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**U.S. NATIONAL SUPPORT ELEMENT VALENCIA**  
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On behalf of the U.S. National Support Element (NSE) in Valencia, I would like to extend my congratulations on your assignment to Headquarters (HQ), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Rapid Deployable Corps – Spain (HQ-NRDC-SP).

As you prepare for your upcoming move, I wanted to provide you with some important information. Our mission at the NSE is to provide topnotch administrative and quality-of-life programs to U.S. service members and their families assigned to HQ-NRDC-SP in Valencia. The NSE reports to the Commander, U.S. Naval Activities Spain at U.S. Naval Station Rota, and the Administrative Agent for NATO forces on the Iberian Peninsula.

Our facilities are located on the Spanish Army base “Base Militar Jaime I” outside the city of Bétera, approximately 25km from Valencia. As there are no American support facilities on-site such as family housing, medical hospital, commissaries, or exchanges. Our five-person NSE team and the one-person Army Support Element are the primary American support structures available.

I am confident that you will find your time here both rewarding and fulfilling. I eagerly anticipate meeting you as well as your families and introducing you to the Valencian community. **Please read the enclosed “USNSE Valencia Welcome Guide” and its Enclosures to ensure smooth transition. *Welcome Aboard!***

*////Signed////*  
Rosendo “Rudy” Valentin  
Director

Enclosures:

1. USNSE Valencia Welcome Guide
2. Incoming PCS Checklists
3. Housing Questionnaire and Temporary Lodging Options
4. Mailbox Application
5. DTS Gain Personnel Request

# **United States National Support Element Valencia, Spain**

## **Welcome Guide** Current Edition



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## INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on your orders to HQ NATO Rapid Deployable Corps – Spain (HQ-NRDC-SP)! This guide was created by the U.S. National Support Element (NSE) Valencia, the organization that provides administrative agent support to HQ-NRDC-SP troops and their families. It provides information to help you prepare for your new assignment to reduce uncertainty and complications upon arrival as much as possible. It includes “I wish I knew” recommendations and information that we hope will be useful throughout your tour. This guide is always a work in progress, so once you are settled, if you have suggested changes or additions, provide them to the NSE.

**SPAIN IS UNIQUE!** Be prepared for a culture shock when you arrive. The Spanish culture differs significantly from the American culture, particularly in terms of work ethic, sense of urgency, and daily routines. The American “do it now!” ethos somewhat does not exist and there is a much lower sense of urgency in Spain than in the U.S., and various things take significantly longer to accomplish. The Spanish work hours and meal times may not align with what you are accustomed to. Language barriers may present challenges, as English is not as widely spoken in Valencia. To help navigate these differences, download Google Translate or a similar application to assist with communication. Additionally, driving in Spain can also be challenging, with narrow roads, tight parking spaces, and multiple roundabouts, which lane markers are only suggestions. It may take some time to adjust to the driving norms in Valencia. While these adjustments may initially seem daunting or even frustrating; you will soon adapt, appreciate, and embrace the cultural nuances and the unique charm of Valencia, Spain.

This is a very distinctive assignment. Not only will you be working in a multinational environment, but also you will truly be living in Spain, as **THERE ARE NO U.S. MILITARY FACILITIES**. In fact, the American presence is very small—less than 25 families. Your fellow Americans, especially your sponsor, will be your greatest source of information and assistance as you prepare for and embark upon this assignment. The only on-site American support activity is the 5-person team at the NSE, which reports to the Commander, U.S. Naval Activities Spain, and the one-person Army Support Element (ASE), co-located with the NSE. However, reach-back support is provided by U.S. Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota, located on the Atlantic Ocean in southwestern Spain, and by Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Allied Forces South Battalion (AFSOUTH) in Naples, Italy.

The small Spanish Army base on which NRDC-SP is located, Base Militar Jaime I, lacks the amenities that overseas U.S. military bases offer. There is no family housing, no Commissary or Exchange, no Department of Defense Education Activity dependent schools, and no Child Development Centers. Dependent children must either attend private schools or Spanish public schools. (The Non-DoD Schools Program pays for most—but not all—of the costs of private schools.) Additionally, there is no U.S. Medical Treatment Facility (MTF), you and your family will be seen by Spanish designated medical facilities contracted by TRICARE Overseas Program (TOP) contractor International SOS (ISOS). Under the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), spouses of U.S. military members may not work on the Spanish economy.

## **THE BASICS**

**USNSE Valencia:** the Administrative Agent that provides administrative and Quality-of-Life (QoL) programs to satisfy the basic needs of U.S. Service Members and their families assigned to HQ-NRDC-SP. Services are provided either directly by the USNSE or remotely with the assigned Navy Installation, which is NAVSTA Rota. Other QoL programs not specifically listed below are handled by each Service Support Elements (USN, USA, USAF or USMC) and other Pillars of Support not discussed within the guide will be explained during the NSE orientation.

### **Pillars of Support** (\*reach-back | ^no capability)

Banking/Military Finance	Housing
Chaplain/Religious Programs*	Legal Services*
Child and Youth Programs^	TRICARE Support
Communications and Computers	Morale, Welfare, and Recreation
Consumer Needs*	Military Postal System
Customs*	Education Services
Fleet and Family Support Programs*	Sexual Assault Prevention and Response
Force Protection	Travel

**Service-Support Components:** AFSOUTH Detachment or the ASE is responsible for funding service-specific equipment and travel, and providing service-specific administrative support and other QoL programs not covered by the NSE. The ASE is not attached to the NSE however, collocated in the same building and report through their own service chain of command, which is AFSOUTH.

**HQ-NRDC-SP:** is a NATO Corps HQ that deploys for NATO crisis response and collective defense missions. It is comprised primarily of members of the Spanish Army and nine NATO countries are represented in NRDC-SP. The authorized strength of the U.S. contingent is 12 U.S. Army officers, 1 U.S. Air Force officer, and 4 U.S. Army NCOs.

