

PCS Jumpstart Guide



If you are reviewing this document at the start of the assignment year, welcome to the Permanent Change of Station (PCS) process. Permanent Change of Station orders means that a member is being permanently transferred to a new unit. The unit may be in the same location as the current unit or across the US. The PCS process is lengthy, with most of the work coming after you receive orders. If you want to know more about the orders process, [check out the information here](#). If you are a Coast Guard member, you can find additional details on the [EPM-2](#) and [OPM-2](#) portal pages.

If you are reviewing this because you or a family member just received orders, congratulations! Now Breathe! You've got this! People have done this before. Moving is a daunting task, but there are resources at [NavigatingCoastGuardPCS.com](#) and many CG specific Facebook groups and other social media pages to help answer your questions. You are not alone!

If you are asking, so what do I do now? Read through the rest of this guide for an overview of the process and information, and then check out the specific links for detailed information.

- If you're a new spouse or you haven't checked out [Sea Legs](#), this is a good starting point for CG specific information.
- There are many PCS checklists and resources that can assist you in planning your PCS. These are a good place to start and will help guide you along your PCS journey. Check out the [checklist here](#) or take a look at some of the [resources available](#). Start personalizing the PCS checklist based on your and your family's needs. The majority of PCS steps have no specific order. Most happen simultaneously, which makes having a checklist a valuable tool.
- Look over any relevant [Tips & Tricks Guides](#) to prepare for various move situations.
- Obtain localized information regarding your next duty station by joining the [local area's social media](#) pages. They are the best place to find out the good and bad about your new location. Additionally, these groups can provide detailed information about housing, realtors, schools, doctors, etc. Check out the social media page to find your local group.
- Talk to your member and utilize their sponsor to get information about the command and their new unit. The unit ombudsman is another great resource. You can contact your [new ombudsman here](#).
- The first major step in the PCS process is obtaining official executable orders because you cannot schedule movers until you have executable orders. Check out this [job aid](#) to help you. You are entitled to a set amount of travel time and proceed time based on the distance between your units. Your local YN can provide you with this information. You will also need to consider how much leave you want to take. Think about how you plan to get your family to your next location. Are you all driving together? Flying? This information needs to be documented on your PCS departing worksheet.
- Once you have executable orders, the Coast Guard member can log into the Defense Personal Property System (DPS) to start scheduling the move. You can find out more detailed information regarding the DPS process here. You can also check out the "[It's Your Move](#)" Guide from US TRANSCOM.

PCS Jumpstart Guide



- While you are working on obtaining executable orders, you can decide on how you want to move your household goods. You have a maximum [Household Good \(HHG\) weight limit](#) that is based on the member's rank. The government will pay to move your goods up to that weight. If your goods are over the weight, you will have to reimburse the government for the difference. There are three moving options:
 1. Household Goods Move: The military hires a moving company to pack up and move all of your HHG from your current residence to your new residence. The movers do the packing and moving. If your new residence is not available when your HHG arrive at the destination area, they will be placed into temporary storage.
 2. Personally Procured Move (PPM): This is a do-it-yourself move. You acquire the transportation method for moving your goods, pack up your goods, and arrange for their delivery. Many people use PODS, U-Haul, etc. for this type of move. The Coast Guard will reimburse you up to a set amount. Check out the [PPM Tips and Tricks Guide](#) for more information.
 3. Combination: You use both methods. How you split the use of the methods is up to you.
- Housing is the largest hurdle you will face in the PCS process. There are various options for housing based on your new unit's location. Some areas have mandatory base housing, some have optional housing through DoD bases, and some areas you will have to rent or buy out on the economy. There are many options and factors to consider and you should take the time to discuss them. Some of the things you will want to consider are, [Basic Allowance for Housing](#) rate, availability of military housing, wait list for military housing, reasonable communiting distance, proximity to airports, childcare, schools, etc. The local social media group or housing officer can provide you with local information or you can check out the [housing page](#) to see if there is [base housing](#) at the your next location. You must get released from housing before signing a lease or buying a house.
- Once you have your departure and arrival dates, start planning your PCS travel. Make an adventure out of it! Stop and see some sights. Make sure to take children and pets into consideration as you decide what you are going to do.
- There is no set timeline for the PCS process. Everyone's situation is different. Maintain open communications with your moving company and provide them with your timeline and when your new residence is available as this will influence how long it takes to get your HHGs delivered.
- Be patient, things in the military don't usually move fast. Start working on the things you can. If you are getting close to deadlines and not getting answers - start making phone calls or have the member use the chain of command to get answers. Call the CG PCS Support Team at 1 (844) 7272-7022, PCSAssist@uscg.mil.
- If you have questions, ask! If you are lost or struggling, reach out for help. The Coast Guard community is here to help you.