

PERMANENT CHANGE OF STATION (PCS)

COAST GUARD FINANCIAL READINESS

Preparation: Distribute and discuss the *Permanent Change of Station (PCS)* Checklist and accompanying handouts to support this video-based training course. Checklists and handouts can be found online at [Coast Guard Personal Financial Management Program - FINRED Learning Resource Library - APAN Community](#).

★ PART ONE: Introduction

Play Video 1

Introduction: Welcome to this training course. Today's conversation is on permanent change of station (PCS). Whether this is your first PCS or your fifth, it can be exciting, it can be stressful, and it can have an impact on your finances. The goal of today's discussion is to provide guidance on financial steps you can take to plan and prepare for your move. The upcoming videos will provide insight on the financial planning aspects of a PCS.



1. PCS
Overview

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What can you do now, during your move, and after your move to make your move smoother?

Talking Points: Create a spending plan and start saving for routine and unplanned expenses long before your actual PCS date. Automate bill payments so there are no worries about missed payments. Keep proper documentation and file your travel claim paperwork as soon as possible. Remember, relocation can be stressful on you and your family. Try to keep calm and maintain a positive perspective, such as thinking of the move as an "adventure." These actions can go a long way to help your family adjust to the dynamics of your new duty station.

2. How can you stay organized and in control of your finances as you prepare and execute your move?

Talking Points: Create a PCS binder so all things associated with your move can be stored in one location. Communicate with your spouse and family members (if applicable) and discuss everyone's expectations.

3. What expenses are you likely to incur with your move?

Talking Points: Any of the costs below could be incurred

A. Before you move:

- Cleaning or damage fees
- Partial rent payments (renter)
- Mortgage payments until your home is sold or rented (owner)
- Final utility payments if renting
- Utility payments until home is sold or rented (owner)
- Additional dining out expenses once cookware is packed
- Cost of bucket list items to check off before leaving your current location
- Veterinary expenses (especially if moving overseas)
- Vehicle preparation expenses
- Temporary lodging expenses
- Costs to replace gear

B. During the move: Consider transportation costs such as fuel, lodging, baggage fees, and pet travel fees. Also, if you and your family members are traveling separately, make sure to account for any additional expenses.

C. After you move:

- Rental deposits
- Utility deposits
- Replacing household items
- Restocking the pantry
- Additional food costs until your household shipment arrives
- Appropriate clothing for the weather at your new location (island life to frozen tundra)
- Auto insurance changes for new state
- Rental insurance updates
- Startup tuition for child care/private school
- School supplies and fees, pet quarantine (overseas)

Note: Have audience write out a personal list and ask for participation as these expenses can be unique to the individual as examples listed above are not all-inclusive.

KNOWLEDGE CHECK

Question: Who should you talk to for moving entitlement clarification?

Answer: Unit Admin/Service Personnel Offices (SPOs) and/or Personnel and Administration Office (P&A)

Your local Health, Safety and Work-Life (HSWL) Regional Practice has resources available including the Relocation Assistance Program, Transition/Relocation Managers, and Personal Financial Managers (PFM) to help answer your questions. For additional resources, visit [Relocation Assistance Program | Office of Work-Life Programs \(CG-111\) \(uscg.mil\)](#).

★ PART TWO: Financial Planning Foundations and Military Consumer Protections

Play Videos 2, 3, and 4

Introduction: The next three videos review financial planning basics to consider as you prepare for and complete your PCS.



2. Spending Plans

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What four tips do financial experts suggest for developing a spending plan?

Talking Points:

1. Understanding your current situation: Track your income and expenses for the next 30 days or look back 30 days using bank and credit card statements.
2. Know where your money should go: Save or invest 10% – 15% of your pretax pay. Limit housing expenses to your BAH or 25% – 30% of your pretax pay. Limit transportation expenses to 15% – 20% of your pretax pay.
3. Create a plan: Put limits on how much you will spend each month on the various expense categories.
4. Make adjustments: As life changes, update your spending plan.



3. Managing Debt and Understanding Credit

2. What is the difference between a credit report and a credit score?

Talking Points: Your credit report is a record of your credit history. You can access one free credit report each week from each of the three reporting agencies which are TransUnion, Equifax and Experian. Visit <https://www.annualcreditreport.com> for more information. Your credit score, on the other hand, is like a grade on how well you manage credit. It is a number between 300 and 850, and higher is better.



4. SCRA, MLA and Credit Protection

3. How can the SCRA help during a PCS?

Talking Points: You can terminate your residential lease upon receipt of PCS orders of at least 90 days. You can also cancel certain consumer contracts after receiving orders to relocate for a period of at least 90 days to a location that does not support the contract. Certain consumer contracts includes commercial mobile service; telephone exchange service; internet access service; mulitchannel video programming service; gym membership or fitness program; or home security services.

★ PART THREE: Considerations Prior to a PCS

Play Videos 5, 6, 7, and 8

Introduction: As we have discussed, there are a lot of different steps you can take to keep your PCS from disrupting your financial plans and the progress you have made. Let's see a further breakdown of possible scenarios and expenses. Be sure to take note of specific costs you anticipate you or your family may incur, and use resources listed in [Relocation Assistance Program | Office of Work-Life Programs \(CG-111\) \(uscg.mil\)](#).