**Base Militar Jaime I:** HQ-NRDC-SP and the NSE are located on the small Spanish Army base called “Base Militar Jaime I,” near the town of Bétera, approximately 20 km northwest of the city of Valencia. HQ-NRDC-SP is located on the “NATO side” of the base, and the NSE building is on the “Spanish side” of the base. The base is very secure, and visitors require pre-approval to enter.

**Valencia:** is the third largest city in Spain, with approximate population of 750,000 in the city limits, and 1.3 million in the entire metropolitan area. The port of Valencia is the fifth busiest container port in Europe, and the busiest on the Mediterranean Sea. The city is located in the province of Valencia, one of three provinces in the Valencian Autonomous Community, which is one of seventeen autonomous communities in Spain. There are two official languages in Valencia, Spanish and Valenciano, which is similar to Catalan. In the city of Valencia and parts of the province of Valencia, signs for roads, streets, and attractions are in Valenciano. The city is a tourist destination due to its mild climate, fine beaches, night life, attractions such as museums, a zoo, and the largest aquarium in Europe, and its famous Fallas festival in March. The city of Valencia has an excellent public transportation system, including an extensive metro system that extends into the suburbs, including a station in Bétera, which is 5 km away from the base – a 10-minute drive, 18-minute bike, or 1-hour walk.

## **BEFORE YOU ARRIVE**

As you prepare for your upcoming move to Spain, take a moment to review all the information in this guide in its entirety and recommending to utilize the checklist provided in Enclosure (2), if applicable, to help you stay organized during this process.

**Sponsorship:** The O-6 US Army Senior National Representative (SNR) has assigned a sponsor to assist you during your transition. Your sponsor will be responsible for:

- Pre-departure contact, resource, and assistance with arranging temporary lodging and transportation if needed. Alternative way is hiring a taxi during the initial load rather than renting a vehicle larger than you will need daily. Dependent on personnel and van availability, the NSE can also assist with the airport pick up, if the sponsor requested assistance in advance.
- Arrival meet-up at the airport, an escort onto base and SOFA Office for in-processing, and to the NRDC-SP office to which you are assigned.
- Facilitate introductions to the SNR and the NSE Director, and coordination of NSE orientation, normally given within the first two weeks of arrival.

**Prepare Financially:** This is key when relocating to Spain. Temporary living and move-in costs can be high, *ranging from €8,000 to 10,000*. If you are bringing pets, the cost of arranging their transportation could exceed \$1,000. We recommend requesting advanced pay and advanced Overseas Housing Allowance to help offset these expenses. There are no U. S. banking facilities available in Valencia. It may take a few weeks to establish a local Spanish bank account, so consider exchanging dollars for euros before your arrival. While ATMs are abundant, there are daily withdrawal limits (typically €600 for Spanish banks), and transaction fees may apply. If your credit card charges a foreign transaction fee, consider obtaining one that does not.

Some *initial expenses to anticipate* are:

- Travel: meals, souvenirs, luggage handling, tips, etc.
- Rental car and fuel (€400-1,000/month, depending on the season)
- Temporary lodging (€100-300/day)
- Dining out and grocery purchases
- First month's rent (€1500-3000); based on Overseas Housing Allowance (OHA) rental allowance per pay grade with/without dependents
- Security deposit (one month's rent, two months for furnished)
- Realtor's fee (one month's rent plus a 21% IVA tax)
- Moving-in expenses: cleaning supplies, adapters, toiletries, etc.
- Car buying, license plate fees
- The unexpected: car repair, vacation opportunities, entertainment activities, etc.

While you will be reimbursed or receive entitlements for many of these expenses, it is impossible to predict how long it will take for Finance to process your vouchers for reimbursement. There is no reimbursement entitlement for rental car expenses. For more information about your DLA, Travel, Per Diem, TLA, OHA, Utilities, MIHA, COLA and other entitlements/allowances, visit [www.defensetravel.dod.mil](http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil).

**Temporary Lodging:** Refer to Enclosure (3) for lodging options and/or consult with your sponsor before arranging temporary accommodations, as he/she will have information on other service member's experiences, possible discounts for U.S. military, and lodging that allows pets. Valencia is a holiday destination, especially in the summer months, so hotel reservations may be difficult to find -- reserve early! Be advised that Spanish hotels may require non-refundable advance deposits. TLA is filed every 10 days of stay; rate changes and vary depending on family size, so confirm your TLA rate before making reservations, and keep all receipts.

**Permanent Housing:** As there is no military housing in the area, you will be fully immersed in the local economy. The rental market is highly competitive, with limited availability and properties being leased quickly. Local realtors' play a crucial role in coordinating visits to potential properties and a reimbursable realtor's fee will be incurred.

While you do not need to start looking for permanent housing before your arrival, you may check the websites listed below if you wish to do so. Be aware that listings may not always reflect current availability and may remain on the websites even after they are rented. Therefore, it is important to manage expectations and understand that the housing stock may differ from what you see online. Additionally, it is advisable not to bring excessive household goods due to inadequate storage in houses and apartments.

Upon your arrival, the NSE Housing Management Assistant will assist you in finding suitable housing within your allowance and meeting U.S. housing standards. Fill out and submit in advanced the Housing Questionnaire in Enclosure (3) that lists your preferences, locations, and amenities.

<https://www.idealista.com/en/>  
[www.pisos.com](http://www.pisos.com)  
[www.enalquiler.com](http://www.enalquiler.com)

[www.spainhouses.net](http://www.spainhouses.net)  
[www.fotocasa.es](http://www.fotocasa.es)

**Education Services:** There are no Department of Defense Education Activity (DODEA) schools, so children must either attend International schools, private schools, Spanish schools, boarding schools, or be homeschooled. All families with school age children must register in the Non-DoD Schools Program (NDSP), which will pay school tuition and transportation costs and provide other services. It is very important that parents clearly understand NDSP requirements and benefits before arriving, and they should familiarize themselves with the program by visiting <https://www.dodea.edu/nonDoD/ndspOrientation.cfm>.

