Tools:** All handouts should be placed at each seat or given to participants at the beginning of the workshop. It is helpful to put handouts in the order that you will be using them. Needed materials and tools are listed below.

PCS Move Training Materials/Tools

Equipment/Materials

- Tables and chairs to accommodate all participants
- Separate table for resource materials
- Name tents or name tags (optional)
- Pencils
- Markers
- Projector and screen (PowerPoint capable)
- PowerPoint slides
- White board or chart paper
- Sign-in sheet
- Video and video projector (optional)

Handouts (Should be available at each seat or handed to each participant upon arrival.)

- Pre-check/Post-check (At the end of this module.)
- Relocation Resources on the Web (Page A-9)
- Basic Entitlements and Allowances (Page A-12)
- Financial Planning for a PCS move (Page A-14)
- Spouse Employment Tips (Page A-2)
- Travel Cost Worksheet (Page A-16)
- Why do a Personally Procured Move? (Page A-17)
- Tips for Packing and Moving Days (Page A-20)
- PCSing with a Pet (Page A-21)
- Saying Goodbye and Staying in Touch (Page A-23)
- Travel Safely (Page A-24)
- Family Travel Tips (Page A-26)
- Relocation Tips for Parents (Page A-29)
- Helping Your Children and Teens Adjust (Page A-30)
- Kids Reactions to Relocation (Page A-32)
- Communicating with your Sponsor (Page A-28)
- Program evaluation (Page A-1)

NOTE: For those at OCONUS locations, include the handout *Reacculturation – Adjusting to Life Back Home After Your Overseas Tour* (Page A-35).

Resource Materials

Materials may include multiple copies of handouts for participants to take with them or single copies of books, pamphlets, or videos for participants to look at. Suggested resource materials include the following.

- Booklets from Conquest Corporation (1-800-922-6629), Channing Bete at www.channing-bete.com, and BR Anchor Publishing at www.branchor.com
- Materials from Military Living at www.militaryliving.com. Includes books and maps.
- Books on relocation. There are numerous books on relocation for adults and children. Go to <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/asin/1573800015/2roomsplus/104-2558769-0309569>.
- Video Tape - *Money and the Move: Financial Planning for Relocation*, #806121 at <http://afishp6.afis.osd.mil/dodimagery/davis/>
- Video Tape - *Mobile Force-Mobile Lifestyle*, #504354 at <http://afishp6.afis.osd.mil/dodimagery/davis/>

- ❑ Moving Checklist (Several checklists are available on the Internet. Try the following website. http://www.military.com/Resources/ResourceFileView?file=Relocation_Checklist.htm)
- ❑ Materials from MCCS One Source. For example, provide reprints of the article “When the New Kid Is Your Kid: Relocating and Changing Schools”.

V. Key Terms

- COLA - Cost of Living Adjustment. A supplement designed to equalize purchasing power between high and low cost areas.
- DLA - Dislocation Allowance. An allowance that is provided to partially reimburse a service member for expenses associated with relocating the household. The service member is not required to collect receipts for the expenditure of DLA. Also, DLA is non-taxable and does not have to be repaid.
- PCS - Permanent Change of Station. Military orders authorizing the military member/family to move to a new permanent duty station.
- Personally Procured Transportation (PPT). Formerly known as a DITY Move. A move in which service members move their own personal property at government expense.
- POV - Privately Owned Vehicle.
- SITES - Relocation information on DoD installations worldwide.
- Sponsor - Service member assigned to assist newcomer and his/her family with settling in.
- TLE - Temporary Lodging Expenses. The allowance received when arriving at a CONUS base that offsets some of the expense of temporary housing and meals.
- TMO - Transportation Management Office. Office that makes arrangements for shipping and/or authorizing storage of service member’s personal effects, furniture, etc.

VI. Curriculum Outline

- Introduction (10 minutes)
- Administration (10 minutes)
- The RAP Program: programs and services available (5-10 minutes)
- Cycle of relocation, stress and coping suggestions (10 minutes)
- Financial planning for relocation (20-30 minutes)
- Moving Preparations (20-30 minutes)
- The move itself: before, day of, traveling, moving in (20 minutes)
- Children and the Move (optional) (15-20 minutes)
- Resources (10 minutes)
- Summary (5-10 minutes)

VII. Curriculum Detail

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Introduction

WELCOME participants to the *PCS Move* workshop.

TELL participants your name, position, and title. Include your experience with relocating military families.

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SAY Whether you've never moved or you're a veteran mover, today's workshop is designed to provide you with the tools and techniques for making your move a positive and rewarding experience. Even the most organized and efficient people can find themselves frozen by anxiety when preparing to relocate. The goal of this workshop is to empower each of you with the information needed for a smooth move. You will gain knowledge of the many resources and services available to assist you. Please feel free to ask questions and share your experiences. We can all learn from each other.

NOTE: If the group is not too large, spend a few minutes on participant introductions. There are several ways to do this. Participants can just state their name and something about themselves such as where they are moving and the number of moves they've made. Or participants can take a minute to talk with the person sitting next to him/her and then introduce that person to the group. If you have distributed name tags, check to see that everyone has one.

Administration

REVIEW the following information with participants:

- **Breaks.** As this workshop is approximately 3 hours, a short break (10 minutes) is recommended after the first hour and ½. You may choose to do two breaks.
- **Restrooms.** Provide directions to the restrooms.
- **Coffee/snacks.** If you provided refreshments, offer them to the participants. If you're in a classroom that does not allow food or drinks, be sure to let participants know.
- **Sign-in sheet.** Ask participants to complete the sign-in sheet if they did not do so upon arrival.
- **Participant materials.** Tell participants that the materials they received will be reviewed during the workshop.
- **Resource materials.** Note that resource materials are available for participants to look at during breaks or after the workshop. Indicate where the materials are located.

