

U.S. Marine Corps Forces Europe and Africa



Welcome Aboard Guidebook

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Sponsorship and You

Welcome aboard! This short guidebook is designed to provide you with some key and critical information to facilitate your transition to the Stuttgart community. I'm sure you will have many questions prior to and immediately upon arrival. Make sure to write your questions down as they come so we can be of better service to you and your family. One way to solve most of your challenges is to ensure that you maintain constant contact with your assigned sponsor and section representatives. A transfer to an OCONUS environment can be overwhelming, but we have included some items in this guidebook you should know prior to arrival to help relieve you of any anxiety.

It is equally important for you to ensure your sponsor has your travel itinerary to facilitate ground transportation upon arrival. Please send it as soon as possible so we can have the appropriate vehicles available.

So what will you do and who will you support? You will be assigned to the staff of U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Europe and Africa, working to support United States European Command and United States Africa Command. The work can be rigorous, but certainly rewarding. We look forward to your arrival.

Remember, communication is key. A successful transition begins with how well you are involved with your sponsor.

Inbound Personnel Support

1. The MARFOREUR/AF website (*) is loaded with Welcome Aboard Resources for your assistance.
2. Your sponsor, with assistance of your new work section, will make contact with you and guide you through key check-in requirements.
3. The FRO will contact you and/or your family members and provide access to Welcome Aboard materials on e-Marine.
4. Once you arrive, your Sponsor will support you in completing your check-in requirements and provide additional assistance as needed.
5. You will have 10 working days to complete the U.S. Army Garrison in-processing classes and the MARFOREUR/AF check-in process.
6. Upon completion of the check-in process, you must complete an evaluation of the program. This evaluation will help improve the Sponsorship Program.

* - See back cover for website.

Points of Contact

| <u>Contact</u> | <u>DSN</u> | <u>Commercial</u> |
|--|--------------|--------------------|
| Sponsor | _____ | _____ |
| Chief of Staff | 314-431-2546 | +49(0)703-115-2546 |
| Sergeant Major | 314-431-2239 | +49(0)703-115-2239 |
| Staff Secretary | 314-431-2382 | +49(0)703-115-2382 |
| AC/S G-1 | 314-431-3586 | +49(0)703-115-3586 |
| AC/S G-2 | 314-431-2564 | +49(0)703-115-2564 |
| AC/S G-3 | 314-431-2567 | +49(0)703-115-2567 |
| AC/S G-4 | 314-431-3142 | +49(0)703-115-3142 |
| AC/S G-5 | 314-431-2399 | +49(0)703-115-2399 |
| AC/S G-6 | 314-431-2408 | +49(0)703-115-2408 |
| AC/S G-8 | 314-431-2441 | +49(0)703-115-2441 |
| FRO | 314-431-3593 | +49(0)703-115-3593 |
| Command Center marforeur-af-cmdctr@mcw.usmc.mil | 314-431-2380 | +49(0)703-115-2380 |

To call commercial from inside Germany, omit +49, dial (o) and the phone number listed. When calling commercial from the United States, dial 011-49 and omit (o) and the phone number listed.

Anti-Terrorism/Force Protection

Safety and Security

In today's environment and social norms, you should be aware of local policies, customs, and laws. Anti-social behavior is certainly frowned upon by our host nation. During your in-processing, you will receive cultural briefs on the do's and don'ts. Your safety and security is very important. Unlike CONUS, for emergencies or to contact the local authorities for any reason, dial 112 vice 911.

Crime

Crime is not something you generally hear about, but it does happen. As you would normally do wherever you reside, take sensible precautions to avoid mugging, bag snatching and pick-pocketing. Be particularly vigilant at airports, railway stations, and public gatherings.

Terrorism

There is a general threat from terrorism. Attacks can be indiscriminate, including in public places frequented by expatriates and foreign travelers. U.S. citizens need to maintain a high level of vigilance and take appropriate steps to increase their security awareness.

U.S. embassies across Europe and Africa remind U.S. citizens to review the Department of State Worldwide Caution, which provides information on the continuing threat of terrorist actions and violence against U.S. citizens and interests throughout the world. You are also encouraged to monitor media and local information sources, and factor updated information into personal travel plans and activities.