- **Enroll in NDSP** at <https://registration.dodea.edu/NDSP/privacy-act.cfm> **prior to arrival in Spain!** Register with NDSP now, but do not pre-register for a specific school prior to arrival. Under "school," type "dummy," as this allows you to enroll with NDSP and you can edit the school section later (after arrival).
- Browse school websites and contact them to see if they have special admission requirements such as entrance exams, space available (as some grades can get full), or acceptance restrictions.
- If possible, based on arrival date and urgency needs for enrollment, develop and coordinate a plan to visit potential schools.
- Some questions to consider based on U. S. family experiences:
  - What are the itemized costs in order to compare how much will be covered? *For instance, lunch and uniforms are not authorized expenses, yet most schools require*



*you to pay for their school lunch and some require uniforms. (View the DoDEA website so see authorized expenses and rates).*

- *What is the ratio of local Spanish students to international students? Some U. S. dependents have had difficulties when there are few other international students.*
- *Is there flexibility in course selection? Many schools require students take a Valenciano language class, which you may not deem valuable.*
- *Is transportation available? Extra-curricular activities? Can your child bring a lunch bag?*

The NDSP, DoDEA program provides the funding and educational support for command sponsored dependents at NRDC-SP and for other authorized personnel posted in remote locations globally.

Review the following websites:

Overview: <http://www.dodea.edu/nonDoD/index.cfm>

Orientation: <http://www.dodea.edu/nonDoD/ndspOrientation.cfm>

Registration: <http://www.dodea.edu/nonDoD/procedures/index.cfm>

Online registration can be accessed once you have orders however, note that NDSP cannot reimburse any fees until the sponsor is in Spain. For assistance with registration, email [ndsp.management@hq.dodea.edu](mailto:ndsp.management@hq.dodea.edu) or call DSN 312 372 0591; CIV (571) 372 0591 (office is located in Alexandria, Virginia).

NDSP covers the cost of tuition and transportation for each enrolled dependent child and the amount cannot exceed the published education allowance in the Department of State Standardized Regulation (DSSR). The education allowance fluctuates and is determined by the US State Department and is directly tied to “Base School” tuitions (American School of Valencia ASV is the “Base School”) If you enroll children in the Base School, then the tuition is covered despite DSSR rate fluctuations. If your children do not attend ASV, then it is critically important to understand the NDSP annual limit. If the tuition of a non-base school exceeds the DSSR, you will pay the difference (exceptions to policy are managed directly with NDSP. The link below highlights our maximum authorization, in USD)

<https://aoprals.state.gov/Web920/education.asp?PostCode=11538&EffectiveDate=20220313>

In addition to the annual DSSR allowance, some one-time fees are also paid by NDSP, for example, application fees. NOTE: If you incur or pay a school application fee before arrival, NDSP cannot start the reimbursement process until you are in Spain and will only pay one application fee. For children who will begin in a nursery school and then transition to primary school, take note of the tuition fees.

For a local nursery school, they are typically substantially cheaper than those of primaries, hence worthwhile to pay out of pocket in order to allow NDSP to pay the application fee of the primary school later on.

Below is a list of schools our service members currently use for their dependents. These are English or bilingual schools within commutable distance to Bétera. Most students attend the American School of Valencia or Caxton College. (NOTE: The title “College” is also used for elementary, middle and high school). Refer to the NRDC-SP newcomers guide for other school.

- American School of Valencia (ASV); at Urbanización Los Monasterios; [asvalencia@asvalencia.org](mailto:asvalencia@asvalencia.org), Tel: +34 961 405 412
- Caxton College (British-based English school); at Puzol; [caxton@caxtoncollege.net](mailto:caxton@caxtoncollege.net); Tel: 961 424 500
- Colegio Helios; San Antonio de Benageber; [helios@colegiohelios.com](mailto:helios@colegiohelios.com); Tel: +34 962 743 106
- Valencia Montessori School; at Campanar; [hello@valenciamontessori.org](mailto:hello@valenciamontessori.org); Tel: +34 960-729-708
- American College Innovation Lab; at Campanar; <https://americanlab.org/>; Tel: +34 625-776-408;

**NOTE:** DoD does **not** fund education before the age of 5. A child must be 5 years old by 1 September of that year in order for the DoD to reimburse tuition and/or fees. However, your children are eligible to be enrolled in Spanish public schools beginning at age 3, at your expense, if you choose to enroll them.

#### **Travel:**

- **Defense Travel System (DTS):** Ask your departing command to “release” you from DTS and as much as possible, fill out and submit the Enclosure (4) DTS Gain Personnel Request.
- **Government Travel Charge Card (GTCC):** Ensure that an active GTCC are in possession prior to traveling to Valencia. Per the JTR, all lodging expenses must be paid using the GTCC. Also, request that GTCC limit be increased to the max allowed.
- **Passports:** NATO personnel are required to have a no-fee passport prior to arrival in Spain. Military members of the U.S. Armed Forces on orders to Spain are not required to have a passport, but they are strongly recommended. They may enter and depart Spanish territory without passports upon presentation of official DoD orders and a DoD military I.D. card (DD-2). However, travel to countries outside of Spain and many hotels, require a passport. Civilians and all family members, regardless of age, assigned to Spain must be in possession of a valid, “no-fee” passport. There is no need to obtain a Spanish visa. No-fee passports are guaranteed to be valid while traveling on official orders only. It is strongly recommended to obtain a tourist passport before arriving in Spain.

