



CIVILIAN PERSONNEL FACT SHEET

SEPARATE MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE (SMA)

Current as of: 9 Nov 07

SMA is an allowance to help an employee with additional expenses when a separate household for dependents must be maintained elsewhere.

REGULATION: Department of State Standardized Regulations (DSSR), Section 260:
<http://www.state.gov/m/a/als/1739.htm>.

TYPES OF SMA:

- Convenience of the government (involuntary): when an employee is prohibited from maintaining dependents at the post of assignment (*not applicable at Ramstein AB, GE*).
- Convenience of the employee (voluntary): when an employee has a special need or hardship caused by compelling reasons to maintain family members elsewhere (i.e., educational or health reasons).
 - Based on established past practice voluntary SMA is normally approved to allow children to complete the current school year or when a family member requires medical care not available overseas.
 - Other reasons will be reviewed and a case by case determination will be made.
- Temporary SMA may be granted for 30-90 days if child needs to complete the school year.

SPECIFICS:

- SMA granted only for dependents who would be authorized government transportation and would normally accompany the employee.
- SMA is paid in lieu of any travel and transportation entitlements for the family members.
- Separation from dependents must be for at least 90 days (involuntary and voluntary SMA), except if child needs to complete school year.
- SMA *is not granted for:*
 - Voluntary legal separation (i.e., with intention of filing for divorce).
 - Child's legal custody being vested wholly, or in part, in a person other than the employee, unless joint custody is established.
 - Children over 18 years of age, unless they are attending secondary (high) school or are incapable of self-support (handicapped).

PROCEDURE:

- Request is made in writing to overseas allowances section at the Ramstein AB Civilian Personnel Office at time of assignment, *but prior to travel, to overseas area*, or at the time the need for SMA arises after arrival at the overseas duty station. Full justification and supporting documentation (i.e. *If health reason is involved, a statement from the physician is required*) and expected duration need to be included in the request.