

SHAPE, BELGIUM (*Mons*)
HHC, AFNORTH BN, USANATO BDE
Newcomers' Support Guide



(Last Updated May 2025)

Contact Information

HHC Commander Cell: +32 (0) 475-60-23-56

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HHC, AFNORTH BN

ADDRESS DUTY: SHAPE, Rue Grande, 7010 Mons, Belgium

CDR Office DSN: 314-597-7313

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Supported Organizations

Headquarters and Headquarters Company

NATO Rapid Deployment Corps- Lille

NCIA HQ Brussels

NCIA FWD

NCIA HQ MONS

NCISG

Welcome

Congratulations on your assignment to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Allied Forces North Battalion, USA NATO Brigade “Headhunters”. I am the Company Commander. The company First Sergeant and I take great pleasure and pride in welcoming you to Belgium. You have joined a unique unit with a variety of mission sets. We are a unit focused on supporting the Alliance, either directly due to duty position or indirectly by supporting NATO billeted Soldiers.

Our unit is spread across two countries and four different locations. We have the honor of being a part of the only Adjutant General Brigade in the United States Army.

We are dedicated to readiness, force protection, personal and professional development—our three lines of effort. Readiness: We exist to provide training and ready forces to the NATO Command and Force Structure. Force Protection: Given the geographic dispersion of our personnel, we want to ensure safety through the utilization of communication, Army Systems, and knowledge. Personal and professional development: The Soldiers and Civilians within our formation are critical to our collective success. We train to improve in the five dimensions of fitness: physical, emotional, social, Family and spiritual.

This is not only a great unit to interact with and see our NATO partners, but also a perfect location for travelling through Europe. Our goal is to see you integrated within the unit and community. Though majorly composed of Adjutant General Soldiers (42A/B/H), we boast a variety of military occupational specialties (MOSs) and areas of concentrations (AOCs). This diverse composition allows our unit to contribute heavily to NATO daily operations and the local community.

First, we want to ensure that your PCS is as smooth as possible and that you are prepared for the unique experience of life in Belgium. In this welcome packet you will find, the company command team contact information, point of contacts within the unit for new arrivals, a welcome packet from SHAPE, pertinent websites, and contact information for our FRGs. Please see the attached Family Questionnaire so that we can get some critical information that will greatly improve our ability to onboard you.

Begin preparing yourself now for the Belgian experience. Year round you will find things to do and see in Belgium alone. The uniqueness of this country cannot be understated. Start your research now to ensure a safe journey for you and your family.

Once again, welcome to the HHC Headhunters Family!

Company Commander and 1SG

Challenges associated with this remote location

On Chievres Air Base there is a Commissary and a PX, as well as a gym. Chievres is 25 minutes from SHAPE and there is a shuttle that goes from Chievres to Shape and back. The hours are 0530, and 0715 to SHAPE to Chievres the shuttle leaves at 1430 and 1715. This is seen as a challenge due to the commissary and PX not located on the same installation as the soldiers assigned to HHC. The local language is French, and English is not commonly spoken off base. There are also some challenges in reference to housing. Utilities are measured by your usage once a year. At some point during the year, you will receive an invoice with a balance you earned or owe (the exact date depends on your city). Government housing usually takes 4 weeks to secure a house. Leasing usually takes 2 weeks from when you decide on the house. Government housing is available near Chievres and right outside of SHAPE.

In-processing

The HHC training room will issue you an in or out-processing checklist. Please follow each of the steps in the checklist and work closely with your sponsor in submitting your required documents to start/stop your overseas entitlements and establish your network access. Your NATO installation will also have its own in/out-processing requirements.

Resources

Installation Information Websites

SHAPE Installation (NATO): <https://www.shape2day.com>

USAG BENELUX (US MILITARY): <https://benelux.army.mwr.com>

AFNORTH Facebook Page

Armed Forces Network BENELUX Facebook Page

Garrison Support

Chievres Air Base is the closest Army Installation to Shape Belgium. HHC personnel will visit the DEERs office, Health and Dental Clinic, Passport Office, Finance, Housing Office and MWR on the Shape installation. However, the Commissary and PX are both located on Chievres Air Base. You or your sponsor will be sending your in or out-processing documents to each respective offices during your transition. Ensure that you include HHC Training room in all communication when in or out-processing to ensure proper accountability.

Medical/Dental

You are required to complete all PHA and dental requirements 30 days prior to arriving at the unit. Requirements include annual PHA, dental exam, immunizations, HIV, etc.