#### **Recommended Items to Hand Carry:**

- Copies of PCS orders and all amendments
- Copies of entire household’s birth certificates
- Passports (your PCS orders should clearly state passport requirements)
- Children’s school records: report cards, transcripts, immunizations, test scores (e.g., SAT, special programs (e.g., ESL, Gifted and Talented), awards, etc.
- Auto insurance, vehicle registration, original vehicle title, shipping documents, and completed auto data form if you shipped a vehicle
- Paper and/or electronic copies of photos of all vehicle data plates (windshield VIN plate, door jamb plate, engine bay plate, trunk plate)
- Driver’s licenses

- Pet documents, if applicable
- Personal firearms information (model and serial number), if applicable
- Book(s) of stamps (see mail services later in this Guide)
- Required medicines to last at least 90 days
- All needed uniform items and appropriate seasonal clothing – overnight lows can get be 30-40°F in November through April
- Children's favorite toys/games

### **Additional Things to Consider:**

- Ensure all family members are properly enrolled in DEERS.
- Read the NRDC-SP Newcomer's Guide (NATO)
- Purchase electric adapter plugs for dual-voltage appliances/electronics. Your lamps will work with an adapter plug and 220V light bulbs purchased in Spain.
- You may check out transformers from the NSE (300, 500, 1000, or 2000 watt) up to 5000 watts in any combination of denominations for the duration of your tour from the NSE, but if you need more or larger transformers, best to purchase in the U. S. prior to moving.
- Most 110V/60Hz items have motors that don't work well even through a transformer, so consult the owner's guide. Even items that do work well such as coffee machines, may wear out faster when using a transformer (see Housing services in this Guide for additional info.).
- Consider shipping in your HHG extra quantities of favorite U.S. grocery items, toiletries or products that may not be easily available in Spain, such as cooking spray, canned soup, crackers, muffin mix, dietary supplements, and favorite brands of face or body lotions. The Spanish economy has most products you'll seek, but not all your familiar brands. The nearest military Commissary and Exchange is an 8-hour drive away at NAVSTA Rota, and you cannot mail order some products, such aerosol cans, due to shipping restrictions.
- Submit a change of address card to your local post office or online with [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com).
- Make sure your ID, passport, driver's license and any other documents with an expiration date are up to date. If possible, get them renewed so the expiration date is after your DEROS. To renew CAC/ID cards after you arrive, you or your family members must travel to NAVSTA Rota.
- Conduct a thorough maintenance check on your vehicle before you ship it and purchase/ship extra vehicle consumables (light bulbs, filters, wipers, etc.) you may need.
- Ship carpets/rugs, as most floors in Valencia are tile/marble. Carpeted houses are very rare.
- Establish a video network account, such as Skype, or download Signal, WhatsApp or Messenger for free video or voice calls and/or purchase a computer based phone service such as MagicJack to reduce expensive calls to the United States. Signal and WhatsApp is widely used by American HQ-NRDC-SP personnel and spouses to communicate with each other. Some Americans also use a VPN in order to watch Netflix with more options.
- If you plan to use your U.S. cell phone to make calls, verify that it is unlocked, works in both the U. S. and Europe, and has an exchangeable SIM card. Some U.S. cell plans allow unlimited free international texting and data. There are many options available for Spanish mobile phones, both contract and pre-pay options are available.

## **ARRIVAL (THE FIRST 24/48 HOURS)**

Upon your arrival in Valencia, be advised that your sponsor will be there to greet you or your family unless you declined the offer. It may take several days for you to become accustomed to the time zone change.

**In-Process with the ASE:** Provide the ASE with the documents listed in the previous chapter under “Items to Hand Carry.” Your sponsor should make an appointment time for you and escort you to the ASE. The ASE phone number is +34 961-605-793.

**Schedule the NSE Newcomers Orientation:** Your sponsor will introduce you to the NSE Director and staff in order to schedule your NSE orientation.

## **THE NEXT FEW DAYS**

The following are additional in-processing requirements and basic information you might need or use during your first week here.

**Attend the NSE Newcomers Orientation:** Most of your Garrison-like support services are provided by the NSE, so it is important that you and your spouse attend the NSE orientation to learn what services are (and are not) available at this remote location. This orientation will last approximately four hours, including the Housing portion which can be held directly after or at a separate occasion.

**Housing:** When selecting a house or apartment for you or your family in Spain, it can be both rewarding and frustrating. There are various options available based on your family size and preferences. Whether you prefer a detached house with a yard, an apartment at city center, in the countryside or even near the beach, there are choices to suit your needs. Currently, majority of our service members resides in downtown Valencia, L’Elia, La Canyada, Mas Camarena, and Los Monasterios/Alfinach. Feel free to reach out to your sponsor and other contingent members for their insights and experiences.

Keep in mind that the process of selecting and moving into your Spanish home may be different, cumbersome, and slower than what you’re accustomed to. Expect some difference in housing compared to American standards. For example, electricity operates at 220 volts and houses and apartments may have smaller living spaces, limited closet space, yard for children/animal may not be possible, not pet-friendly, garages are not available hence street parking is necessary, and appliances are smaller or may not even be available. Despite these differences, there are quality housing options available, OHA allows for comfortable living arrangements, and NAVSTA Rota Housing Office can offer large appliances, e.g. fridges, washers, etc., to compensate. Do not hesitate to communicate your preferences and needs, as negotiations are possible.

### **NSE Valencia Housing Management Assistant**

- Works closely with local realtors and landlords to show available homes and apartments within the OHA price range. Note that house-hunting can only occur during normal working hours as overtime is not authorized, however, you may choose to do additional house-hunting on your own after hours. As you adjust to the local pace in Spain, be patient when arranging appointments for showings with rental agents. The housing

market fluctuates, and availability can be limited, especially in the summer months (June to August). It is common for families to visit multiple homes before making a decision and to stay in temporary lodging for 4 – 8 weeks after arrival.

