

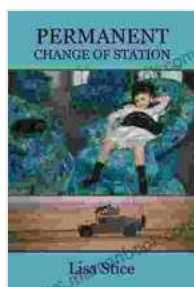
Permanent Change of Station (PCS) for Military Families: A Comprehensive Guide

Permanent Change of Station (PCS) is a common occurrence for military families. It is an order from the military to relocate to a new duty station, either within the United States or overseas. PCS moves can be both exciting and stressful, but with proper planning and preparation, they can be managed smoothly.

Planning for a PCS Move

The first step in planning for a PCS move is to gather information about your new duty station. This includes researching the cost of living, housing options, schools, and childcare. You should also contact your new unit to learn about the specific requirements and procedures for PCS moves.

Once you have gathered information about your new duty station, you can begin to make plans for your move. This includes budgeting for expenses, finding housing, and arranging for transportation. You should also start to pack your belongings and prepare your family for the transition.



Permanent Change of Station by Lisa Stice

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PCS Move Timeline

The PCS move timeline typically begins 90 days before your scheduled departure date. This timeline is designed to give you enough time to prepare for your move and to minimize stress.

The following is a general overview of the PCS move timeline:

- **90 days before departure:** Begin planning for your move. Gather information about your new duty station and start to make arrangements for housing and transportation.
- **60 days before departure:** Start packing your belongings and preparing your family for the transition.
- **30 days before departure:** Finalize your housing arrangements and transportation plans.
- **14 days before departure:** Report to your old unit for out-processing.
- **Day of departure:** Move to your new duty station.
- **14 days after arrival:** Report to your new unit for in-processing.

PCS Expenses

The military reimburses PCS expenses for service members and their families. These expenses include the cost of transportation, temporary lodging, and storage. You should keep all receipts for PCS expenses, as you will need to submit them for reimbursement.

PCS Housing

There are several different housing options available for military families who are PCSing. You can choose to live on-post, off-post, or in government quarters.

On-post housing is located on the military installation. It is typically the most affordable option and is convenient for commuting to work. However, on-post housing can be limited, especially in high-demand areas.

Off-post housing is located off the military installation. It is typically more expensive than on-post housing, but it offers more privacy and freedom. You should carefully research off-post housing options before making a decision.

Government quarters are owned and maintained by the military. They are typically assigned to senior officers and their families. Government quarters are usually spacious and well-maintained, but they can be difficult to obtain.

PCS Schools

If you have school-aged children, you will need to make arrangements for their education. You can choose to enroll your children in public schools, private schools, or Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) schools.

Public schools are funded by the local government. They are typically free to attend, but they may not be as well-funded as private schools.

Private schools are funded by tuition and donations. They typically offer smaller class sizes and more personalized instruction. However, private

schools can be expensive.

DoDEA schools are funded by the Department of Defense. They are available to military families who live overseas or on military installations. DoDEA schools offer a high-quality education that is comparable to public schools in the United States.

PCS Childcare

If you have young children, you will need to make arrangements for childcare. You can choose to use on-post childcare, off-post childcare, or a private nanny.

On-post childcare is located on the military installation. It is typically the most affordable option and is convenient for commuting to work. However, on-post childcare can be limited, especially in high-demand areas.

Off-post childcare is located off the military installation. It is typically more expensive than on-post childcare, but it offers more flexibility and choice. You should carefully research off-post childcare options before making a decision.

Private nannies are hired to provide childcare in your own home. They are typically the most expensive option, but they offer the most flexibility and control.

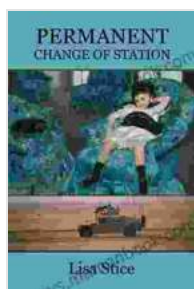
Preparing Your Family for a PCS Move

PCS moves can be stressful for families, especially for children. It is important to prepare your family for the move and to help them adjust to their new surroundings.

Here are some tips for preparing your family for a PCS move:

- Talk to your children about the move and answer their questions honestly.
- Visit your new duty station before the move, if possible. This will help your family get a sense of what to expect.
- Pack a box of familiar items for your children to take with them on the move.
- Set up your new home as soon as possible after you arrive. This will help your family feel more settled.
- Get involved in your new community. This will help your family make new friends and adjust to their new surroundings.

PCS moves can be a challenging experience, but with proper planning and preparation, they can be managed smoothly. By following the tips in this guide, you can help your family make a successful transition to your new duty station.



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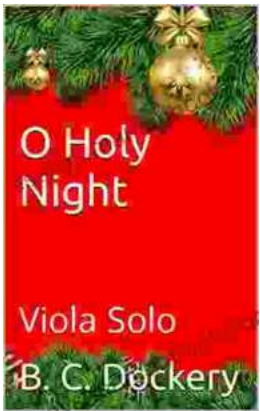
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