Dental care for the Soldiers must be done on the local economy through TRICARE International SOS (ISOS). Family members will receive dental care through enrollment in the TRICARE Overseas Dental Program.

TRICARE Overseas Program Prime Remote provides health care through International SOS to Active-duty Service Members (ADSMs) and command sponsored Family members residing with them in designated overseas locations.

Website: <http://www.tricare.mil/PLANS/HealthPlans/TPRO.aspx>

Phone number: +44-20-8762-8384

Family members will need to be enrolled in TRICARE Overseas Program Prime Remote. It is best to contact the TRICARE Service Center at +44-20-8762-8384 to enroll by phone.

Soldiers and Family members will be referred to local health care providers by International SOS.

International SOS maintains a list of local hospitals, clinics, and providers who speak English. However, once you arrive at your scheduled appointment, it will not be guaranteed that you will be speaking to an English-speaking receptionist or nurse. ISOS can provide live translations during your appointment, via telephone, if coordinated prior to your visit. HHC will provide you with specific instructions on how to complete your PHA online and over the phone.

In certain instances when specialty care is not found in the Shape community, Soldiers and Family members will be referred to the most appropriate location where the specialty care can best be provided, which **may** be on the economy or Landstuhl Military Medical Center.

Schools and Childcare

For DODEA Europe Schooling and transferring school records and completing registration requirements, you will need to go directly through the school registrars.

SHAPE ES	SHAPE Community Schools	+32 (0)6575-7720
SHAPE HS	SHAPE Community Schools	+32 (0)2405-0160
SHAPE MS	SHAPE Community Schools	+32 (0)2405-0180

CDC: Ensure your child(ren) is enrolled on the waiting list through MCC for the SHAPE location:
<https://militarychildcare.com/>

Belgian Kindergarten being assigned to Shape, we have the unique opportunity to enroll your child into the Belgian Kindergarten starting at 2.5 years of age. For more information contact your sponsor and when you arrive go to the registration office. Also, half and full day schedules are available as well as before and after school nurse hours beginning 0800-0900 and 1530-1800.

Housing:

There is Government Quarters/Housing available for Chievres Air Base, SHAPE, and Brussels. Families may reside in privately leased housing or government housing. There is a separate housing office for each of the following locations: SHAPE, Chievres Air Base and in Brussels. They will process your request to reside on the economy, lease agreement, realtor fee and other documents.

If you are going to be leasing a home, housing will deliver temporary (CMFO) furniture for up to 90 days or until your household goods arrive. Many electrical appliances you currently own cannot be used on the European 220 voltage systems. However, most smart devices like cellphones, laptops and tablets can be plugged in to the wall via an adapter. Additionally, other 120v appliances will require a step-down transformer, which you can purchase after you arrive. It will be possible to order transformers via amazon and have them delivered to your new APO. Please see the mail information regarding timeliness and size restrictions. **Housing must be notified prior to house hunting as well as during the lease signing process.**

Housing Contact Number	011-32-68-25-5333	011-32-68-25-5332
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Passports/Visa

Family members and US Government civilians traveling overseas are required to have passports. "No-fee passports" can be obtained at Government expense. The application process may take 4 to 6 weeks, so, you should begin the passport application process as soon as you receive your travel orders.

Tourist passports are needed for personal travel in Europe. You may apply for tourist passports on arrival, but for convenience it is recommended that you apply for the tourist passport while you're still residing in the United States. You can find more information on tourist passports from your local personnel service's detachment, passport office nearest you, or from the U.S. State Departments official website at <http://travel.state.gov>.

Mail

There is a post office located at both SHAPE and Chievres Installations. You are given the option to which post office in which you want to receive your mail.

Banking

One popular bank in the USAGBENELUX Area is Andrew Credit Union, located on Chievres Airbase. Your sponsor may be able to recommend financial institutions that provide convenient branch and ATM locations. Please remember that conversion fees apply to your transactions when transferring dollars to the local currency or at point of sale (if paying in USD). Many people make the mistake of calculating the equivalent currency when looking at the price of a good or service, but vendors and banks offer different conversions rates that is not equal to a simple conversion. Banks often provide more competitive conversion rates, so it may be best to transfer USD to local currency within your account to avoid excessive transaction fees or conversion rates at the point of sale. It will be important to know your bank's International Bank Account Number (IBAN) or SWIFT number, as this information will almost always be needed when paying bills, tickets or contract services online.