5. Transition to PCS Expenses Before, During and After Your Move

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Were any housing-specific costs mentioned that surprised you?

Note: As presented in the video, go through the five major housing expenses and encourage conversation. Create a list of answers on whiteboard/chart paper.

Talking Points:

- A. Cleaning, maintenance, and disassembling
- B. Breaking a rental contract or lease
- C. Excess shipping or storage costs
- D. Insurance
- E. House hunting



6. Potential Housing Expenses Before You Move

2. Let's review the common vehicle expenses associated with PCS. What specific expenses are you going to have before, during or after your PCS?

Talking Points:

- A. Number of vehicles — Do you have a second vehicle for which moving costs are not covered?
- B. Insurance — Now is a good time to contact your insurance company.
- C. Maintenance — Whether you plan on driving, shipping or storing your vehicle, make sure to take care of your regularly scheduled maintenance.
- D. Vehicles stay behind? Will you have transportation? How will it be paid? Where will your vehicles stay? Will you be leaving your car with family or friends? What implications can this have? How will you ensure that you take care of your car?
- E. Leases — Are you able to break the lease with SCRA?



7. Potential Vehicle Considerations Before You Move



8. Potential Miscellaneous Expenses Before You Move

OCONUS considerations:

- Purchasing maintenance-related parts
- Storage
- Lease/financed vehicle
- Rental insurance may need to be obtained before leaving U.S. address

3. You saw some examples of miscellaneous expenses in the last video.
What miscellaneous expenses might you incur?

Talking Points: There are a few important categories of extra expenses to consider as you get ready to PCS such as:

- Dining out and farewell parties
- Pet needs
- Overseas moves: passports, immunizations, prescription medication

★ PART FOUR: Potential Expenses During and After Your PCS

Play Videos 9 and 10

Introduction: Costs can add up during and after your PCS. The following two videos review potential costs and some ways you can stay organized and track your expenses.



9. Potential PCS Expenses During Your Move

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How will you keep track of your PCS receipts? How will you tally the total cost?

Talking Points:

- Use your PCS binder as the one location to keep all documents. Separate your receipts for gas and maintenance, lodging, food and miscellaneous expenses in different envelopes to make them easier to locate when you do your travel claim. Take pictures of your receipts.
- For further documentation of costs, have a notebook to jot down all expenses; use the notes section of your phone to tally costs especially if you are using your debit or credit card to pay these costs up front.
- While it's obviously important to track where you're spending your money, it's also important to have access to it. Notify your bank that you are traveling to avoid having your accounts put on hold for suspicious activity. Continually check your accounts while traveling to verify purchases.



10. Potential PCS Expenses After You Arrive

2. What other expenses, beyond your security deposit and first month's rent, may you have to pay when you move into your home?

Talking Points: Pantry and grocery items, curtains to fit windows if they are a different size than your last home, cleaning supplies (mop, broom, scrub brush), toilet paper, paper towels, laundry items, candles, air fresheners, home decor (front door mat, rugs, couch pillows, bed pillows, etc.).

3. How can you save on utility deposits?

Talking Points: Call your new utility company and ask if they waive the utility deposit for Coast Guard members or if they accept a letter of reference from your previous provider.

4. You may be surprised that moving to a new location might require you to update your vehicle registration and insurance. How can you prepare to make sure you have the appropriate documents and have funds set aside to cover these expenses?

Talking Points: Visit the DMV online or call your local office to see if you need to update your registration. Your current insurance provider can provide information and a quote based on your new location. If you decide to go with a new provider, make sure your new policy is in place before canceling the old one.

KNOWLEDGE CHECK

Question: What consumer protection law may allow you to terminate your internet services or gym membership based on your orders?

Answer: SCRA — Servicemembers Civil Relief Act

★ PART FIVE: Conclusion with Money Tips and Resources

Play Videos 11, 12, 13, and 14

Introduction: In this final section, you will find best practices, resources and a recap to help you prepare for your PCS.



11. Transition to Money Tips and Resources

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How can an emergency fund help during your PCS?

Talking Points: Chances are, you will have to pay for unexpected costs during your PCS. Make it a priority to boost your emergency fund ahead of time and tap into it rather than going into debt. Just make sure to replenish it as soon as possible.



12. Best Practices — PCS Money Tips 1-5

2. What are two options to help reduce lodging costs during your PCS

Talking Points: Try to make arrangements to stay in temporary lodging on military installations while you're in transit. If this isn't an option, check and see if your civilian lodging offers a military discount.



13. Best Practices — PCS Money Tips 6-10

Note: Encourage discussion on these and other helpful PCS tips drawing on your students' experiences.

KNOWLEDGE CHECK

Question: Who can you contact if you have questions about shipping allowance or entitlements for storage?

Answer: Personnel and Admin Office (P&A) and Personal Property Shipping Office (PPSO)



14. PCS Resources

Play Video 15



15. Recap
Resources
and
Wrap Up

CONCLUSION

That completes today's training on PCS. Based on the information provided, consider how you can prepare for your next PCS and put the suggested tips into practice. You may find it helpful to break the PCS into three parts: before, during and after PCS. This framework can help you keep your finances organized and on track with your spending plan.

Note: Allow time for questions.