<http://www.travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/alertswarnings/worldwide-caution.html>

What you need to know: DoDI 2000.16, requires all personnel 14 years of age and up to complete Level I AT awareness training. This training is required to be completed prior to departure from CONUS. This will help to prepare you and your family for an OCONUS assignment.

<http://jko.jten.mil/courses/at1/launch.html>

Passports

Due to the high volume of official and unofficial travel associated with your tour in Germany, you will need to obtain an official no-fee passport and a tourist passport prior to your arrival.

Military requirements for PCS Travel: ID Card and PCS Orders.

Family member requirements for PCS Travel: Official no-fee passport, ID Card, and PCS Orders.

DoD Civilian requirements for PCS Travel: Official no-fee Passport and PCS Orders.

After arrival, if you were unable to obtain an official no-fee passport, our command passport representatives will assist you in completing the appropriate forms for processing at the U.S. Army Garrison Passport Office.

Local Leave Travel: It is recommended that you carry your tourist passport and ID card when traveling in Europe, or anywhere else outside of the U.S. In most instances, NATO member countries allow U.S. military personnel to cross borders with an ID card and leave forms, but it cannot be guaranteed that you will be allowed through every access point. In preparation for all travel, it is your responsibility to plan in advance, review requirements for travel, and review the DoD Foreign Clearance Guide.

What you need to know: Regardless of the passport type issued, you will be required to obtain a State Department-issued Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) stamp in your no-fee or official passport, for dependent and civilian employees only. If not obtained prior to arrival, you will be required to obtain a SOFA stamp issued locally within 90 days of arrival.

DoD Foreign Clearance Guide:

<https://www.fcg.pentagon.mil/>

Passport and SOFA Services:

DSN: 314-431-2539, Commercial: +49(0)703-115-2539

<http://www.stuttgart.army.mil/services-passports.html>

Temporary Lodging

Upon receipt of orders, you are advised to reserve temporary lodging for 60 days as soon as possible. The purpose is to ensure adequate time to obtain permanent housing. Your sponsor will assist you as needed.

Army Lodging Hospitality Programs operates two facilities in the USAG-Stuttgart area. It is highly recommended for ease of travel during the checking-in process that you stay at the Panzer Hotel. If not available, you can stay on Kelley Barracks. There is a base to base shuttle bus that is available to you and your family.

If you have pets, plan accordingly, there will be pet charges for staying in the hotels. These charges are NON-REFUNDABLE and you will be required to pay for this out of pocket.

What you need to know: If you cannot secure on base lodging and are required to go off base, you must receive a Certificate or Statement of Non-availability from Army Lodging prior to staying in any off-post establishment, in order to be reimbursed for lodging expenses.

Panzer Hotel:

DSN: 314-431-3490, Commercial: +49(0)703-115-3490

www.stuttgart.armymwr.com/index.php/europe/stuttgart/programs/panzer-hotel

Kelley Hotel:

DSN: 314-421-2815, Commercial: +49(0)711-729-2815

www.stuttgart.armymwr.com/index.php/europe/stuttgart/programs/kelley-hotel

Off-Post Lodging:

<http://www.stgt.com/hotels/homee.htm>

In-Processing

On the day of arrival, it is your responsibility to physically check-in to the Regional Personnel Administration Center (RPAC) on Panzer Kaserne, Building 2900. The building is adjacent to the side entrance of the Main Exchange. If you arrive after working hours, on a weekend or holiday, call or email the Command Center and provide your name, rank, date of arrival, lodging location, and contact details.

Immediately upon arrival, you will be required to attend local classes sponsored by the U.S. Army Garrison. Your sponsor will assist you with registration.

At a time to be determined, with your sponsor's or assigned section's assistance, you will need to set up an appointment with the Staff Secretary to physically check-in with the Sergeant Major (enlisted) or Chief of Staff (officer) in the service uniform.

What you need to know: Your pay and allowances cannot start until you check in with the RPAC.