- Will help you negotiate a rental price, verify the presence of the Military Clause in the lease, ensure compliance with the law, help identify/negotiate improvements that should be made, explain your responsibilities and those of the landlord, and arrange loaner appliances/furniture, if needed.
- Once you have decided on a home, the Assistant will work closely with you and the landlord to negotiate terms such as rent, services and necessary improvements to the property. It is advisable to have a second choice in mind in case negotiations do not go as planned. When an agreement is reached, pre-contract and the lease will be prepared and only agreements made during the pre-contract phase will be reflected in the final lease. There will be no room for negotiation at the time of signing of the lease. At the time of signing, be prepared to pay the first month's rent, a security deposit (equal to one month's rent or more if the property is furnished), and a realtor fee if applicable. The realtor fee (one month rent plus 21% VAT) will be reimbursed upon submission of the necessary MIHA paperwork. It is crucial to fully understand the terms and commitments before entering into any verbal agreements, as they are legally binding in this country.
  - Once you sign for permanent housing, your home address will be provided to the Guardia Civil. They will periodically (usually twice a week) drive by your premises as a security service for US personnel.
- Will assist with all the necessary paperwork and provide loaner appliances (full tour) and furniture (90 days or until HHG arrived) if needed. Loaner appliances such as refrigerator, microwaves, washer, and dryers are available for full-tour loan from NAVSTA Rota, while other items like dishes, utensils, smoke detectors and dehumidifiers can be borrowed from the short-term loaner closet at the NSE. Lists of appliances and furniture are available and will be provided.
- After occupancy, the Assistant will aid you with certain aspects of landlord mediation, landlord disputes, maintenance service scheduling, lease amendments and termination of lease.

**OHA:** You will receive OHA for rent and a monthly allowance for utilities. Rent costs that exceed your OHA cap must be paid out-of-pocket, so you are cautioned against signing a lease for rent that can be expected to exceed your OHA. Beware of currency fluctuations!

**Utilities:** Broadly, due to taxes and other considerations, electricity, gas, and other home-based utilities are generally more expensive in Spain than the US. Furthermore, many Spanish houses and apartments are at the low end of the energy efficiency range. Billing cycles and processes for utilities are less standards and different than in the US. Specifically, utilities will generally bill for estimated usage based on historical usage of that household, including before you moved in. Billing cycles can be monthly, quarterly, or semi-annually and some companies will read meters at different cycles, as well. Some companies will provide the opportunity to input your readings online by requesting the information via text or email. When you arrive and depart, ensure to record meter readings. Most utilities will require a Numero de Identidad de Extranjero

(NIE) and IBAN to start contracts. Keep records of your transactions and payments for all utilities. Landlords and realtors can help with establishing utility contracts. If you are responsible for a utility, according to the lease, ensure the utility is in your name, and not the landlord or realtor. According to Spanish law you have 14 days from the activation moment to terminate a contract without incurring in additional fees. You may incur fees if you close any utilities or accounts earlier than the length of the contract, with 24 months as the average contract time. Generally individual utility bills are prepared independent of previous bills. If you miss a payment, do not assume that if you pay the next bill on time that you have also paid the previous one. Services can be suspended if over 60 days late, even though you have paid the most recent bill. Getting your service restarted is a significant hassle. We recommend auto billing for utilities to reduce the risk of missed payments.

**Register at Your Local City Hall:** Although you are not required to do so, there are a number of reasons you will want to register at your local city hall (ayuntamiento) as a resident of your neighborhood. To register, you will need to visit the ayuntamiento with both, the original and a copy of your lease, your (and dependents if applicable) passport(s) and copies of your and your landlord's NIE/DNI, and a small fee. Once you are there with your copies, you fill out a form with information about all the members in your family. Pay the small fee and then you are registered in your local city community. In order to register at your local city hall, you will need an appointment and hours can vary daily but most do not work in the middle of the day.

Being registered, you can now take advantage of the city services such as taking classes offered for both adults and children, registering your child for public pre-school, or attending some local sporting events free of charge. Registration is typically required in order to purchase a vehicle from an auto dealership in Spain. Visit the website of your local ayuntamiento to see specifically what they offer/the advantages of registering.

**Household Goods:** It normally takes 60 – 90 days to receive your personal property. All incoming/outgoing HHG go through NAVSTA Rota. The NSE recommends calling Rota upon arrival to see if your HHG have arrived in Spain. The Housing Management Assistant can assist with coordinating your HHG delivery if requested. Coordinate with the Housing Management Assistant and do not make a HHG delivery appointment before your rental contract is signed/completed. Keep in mind that the government only pays for your arrival and departure moves -- if you move houses during your tour here, you must bear the costs of that move.

- ***It is imperative that weapons are shipped separately from your HHG.*** While the moving companies may incorrectly state that weapons can be shipped with HHG, Spanish regulations and the Commander, Naval Activities Spain require weapons to be shipped separately while awaiting clearance and authorization from the Spanish authorities. Contact your transportation office for specific details.

**POV Shipment:** If you shipped a POV, check the status at <http://www.pcsmypov.com> or via email at [rota.vpc@ialpov.us](mailto:rota.vpc@ialpov.us). Upon arrival to Rota, your vehicle will be transported to Base Militar Jaime I. You will need the following documents to coordinate the release of your vehicle:

- DD Form 788, the original privately owned vehicle (POV) shipping document
- Valid stateside registration and original title

- Overseas vehicle insurance (the “green card” and the Recibo Pagado de España/Spain Paid Receipt)
- Military ID
- Paper and/or electronic copies of photos of all vehicle data plates (windshield VIN plate, door jamb plate, engine bay plate, trunk plate)

**Pets Ownership/Transportation:** In Spain, pet ownership is widely accepted, and there are ample, quality vets, kennels, and pet-supply stores available. While, there is no quarantine requirement, a certificate stating that the animal is in good health and has a current rabies vaccination is necessary. One of the main source of frustration concerning pets stems from arranging transportation for animals into the country. Consult with your vet and transportation office several months before your planned departure to ensure a smooth process. Some questions you may want to ask are:

- What is the timing required (prior to travel) for shots/inoculations the animal may need?
- Any breed/size restrictions? Some airlines won’t transport breeds with flat noses – pugs, bulldogs, Persians, etc.
- Will your transport company bring the animal all the way to Valencia? Depending on routing, some companies may only bring them to a major connection hub in Europe, such as Madrid.
- Are there temperature restrictions?
- What are the travel carrier/container requirements?

