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Moving out of Service Family Accommodation



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Moving Out of SFA

Planning Your Move - The Service Families Task Force has published a Relocation Aide-Memoire – A Guide for Service Families on Moving which you might find helpful. It can be found on the MOD website at:

<http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/DefenceFor/ServiceCommunity>

Booking Your Move-Out - You are required to inform your Housing Provider that you have been re-assigned within 14 days of receiving your Assignment Order. You are also required to book a Pre Move-Out Advisory Visit (PMOAV) with your HIC/Housing office up to 2 months prior to your expected Move-Out date.

Pre Move-Out Advisory Visit - The aim of the PMOAV is to advise you on the agreed Move-Out standard whilst also giving the Housing Officer (HO), the opportunity to assess any repair/maintenance work that may be necessary prior to the SFA being allocated to another family. At your PMOAV, you will be given a leaflet explaining the standard required. The HO will be happy to answer any questions you may have on the Move-Out process. Please note that the PMOAV is a mandatory requirement.

Those areas to which the Move-Out standard applies are outlined below:-

General

- **Carpets** - Vacuumed, stain-free and free of infestation where occupants have had pets
- **Floors** - Clean and free of marks
- **Walls** - No stains or marks, all holes filled and made good where picture hooks have been removed except where agreement has been given for picture hooks to be left
- **Woodwork** - No dust or finger marks
- **Windows/Frames** - Glass to be clean inside and out and frames free of mildew

Bathroom

- **Taps and Sanitary Ware** - Clean and free of lime scale inside and out
- **Tiles** - No finger or splash marks and free from mildew between the tiles

Kitchen

- **Cooker** - Clean and grease-free inside and out and free of carbon deposits. Cooker hood and filter clean and grease-free.
- **Cooker Recesses** - Clean and grease-free, underneath, behind the cooker and on side panels
- **Work Surfaces and Kitchen Units** - Clean (including the edges and underneath) and grease free
- **Tiles** - No finger, splash or grease marks

Outside

- **Gardens** - Tidy, with grass cut, hedges trimmed and flower beds free of weeds
- **Paths** - Swept
- **Garages** - Swept and empty
- **Garden Waste** - Dispose of all prior to Move-Out
- **Rubbish Bins** - Empty and clean

Pre-Payment Cleaning Scheme - The pre-payment cleaning scheme is an optional arrangement where you pay in advance for your SFA to be cleaned prior to Move-Out. In England and Wales, arrangements are in hand to transfer this service to the HPC. Your Housing Officer should provide you with details of the scheme at your Pre-Move Out Advisory Visit. For details of arrangements for Scotland and Northern Ireland you should contact your HIC in the first instance.

Move-Out - Your Move-Out will be attended by the HO who will inspect the SFA to see if it meets the agreed Move-Out standard. If the standard is not satisfactory and there are deficiencies or damages that are not considered to be fair wear and tear, a charge will be raised by the HO (See Chargeable Repairs on page C - 4 of Booklet C). An invoice will follow. The HO will complete the move, and JPA action will then be taken to cease accommodation charges on the property from the date of the Move-Out.

Redirection of Mail - GB - It is your responsibility to arrange for your post to be redirected to your new address by making the necessary arrangements with Royal Mail. This takes at least 5 working days to take effect. Any mail arriving at a property in UK after the occupant has moved out will be returned to the sender. DE Ops Housing is not responsible for redirecting mail.

Redirection of Mail - Overseas - The arrangements for overseas are detailed in the appropriate Booklet F.

Retention

For a variety of reasons, families occasionally wish to retain their present SFA rather than move-on to the next Duty Station. As accommodation is required for incoming personnel retention is admissible in certain circumstances for a specific period of time, which have been agreed by the three Services and are defined in JSP 464. All requests for retention should be made in writing to the HIC. Retention of SFA may be granted on welfare, medical or educational grounds. Each case will be considered on its merits and would involve the appropriate welfare, medical or educational agencies and the LSC.

Limited retention for a period of 28 days can also be authorised by the HIC in cases where SFA is not available at the new Duty Station but this should only occur in exceptional circumstances.

In Naval Port Areas, entitled Royal Navy (RN) and Royal Marines (RM) families occupying SFA at Portsmouth, Plymouth and Clyde may retain their SFA irrespective of any future Assignments.

End of Entitlement

Vacation and Notice Period - Licensee - The minimum period of occupation of SFA is 6 months after which 28 days notice should be given or, on re-assignment, within 14 days of receipt of an Assignment Order.