Pre-check

REFER participants to the Pre-check/post-check handout.

SAY A pre and post-check will be given as we are interested in knowing not only how much you might have enjoyed the workshop but how effective we are at teaching. Please answer each question as I read it aloud and then set the paper aside. At the end of the workshop there will be a post-check and the papers will be collected. We are not asking for any identifying information.

NOTE: The correct answers to the pre-check are included here. The answers need not be given to the participants as the information will be covered during the workshop.

PCS Moves Pre-Check

1. To arrange for packing and moving I should contact Transportation Management Office (TMO). (True)
2. There are normal phases of relocation that affect most people as they prepare to move and adjust to their new home. (True)
3. It is my responsibility to remove all the boxes and cartons after a move. (False)
4. My family's medical records will automatically transfer to the gaining Medical Treatment Facility. (False)
5. I can receive free one-on-one assistance to develop an individual relocation plan. (True)
6. With Permanent Change of Station (PCS) orders, Air Mobility Command will transport cats and dogs free of charge. (False)
7. I will automatically be assigned a sponsor. (False)
8. With PCS orders, temporary lodging facilities must provide accommodations for my family members and me. (False)
9. If I travel in my privately owned vehicle, I will receive mileage reimbursement based on the number of family members traveling with me. (True)
10. My Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) is based solely on my rank. (False)

ASK what concerns and expectations participants have. List these on white board or chart paper. Let participants know that you will be addressing many of these throughout the workshop.

NOTE: It is important to reiterate that this workshop is designed to meet the needs of service members and their families moving within the United States (CONUS). The information is helpful to those moving OCONUS. However, they should also attend the *Moving Overseas* workshop as this has additional information specifically related to OCONUS moves.

The RAP Program

SAY The *Relocation Assistance Program* (RAP) provides relocation assistance to newly reporting and detaching military personnel. RAP exists worldwide within Marine and Family Services. These programs and services can be helpful to you as you prepare to move and once you've arrived at your destination.

DESCRIBE the Relocation Assistance Program services available:

- Relocation Workshops. Numerous workshops are provided to help relocating service members and their families. These include: *Moving Overseas*, *Welcome Aboard*, *Sponsor Training*, *Relocating with Special Needs Family Members*, and *Newly Arrived Spouse Orientation*.

NOTE: Be sure to have information on upcoming workshops. Also, encourage participants to attend the *Welcome Aboard* workshop at their new duty station.

- Loan Locker. This service temporarily loans household items to relocating personnel. Household items may vary from site to site but generally include items such as kitchenware, cots or futons, playpens, and portable table and chairs. The initial lending period is usually one to two weeks but extensions may be approved. At most locations, a valid military I.D. card and a copy of your PCS orders are needed to check out items. Items are available on a "first come, first served" basis.
- SITES. RAP services include SITES, computerized information about duty stations and communities. SITES is updated regularly to ensure current information for over 300 duty stations throughout the world. SITES may be viewed online or a site-specific booklet may be printed out. Additionally, some Marine and Family Services locations have Internet access allowing you the opportunity to access other relocation websites.

NOTE: Show a sample SITES booklet for your location. Also, refer to the *Resources on the Web* handout.

- Welcome Aboard Packets. You may also request and receive a Welcome Aboard Packet which contains base and area information. This is most often sent to the incoming service member and his/her family by the command sponsor. WAPs usually include maps of the community, a base map, and newcomer's information useful to arriving service members and their families.

- **Resource Information.** Most locations have travel guides, videos, language tapes, and maps available. These materials are available for you to view onsite or may be available to borrow.
- **Individual/family relocation assistance.** Each individual and family has their own unique relocation needs. RAP staff are available to meet with you on a one-on-one basis to discuss your situation and assist in making appropriate plans.

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Coping with Relocation

SAY For many Marines and their families, relocation has both positive and negative affects on their personal and family well being. Based on our experience, preparing for a move can take several months and then there's a period of adjustment once you've arrived at your new duty station. Understanding that there is a normal cycle of relocation will help you keep things in perspective.

DESCRIBE the phases of relocation:

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1. **Pre-Departure Phase.** This is the phase you are most likely in now. You're focused on what has to get done - research and information-gathering related to the new duty station, housing, shipment of household goods, and financial planning. Your feelings may be both positive and negative as you look forward to (or dread) the upcoming move.
2. **Transition Phase.** This period includes actual departure and travel to your new home. You are busy packing-out, arranging temporary lodging, finding housing, and then making the move itself. Feelings of anxiety, sadness, excitement and enthusiasm are usually experienced - sometimes all at once!
3. **Arrival and Orientation Phase.** As you settle in to your new community, you will find you have a need for specific information and support. Healthcare access, school enrollment, housing, and meeting basic physical necessities while waiting for household goods take priority. Remember to take advantage of programs and services at your new duty station. You may feel overwhelmed at this stage, but support and help are available.
4. **Reconnect Phase.** This phase usually occurs between two and six months after you've arrived and involves adjustment issues. You may feel disillusioned as "reality" sets in and you just want to go back home. Or, you may be surprised at how easily everything has gone. New schools, new friends, and new jobs - all is well. However, usually most of us experience something in between these two extremes. Continue to seek out support if needed.

5. **Stabilization Phase.** Once you've settled in, all is stable – or as stable as life in the Marine Corps can be. You're busy with work, community activities, and enjoying life. Feelings reflect the normal ups and downs of everyday life. However, feelings may reflect a “holding pattern” attitude while once again you are awaiting PCS orders.
6. **The Re-entry Phase.** This phase is associated mostly with OCONUS to CONUS moves. The need for assistance for those going overseas is usually recognized, but coming back from overseas also can be difficult. Most people simply do not anticipate any problems in “coming home”. However, there are often feelings of guilt for not wanting to be back stateside as well as concrete problems such as financial issues.

