

RELOCATING

TO KOREA



RELOCATING YOUR FAMILY TO KOREA

Service members are assigned as either command-sponsored or noncommand-sponsored tours to Korea. Only about 3,000 of the 37,000 military assignments in Korea are command-sponsored two-year tours that allow service members to bring their families along on the government's dime. Conversely, most tours are unaccompanied tours (also known as noncommand-sponsored, hardship or remote tours) that last one-year and do not accommodate families. Since Korea is a potential combat zone, the number of family members in the country has been limited due to the potential risks.

If a service member in a noncommand-sponsored category does decide to bring his/her family to Korea they will be responsible for their family's moving expenses, including transportation of goods; schools; housing and other living expenses. Depending on the service member's orders, they may be required to live alone at the installation in the dormitory, BEQ/BOQ or barracks, especially those units located north of Seoul. It is a volatile region that is considered unsuitable for families to live in.

Since housing is very limited, service members that are assigned to accompanied tours will be granted concurrent travel only if suitable housing for the family will become available in 60 days. Otherwise, the service member will travel to Korea first and wait for housing to open up so his or her family can move over. If government housing is not available, the service member will receive financial assistance with their rent. Command-sponsored families have complete access to the installation exchange, commissary, schools and medical care.



If living off base, your living quarters must be approved by housing and health officials before you make a commitment to move in. The average apartment is 800 sq. ft. with limited storage space, no closets and no shower curtain rods. It is advisable to bring wardrobes to hang clothes on and extra shelving for storage. In addition, the apartments typically aren't furnished with stoves, washers, dryers, or air conditioners. It is a good idea to bring a fan with you for the sweltering summer months and an electric blanket and heater for the cold winter months. Rent in the Seoul area ranges from \$950 to \$2,000 a month for a three-room (not bedroom) apartment and electricity is expensive.

For families that move to Korea, it is imperative that all family members have a current passport with an A-3 Korean Visa. Service members won't need a passport to enter Korea, but will need one if they plan to travel outside of the country.

When you arrive into Korea, a Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) stamp should be affixed in all family members and DoD civilians passports. Your relocation office can assist you with this. You should carry your SOFA card at all times.

Furthermore, according to a United States Forces in Korea policy, command and non-command sponsored spouse, retirees and children over 10 years old will have to show an ID card and ration control plate when entering a commissary or exchange. At some of the smaller AAFES facilities shoppers may also have to be members.

If a service member does leave his/her family back in the States, the family will be entitled to exchange, commissary, housing and other benefits at the military installation near where they live. In addition, the government will pay for the family to be moved to another location if they choose.