In the rare event that your pet undergoes examination by the Customs veterinarian upon arrival, it is advisable to plan your trip to avoid weekends, holidays, or off-hours to prevent delays. Additionally, if you plan to travel to other European countries with your pet, obtaining a pet passport from a local vet is recommended. Check entitlement with service finance and keep in mind that DoD only approves overseas PCS pet expenses reimbursement up to \$2,000 to cover transportation costs for one household pet.

**Banking/Military Finance:** U.S. personnel require the ability to conduct personal financial transactions and access local currency. Paying rent, utilities, phone, cable, internet, fuel card, etc. is typically done by automatic debit from your bank account. Checks are rarely ever used in Spain. Subject to host-nation laws, Service Members, their adult family members, and DoD civilians may open accounts with local banks. While no one is obligated to open a local bank account, without one, life in Spain is almost impossible. You are free to choose any bank, but we suggest you consider the BBVA branch in Bétera. You will need your NIE and the Assignment Certificate (Certificado de Destino) from the SOFA office to open your account and another form of photo identification. You will also need a valid mailing address. Since you have just arrived and probably have not had time to sign a contract for a house, you can use your military address (Carretera Porta Coeli S/N, Bétera, Valencia 46117). Once you are in your new home, you can go back to the bank and request an address change/update. You may establish allotments of net pay from the Defense Finance Accounting Service (DFAS) or use other money transfer services to transmit money to host-nation bank accounts. Consult with your service elements to start, stop or change allotment.

**Military Postal System:** Upon receiving your orders, you have the option to mail item (excluding HHG) to your new mailing address at the NSE Post Office. To obtain your permanent mailing address, submit the Mailbox Application in Enclosure (4). Note that the NSE



Post Office is not a full-service facility and has limited space, so refrain from sending large items that must be stored for extended periods. Additionally, be aware that the Post Office do not support retail mail services (selling stamps, postal products, or money orders) nor provide mail delivery service. We recommend creating a 'Click-N-Ship®' account at <https://www.usps.com/ship/online-shipping.htm> to send packages up to 70 pounds and 130 inches in length and girth combined. To purchase stamps in advance, visit the website: <https://store.usps.com/store/stamps>. The NSE provides various sizes of flat rate boxes and provides a scale for weighing items to ensure accurate postage when purchasing online. Mail room hours are 0930 – 1530 on Monday through Thursday and 0930 – 1430 every Friday, closed on various Local and/or U.S. federal holidays. Due to potential delays and misrouting, mail from the U.S. may take weeks to reach Valencia, with an average delivery time of two weeks. We suggest advising friends and families to use bubble wrap and seal item in plastic bags within the box for added protection during shipment.

**TRICARE Support:** Active duty members (ADSMs) and their families permanently assigned in remote locations in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East are covered by TRICARE Prime Remote Overseas (TPRO). Upon arrival in Spain, enroll or transfer coverage online, by phone, or by mail. The quickest way to do so is by contacting the Regional Call Center at +(1) 877-678-1207 or +(44) 20-8762-8384. TPRO is a global program tailored to serve the unique needs of TRICARE beneficiaries living overseas in remote locations and is a partnership between TRICARE ISOS, the largest remote site-health care service in the world. ISOS is a government sourced company that facilitates medical care for service members and families due to the distance from a traditional MTF. For more TPRO information, refer to <https://www.tricare.mil/primeremoteoverseas>.

For medical services, ISOS serves as the remote Primary Care Manager (PCM) who manages most routine and specialty care. Coordinate care with ISOS first by contacting +34 900-812-193 or +(44) 20-8762-8384 to request a referral and/or pre-authorization to set-up an appointment to see a TOP Preferred Provider. Failure to coordinate with ISOS first is a Point-of-Service, which may result in higher out-of-pocket costs and the possibility of denied reimbursement claims. ADSMs are generally required to pay for prescriptions from local pharmacy and submit a reimbursement claim afterwards. Some prescriptions can be filled by military providers via virtual care support or Express Script.

For dental services, United Concordia under Active Duty Dental Program serves as the remote PCM. Same as medical, ADSMs and families must be enrolled in TPRO. Contact the dental PCM at +(1) 844-653-4058 for ADSM and +(1) 844-653-4060 for ADFM to request an Appointment Control Number and schedule for routine services with a TOP Preferred Dentist locally.

The NSE TRICARE Points of Contact are your primary liaisons for any TRICARE issues. Medical readiness is handled by each service support elements and not the NSE. Consult with the service HQs to fund the medical travel concerns required at a MTF.

Manage expectations as you will experience different norms regarding patient privacy, space, and schedule protocol compared to what you may be used to in the US. Learn about your benefits, including health, dental, pharmacy, costs, and more by visiting the website at <https://www.tricare.mil/Publications>.



**Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR):** The NSE manages an austere MWR program. Services provided through the MWR program include check-out of: books, movies, and TV series DVDs, board/video and lawn games, bounce houses, camping, sports, and exercise equipment, including bicycles, kayaks, and paddleboards, coolers, and holiday decorations. The NSE also provides information on events sponsored by the NATO Morale and Welfare Activities Committee. Navy MWR provides LifeFitness equipment in the base gym for service member's use. Because of the small size of the NSE staff – 5 personnel – they have 1 individual employed as the MWR coordinator who coordinates MWR trips and also works with NAVSTA Rota MWR to “piggyback” on their trips and/or establish contractual relationships with Valencia tour companies. Visit the websites below for various **Things To Do** in and around Valencia e.g. Fallas Festival, City of Arts and Sciences, Oceanografic, Hemisferic, Bioparc, Sport Events, Museum, Monuments, Tour Activities, Running, Valencia Club de Fútbol, Tomato Festival, Running of the Bulls (*as spectators*), Bull Fighting, Flamenco, MeetUp, and many more.

