



Welcome Guide ASG-Poland



Welcome



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Welcome to Poznan! This guide will assist you and your family in making the transition to Poland and also provide an overview of the support available from Area Support Group (ASG) – Poland here in Poznan. This guide is subject to periodic revision and may not have the most up to date information and is not all inclusive. For information concerning the latest updates/changes, please contact your

sponsor. Poznan is still a relatively new assignment for U.S. personnel; the U.S. did not have a permanent military presence outside of the U.S. Embassy in Poland until 2006. Hopefully, you will not have to do a lot of discovery learning, but you can expect it to happen occasionally. We believe you will find Poznan to be a very modern, well-developed and exciting city and you will enjoy your time stationed here.

Patience and flexibility are essential attributes for Americans working in Europe. Poznan is home to a very diverse working environment where you are certain to encounter people with different backgrounds and thought processes. The key to a successful assignment will be the ability to recognize the value in other people's ideas and then combine them with your own. This kind of collaboration will allow us to accomplish the mission, and learn from each other in the process.

An assignment in Poland is a unique opportunity and experience to live and work in a foreign country far from the traditional support structure provided at traditional Military Installations in Europe. The assignment is well-suited to individuals who are resilient and Service Members, Department of Defense civilian employees, and Family members. The closest U.S. Army Garrison is U.S. Army Garrison (USAG)-Bavaria, which comprises; Grafenwoehr, Hohenfels, and Garmisch installations. Of the three locations the closest to Poland is Grafenwoehr, which is approximately a 6 hour drive one-way. This may seem like a significant challenge to some, however, with the excellent opportunities that the City of Poznan has to offer, as well as the growing number of services provided by Area Support Group – Poland, the community in Poznan should meet many of your needs.

Physical Location of ASG Poland

**ASG Poland
Bukowska 34
60-811 Poznań, Poland**

U.S. Sponsor

An ASG-Poland supervisor will assign you a sponsor once you accept the position. Your sponsor will help you in obtaining a hotel in Poznan upon your arrival and address your questions concerning your Permanent Change of Station (PCS) move.

Cell phones

In accordance with the Service Members Civil Relief Act, bring a copy of your Military orders to your local phone carrier in the U.S. to cancel your current contract before departing your duty station. If you would like to use your current phone with Polish carrier, make sure your phone is unlocked, check with your current provider before departure as unlocking your phone overseas will be more expensive. The four major carriers here are T-Mobile, Orange, Plus and Play. You can purchase prepaid or postpaid plans, both of which are relatively inexpensive.

Websites/Facebook

Some sites you can visit or join prior to your arrival are:

- <http://move.mil> – Official DOD Customer Moving Portal
- <http://www.eur.army.mil> – US Army in Europe, official military page
- <http://www/mncne.pl/> – Multinational Corps Northeast official website

Mail

Have your sponsor set up an APO box for you prior to your arrival. You will be able to order goods directly from the U.S. and have them delivered to your APO address here in Poland. Most stores in the U.S., like Amazon, Walmart, Old Navy/GAP, and etc. ship to the APO at domestic prices. However, if you would like to order something or ship some of your HHGs to yourself during your PCS move, be aware of the size restrictions on the APO address: mail may not exceed 66 pounds and size is limited to 42 inches maximum length and 72 inches maximum length and girth combined. Other restrictions apply, so please visit the U.S. Post Office's website: usps.gov.

Our mailing address:

Your Name

PSC 1650 Box ____

APO AE 09103-XXXX

Note: the plus 4 of your ZIP Code will depend on the box number assigned to you. The +4 of the ZIP is for all box numbers that fall within a certain range

For example

Box numbers 1-99 the ZIP code will be 09103-0001

Box numbers 100-199 the ZIP Code will be 09103-0002

And so forth

For outgoing mail, there are two ways to mail letters and packages:

- A personal USPS click and Ship account (this is created by YOU). You can also use your USPS account to order stamps directly to your PSC box if you wish.
- The APO in Poznan has basic USPS retail functions where you can mail a parcel or letter out same as you can at a UPSP Post Office in CONUS
- Stamps are also available. The APO has a limited supply of pre-stamped envelopes.

