

Army offers helpful PCS resources as COVID-19 creates household goods shipment delays

By Army Public Affairs Staff 08 July 2021



Movers unload household goods at a residence located across from the Carlisle Barracks Army Housing Office, July 22, 2021.

The COVID-19 pandemic has put strains on many aspects of normality around the world, and the large numbers of service members completing a permanent-change-of-station, or PCS, move this summer are seeing delays in household goods shipments due to private-sector shortages in labor, equipment and supplies.

To alleviate as much of the uncertainty as possible, the Army has tools available and advice to make a PCS more convenient, predictable and user friendly.

The Army PCS Move App — available for download from the Google Play and Apple app stores — offers information on financial management, entitlements, types of moves, planning, scheduling and the claims process.

In addition, it provides practical advice, links and interactive functions such as live chat to make the PCS move a low-hassle experience.

Additionally, local transportation offices are ready to help. Contact information for the closest transportation office can be found at the official Department of Defense Customer Moving Portal, <https://move.mil/customer-service>, or by calling the Army PCS Help Desk at 1.800.521.9959.

At Carlisle Barracks, the Installation Transportation Office is located in Anne Ely Hall, Bldg. 46, and are available to answer questions from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Contact Household Goods at 717-245-400 or Passenger Travel at 717-245-4775. Additionally, the Army War College website, <https://www.armywarcollege.edu/experience/index.cfm>, has “The Carlisle Experience” page for service members and their families to utilize.

Upon receipt of orders, Soldiers should immediately create an account or log on to the Defense Personal Property System, upload their orders and complete all shipment applications for the move. The next step is to visit the local transportation office for counseling, which will assist Soldiers, civilians and families with state-side and overseas moves. By contacting the transportation office quickly, customers will have a better chance of scheduling a convenient move, receive confirmation of booking a moving company in advance, and receive approval to conduct what’s called a personally procured move. A PPM, as they’re commonly called, is designed to provide service members with an alternative to move their household goods on their own. Members may move their personal property themselves, using rental equipment, their own vehicle or by hiring their own commercial carrier. For more information on PPMs, visit <https://move.mil/tutorials/create-a-ppm-shipment>.

Since each move has unique needs and requirements, Military One Source offers strategies for smooth moves, relocation assistance and personalized support that can be found on their website. Their 24/7 hotline — 1.833.645.6683 — provides customer-support representatives who can offer assistance and answer questions. The Army also released three household goods claims videos, located on the Army PCS Move App, to provide answers to frequently asked questions.

Army officials also offered the following tips to make a PCS run as smoothly as possible:

- Soldiers may request their government travel charge card limit be raised to the maximum of \$25,000, to be used for authorized moving expenses.

- Soldiers and families PCSing without a GTCC may request a pay advance through their Organizational Defense Travel Administrator if they're planning to conduct a PPM.

- Soldiers should reach out to their gaining installation housing office as soon as they get their PCS orders.

- Beware of scammers. Use only an approved moving company registered with the federal government. More information can be found at the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration website.

Soldiers PCSing outside the continental United States are authorized an overseas housing allowance, dislocation allowance and temporary lodging allowance for no more than 60 days. However, extensions may be authorized when certain reasons exist, such as non-arrival of household goods or a delay in the availability of government quarters due to service requirements.

Soldiers PCSing inside the continental United States are authorized a basic allowance for housing, dislocation allowance and temporary lodging expense up to 10 days, depending on the location. TLE reimbursement must not exceed \$290 per day.

Options exist for Soldiers and families with no DOD moving company assigned who have a 30-day or less home sale or expiring lease, or a short-notice report date that cannot be extended; or a short-notice DOD moving company cancellation or missed pack and pick up.

- Option one: The government picks up the household goods and places them into an origin storage facility until a DOD moving company can move it forward to the destination with some delays expected.

- Option two: The Soldier conducts a PPM from the residence to a local self-storage facility and receives actual cost reimbursement until the government can schedule a DOD moving company to move it to the destination. An ACR allows reimbursement, which could be significantly higher than normal government contracted rates.

- Option three: The Soldier conducts a full PPM at 100 percent of what the

government would pay a moving company to move all of the household goods from the origin to the destination duty station. This option is not recommended for OCONUS moves.

- Option four: The Soldiers receive an ACR memorandum from the transportation office to hire a commercial moving company with a minimum of two commercial invoice estimates.

After a shipment is delivered, Soldiers should complete the customer satisfaction survey on the Defense Personal Property System website. The survey results will help keep moving companies accountable by assessing their performance.

The deadline for claim notification is now 180 days after delivery — up from 120 days — which gives Soldiers, civilians and families ample time to identify and report lost or damaged goods.

Though the summer PCS season may feel different this year, the Army is doing what it can to take care of its most valuable asset — its people.