



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

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Ser N93/1800

27 Jul 15

From: Commander, Fleet Activities, Yokosuka
To: Prospective Resident of Military Family Housing

Subj: INTERIM HOUSING ASSIGNMENT POLICY

1. Welcome to Japan! I recognize that all changes in life can be stressful, and changing jobs and moving your residence can be some of the most stressful circumstances that families face. Military families face these stresses many times during a career - which sets you apart from most of the Country that you defend! For many of us, the most important questions we have when facing a PCS move is "where am I going to live?" and "where are my kids going to school?" Having moved seven times since my eldest son was born 14 years ago (and having moved many times before then) I understand your concerns all too well. The Housing Services Center is here to assist you as they take you through the housing assignment process.

2. Commander Navy Region Japan requires that all military members be assigned to Military Family Housing, provided there is housing available that meets the criteria of paygrade, family composition, documented pet ownership, etc. This is in response to the requirement to increase occupancy in Military Family Housing (MFH) to over 90 percent of available units. This is important as good stewards of the Nation's resources, and important to our Japanese Host Nation relationship by demonstrating that the housing units built by the Government of Japan are well used by U.S. Forces. As such, it is our desire that families are assigned MFH very soon after arriving at Fleet Activities Yokosuka in order to maximize MFH occupancy, minimize time spent in temporary lodging such as the Navy Lodge, and to assist you in beginning your transition to your new life in Japan as soon as practical.

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3. When the current housing instruction was approved shortly after housing assignments became mandatory in May 2013, it mandated that newly arriving personnel be assigned the next available MFH unit on the list that met their paygrade and family composition requirements, without input from the Service Member. This practice was efficient for Housing, but in my opinion it created unnecessary stress and frustration for the service member. This letter serves as an interim guidance change, and modifies the assignment policy of that instruction such that families (both military and civilian) participating in the MFH assignment process be given the option to select from all units available to them (given their paygrade, family composition, etc) as of the day that they check in to housing. This includes those who are eligible to reapply for MFH reassignment and relocation due to changes to family composition (e.g. birth of a child or acquiring additional dependents such as a dependent parent, niece or nephew, etc) or those promoted from enlisted to officer. Promotion or advancement within the enlisted or officer ranks (e.g. from E-6 to E-7, or from O-5 to O-6) does not qualify you for MFH reassignment.

4. Billeted Quarters are unique in that some specific MFH units are assigned individuals holding a specific billet. There are special requirements to keep the HSC informed of intentions to vacate at PRD and when you will no longer hold the billet, and you may not stay in billet quarters past the date of billet change. The only billeted quarters not assigned to Flag Officers are the Installation Commanding Officer and the Seventh Fleet Chief of Staff. Personnel eligible for assignment to billeted quarters do not participate in the MFH assignment process.

5. The MFH assignment process articulated in this letter is meant to be as fair as possible to everyone assigned to Fleet Activities Yokosuka. It tries to offer everyone as many options as possible, while discouraging families from intentionally not checking into housing in the hopes that more units will become available in the future. As such, it is designed to provide equal opportunities for housing no matter when you check in.

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There are no control dates (other than the day you arrive at housing) and no waiting lists if there is a suitable unit available. To some it may seem unfair that a person checking into housing the day after them has the option to pick a MFH unit that was not available to them (even though you may be senior to them), but this is the fairest way to ensure that everyone has equal opportunities given the constantly changing list of available units due to moves, maintenance, and other service member prior selection.

6. The MFH Assignment Process.

a. When you check into housing and receive the housing brief, you shall be provided a list of all units available for selection by you (given what units are move-in ready as of that day, and what you are eligible for based on paygrade, family composition, etc).

b. You shall be given two days to make a selection from one of the units on the list (i.e. by the close of the next business day after the list is provided). You may only choose from units on your list, even if other units become available before you make your selection (e.g. if you get your list on Monday, even if you have not made your selection before the list comes out on Tuesday you may only select from the Monday list). It is worth noting that everyone in your particular situation (i.e. paygrade and family composition) that checks into housing on the same day you do will have the same list that you do - and shall be eligible to select from the same housing units. You might draw an analogy to car shopping on a lot with limited cars, with everyone facing the same choices but only one person gets to have any particular unit.

c. If two or more service members select the same unit at the same time, the more senior member will receive the assignment.

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d. If no selection is made by the close of business on the second working day that you have the list, the first available unit shall be assigned based upon the list of available units.

7. Waiting Lists. If no units are available in the respective eligibility category based on paygrade and family composition only, applicants will be placed on a waiting list and authorized to move off base with full OHA. When a unit meeting your eligibility requirements becomes available, if you are first on the waiting list the unit shall be offered to you. If you accept the unit, a government funded local move shall be authorized to move you from off-base to your new on-base MFH unit. You shall have the option to decline the offer (e.g. you are now settled and happy in your off-base residence and prefer to stay there), in which case you may remain in off-base housing, continue to receive your OHA, your housing assignment shall be considered complete, and you shall be removed from the waiting list. There is no option to reapply for MFH at a later time, except as noted in paragraph 3 above.