NOTE: If you are at an OCONUS location, refer to handout *Reacculturation – Adjusting to Life Back Home After Your Overseas Tour* and discuss.

Now that you know there is a cycle associated with relocation, let's look at symptoms of stress and coping methods. Stress is the psychological and physiological response to demands made on you. Moving can be stressful to adults and children of all ages. Remember that everyone may respond differently to the stress of relocation. For some, change is an exciting event that represents new opportunities and adventures. For others, change elicits fear of the unknown or sadness over loss of a predictable routine.

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The stress associated with moving can be mild or severe. Some people enjoy their new jobs or friends so much that they experience only minor symptoms of stress during a move. In other cases, the stress can be severe. The physical signs of relocation stress can include:

- Constant fatigue.
- Frequent headaches.
- Un-channeled energy or lack of energy.
- Changes in eating/sleeping habits.

The emotional symptoms of relocation stress are varied. Some people feel irritable or impatient. Others may become moody, depressed, or withdrawn. Still others may be happy and excited. Stress can also show up in a wide range of behavioral symptoms. These can include nail biting, teeth grinding, or abusing drugs or alcohol.

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SAY There are many ways to cope with the stress of moving. Keep the following in mind:

- Accept and respect how others are feeling.
- Take time to listen.
- Focus on the positive.
- Gaining a sense of control over your move can help ease daily stresses. Get organized by making lists and prioritizing.
- Take good physical care of yourself. Eat right, get enough sleep, and exercise.
- Let kids ask questions and express how they're feeling.
- Maintain schedules and routines when possible, but remain flexible.
- Keep the family informed about the move process - no secrets.

Remember - be sensitive to emotional and physical reactions to stress and don't hesitate to seek help if needed.

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Financial Planning for Your Move

SAY It is important to prepare yourself financially for a move. Service members on PCS orders are entitled to personal travel and transportation allowances for themselves and their families. Upon receipt of your orders, you may request an advance on allowable travel allowances. Ensure your Page 2 is up to date before requesting a travel advance. And, if you receive orders and then get married, have the orders modified prior to relocating. Once the move has occurred, you cannot file for retroactive allowances based on your new marital status.

Let's take a detailed look at your travel pay and allowances.

NOTE: Military pay and allowances are constantly being adjusted. Refer to <http://www.dtic.mil/perdiem> for current facts and figures prior to presenting each PCS Move workshop. Additionally, it is recommended that RAP staff coordinate with the Personal Financial Management staff to deliver the following section.

REFER to the *Basic Entitlements and Allowances* handout and describe the following:

Monetary Allowance in Lieu of Transportation (MALT). Service members receive MALT when they drive their own vehicle to a new assignment. The MALT is paid on a “per mile” basis for the official distance. Your commanding officer at your current duty station must grant approval prior to your travel if you wish to be reimbursed for driving two or more privately owned vehicles to your new duty station. The rate payable for each authorized traveler is as follows:

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- One traveler = \$0.15 per mile
- Two travelers = \$0.17 per mile
- Three travelers = \$0.19 per mile
- Four or more travelers = \$0.20 per mile

Per Diem Allowance. Service members entitled to MALT will also receive a flat per diem for each day of authorized travel for themselves and their family members. Families are authorized this per diem up to 350 miles per day (not to exceed the official authorized distance). The rates are as follows:

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- Service member receives 100% of authorized amount.
- Authorized travelers 12 years of age and over receive 75% of authorized amount.
- Authorized travelers under 12 years of age receive 50% of authorized amount.

Dislocation Allowance. Dislocation Allowance (DLA) is often referred to as “free money” since it is authorized and designed to partially reimburse a service member (with or without family members) for the expenses incurred when relocating in connection with PCS moves. Advance payment requires documented evidence that household goods are scheduled for shipment. DLA payment is paid upon request, three to ten days in advance of transfer. We know of many service members who did not receive this allowance because they were unaware of this entitlement and did not ask.

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NOTE: Single service members residing in government quarters (BOQ/BEQ) longer than 60 days after arrival or acceptance of government quarters will invalidate eligibility for DLA.

Temporary Lodging Expense. You and your family can receive Temporary Lodging Expense (TLE) at a rate of up to \$180 per day, depending on location, to help defray the cost of meals and temporary housing incurred during a PCS move within the Continental United States (CONUS). TLE is available for a maximum of ten (10) days lodging in the vicinity of either your old or new duty station in CONUS. TLE is limited to five (5) days

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if transferring to a location overseas. Payment is made through the settlement of your travel claim, although it can be advanced.

NOTE: Remind participants to keep all receipts as proof of expenditures must be provided.

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Advance Pay. The purpose of advance pay is to help the service member meet extraordinary expenses that are anticipated during a PCS move. Advance pay is not authorized for the specific out-of-pocket expenses covered by advances of other pays and entitlements. If you request advance pay you are basically taking a loan from your future paychecks. Unless you are in a very unique situation and have generated a financial plan to accommodate the repayment, this is not a good idea.

Advance pay (basic pay minus taxes and required deductions) of up to three months may be authorized upon receipt of PCS orders. You must provide written justification clearly showing that accrual or anticipated out-of-pocket PCS expenses are equal to or exceed the amount of advance pay requested. A commanding officer must approve a repayment period that is longer than the norm as well as all payments made to pay grades E1-E3.

SAY Two additional entitlements that are not related to relocation, per se, but affect your income at your new duty station are BAH and COLA.

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Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH). BAH is based on geographic duty station, pay grade and dependency status. The intent of BAH is to provide service members with accurate and equitable housing compensation based on housing costs in local civilian markets. It is payable when government quarters are not provided. Remember that your BAH may increase or decrease based on your duty station. For more information on BAH go to <http://www.dtic.mil/perdiem/bahintro.html>. You can even enter a zip code and your pay grade and get a figure for BAH for that area as well as average out of pocket expenses.

