PCS Orders Dropped—Now What?

Your First 10 Steps

This is a planning aid, not official orders or legal advice. Confirm move-specific requirements and deadlines with your service and local transportation office. Several steps can happen in parallel; use the ones that fit your move.

☐ 01 Review your orders.

Check names, locations, dependents, and dates. Mark anything unclear or inconsistent, then ask the issuing office or your command’s designated contact how to clarify or correct it. Keep a secure copy available to the adults coordinating the move.

Notes

☐ 02 Contact your transportation office.

Ask which move options apply, what to do first, which deadlines are specific to your orders, and whom to contact if plans change. If you are a first-time mover or your situation is not covered by the online instructions, ask the office before scheduling.

Notes

Plan together and prepare

03 Make one shared move plan.

Record your current and gaining locations, report date, household needs, and the first-week items you will need to handle after arrival. Add relevant home and admin tasks—such as mail, utilities, and records—then assign an owner and a date to check each one. Use Military OneSource Plan My Move to start a personalized checklist.

Official web address https://planmymove.militaryonesource.mil/

Notes

04 Prepare for upfront costs.

List the move-related expenses you expect to pay before reimbursement or confirmation. For each one, note the estimated amount, what is confirmed, and what is still unknown. Write down questions for your finance office before making commitments.

Notes

Expected cost	Estimate	Confirmed or unconfirmed?	Question for finance

Questions for finance

Coordinate the move

☐ 05 Start the household-goods process when directed.

Follow your service's instructions and use the Defense Personal Property System (DPS) when directed. Confirm the right process and timing with your transportation office for your orders and move type.

Official web address https://dps.move.mil/

Notes

☐ 06 Sketch your travel and housing plan.

List likely travel windows, temporary-lodging questions, transportation needs, and who will make each reservation. Confirm authorization with the responsible office before committing money.

Notes

Prepare your household

☐ 07 Set aside essentials and document your belongings.

Identify what your family will need to carry with you, such as medications, key documents, chargers, children's comfort items, and valuables. Photograph the condition of important household items and store records securely. Ask the transportation office what documentation it recommends for your shipment.

Notes

☐ 08 Plan the family transition.

Gather school, childcare, and support questions, along with any records you may need to request. Find the gaining installation's school liaison or family support resources through Military OneSource. Note what can be handled before departure and what must wait until you know more about the new location.

Official web address https://www.militaryonesource.mil/

Notes

Keep the next steps visible

☐ 09 Keep healthcare continuity in view.

Check medication supplies, care records, and provider questions. Read TRICARE's moving guidance, keep DEERS contact information current as appropriate, and confirm the steps for your plan and destination directly with TRICARE.

Official web address https://tricare.mil/LifeEvents/Moving

Notes

☐ 10 Arrange for pets and vehicles.

List the arrangements your household needs for pets and vehicles, including records or documents to gather, travel or transport questions, and who will handle each item. Confirm move-specific requirements with the appropriate office or provider.

Notes

One next step for today: _____

Who owns it: _____

When we'll check back: _____