8. Special Circumstance - Documented Pets (canines). Dogs are permitted in all town homes, and on the first floor units of all Highrise Towers. If no dog-friendly quarters are available for applicants with documented pet dogs, they will be authorized to move off base with full Overseas Housing Allowances (OHA). Acceptance of OHA and moving off-base shall complete your housing assignment. Documented / Authorized dog owners are applicants whose dogs arrived in Yokosuka with them, or have proof (quarantine documents and dog flight info) provided to the Housing Services Center that their pet dogs are in transit to Yokosuka.

9. Special Circumstance - Two Bedroom eligible families. If your family is eligible for a two-bedroom unit, you shall have the option of selecting a three bedroom tower unit in Ikego (if any are available).

10. Special Circumstance - Four Bedroom eligible families. If your family is eligible for a four-bedroom unit, you may elect

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to accept a three bedroom unit (by signing a waiver to have one bedroom less than you are entitled). Many families do this to have their choice of location (Ikego or Yokosuka) or unit type (High-rise or town home).

11. Non-Smoking Highrise Towers. The Nara and Ise Towers in Ikego are hereby designated as non-smoking Military Family Housing (MFH) facilities. Those families living in those towers prior to that designation may continue to smoke tobacco products in their assigned units. All new assignments to those Towers are with the understanding that the MFH unit shall be smoke-free thereafter.

12. Declining MFH Assignment. Applicants declining assignment to MFH (including owners of undocumented or unauthorized pet dogs) shall be required to immediately move off-base and shall forfeit housing allowances. They may reapply for MFH one time only after living off base for three months without housing allowances, at which time the assignment process documented in this letter shall be followed. Any move shall be at the member's expense.

13. Civilians. Civilians are not required to participate in the MFH assignment process, and may live off-base with housing allowances. Authorized Civilian employees on a transportation agreement with one or more family members may voluntarily participate in the MFH assignment process, provided no more than 10 percent of the MFH units are assigned to Civilians. The units made available to you for selection shall be based on equivalent paygrade, family composition, and number of available housing units as categorized by location and unit type that are less than 90% occupied. For instance, if 3BR Tower units in Ikego are 75% occupied, but all other categories of units for which military members qualify (e.g. 3BR Houses on Ikego and Yokosuka, and 3BR Towers on Yokosuka) are 95% occupied, you shall only be able to select from 3BR Tower units in Ikego. If you choose to participate in the MFH assignment process, you shall follow the same process as military members except as noted above, including forfeiture of housing allowances should

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you decline housing assignment after you see the units available. In other words, once you choose to apply for MFH, you may not refuse assignment. The requirement that you vacate MFH after five years applies.

14. Waivers. Waivers to this MFH assignment policy may be submitted to Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka via your Command and the Housing Services Center. The HSC can provide you a template to make your request. While I believe that not asking is same as "no", and as such you may as well ask for a waiver, I will note that waivers are generally meant for circumstances not well covered by the instruction or other guidance (as opposed to your desire to not follow the guidance). For example, a service member that owns property near Yokosuka (or whose spouse owns property) and desires to live in that property rather than MFH may request to not be subject to the mandatory MFH policy on the basis that it may create a financial hardship, in which case I may be inclined to grant the request. However, a waiver to live on Yokosuka main base instead of Ikego (the only location on the list you are given) because you find the commuting time too great would likely not be favorable endorsed, since Ikego is only 10km away.

15. Types of Housing. The following table is meant to help you think through the choices you will be given on the list of available units. I encourage you to talk about the options as a family, and perhaps circle your choices on this letter. This is just for you, and is non-binding (you may choose any unit on the list you are given), but I find it is helpful to have a game plan ahead of time.

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Type	Location	Size
Preference 1: Townhouse/ Highrise	Ikego / Yokosuka	2BR/3BR/4BR
Preference 2: Townhouse/Highrise	Ikego / Yokosuka	2BR/3BR /4BR
Preference 3: Townhous/Highrise	Ikego / Yokosuka	2BR/3BR/4BR
Preference 4: Townhouse/Highrise	Ikego / Yokosuka	2BR/3BR /4BR
Preference 5: Townhouse/Highrise	Ikego / Yokosuka	2BR/3BR/4BR
Preference 6: Townhouse/Highrise	Ikego/Yokosuka	2BR/3BR/4BR
Preference 7: Townhouse/Highrise	Ikego/Yokosuka	2BR/3BR/4BR
Preference 8: Townhouse/Highrise	Ikego/Yokosuka	2BR/3BR/4BR

- Note on Options:
- (1) 2BR eligible families may elect a 3BR Ikego Highrise
 - (2) 4BR eligible families may elect a 3BR unit
 - (3) 2BR units are only available on Yokosuka
 - (4) 4BR units are only available in a Townhouse
 - (5) Pet dogs may only live in Townhouses and the first floor of Towers
 - (6) Nara and Ise Towers are non-smoking

16. Again, welcome to Japan. I hope you have a fantastic experience during your tour both personally and professionally. Having lived in Ikego in a Tower on my last tour in Japan, and now living in a house on the main base, I can assure you that you will be well taken care of by Housing. You will have neighbors that understand what you are going through, and a community ready to support you. I wish you the very best - and we are happy to have you on the Navy's largest overseas Installation!



D. T. GLENISTER