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Cost of Living Allowance (COLA). COLA allowance is paid to service members stationed in high-cost areas, both CONUS and OCONUS. It is designed to help service members maintain the same standard of living when living in high-cost areas. The amount of COLA received depends on location, cost of living, exchange rates, pay grade and number of family members. Only a few CONUS sites are authorized to draw COLA.

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Develop a Relocation Spending Plan

A sound spending plan should result in a smooth move. You may want to meet with the PFM Specialist to help develop a financial plan. To develop your own plan, consider both the additional income and expenses that are associated with moving and then determine your budget.

REFER to the *Financial Planning for a PCS Move* handout and discuss.

SAY This handout lists all of the possible sources of income and expenses that can occur with a PCS move. Use this handout as you develop your own relocation spending plan.

REFER to the *Travel Cost* handout.

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SAY This handout will help you plan your budget for the actual move. It takes into consideration the costs of driving, lodging, food, and incidentals. What it doesn't cover are the many items that we usually don't think about such as a car tune-up and new tires before the trip and emergency repairs, among others. Be sure to plan for this as well.

NOTE: Remind participants to book lodging at new duty station site. Temporary billeting and lodging fills up quickly around military installations during peak relocation periods. Contact them immediately upon receipt of orders. If they are already booked, they can provide alternate lodging recommendations to you.

There are also many start-up expenses that must be considered: cleaning supplies, restocking the refrigerator, food staples, household incidentals such as light bulbs and soap. And, don't forget the cost of utility deposits and hook-ups.

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In addition, there are financial responsibilities you must consider. These include taking the following steps prior to your departure:

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- Identify where you will be banking. Is a branch of your current bank available? Is on-line banking an option for you?
- Check your credit reports. To check your credit go to: www.experian.com, www.transunion.com, or www.equifax.com. All consumers are entitled to one free credit report from each of these agencies annually. Check for accuracy as these reports determine your ability to make major purchases, including buying a home.
- Let your current creditors know that you will be moving. If possible, pay off your outstanding balances and close your accounts. Once you are settled, send your permanent change of address to your creditors.

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As part of your spending plan, begin tracking all moving expenses. Although reimbursed expenses cannot be deducted, recognize that if your expenses in certain areas exceed the government allowance, they may be deductible. Such expenses may include those costs related to personally procured moves, packing, crating, in-transit storage, hauling a trailer, and additional travel and lodging expenses not usually allowed. Be sure to keep all receipts.

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Spouse Employment

REFER to the *Spouse Employment Tips* handout.

One major financial consideration when relocating is your spouse's employment. How much does your spouse's income contribute to your current financial well-being? Have you planned on doing without this income until your spouse can reenter the workforce? We recommend that you explore employment options prior to your departure. Talk to the Family Member Employment Assistance Program staff at Marine and Family Services. Once you've arrived at your new duty station, visit Marine and Family Services there as they will have information on the local job market.

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Housing

SAY A major component of everyone's budget is the cost of housing. Be sure and evaluate all of your options prior to making a decision. The housing office and RAP can provide information and guidance regarding on-base housing and the local housing market. If you own your home, as soon as you receive orders prepare to sell or rent it.

NOTE: Ask how many need to sell their current home or are thinking of buying a home at their new duty station. Give the date and time of your next *Home Buying and Selling* workshop.

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Prior to departing, we strongly recommend that you contact the housing office at your new destination. They will be able to tell you about unit size, floor plans, wait lists, and more. Active duty personnel with dependents are authorized to submit an advance application for military housing at any time after they have received PCS orders for their next duty station. The housing office will assist you. Many housing offices also now offer an online application process.

If housing is not immediately available, the housing office at each installation will be able to give you a rough estimate on how long you may wait before housing becomes available. Be prepared! The wait could range anywhere from a few months to years!

NOTE: Ask how many are single or will be geographic bachelors. They need to contact Bachelors Enlisted or Officer Quarters for assignment, if available.

On-Base vs. Off-Base Living

Many service members and families have a strong preference to live on-base...or off-base! There are many factors to consider and each has to decide which is best. A primary consideration is cost of living in the area and BAH received for that locale. Also, if you are immediately attaching to a deploying unit, entering into an off-base rental agreement may not be advisable. For family members, some appreciate the support offered by the military culture, while others prefer living in the civilian community.

Lease/Rental

Prior to entering into a lease or rental agreement, we strongly advise that you receive guidance from your legal office.

- **Military Clause.** When leasing or renting property, always include a military clause which releases you from your lease should you receive unexpected orders.
- **Security Deposit.** Upon entering into a lease, you will be expected to pay a security deposit and fees associated with pets. Ensure that the return of your security deposit will occur pending inspection.

Rental Partnership Program (RPP)

Some installations support partnerships programs that are operated through the housing office. RPP encourages property owners and property management companies to give military members a discount on market rent and forgo security deposits, application fees, and other up-front move-in costs. In exchange, property owners avoid marketing and turnover costs as the Military refers them financially pre-qualified prospective tenants.

RPP:

- Does not allow a security deposit to be charged.
- Charges a \$20.00 fee per unit, for review of renter's selection criteria.
- Requires a 12-month lease.
- May require renter's insurance.
- Requires singles E-5 and below to have authorization to live off station.
- Is open to all rates/ranks.

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Moving Preparations

SAY There are two types of moves: government and personally procured transportation (PPT), formerly known as a DITY (do-it-yourself) move. Regardless of which type you choose, call or visit the Transportation Management Office (TMO) as soon as possible after receiving your orders.

NOTE: Give locations and hours of your local TMO.