Regional Personnel Administration Center:

DSN: 314-431-3615, Commercial +49(0)703-115-3615

Command Center:

DSN: 314-431-2380, Commercial +49(0)703-115-2380

marforeur-af-cmdctr@mcw.usmc.mil

Central Processing Facility (CPF):

DSN: 314-431-2599 / 2803

Commercial: +49(0)703-115-2599 / 2803

<http://www.stuttgart.army.mil/relocation.html>

Staff Secretary:

DSN: 314-431-2736

Housing

Marine Corps and Army housing policies are very different. Assignment to on-post housing is mandatory for military personnel. All Military and Civilian personnel on permanent change of station (PCS) orders to Stuttgart must in-process with the housing office no later than 48 hours from date of arrival to receive an appropriate briefing.

There are four housing areas in the Stuttgart area: Patch, Kelley, Robinson Barracks and Panzer Kaserne. Patch Barracks and Robinson Barracks are the two largest areas with approximately 60% of the total housing assets. Quarters include two, three, or four bedroom units. For large families, there are a very limited number of five bedroom units. Field grade, company grade, senior and junior enlisted housing is in multi-family apartment buildings locally known as the "stairwells." You will have an assigned storage unit within the building that varies in size.

Civilians will not be assigned housing on base, but are required to contact the Off-Post Housing Office for assistance in locating housing.

What you need to know: If housing for your grade and family size is not projected to be available for assignment within 60 days of arrival, a Certificate of Non-Availability (CNA) may be issued to live off-post.

Unaccompanied Personnel Housing:

DSN: 314-431-2236 / 2337, Commercial: +49(0)703-115-2236 / 2337

On-Post Housing:

DSN: 314-431-2285 / 2275, Commercial: +49(0)703-115-2285 / 2275

Off-Post Housing:

DSN: 314-431-2521 / 2318, Commercial: +49(0)703-115-2521 / 2318

<http://www.stuttgart.army.mil/housing/in-processing.html>

Household Goods

As soon as you are notified of your upcoming PCS move, you can start getting your house and family ready. Begin by gathering important family records and stage in one location. You will need access to them from time to time during your transition. Hunting for them in random boxes can be a challenge.

You should begin to plan what items you will take in your unaccompanied baggage, your main household goods shipment, and what you will put into permanent storage. Do yourself a favor and maintain proper records of what you leave in storage, because you may end up purchasing the same item during your tour. If you don't need it now, you might not need it three years later.

The Defense Personal Property System (DPS) is the online system you will use to manage your household goods shipment. Move.mil explains this new process and provides access to DPS.

What you need to know: You will be provided a washer, dryer, and an American size refrigerator during your tour. Until your household goods arrive, you are also entitled to temporary furniture. Off-base, the electric current is different (220V), and houses are generally smaller than U.S. standards. Sometimes large furniture is an issue. Also, most houses on the economy do not have closets. Wardrobes may be provided by the housing office. Yes, you can bring your lamps as they are not effected like standard electronic devices, but you will need to change the light bulbs. Small appliances may require a transformer which you can procure locally. Some people prefer to purchase small appliances once they arrive. If you have any questions about electronic devices, your sponsor can assist you in gathering the appropriate information.

Transportation Office:

DSN: 314-431-3338

Commercial: +49(0)703-115-3338

<http://www.move.mil/>

Vehicles

Locally procured, new, used, or shipped vehicles must be registered with United States Army Europe (USAREUR). All vehicles must pass a detailed safety inspection before they can be registered. Please make sure your vehicle is mechanically sound prior to shipment.

If you have a vehicle that has been normally operated in warmer climates, it is highly recommended that you check the battery and replace the washer fluid before the first cold spell. Your vehicle may not start and the fluid may freeze on the glass.

What you need to know: Ship your vehicle as soon as practical. It can take up to 60 days for arrival (depending on location). Rental cars are not authorized for reimbursement during PCS travel. If you need a second vehicle, you may ship one at your own expense or purchase one locally. A used car lot, commonly referred as the “lemon lot” is located on Panzer Kaserne near the Main Exchange.

Vehicle Registration:

DSN: 314-431-2833 / 2883

Commercial: +49(0)703-115-2833 / 2883

<http://www.stuttgart.army.mil/services-vehiclereg.html>

Driver's License

In order for you to operate your vehicle, it must have a USAREUR plate, and you are required to possess a USAREUR diver's license.

A U.S. Forces certificate of license (AE Form 190-1F) is valid for 5 years for the vehicle class identified, unless the license is suspended or revoked. To be valid, licenses must be carried with a valid identification card and a valid country or state license.