Vehicles

License: To legally operate your POV, you will need to apply for and purchase an international driver's license. Many U.S. personnel in NATO accomplish this through AAA. Please reach out to your sponsor for alternatives if AAA is not available to you. Other licenses can be acquired, depending on agreements with the local government. You are also required to have a Shape Driver's License to operate your vehicle on the installation.

Registration: Registration is often a complicated task. Before registration begins, you will need to have your vehicle inspected at a reputable mechanic shop or inspection station. The inspectors will ask for translated copies of your previous registration and a data sheet that outlines the technical specifications for your vehicle. European inspections are rigorous. Technicians will complete a bumper-to-bumper, top-to-bottom, inspection that states any deficiencies. You will then have up to two weeks to correct the deficiencies, i.e. repair it, or you will need to pay for a whole new inspection at full-cost. Be prepared to pay for repairs or parts replacement if your vehicle is not new or well maintained. Once completed, you will need to have written permission from your finance company to register in your host nation (translated), a bill of sale (translated), previous registration, customs documents, local inspection and (in some cases) a driver's history from the past seven years (translated) for the insurance company. You will need assistance from a language specialist or local national to take your documents to the local DMV, pay the fees, and receive your temporary plates. After you are entered into the DMV database, permanent plates will be issued.

Fuel: Fuel in Europe can cost up to three times the cost in the U.S. It is important to plan trips according to authorized fuel stations. In Belgium, you buy fuel by the liter. On both Shape and Chievres installations you have an opportunity to purchase a gas card for 100 liters or 200 liters. This makes gas significantly cheaper than paying at the pump.

Transportation

The Transportation office located on Shape, Belgium. The arrival of Household Goods (HHG) will be coordinated through this office. Your sponsor will assist you in working with transportation personnel

to ensure the delivery of your HHGs after you find a home. Once your housing contract is complete you can track your move at: <http://www.move.mil/> website. Upon notification of a shipment's arrival, you must schedule a delivery date and be at your quarters on that date to accept delivery. HHG shipments for newcomers to your location should not include Personally Owned Firearms (POF). Host nation law is to absolutely minimize the import of weapons. The need to have a weapon must be proven by the local authorities and there is no guarantee the request will be approved. Newcomers will not have the option to store POFs in the unit arms room due to the limited available space or prohibition of POFs in your orders.

IT Support

The company will process NIPR account requests and issue NIPR computers and hotspot devices. VPN access can also be requested from BN S6 if necessary. Most of your emails will be on NATO Secret servers; the VPN can be used to access your .mil emails.

Reassignments

When a SM out-processes from HHC their main POC is the HHC training room in Shape, Belgium. The Company coordinates issuance of PCS orders from the BN MPD/S1 at Mons, Belgium and coordinates all out-processing requirements such as transportation and housing on Shape.

Request for replacement of PE and MOU personnel is coordinated between the Senior National Representative (SNR) / the Senior Army Officer (SAO) with ECJ1 Strength Management Division.

Clearance

The NATO Secret, SF86 renewals, and other clearances are processed by the AFNORTH Bn S2.

Hand Receipts

The property books are controlled by the Company Commander at HHC Shape, Belgium.

UCMJ

UCMJ Company Grade is held by the Company Commander at SHAPE Belgium. UCMJ Field Grade is held by the AFNORTH Battalion Commander at Mons, Belgium. GCMCA is held by the 7th ATC at Grafenwoehr

SCMCA for E1 through E7 will be held by the AFNORTH Battalion Commander at Mons, Belgium. SCMCA E8 and above will be held at 7th ATC at Grafenwoehr.

Required Documents to Carry with You

- PCS orders.
- Medical, dental, and Immunization Records.
- Marriage Certificates, Divorce Decrees, and Birth Certificates
- Passports (Soldier and family members).
- Social Security Cards.
- Wills and Powers of attorney.
- Education Records.
- Car titles and shipping papers, car registrations, car insurance policies and driver's license.
- Household goods and shipping inventory.
- Employment records and references.
- Pet records.
- Proof of citizenship, if a naturalized citizen.

CASUALTY REPORTING

In case of casualty or serious injury contact the Company Commander or First Sergeant immediately. They will provide instruction on how to properly report the casualty and request all necessary information needed to submit a CCIR. Recommend SAO/SNR review the Brigade and Battalion Casualty SOPs for more detailed guidance.

CPT, AG
Commanding