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Calling TMO in advance is a good idea. They will give you a list of items to bring with you to make your shipping arrangements go smoothly. These may include:

- Power of attorney or authorization letter – Spouse or person acting on behalf of the active duty service member must have power of attorney (POA) or written authorization to arrange the move.
- Copies of your PCS orders - Multiple copies of orders are required for each move/shipment.

Be sure to have in mind a date for moving (be flexible) and when you are required to be at your new duty station. As it can be difficult to coordinate this, service members are entitled to 90 days of temporary storage when their household goods are being moved at government expense on PCS orders. Storage may be used at origin, en route, or at your destination. Try to avoid using temporary storage by planning for a realistic date when your goods can be accepted. This will save the property from additional handling and possible damage.

You may ship all personal property associated with your home and all personal effects belonging to you and your dependents. There are restrictions including flammable and corrosive materials, alcohol and tobacco products, and live ammunition. Local laws or carrier regulations may prohibit shipments of other articles. Be sure to obtain information on prohibited articles.

NOTE: Refer participants to Joint Federal Travel Regulations (JFTR) at <http://www.dtic.mil/perdiem/jftr.html> for specific questions about personal property shipments.

In addition to restrictions on certain items, there are weight limits based on pay grade and marital status. Know your weight limits. You, not TMO, is responsible for staying within this limit. Excess weight can cost a lot of money. It may be more than a year after your move before you are notified of overweight limit charges, charges you must pay.

Estimate about 1000 pounds per room and then add the estimated weight of large appliances and items in the garage, storage rooms and basement. Make a list of large or unusual items such as a piano or pool table.

Professional Books, Papers, and Equipment

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The total weights of professional books, papers and equipment are accounted for separately and are not figured into allowed household weight. Items considered essential to perform official duties are professional books, papers, and equipment. These may include:

- Reference books, papers, and materials.
- Instruments, tools, and equipment needed by technicians, mechanics, and other professionals.
- Specialized clothing such as diving suits, flight suits, band uniforms, and other professional clothing not considered to be normal uniforms.
- Individually owned or specially issued field clothing or equipment; and official awards and other memorabilia given to a member by a uniformed service, professional society/organization, or U.S. or foreign government.

You must separate professional items from household goods. Be sure all boxes are labeled accurately and these items are listed on the inventory as “professional books, papers and equipment.”

Personally Procured Transportation (PPT)

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REFER to handout *Why do a Personally Procured Move?*

Personally Procured Moves were formerly known as DITY or do-it-yourself moves. You may get permission to do a personally procured move within the continental United States. These moves are intended to pay you to move yourself - 95% of the government’s constructed cost. If your actual cost is below the 95%, you pocket the remainder. You will receive 60% of the monies prior to the move if a vehicle is rented and will receive the remaining 35% after the move is complete.

The same weight restrictions apply whether you use a moving company or do it yourself. You make the arrangements for truck rental, moving supplies, and packing. You are also entitled to travel allowances and insurance coverage. Meet with TMO to determine if this is something you’d like to consider.

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Before the Move

Refer to the *Tips for Packing and Moving Days* handout.

SAY If not doing a personally procured move, the Marine Corps pays a moving company to pack, move and deliver your household goods. It is your responsibility to prepare your personal property and household goods. To ensure a smooth move, complete the following tasks.

- Inventory your belongings. Take pictures or videotape the condition of everything you will be sending with the movers (date pictures and/or video). **DO NOT PACK YOUR INVENTORY PICTURES/VIDEO!** This will definitely pay off on the other end if you should sustain damage or loss.
- Separate items that will not be packed and moved by the movers. Make sure you have all important papers and records, clothing, prescription drugs, valuables and anything else you plan to carry with you in a safe, secured location (preferably in a neighbor's house or a **LOCKED** closet/room).
- Check your insurance coverage. If your property is lost or damaged during a move, you may file a claim against the government. The maximum statutory amount the government can pay on a single claim is \$40,000. Despite this amount, there are maximum amounts allowable for specific types and categories of property. Consult TMO or your private insurance carrier for recommendations on additional replacement value insurance.
- Obtain a Power of Attorney if necessary. Some installations require a specific power of attorney if the service member is **NOT** there for pack-out. Visit your legal office prior to moving day should you need a power of attorney.
- Organize Records. Go through your records and be sure all are current. You should have the original and copies off all important documents.

NOTE: Service members are no longer allowed to sign out family medical records. Records are sent to the new duty station. However, copies can be provided if the request is made in advance of departure. Contact TRICARE health benefits advisor for further information.

- Be sure you have all of the following records:
 - Military orders and identification. Check the expiration date on your ID card. If your ID card will be expiring soon, check to see if you can have a new card issued prior to your departure.
 - Vehicle information including loan paper or lease agreements, vehicle registration, driver’s licenses, and insurance paperwork.
 - Personal family and medical information. Include marriage license or divorce decree (if applicable), birth certificates, adoption papers, and medical and dental files.
 - School information. Include school records, immunizations, and any certificates of completion or diplomas.
 - Legal paperwork. Include a copy of all wills, powers of attorney for finances and health care, and trusts. (Leave the original will with the executor or a trusted friend or advisor, or place it in a safety deposit box.)
 - Pet paperwork. Include vet records, licensing documentation, and pedigree papers.
 - Financial paperwork. Include bank or brokerage house account information, tax information, and records of any public assistance received, such as Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) benefits.
 - Moving receipts. Keep all receipts related to your move.

- Arrange childcare and pet care. Ensure that you have arranged for childcare and pet care for the packing and moving days. It is difficult to give children and pets the attention they need during this time.
- Notify schools. Schools must have enough time to complete paperwork and assemble complete records, so notify them well in advance of your departure. It is best to hand carry these records (although many schools will forward them directly to the next school for you). In addition, research the schools at your new location.
- Determine residence for voting. Go to the Federal Voting Assistance program website at www.fvap.gov for more information. State election sites are available at www.fvap.gov.