You are encouraged to establish a log-in account at (<http://jko.jten.mil/>) to take the on-line U.S. Driver's Training Program for Europe. Once your account is established, search the course catalog to find and enroll in the training program and the final course exam. Passing this course will eliminate the one day, in person licensing class, and get you on the road quicker. All you will need to do is print the certificate and bring it with you.

Motorcycle license testing is conducted by appointment only.

What you need to know: You must be cognizant of the expiration of your stateside license. It must be valid, and in your possession, when operating vehicles OCONUS.

Driver's License Office:

DSN: 314-431-2007

Commercial: +49(0)703-115-2007

http://www.eur.army.mil/rmv/Drivers_Testing/default.htm

TRICARE

Prior to transfer, work with your local TRICARE Service Center (TSC) or case manager to ensure the transition is as smooth as possible. Upon arrival, you should contact the Beneficiary Counseling and Assistance Coordinator (BCAC) or TSC to ensure the transition plans are in place. You may also contact the BCAC or TSC to obtain authorizations for TRICARE Extended Care Health Option (ECHO) services, if applicable.

All TRICARE Regional Offices, and most Military Treatment Facilities, are staffed with BCACs (formerly known as Health Benefits Advisors). BCACs provide information, guidance and assistance on benefit options, TRICARE Prime enrollment, special authorizations, status of claims and eligibility, and assistance with referrals and appointments. If you or your family member have a more severe medical need, contact your assigned case manager.

What you need to know: Transfer your eligibility from CONUS to OCONUS. Don't wait until you are sick.

Health Benefits Advisor:

DSN: 314-430-4052 / 7408

Commercial: +49(0)711-680-4052 / 7408

<http://www.tricare.mil/overseas>

Medical Services

The Stuttgart Health Clinic is located on Patch Barracks in Stuttgart, Germany. There is also a Health Annex on Kelley Barracks.

Fundamental services include: primary care, pediatric care, laboratory services, and physical therapy, as well as behavioral health services such as social work, psychology and family advocacy programs.

The Stuttgart Health Clinic has a strong partnership with our Host Nation counterparts. If you or a member of your family can't be treated in one of the Army clinics, you will be referred to a German provider. Together, military and German providers ensure you and your family members have access to world-class healthcare.

What you need to know: There is no military hospital in Stuttgart. Emergency and complex medical issues are handled on the local economy. In the event of a medical emergency, dial 112. If you can, contact the Military Police (MP) desk to help ensure an appropriate response.

Medical Services:

DSN: 314-590-2900, Commercial: +49 (0) 6371-9464-2900,

MP desk: (0) 711-680-5262

<https://ermc.amedd.army.mil/stuttgart/index.cfm>

Dental Services

The Dental Clinic is located on Panzer Kaserne in Stuttgart, Germany. They are focused on oral health care for you and your family members. They may also provide limited services to Reserve Service members on active duty orders and retirees.

Dental Services:

DSN: 314-590-2800, Commercial: +49(0)6371-9464-2800

MP desk: (0) 711-680-5262

Installation Access

Upon arrival, you and your family members will be required to register your DoD ID Cards within the Installation Access Control System (IACS). IACS is a personnel access verification system, with a central network database linked to all Installation Access Control Offices, MP Stations, and Access Control Points to all military installations in Europe.

What you need to know: If you have a change of status with your ID Card, you will need to re-register the new card with IACS.

IACS Office:

DSN: 314-431-2872, Commercial: +49(0)703-115-2872

<http://www.stuttgart.army.mil/services-IACS.html>

ID Card Services

The mission of U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart, Directorate of Human Resources, Military Personnel Division, Identification Card Section is to provide equitable, accurate, timely and efficient customer service to the Stuttgart Joint community through the Central In-/Out-processing Facility.

What you need to know: If you or your family member lose an ID Card, you must obtain a Lost ID Card Statement from the MP Desk on Patch Barracks and provide two forms of ID prior to being issued a new ID Card. The new card will also need to be registered in IACS.

ID Card Office:

DSN: 314-431-2333

Commercial: +49(0)703-115-2333

<http://www.stuttgart.army.mil/services-ID.html>

School and Parent Central Services

There are three Elementary, one Middle and one High School in the Stuttgart area. School Liaison Officers help families communicate with school districts and schools regarding education issues (to include school personnel understanding the impact of PCS on military students), provide transition support, and link students and families to education and post-secondary resources.