Click and Ship will enable you to print your own mailing labels. Once you have an account, you have to logon, complete the data about the package to include, height, width, length, weight, mailing Addresses, and customs information. If you need assistance with a scale, see the Post Office. As a reminder, the APO service is provided for you as an authorized patron. The Post Office may not be used as part of any home-based business or used to provide a tax free import for local nationals or other not entitled to the service themselves.

Transportation

Contact your local transportation office to arrange your transportation. If you have any difficulties, we recommend using the SATO office in Kaiserslautern Germany to book your travel. They are more familiar with European travel issues and can conduct all by email.

https://www.cwtsatotravel.com/traveler_info/contactInfo.html?cid=3457 for assistance. The easiest way to make your journey to Poznan is through commercial air. Your sponsor should arrange to either meet you at the airport, or help you arrange transportation once you arrive. For example, you may be told that you cannot book your flight because you do not have an official passport. The SATO office in Germany is aware that you can travel for up to 6 months on your tourist visa and will still book the flight for you based on your orders.

Shipment of your household goods

Contact your local transportation office when you have your orders to schedule your three authorized shipments that cannot exceed 18,000 lbs total: Unaccompanied (UB), up to 350 lbs that is small enough to travel by air, Household Goods (HHG), and Non-Temporary Storage (NTS). Please note that since NTS is authorized for this location, you may want to leave some of your larger furniture pieces and appliances in storage for the duration of your overseas tour. We do recommend you ship light as many of the apartments or homes are fully or partially furnished. Our service housing office is able to grant up to a maximum of 60 days temporary lodging allowance (TLA) for Soldiers or a maximum of 90 days of Temporary Quarters and Living Allowance (TQSA) for government civilians. For this reason, we recommended that you ship your household goods to this Outside the Continental United States (OCONUS) early.

You should not ship your US washer, dryer, microwave, oven or refrigerator – due to different voltage requirements. Poland, like Germany is on a different voltage than the US; be sure to look at your appliances to see if they are dual voltage or not. Poland is 220V and US is 110V. If your appliances say 110-220V then just a small adapter plug will work, but if they are 110V only, then you must use a converter box (transformer). There are no loaner services available, so please be sure to purchase some plug adapters and transformers in advance and either bring some with you or ship them with your household goods.

Suggested items to bring (items not available at local stores):

- Linens (sheets, blanket, towels) (Poland has no flat sheets)
- Mattress pads
- Electrical Adapters



Pet Requirements & Shipment

When you ship your pet, it will be at your own expense. Arrange pet shipment well in advance by contacting your current Transportation Movement Office (TMO) or airline.

All pets must have a valid rabies vaccination taken at least 21 days before they arrive in Poland. Pets younger than three months are not allowed to enter Poland. Before you ship your pet, you must obtain:

- EU Health Certificate is required no more than 10 days before arriving in Europe. Military vets are usually familiar with this certificate, but civilian vets may need **several weeks** lead time to order the certificate from the Department of Agriculture.

- Electronic microchip (ISO 11784/11785 15-digit or compatible pet microchip implant. If your pet already has a microchip implant that is not ISO compatible, you can bring your own microchip scanner (or you can rent it from the your microchip's manufacture)
- EU pet passport certifying a valid anti-rabies vaccination.

DOG BREEDS RESTRICTED IN POLAND

- | | |
|---|--|
| • American Pitt Bull Terrier | • Rottweiler |
| • Ca de Bou (Perro de presa Mallorquin) | • Akbash Dog |
| • American Bulldog | • The Anatolian shepherd dog, Moscow Guard Dog |
| • Dogo Argentino (Argentine Mastiff) | • The Caucasian Shepherd Dog |
| • Perro de Presa Canario | |
| • Tosa Inu | |

Please visit <http://www.pettravel.com/immigration/poland.cfm> for more information.