Vacation and Notice Period - Housing Provider - As a Service licensee you will normally be required to vacate your SFA if any of the following circumstances arise:

- Assignment elsewhere, (see page D - 3 for RN & RM families)
- Resignation, retirement or discharge
- Absence Without Leave
- Changes in your PStatCat status affecting entitlement
- Breach of the licence agreement or station regulations
- Vacant possession is required for modernisation, disposal, health & safety reasons or change of use

The length of notice given by your Housing Provider when issuing a Notice to Vacate (NTV) will depend on the following circumstances. In some cases the notice period may be shorter than that stated (but not less than 28 days).

Assignment - 28 days - to expire on your Re-assignment date or the end of any period of authorised retention.

Normal Discharge or Retirement - 93 days - to expire on the last day of service.

Short Notice Discharge - 93 days - even if this goes past the anticipated discharge date. If on disciplinary or misconduct grounds, only 28 days notice is given.

Compulsory Medical Discharge - 93 days - continued use and occupancy of SFA will exceptionally be permitted (depending upon personal circumstances) after the date of discharge.

Absence Without Leave - 28 days notice given to the Spouse/Civil Partner from the date the licensee is formally declared AWOL.

Breakdown of Marriage or Civil Partnership - 93 days notice is given to the remaining occupant(s) from the date that the Housing Provider is notified of a change of PStatCat.

Death of the Service Licensee - The bereaved Spouse or Civil Partner is entitled to remain in occupation of SFA for an initial period of 2 years at entitled rates. Retention of SFA may be extended beyond this point at the discretion of the LSC, in consultation with the relevant welfare authorities and the Housing Provider.

Compulsory Vacation For Other Reason - As much notice as possible is given but not less than 28 days for those occupying surplus SFA, otherwise not less than 93 days.

Irregular Occupancy

Expiry of the Notice to Vacate (NTV) - Irrespective of the cause of the loss of entitlement to occupy SFA, when a NTV expires and the family or members of the family remain in occupation of SFA they will become Irregular Occupants (IO).

The previous section describes the circumstances where loss of entitlement occurs and the period of notice that the Housing Provider will issue. During the notice period the Service licensee is responsible for paying the accommodation charges. On expiry of the NTV, the remaining occupants become liable to pay Damages For Trespass (DFT) (Violent Profits (VP) in Scotland).

The DFT or VP charge covers use and occupation of SFA and is broadly similar in cost to a market rent, plus charges for furniture and garage (if appropriate), council tax, water and sewerage. The DFT or VP charge is, however, not rent. It is markedly higher than the entitled rate of accommodation charge.

Repossession - The Housing Providers, in consultation with the LSC reserve the right to take court action to repossess SFA. Repossession of the property will be in accordance with the DE Ops Housing IO procedures.

[Joint Service Housing Advice Office \(JSHAO\)](#) - The JSHAO provides a central contact point for information and advice on Local Authority (Council) and Housing Association accommodation, shared ownership and house purchase in UK. They can also advise on the process for re-housing applicants in Housing Association rented accommodation via the MOD Referral Scheme. Service personnel and their dependents can use the service, as can separated partners occupying SFA. For more information about re-housing options contact them at: www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support/housing

Joint Service Housing Advice Office
Headquarters Land Forces
Erskine Barracks
Wilton
Salisbury
Wiltshire, SP2 0AG
Tel: 01722 436575

[SSAFA Forces Help](#) - SSAFA Forces Help's Housing Advisory Service offers advice and guidance to ex-Service personnel and their families on a range of housing issues such as housing options, relocation, specialist housing, applying to Local Authorities, private rental and house purchase.

They have contacts with a wide variety of housing providers including organisations that provide accommodation exclusively for ex-Service personnel. For more information see www.ssafa.org.uk/housing.html.

Welfare

HIVE - The HIVE provides help, information and signposts you to professional agencies. Their core function is the provision of information – virtually anything from bus times to confidential welfare ‘signposting’. This means that although they cannot sort out all your problems for you, they can point you towards the best sources of advice and assistance across both military and civilian organisations. HIVE information centres can give you practical assistance in sending e-blueys and provide internet access. HIVE online can be found at: www.hive.mod.uk. Alternatively, call 01722 436569.

SSAFA - A range of other assistance, including financial, is available from SSAFA Forces Help. In addition to its social workers, in-Service committees and community volunteers in many Port/Garrison/Station areas, SSAFA Forces Help have a network of branches throughout the UK which supports serving, ex-Service personnel and their families. Addresses of these branches are in Service and BT telephone directories and are also available on their website see www.ssafa.org.uk.

Further details of welfare support can be found in Booklet F.