You will be briefed on Child, Youth & School Services (CYS) as part of your in-processing with the installation.

Prior to enrollment in any activities such as Scouts, sports, or any youth services, you will be required to register all children with Parent Central Services, located on Patch Barracks.

What you need to know: Your children will go to school based on where you live. There are boundaries that dictate which school is within your area. Secondly, if your child will participate in sports, a valid sports physical must be completed upon arrival.

School Liaison Officer:

<http://stuttgart.armymwr.com/europe/stuttgart/programs/school-liason-officer-slo/school-liason-officer/>

Parent Central Services/CYS Registration:

DSN 314-430-7480

Commercial: +49(0)0711-680-7480

Pets

Planning for shipment of your pet includes researching airline requirements and quarantine restriction laws in your new location. You will need to ask the airlines for the requirements for size, weight, number of animals, kennel construction, documentation and season of the year limitations. Occasionally, small pets can be shipped on military flights, but availability, regulations, and fees often change. We recommend you search Move.mil, Air Animal, and the Fly Pets websites for general information on shipping pets.

Please make pet arrangements before you transfer. Ask your sponsor for assistance as needed. Hotels on-post have limited rooms and space for pets; however, many German hotels allow pets. There are a few kennels available in the area. Contact Veterinary Services, located on Panzer Kaserne for more information.

Also, boarding establishments are limited and can be expensive. Regulations limit residents of military housing to no more than two domestic pets per household. Make sure you communicate with your sponsor as early as possible regarding pet needs.

German states have passed a Dangerous Dog Ordinance (DDO), placing restriction upon the ownership of certain types of dogs. If you own such a dog, you should research the requirements of the German DDO and owner responsibilities.

What you need to know: Germany is very pet friendly. However, pet transportation at government expense is not authorized.

Transportation Office:

DSN: 314-431-2675 / 2589, Commercial: +49(0)703-115-2675 / 2589

Veterinary Services:

DSN: 314-431-2681 / 2671, Commercial: +49(0)703-115-2681 / 2671

<http://phc.amedd.army.mil/organization/phcreur/Pages/PHCR-EuropeVeterinaryDistrictsandBranches.aspx>

Value Added Tax (VAT) Program

Germany imposes a Value-Added Tax (VAT) of either 19% or a reduced rate of 7% on most items/services purchased. This tax is similar to a sales tax in the U.S., but it is generally already included in the price. That means the sticker price already includes either the 19% or 7% VAT. The full rate of 19% is charged on most items/service. The reduced rate of 7% is charged on basic food staple items (such as milk, flour, and eggs), as well as some magazines, books, and hotel stays. Some services and some used items may not include a tax that can be extracted.

International Agreements between the U.S. and Germany permit U.S. Forces to procure tax-free goods and services for eligible members. Please be aware that there are restrictions and that intentional or unintentional abuse of the program will lead to personal tax liabilities, expulsion from the program, and Commander or Supervisor notification. It may also be considered punishable tax evasion.

What you need to know: You can use VAT Forms at most off-base businesses. You will need to ask first and the benefit eliminates the taxes. Plan ahead and keep a VAT form in your car.

VAT-Tax Free Office:

DSN: 314-431-3368, Commercial: +49(0)703-115-3368,

<http://stuttgart.armymwr.com/europe/stuttgart/programs/vat>

Useful Links

Official U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Europe and Africa Website:

<http://www.marforeur.marines.mil/>

U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Europe and Africa Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/USMCFEA>

Marine and Families of Stuttgart, Germany Facebook Page:

<http://www.facebook.com/USAGMarines/?fref=tss>

U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart Website:

<http://www.stuttgart.army.mil/>

Stuttgart Family and MWR Website:

<http://stuttgart.armymwr.com/europe/stuttgart/programs>

Moving Resource:

<http://www.militaryonesource.mil/moving>

Getting Around:

<http://www.gettingaround.net/pages/usareur.php>

Life Lessons:

<http://lifelessonsmilitarywife.com/>

Army Policy on Sponsorship:

<http://www.stuttgart.army.mil/pdf/policies/p16.pdf>