Shipment of your car

Depending on your orders, in most cases you will be authorized to ship one vehicle to Poland at government expense, however, taxes may apply. Once you receive your PCS orders you can schedule your drop off appointment and verify document requirements at <https://www.pcsmypov.com/>

Currently you can choose to ship your vehicle to Kaiserslautern, Germany or Poznan, Poland. You may ship additional vehicles to Poland, but these will be at your own expense.

Before shipping your vehicle, you should consider the following:

- Make sure you have the following original documents **in hand** (do not ship them with HHG):
 - Original title
 - Original Bill of Sale (very important – this is your primary proof of ownership in Poland! If you cannot locate it, please ask the dealer for a duplicate),
 - Current registration document (the actual registration document, not just a fee payment confirmation)
 - A vehicle recall verification (you took care of any factory recalls)
 - Current and valid license plates
 - Drivers record from you previous insurance company covering the last 7 years.
- If you don't have a clear title to your vehicle (e.g. you have a car loan and the bank holds a lien on your title), there are additional requirements/paperwork need **prior to** shipping your vehicle from the U.S. In that case you need a prior **written bank consent to register the vehicle in Poland** – please note that the process to obtain such authorization might take weeks/months but it is essential that you complete it before shipping your vehicle!
- If your vehicle is old, or has body damage, it might be difficult to pass the required local inspection, repairs may be required to complete the inspection

Vehicles shipped directly to Poland will have a valid registration (US palate, import plate, or EU plate). Also vehicles must have a basic insurance before it can be driven. Recommendation is to minimize driving of these plates until Polish plates are issued.

It will take at least 45-60 days for your car to arrive after shipment. **IMPORTANT: Please, do not send any of your vehicle documents with your HHG. Bring the documents in your personal baggage.** Vehicles must be picked up in person at Lawica Airport, Poznan. Owner must bring the documents for pick up.

Temporary Lodging

You do NOT need your orders to make a hotel reservation! Temporary Lodging is less than 1.5 miles from 34 Bukowska Street, where we are located. Please contact your sponsor for assistance.

- Sheraton Hotel: <https://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/pozsi-sheraton-poznan-hotel/>
- Hotel Mercure: <https://all.accor.com/hotel/3393/index.en.shtml>
- Novotel Hotel: <https://all.accor.com/hotel/3376/index.en.shtml>
- Platinum Palace Residence: <http://poznan.platinumpalace.pl/en/>
- City Park Hotel and Residence: <https://cityparkhotel.pl/general-information/>

International Driver's License

It is recommended to obtain an International Driving Permit from AAA prior to arrival. Generally, international drivers (from outside of the European Union (EU)) require an International Driving Permit for driving in Poland. Per Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) between the U.S. and Poland, the U.S. military members are allowed to drive in Poland on their valid and unexpired US driver's licenses (**please make sure your state license is actually valid throughout your stay as the military exceptions grant by some U.S. states, allowing military members to drive on expired license during their AD status, ARE NOT ACCEPTED OVERSEAS!!!**). We recommend that both you and your spouse obtain the international driver's license, especially if you plan on driving across the Polish border (you will definitely need it for driving in Germany). We recommend you obtain the **International Driving Permit** through AAA while you are still in the U.S. You can easily obtain it by going to any of the AAA branches. If you are already overseas, you can obtain it by mail – see the requirements on the AAA website - <http://www.aaa.com/Vacation/idpf.html> or at <http://www.idlid.com>. After arrival to ASG-Poland contact Department of Logistics for USAREUR Poland application.

Passports/Legal Status

The status of the U.S. military and civilian personnel working in Poland is defined in the NATO Status of Forces Agreement, dated 19 June 1951 (NATO SOFA) and the bilateral supplemental agreement between the governments of the United States and Poland (Polish Supplementary Agreement to NATO SOFA), dated 11 December 2009. Under these agreements, U.S. military and civilian personnel are exempt from passport and visa regulations.