<https://www.visitvalencia.com>  
<https://www.valenciasecreta.com/>  
<https://www.valenciabonita.es/>  
<https://wexcursion.com/en/>  
<https://www.valenciaciudadde RUNNING.com/>  
<https://www.valenciacf.com/tickets>  
<https://latomatina.info/>  
<https://tomatina.es/en/>  
<https://www.runningofthebulls.com/>  
<https://www.entradastorosvalencia.com/en/home/>  
<https://linternaeventos.com/comprar-entradas>  
<https://www.meetup.com/>

- The NSE building serves as a community center to make your tour in Valencia as convenient as possible. It contains the following rooms; a computer room with both general internet access and access to the Navy OneNet for access to official email and DoD and Service training websites; the mail room/post office; a small library with books and DVDs available for check-out; and a community room with sofas, TV, and video game consoles. The building also contains the NSE and ASE staff offices.

**Fleet and Family Support Programs:** NAVSTA Rota Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC) provides with reach-back consultation and support on family support issues and programs. Services provided by FFSCs fall into the categories of Deployment Readiness, Crisis Response, and Career Support/Retention.

- **Day Care:** Day care centers in Spain are only use by local residents registered at the Ayuntamiento (City Hall) and are normally Spanish-speaking.

**Legal Services:** Service Members may seek assistance remotely via the Region Legal Service Office in NAVSTA Rota. The Consular Agency of Valencia provides non-emergency passport, consular report of birth abroad, and notarial services. The Consular does not provide visa services and conducts operations by appointment only via email at [valenciacons@state.gov](mailto:valenciacons@state.gov), opens Monday through Friday, except for U.S. and Spanish holidays.

- **Powers of Attorney:** A power of attorney may be useful or necessary, especially if the service member will be absent from home for extended periods of time. A power of attorney may be tailored and limited to fit particular needs, enabling the grantee (usually the spouse or a trusted friend) to act on behalf of the service member. There is no military Legal Office in Valencia, the closest place with capabilities to assist with Power of Attorneys and Will is the U.S. Embassy Madrid, 3.5 hour away, or NAVSTA Rota, 8 hours away. We recommend obtaining a power of attorney prior to arriving in Spain.

**Communications:** There are several cell phone companies and plan options, including packages with landline and internet, to choose from if desired. You also have the option of prepaid cards or a contract. Prepaid cards usually require a passport and contracts will require a bank account, NIE and possibly your passport as well. If you plan on using a mobile phone that you purchased in the U. S., call your U.S. provider to get it unblocked or it may not work in Europe with a local provider. Various companies to apply for a home or mobile network service e.g. Movistar, Vodafone, Orange, Jazztel, Ono, and GoogleFi. Repair/Maintenance in and around Valencia such as Phone Diagnose and MediaMarkt are also available.

## **THE REST OF YOUR TOUR**

**Valencia:** The Valencia Community has a long history forged over the millennia. Many cultures left their mark in these lands from primitive cave paintings and rock shelters to Iberian, Roman, Visigoth and Moorish creations. Valencia was given its name when the Romans founded it in the year 138 BC. The roots of modern Valencia can be traced back to Jaime I of Aragon conquering the region from the Moors in 1238, establishing a set of laws to govern what was then called the “Kingdom of Valencia.” Since then, history brought Gothic, Baroque and Modernist styles which are still reflected in many buildings and works of art in the region.

The city is at the center of the Spanish Mediterranean coast and an ideal centralized location on the western side of the Mediterranean Sea. From a historical point of view, Valencia has always been and still is, a natural bridgehead between the mainland and the Mediterranean islands and other nations.

Valencia and its metropolitan area have a subtropical Mediterranean climate, with very mild winters and long warm-to-hot summers. With its mild climate, it is the ideal site for holidays year-round. The average annual temperature is 72.1°F during the day and 56.1°F at night. In the coldest month, January, the temperature ranges from 40 to 58°F during the day and 36 to 54°F at night. In the warmest month, August, temperatures are 81 to 93°F during the day and around 72°F at night.

Valencia's industry is very diverse and includes the manufacture of automobiles, textiles, agriculture, footwear, furniture, and ceramics. Also, Valencia is one of the main ports on the Spanish Mediterranean.

**Culture Shock:** Culture shock is the feeling of disorientation and anxiety in a new and radically different environment. This is a normal and predictable phenomenon that most people experience when relocating to a foreign country, especially if they don't speak the language. Some people deal with the cultural differences quickly and easily, but others need more time. Here are some positive strategies for helping to combat stress produced by culture shock:

- Include a regular form of physical activity in your routine. This may help combat the sadness and loneliness in a constructive manner. Exercise, swim, or just walk and enjoy the mild climate.
- Relaxation and meditation have proven to be positive activities for people who are experiencing periods of stress. Allow yourself to feel sad about the things that you have left behind, but maintain contact with your friends and family. This helps keep a feeling of belonging, and helps reduce feelings of loneliness.
- Begin to integrate into your new culture, including learning some Spanish. This will help to reduce stress about the communication barrier, as well as be very useful.
- Get out and enjoy the many cultural, historical, and natural sites in the Valencia area: El Carmen, the Cathedral, the beaches, the science, history, and art museums, the aquarium, the zoo, Albufera rice fields, Sagunto castle, etc.

If you're having problems dealing with culture shock and the stresses caused by this move, consider calling Military OneSource at +(1)800-342-9647, or calling the NAVSTA Rota Duty Chaplain at +34639-101-864. These numbers are manned 24/7, so there's always someone available to help you!