- Make travel arrangements for pets. Depending on where and when you are moving, you will most likely transport your pets by air or in your car. If transporting pets by air, check with the individual airlines regarding requirements. 80% of commercial airlines **DO NOT** transport pets during summer months!

REFER to *PCSing with a Pet* handout.

If your pet will be accompanying you in your car, ask your veterinarian about pet carriers and the possibility of a mild sedative to relax it during the move. Make sure you have a leash for all cats and dogs, and plan to take several stretch breaks and relief breaks along the way.

NOTE: Many military bases require animals residing on-base to have a micro-chip. This service can usually be administered by your vet for a fee of approximately \$25.

- Take care of yourself and your family. As we had discussed, moving is stressful. In addition to all the logistics, be sure to make time to spend with friends and family. It is important to say goodbye. REFER to *Saying Goodbye and Staying in Touch* handout.

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Moving Day

SAY The day has arrived and if you've planned thoroughly, you should be feeling confident and ready to go. There is a lot to do on moving day, including the following:

- Help supervise packers. Find out ahead of time how certain items should be packed (i.e. china or other breakables) and politely monitor the packing process. Generally, you are expected to take down curtains and pictures, but disassembly of furniture is to be completed by the movers.
- Verify inventory and condition of belongings. Don't be shy! Ask to see notes made by movers regarding the condition of your personal goods (especially furniture), and better yet stand with them as they inspect your belongings. Expect them to take note on damages already sustained to your furniture and assign a damage code. Check items for inventory stickers and agreement of damage codes. If you disagree with their assessment, notify TMO immediately. Do not let carrier walk away with your inventory sheet or any other pertinent moving documents.
- Don't seal boxes. If you are packing boxes yourself, don't seal them! The moving company will not be responsible for damage or missing items if the box has been sealed.

- Don't pack the garbage! A word of caution... While most movers scrupulously follow packing regulations, some will pack just about anything. Ensure that your garbage, perishables, etc. do not get packed.

On the Road

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SAY Whether traveling by car or plane, safety should be a primary concern. You, your family and your belongings are vulnerable while in transit.

Refer to *Travel Safely* handout and review pertinent points.

When on the road, keep these important phone numbers close at hand:

- Auto Emergency Roadside Assistance (AAA, USAA, etc.)
- American Red Cross (1-877-272-7337)
- MCCS One Source (1-800-869-0278)
- Installation Temporary Lodging Facilities (TLF) can be a good source of affordable lodging when traveling.
 - Air Force 1-888-235-6343
 - Navy 1-800-628-9466
 - Army 1-888-363-5771
- Phone number for Sponsor/POC at new command
- TMO number
- Phone numbers of family and friends

NOTE: Let participants know that resources at military installations are available to those traveling - the exchange, commissary, recreational facilities, etc.

ASK How many of you will be traveling with children?

If traveling with children, you know the familiar cries - "Are we there yet?" "I'm hungry!" "He hit me!" However, with some thought and planning, you can turn this move into a

family adventure. Involve everyone in planning, deciding where you'll stop and what you will see. Most importantly:

- Plan frequent stops – every two hours or so.
- Travel when children may be sleeping.
- Stick to some sort of routine. Try to provide times for naps, nutritious snacks, and physical activity.
- Be flexible.

REFER to *Family Travel Tips* handout and discuss. Ask participants what they have found helpful when traveling.

Moving-in Day

SAY The following suggestions should assist you in keeping moving in day somewhat under control.

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- Be at your new home before movers arrive. If you are doing a “door-to-door” move, let TMO know how to contact you. If you are taking leave in conjunction with your move, the movers will most likely arrive at the destination first and will place your items in a TMO approved storage unit. You must be at home when the movers arrive. If not, they will leave and you will be charged for a missed drop off.
- Direct the placement of items. If possible, review the layout of your new home prior to the movers delivering your shipment. This will allow you time to identify a location for your items.
- If possible, have two adults onsite to cover the two main responsibilities during the delivery. The first is to check off each and every box as it comes off the truck and direct them to the appropriate room. If you have four people unloading, this can be challenging. The second responsibility is to monitor the unpacking process. While many seasoned military members have done this solo, it is much easier to have a helper.
- Recognize that it is the moving company's responsibility to unload and remove all cartons/boxes. If you choose to unpack yourself, you will be responsible for breaking down and disposing of these containers yourself as the carrier is not required to return and pick up the boxes.

- Report damage to TMO. Check your belongings carefully and report any damage/loss to TMO. To ensure maximum reimbursement, paperwork must be filed within 70 days but you have up to two years to finish and settle a claim.

Kids on the Move

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NOTE: If the majority of the participants do not have children, you may want to offer this section after the conclusion of the workshop, making it optional for those wishing to stay. This material may also be expanded and offered as a stand-alone workshop.

Moving is a stressful time for parents and kids alike. Kids, too, are leaving behind familiar places and important friends and are starting over. They have to adjust to a new home, school, and neighborhood, and make new friends. As parents, understanding how they may react and how you can help, should ease the transition for all family members.

REFER to the *Kids Reactions to Relocation*, *Relocation Tips for Parents*, and *Helping Your Children and Teens Adjust* handouts.

SAY Children react differently to moving depending on their age and stage of development. Younger children are generally fine with change as long as they are near one or both of their parents. However, it is not at all unusual for behavior to change when their daily schedule has changed. You may notice some of the following behaviors, but rest assured that they are usually quite normal reactions.