- For the U.S. military and civilian personnel -- the following documents are required to enter Poland and during the entire assignment:
 - Personal identity card (DoD CAC)
 - Individual movement orders (PCS orders)
- ASG-Poland Passport Services Office usarmy.poznan.asg-p.list.asgp-passport-af@mail.mil

In addition, it is recommended for all (military members, civilian personnel and dependents) to have your tourist passports for identification purposes, as your CAC ID is not considered sufficient in Poland for identification purposes. If you want to open a bank account, set up your phone contract or any other services you will need a Passport. You will also need your tourist passport when travelling outside of Poland.

After joining the European Union's Schengen Agreement by Poland, there are no physical border controls upon entering or leaving Poland. However, there are thorough mobile customs controls in the border areas.

Consular Locations and Staffing in Poland

Routine Services Provided in Warsaw and Krakow	Services Provided in Poznan (currently temporarily closed)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First time U.S. passport applications (for adults and children) • Renewal U.S. passport applications (for adults and children) • Consular Report of Birth Abroad applications • Notarial services • Voting assistance • Adoption Assistance • Assistance in cases of international parental child abduction • Provide information about living in Poland • Emergency passports to replace lost or stolen passports • Security Messages through the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) • Death of U.S. citizen – Consular Report of Death Abroad and list of funeral homes • Arrest assistance – consular prison visits and list of attorneys • Repatriation Loans for destitute Americans • Assistance to victims of crime • Medical assistance – list of reputable hospitals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renewal adult U.S. passport applications (no first-time applications or applications for children) • Notarial services • Provide information about living in Poland • First-time passport applications and applications for children • Consular Report of Birth Abroad applications • For contact information and additional information about our services, fees, and to make an appointment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U.S. Embassy website: https://pl.usembassy.gov/u-s-citizen-services/ • Poznan Consular Agency website: https://pl.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulate/consular-agency-poznan/

Cost of Living and Finances

The cost of living in Poland is low and among the most inexpensive in the European Union (EU), alongside Romania and Bulgaria. In the 2017 Mercer Cost of Living Survey, Warsaw, Poland's most expensive city, ranked 180 of 209 cities across five continents. Eating out and buying groceries is generally cheaper than in most other Western European cities, but import items will be significantly more expensive. Prices for such items might be even higher than in Paris and London. Prices for Polish products are very reasonable.

Overall, Poland has a moderate cost of living index, with the larger cities being significantly more expensive than the truly rural areas; as is the case with most countries. (Source: <http://www.expatarrivals.com/poland/cost-of-living-in-poland>)

Currency

Currency. Even though Poland joined the European Union in 2004, it has not yet adopted the Euro. The Polish currency is the Zloty (PLN). A single zloty is made up of 100 Grosz. You can change money in banks or Kantors (exchange offices). Banks will likely charge a commission/currency exchange fee whereas the Kantors (found in every mall, some highway rest stops and at the airports) usually provide better exchange rates and don't charge a commission. Avoid the Airport currency exchanges. The ATMs are widely available throughout Poland, check with your US bank or credit union on the currency conversion fees and daily limits (some US banks, like USAA will waive your international ATM fees), also

consider not accepting conversion offers which may increase the ATM fee/cost. When purchasing with a credit card it's generally better to be charged in local currency and not allow conversion to your own currency which could cost an additional 5%.

While the cost of living in Poland is generally lower than in the U.S., you should be aware of the initial expenses you might spend upfront, as part of your in-processing and settling in Poland. ASG-Poland will provide you a list of the most common initial expenditures, along with your Entitlements and Allowances for this location.

Post Exchange (PX)/Commissary

There is a traveling PX in Poland. Once a month the PX truck comes to Poznan. In addition, Powidz and Zagan host small PX's. Currently there is no commissary available.

Additional Information

