

PCS to Japan checklist

<https://nextbaseguide.com/guides/pcs-to-japan/>

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When you have orders

- ☐ Contact the transportation office at your current installation as soon as you have orders. That office helps with entitlements, the household-goods shipment, and problems with the moving company. Military OneSource (<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/moving-pcs/living-oconus/a-service-family-checklist-for-moving-oconus/>).
- ☐ Book and track the shipment in the Defense Personal Property System (<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/moving-pcs/moving-personal-property/>).
- ☐ Ask that office what your weight allowance is. Military OneSource (<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/moving-pcs/living-oconus/a-service-family-checklist-for-moving-oconus/>).
- ☐ If family is coming, ask for command sponsorship. It is not guaranteed. If it is approved, your orders say dependents are authorized. Military OneSource (<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/benefits/obtaining-command-sponsorship-before-oconus-move/>).
- ☐ A unit sponsor is not command sponsorship. Ask the gaining unit for a sponsor. Military OneSource (<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/moving-pcs/living-oconus/a-service-family-checklist-for-moving-oconus/>).

Driving

- ☐ You need a U.S. Forces Japan operator's permit, USFJ Form 4EJ, to drive. U.S. Forces Japan study guide (https://www.mcbbutler.marines.mil/Portals/189/Docs/BaseSafety/Images/SOFA%20STUDY%20GUIDE%20NEW%202025.pdf?ver=iC__b9CpY_Omb-wVWt1u0Q%3D%3D).
- ☐ On Okinawa, bring a valid state, U.S. territory, or USFJ-approved country license when you apply. Marine Corps Installations Pacific ([https://www.mcipac.marines.mil/Portals/28/Site%20Images/safety/Driver%20License%20Flyer%20\(updated%2016%20May%202023\).pdf?ver=-fgjXQSu_9a8a_OQVuzMtw%3D%3D](https://www.mcipac.marines.mil/Portals/28/Site%20Images/safety/Driver%20License%20Flyer%20(updated%2016%20May%202023).pdf?ver=-fgjXQSu_9a8a_OQVuzMtw%3D%3D)).
- ☐ In Japan, traffic keeps to the left. Passing is usually on the right.
- ☐ If you drive, be ready to show the permit, proof of Japanese compulsory insurance, and property-damage liability insurance.

Pets

- ☐ Implant the microchip before any rabies shot or blood test. The number has to be on the certificates. U.S. Army Japan veterinary service (<https://www.usarj.army.mil/units/vet/import/>).
- ☐ Dogs and cats need two inactivated rabies shots at least 31 days apart, then a rabies blood test (FAVN).
- ☐ Dogs and cats under 12 months rarely meet those rules. They can still come, and they start with 180 days of quarantine.
- ☐ Pit bulls, Rottweilers, Doberman pinschers, Chows, wolf hybrids, and mixes of those breeds cannot be brought to mainland Japan or Okinawa. Exotic pets are also prohibited.

Allowances

- ☐ Contact the gaining housing office for housing options, and for Overseas Housing Allowance if installation housing is not available. Military OneSource (<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/moving-pcs/living-oconus/a-service-family-checklist-for-moving-oconus/>).

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- ☐ Overseas Housing Allowance is paid toward rent, utilities and recurring maintenance, and move-in costs for privately leased housing. Apply with DD Form 2367 and a copy of the lease. DTMO (<https://www.travel.dod.mil/Allowances/Overseas-Housing-Allowance/>).
- ☐ Look up the rate for your locality. A rate for another locality does not apply. DTMO OHA Rate Lookup (<https://www.travel.dod.mil/Allowances/Overseas-Housing-Allowance/OHA-Rate-Lookup/>).
- ☐ Overseas COLA offsets higher prices of non-housing goods and services. It is not a fixed amount. Do not build a budget that depends on it. DTMO (<https://www.travel.dod.mil/Allowances/Overseas-Cost-of-Living-Allowance/>).