- May temporarily regress. This is common with any major change in a little one's life. A toddler who is potty-trained may revert back to diapers while moving. Or, a baby may need his or her bottle or pacifier more often. This is a coping mechanism in response to a disrupted routine and is completely normal. Additionally, experts recommend that you may want to wait until you are fully settled before you try to potty train, wean a baby or accomplish any significant developmental tasks that take parent time and focus. This will not hurt them! And, if they do regress, recognize that this is temporary and don't focus on the behavior. Do not hesitate to seek assistance from your pediatrician or Marine and Family Services counselors if you desire additional information.
- May become clingy. This is another common response to the uncertainty of change. The world in the eyes of a very young child is generally limited to their proximity to a familiar face. When environmental changes begin, the tendency to seek security is natural. This too will pass.

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- Will generally mirror your reaction. How true this is! Even babies and young toddlers are very perceptive to your state of mind. When you are feeling more stress than usual, try to take a time out. Call a friend or family member, or take a walk. Even a forced smile will eventually allow you to put things in perspective and provide a stable role model for your baby or toddler.
- May exhibit no reaction at all. That's right. Often times, very young children do just fine. Again, so much of their response is a reflection of yours. Have a plan, keep up with your relocation tasks, and always schedule time to snuggle and play with your little one. The payoffs are awesome.

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SAY School-age children experience yet another set of reactions:

- May be frightened or angry. Fear of the unknown is a scary proposition for anyone, but for school-age children, especially those who have never relocated before, it can seem overwhelming. Fear can manifest itself in many ways; children may become moody, angry, or even withdrawn and sullen. Encourage your child to share his/her feelings with you, validate their concerns and then present them with positive aspects of the move to consider as well. In every instance there is a positive that can be formulated out of a seemingly negative situation. It is your job as a parent to help your children recognize and appreciate this fact.
- May internalize emotions. As noted above, this can and often does happen. Be alert to subtle changes in their behavior and ensure that there are opportunities for them to talk. Sometimes, children perceive their concerns as additional burdens to their parents and therefore keep silent. You may want to plan a special "date" with your child. This will allow your child to have your undivided attention and give you an opportunity for discussion. It is important not to ignore a child who is unable or seemingly unwilling to verbalize his/her concerns.
- May lash out at family or friends. The flip side to internalizing is acting out towards others. Again, it is important to acknowledge your child's worries and teach or model appropriate behavior. Encourage discussion, but don't tolerate violence and/or disrespect. Stay calm while validating your child's frustrations and ensure that they have an appropriate venue for blowing off steam.
- May distance themselves from friends. Watch for this response and subtly identify ways to encourage interaction. We will soon discuss ways to help them say goodbye in a healthy way.
- May be excited and anxious to move. Your child may be a free spirit who sees the impending move as a real opportunity for growth, change, and the possibility to reinvent him/herself.

SAY Of the three age groups, parents usually agree that teenagers is the hardest to move. Even without an impending move, teenagers are torn between dependence upon their parents and achieving independence. Teenagers are notoriously egocentric; so expect this impending move to be all about them!

Once a child has reached his or her teens, especially if they have not moved frequently in the past, the probability for resentment is high. It is important to recognize that teens see themselves as adults. Respect their unique situation, validate their frustrations and encourage their participation in planning and executing the move. Again, listen to your teen, but maintain your status as a parent. It's easy to feel guilty and give into their demands or they won't move, but your child needs guidance and direction now more than ever.

DESCRIBE the following potential reactions:

- **May rebel.** Look for signs. Is your child changing his/her appearance or breaking established house rules? Are they hanging out with different kids, or becoming withdrawn? Don't ignore these signs or any other extreme change in behavior as they are clear cries for help and attention. Make time to spend with your teen, and don't forget to continue to set and enforce limits. If necessary, seek outside help from Marine and Family Services.
- **May experience anxiety or depression.** Again, if your child experiences significant changes in behavior (i.e. eating, sleeping, interacting with others), we strongly recommend that you speak with your pediatrician or a counselor. Signs of anxiety or depression must be addressed by a professional.
- **May rely on peers for comfort.** Peers are generally more influential in a teen's life than parents (or at least it appears that way to them) and they may spend an increased amount of time with them venting about their impossibly awful situation. Peers can not only serve to comfort your child, but they can empathize with their predicament as well.
- **May seek options and independence.** Teens may beg you to work out a deal. Deals are at your discretion. However, if you opt to allow your child to live with a relative or close friend (because they would be leaving in their senior year of high school, for example), ensure parameters are set and lines of communication remain open. Carefully assess the pros and cons of major issues such as these and seriously weigh the potential consequences for your family and your teen.

DESCRIBE the following actions to help minimize conflict with children:

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- Validate their feelings. Children have different personalities with different modes of responding to change. Whatever their reaction is to your impending move, it is imperative not to dismiss them but encourage them to discuss their feelings and validate what they say. You may even want to schedule a family meeting to provide them a forum to voice their concerns. Don't disregard signs of fear, anger, frustration or sadness. Talk to your children regularly and seek help from counselors, if necessary.
- Share information about your new destination. Get brochures, videos, and books that tell them about their future home. Surf the Internet together and find out what area attractions exist and plan to visit soon after you've arrived.
- Research activities ahead of time. A great way to get your child excited about the impending move is to ensure they have something to look forward to. Take time to research and schedule visits to music or dance studios, sports leagues, or whatever activity is of interest to your child. Also, RAP can provide contact information regarding youth sponsorship or pen pal programs at your new destination.
- Help them say goodbye. Saying goodbye to friends and to their community can be a sad time for children. Have friends over for pizza, or meet at the park for a play date. Bring your camera, video recorder and a special address book for your child to collect treasured contact information. A great way to provide children with the tools to express themselves while preserving memories is to give them a disposable camera. Have them take pictures of their friends, teachers, their home, or other special places. Use the photos to create a scrapbook which is a great way to pass the time while traveling. A child can also use a journal to document their feelings or special memories. The camera and journal can also be a fun way for children to document their adventures while traveling.
- Stay upbeat, positive and calm. Children are very tuned in to how mom and dad are feeling and will no doubt reflect those feelings in their behavior. While it is very healthy to acknowledge that you, too, are sad to say goodbye to your home, it is important that you display confidence and enthusiasm about this new adventure. In turn, this will help alleviate fear that some children experience.

