

470TH AIR BASE SQUADRON HOUSING REFERRAL OFFICE

INPROCESSING COUNSELING CHECKLIST

1. Service member (SM) provides five copies of PCS-orders with departure date, date of arrival, which dependents are with SM in hotel, duty section and extension, temporary location (hotel or guesthouse).
2. TLA procedures: Hand out copy of TLA Info Letter; TLA in 10 day increments, SM proofs aggressive seek of housing by "TLA Validation Sheet", (1. week=2 dwellings, 2. week=5 dwellings). SM provides receipts from hotel or other temporary accommodation, max. 30 days TLA, transfer of TLA form to Account.&Finance NLT two days after turn-in of receipt. Pink copy of VAT form can be turned-in for reimbursement. **SM should not forget to pay hotel/ guesthouse bill!!**
3. Sources for house hunting: USAF Housing Referral Office (HRO), NATO Billeting (Bldg. 141), Schinnen Housing Office in The Netherlands, and JFC HQ in Brunssum/NL, local GK newspaper.
4. If SM has school kids, has to make sure the future place of residence is within the school-bus area. The school-bus office in building 89 has to be contacted for information. If the SM lives outside the school-bus area, he/she is responsible for transportation to the next possible bus stop.
5. Wish to reside in the Netherlands? SM has to pick up form at the orderly room in bldg. 88, customer service section, and get it completed, then return it to orderly room.
6. Explanation of rental contract terms such as size, cold rent, utilities(house insurance should always be added, to avoid tenant paying for water damage caused by washer – recourse/regress), housing allowance, renovation requirements, final bills, termination, security deposit.
7. HRO will contact landlords, if necessary, and negotiate contractual stipulations with tenant and landlord. When SM has selected a residence, he/she has to pick-up a worksheet for a lease contract from HRO and let the landlord complete it. The worksheet (also pre-contract) then will be returned to the HRO. HRO will prepare the USAF lease contract. The contract can be picked-up three to five days later. Don't carry the lease around. Bring lease to landlord for signature within the next three days.
8. Don't tell a prospective landlord, what your OHA ceiling is. Landlords don't have to know, it might give them ideas to raise the rent. The average rent per m² is around € 7 in the GK area.
9. The SM should not sign a lease contract before HRO has checked the rental stipulations!!
10. Only USAF lease contracts will be accepted. For housing allowance reasons the USAF finance office will fax the contract to the AF Finance Center in Ellsworth, SD, and the employees there don't have German language skills.
11. Only the two USAF housing employees are the official POCs for housing matters, nobody else. There are always individuals and private agencies trying to make money by taking US personnel to housing visits using the USAF housing list and trying to make arrangements with landlords to increase the rent. You should not make any deals with them. Housing office services are free for landlords and tenants.
12. Before the SM agrees to an effective date on the lease contract, TMO should be contacted to find out, if household goods can be delivered in time. If not, loaner furniture from Schinnen will be available.
13. The Housing Supply Office (CFMO) is located in Schinnen, The Netherlands. This is the point of contact if the SM needs loaner furniture and appliances. (Tel. 0031/46443-7419 or 7440, Bldg. 18).

14. Before moving in, the SM will inspect the rental unit with the landlord. The use of the inspection checklist (USAFE Form 333a) for the documentation of the condition of the rental unit is recommended. SM provides one copy of the checklist to be filed in the SM's folder at the HRO.
15. The SM should read the water and electric meter and note the readings on the condition checklist. That makes it easier to control the yearly utility reconciliation bill.
16. The SM should think about a Family Liability Insurance. If there are damages to the rental property caused by the tenant, this is a good tool to avoid the financial burden of repair cost. Check your current insurance policy about what is covered and what should be added.
17. When the lease contract is signed, the SM should provide the new address of residence to TMO.
18. To start electricity, the SM reads the meter at his/her residence and takes it together with the meter number to the New Energie company in Geilenkirchen, Nikolaus-Becker-Str. 28-34. The sponsor can assist the SM. Only New Energy provides tax-free electricity, other providers do not!
19. If the rental unit is heated with natural gas, the SM reads the gas meter and brings reading and meter number to the NAF/Tax Services Office in building 87, room 21. There he/she can also enroll in the Utility Tax Relief Program. If it is an oil heating system, the SM has to purchase the oil from a local dealer (for tax exemption see Tax Office). The AFRC has infos about oil companies.
20. Telephone service and internet: The SM should sign a contract with a provider, who accepts a monthly termination of this contract. Don't sign a contract for two years. The SM has to keep in mind if the contract is changed because of new features or with a different company, it starts from zero again. The SOFA contains no clause to protect the SM in this matter. (TKS, Telekom, Arcor, 1&1, etc.)
21. After the delivery of household goods and furniture the SM has to check the dwelling, if the moving company has caused any damages. Right then it has to be addressed to the movers; pictures would be a good help. The SM is responsible to the landlord for damages, not the moving company, so the SM has to get in contact with the movers immediately to claim the damage.
22. Upon the effective date of the lease contract, the SM returns to HRO to start the Overseas Housing Allowance(OHA) and Moving In Housing Allowance(MIHA). The SM signs the completed OHA/ MIHA form in two copies. Each Wednesday HRO will log and transmit the forms with a copy of the lease contract and PCS orders to the Finance Office. Finance will submit the information to the finance center. It's the SM's responsibility to assure payment of the rent to the landlord upon due date.
23. Payments of rent, electricity, gas and telephone are possible through Community Bank in Schinnen/NL, Commerzbank (Bldg. 81, Tel. commercial 68085), or any other local German bank. The SM has to set up an account and has to deposit a sufficient amount of money every month to guarantee the monthly electronic transfers, if at a German bank.
24. HRO provides updated and available rentals online under "www.ahrn.com". The SM's sponsor can arrange the transportation. A few GPS systems are available at the AFRC for house hunting purposes. Local maps can be bought at a gas station or at the book-store downtown Geilenkirchen. SM should check dwellings available within the 30-day TLA window only.

(POC: Housing Referral Office, Bldg. 87, Room 4, Tel. (02451-63-) 2224)

(Date, Rank, Name, Signature)