Acclimating your Children

SAY Once you have arrived at your destination, it is important that you help your kids acclimate to their new community. Although this can be challenging, experienced military parents tell us the following actions can help.

- Meet neighborhood kids. Your children may be shy at first, so lend them a helping hand. More than likely neighborhood children will congregate at your new home to see who's moving in. Be friendly and introduce yourself and your child/children. It's amazing how quickly, once the ice is broken, that children begin to feel at home in their new surroundings.
- Visit area attractions. If you are able, take advantage of being your child's new best friend! Visit local sites and attractions from the mundane (the grocery store) to the exciting (the ocean). This will help your child start to identify with their new environment and help them feel at home.
- Allow children to have input into arranging their new rooms. This can be difficult for some parents but recognize that a child's room is his/her very own special place. Relocating was completely out of their control, so let them regain some control by letting them arrange the room to their liking.
- Visit new schools. Make an appointment with the new school to take a tour and register. Find out how your child can join teams or clubs. If the school has a significant population of military children, chances are they may have programs or services specifically for them. Ask what is available.
- Share hugs and reassurance. This is an emotional time for every family member, but especially for children. The love and support from mom and dad provide immeasurable comfort.
- Set a great example! You cannot expect your children to look for the positives in this experience if you are miserable yourself. Maximize this opportunity to show your children through words and actions that you see this move as a new and exciting adventure. Participate in local events, meet your neighbors and get involved in activities that interest you. Most importantly, support your spouse and the military lifestyle you have chosen to experience together.

Resources

In addition to RAP services that we discussed at the beginning of this workshop, there are other resources that can be of assistance to you during relocation.

DESCRIBE the following resources.

- **MCCS:** In addition to RAP, Marine and Family Services offers many other programs including counseling, employment assistance and family education programs. MCCS offers other programs and services. Semper Fit, Marine Corps

Family Team Building, Child Development Center, and the Single Marine Program are all services you may want to take advantage of.

NOTE: Suggest that participants attend the *Welcome Aboard* or *Newly Arrived Spouse* workshops at their new duty station.

- **MCCS One Source:** Available 24/7 online or toll-free. They provide personalized relocation reports that are updated monthly. You can request specialized information such as housing information or child care providers.

REFER to the *Relocation Resources on the Web* handout and SAY As we discussed earlier, the Internet has a wealth of resources available. Use this handout as a place to begin.

Sponsorship Program

SAY Among the most important relocation resources is the sponsorship program. Whether you are single or have a family, the sponsorship program can make your move easier. After you receive your orders, you should request a sponsor from your gaining command. Some commands assign a sponsor whether you request one or not. At other commands, you must request a sponsor. If you request a sponsor, you will be assigned one whose grade and status is similar to yours.

The sponsor will fill you in on command structure and serve as a resource for community information such as recreational activities, area attractions, housing, schools, and spouse employment. Contact your sponsor as soon as possible and keep them informed of any special needs or circumstances. Remember to carry your sponsor's name, duty and home phone numbers with you while on route to your new location.

ASK How many of you have school age children or teens? There is a Youth/Teen Sponsorship program available at most installations. Your child can get a sponsor to assist them in adapting to their new surroundings. A child at your new duty station will be assigned to your child prior to your move. The children will correspond with each other and then when your child arrives their sponsor will assist them in getting to know the new area.

NOTE: This program may be under the auspices of Children/Youth/Teen or Marine and Family Services. Be sure to have information available on how to access this program.

Summary

SAY We've covered a lot of material. Before we conclude, does anyone have any questions?

SAY If there are no more questions, could you please take a few minutes and complete the post-check and also the program evaluation. You will find the post-check on the back side of the pre-check. When you've completed these, please return them to me. And, please stop by the table and look at the resource materials.

THANK the participants for attending.

VIII. Quality Assurance Procedures

To assure accurate and current information as well as a quality presentation, the following should be completed:

- Review and update the curriculum annually.
- Distribute program evaluations to participants after each workshop. Results should be tabulated and retained to measure the effectiveness of information disseminated, workshop content, and delivery of presentation.
- Evaluate pre and post-checks to determine if participants' knowledge increased.
- Observe and evaluate the program annually. This should be done by the RAP supervisor. Both program content and the presenter's effectiveness should be included in the evaluation.

IX. PowerPoint Slides

A PowerPoint slide presentation can be found directly after the following section. The slides are printed three to a page with space to the right of each slide for presenter's notes and are designed to underscore the main points of the presentation. This workshop can be presented without use of the slides

X. Instructional Materials

- Pre-check/Post-check (At the end of this module.)
- Relocation Resources on the Web (Page A-9)
- Basic Entitlements and Allowances (Page A-12)
- Financial Planning for a PCS Move (Page A-14)
- Spouse Employment Tips (Page A-2)
- Travel Cost Worksheet (Page A-16)
- Why do a Personally Procured Move? (Page A-17)
- Tips for Packing and Moving Days (Page A-20)
- PCSing with a Pet (Page A-21)
- Saying Goodbye and Staying in Touch (Page A-23)
- Travel Safely (Page A-24)
- Family Travel Tips (Page A-26)
- Relocation Tips for Parents (Page A-29)
- Helping Your Children and Teens Adjust (Page A-30)
- Kids Reactions to Relocation (Page A-32)
- Communicating with your Sponsor (Page A-28)
- Program evaluation (Page A-1)
- Reacculturation (Page A-35)