**Spanish Language:** A pocket dictionary or phrase book can be a valuable tool to acquire before your arrival. Also, a basic familiarity with words and phrases may help make your transition into the local community much easier. Attending a formal course will certainly be beneficial and will flatter Spanish people to know that a foreigner has made an attempt to learn their language. No matter how fractured your Spanish, you can expect the locals to be patient and appreciative of your attempts. You will be more successful in any situation - shopping, traveling, meeting neighbors - if you try to speak Spanish. Visit the websites or download recommended Spanish mobile applications below.

- El Carmen Spanish School; <https://www.elcarmenspanishschool.com/>
- Don Quijote Spanish Language Learning; <https://www.donquijote.org>
- Duolingo
- Babbel

### **Spanish Hours:**

- NATO Workday Hours: Typically summer (mid-June to mid-September): 0900 – 1330 and winter: 0900 – 1430, except Monday 0900 – 1745. NATO observes all Spanish national and local holidays. The NSE work hours are 0800 – 1600 on Monday - Friday and 0800 – 1500 on Friday and closed on various local or U.S. Federal holidays.
- Restaurants: The fast food restaurants like McDonald's and Burger King are usually open 1200 – 2300. Most sit-down restaurants are open 1400 – 1600 for lunch and open again around 2000 for dinner. Keep these hours in mind or you may be disappointed when you arrive at a restaurant at typical U.S. lunch or dinner times only to find it's not open yet. "American-style" restaurants such as Barbaros Smokehouse BBQ, Fosters of Hollywood, The Good Burger, and Domino's Pizza open earlier in the afternoon/evening. Also, many bars (which in Spain serve meals as well as alcohol) are open from early morning to late at night, although food options may be limited during typical American meal times.

- Grocery stores: Grocery stores typically open between 0900 and 1000, and close between 2100 and 2200. Most are closed on Sunday, although many Carrefour and SuperCor Express are open on Sunday, as are some bakeries that offer items such as milk, eggs, and water.

**Driving in Spain:** Before you arrive in Spain, make sure you have familiarized yourself with the rules of the road and the road signs.

- Look out for pedestrians and stop at crosswalks! Pedestrians always have the right-of-way, and may not look or wait for cars to pass before entering crosswalks--you must stop until they cross.
- Bicycles have the right-of-way on the road and by law do not have to move out of the way or to the side in order for you to pass them. Be patient, as this can be frustrating when you are in a hurry.
- Seatbelts for all passengers are required by law. Also, pets are required to be in a pet car seat or special pet seatbelt (fines can be hefty - €50 or more).
- There are several rules for car seats, depending on weight, for all children up to 12 years old and under 36 kg; check the web for specific details. Also, children under age 12 are not legally allowed to travel in front passenger seat, but must instead travel in the rear.
- The minimum driving age in Spain is 18 years.
- Roundabouts are everywhere; vehicles in the roundabout have the right-of-way unless otherwise indicated.
- Speed limits are enforced, often through radar/camera checkpoints from which you'll receive your ticket in the mail, usually months later. The Spanish authorities are also authorized to issue on-the-spot fines; ensure you get an official receipt if this happens. It is prudent to pay all speeding fines within 20 days, as they will generally only charge you for half of the ticketed fine amount listed. Radar detectors are illegal.
- Drinking and driving incurs heavy fines or prison sentences. The limit is 0.05% blood-alcohol or 5mg per 1ml of blood, which is less than in the U.S., so it's best not to drive after drinking!
- Use of hand-held cellular phones while driving is prohibited. (This is a €200 fine)
- If pulled over and ticketed, you can pay on the spot with a credit or debit card, and will only be assessed half of the full fine amount and will be given a receipt.
- On-street parking spaces with a white border are free. Yellow borders are used for no-parking zones. Colored borders, often blue, are used for on-street parking for which you must pay at the nearby caja (box) with the large "P" sign.
- Parking tickets have instructions for paying a reduced rate at the caja. (Take a picture with Goggle Translate for the directions)

You are required to maintain your vehicle registration, insurance documents, road-side reflective triangles and a reflective vest in your vehicle at all times while driving in Europe. These safety items must be used if you break down on the side of the road. You and all passengers are required to wear reflective vests while outside the vehicle and the reflective triangles must be placed on the roadside to warn other drivers.

Only active duty members, DoD civilian employees, and their family members in Spain are allowed to operate duty-free imported vehicles. This prohibition applies to all visitors, including family members of personnel stationed in Spain.

For vehicles registered through the HQ-NRDC-SP SOFA Office, an annual vehicle inspection is not required. However, if you own a vehicle that is registered through the Spanish government you will have to annually get your car inspected at an ITV station. An appointment is required, and the process can take an hour. This rigorous inspection is performed at ITV establishments scattered throughout Valencia and surrounding areas.

You may want to apply for an International Driver's License before you depart your current duty station. Some European countries impose very heavy fines if you do not have the proper license and there is no guarantee they will honor your Spanish translation.

## **LIVING IN VALENCIA:**

### **Airports:**

- Valencia Airport +34 963-709-500
- Alicante Airport +34 966-919-000
- Rota AMC Terminal +34 956-822-411

**Public Transportation:** Valencia has a very well developed, safe and relatively inexpensive public transportation system of Metrorail and bus. Local and inter-European trains are also very easy to access in Valencia, with numerous ticket options. Additionally, Valencia has an airport that hosts several airlines who offer extremely low rates for travel around Europe and North Africa. Visit [www.valenciavalencia.com/travel/public.htm](http://www.valenciavalencia.com/travel/public.htm).

The information provided below is strictly an informal guide comprised of input from service members and families--it does not imply any official endorsement by the U. S. authorities of any of the services identified.

### **Home Improvement Stores:** (compare to Home Depot)

- Leroy Merlin – Parque Comercial Ademuz, Av. de la Ilustración, 6, 46100 Burjassot  
<https://www.leroymerlin.es/>
- Brico Depot – Autovía del Este, salida 345, 46930 Quart de Poblet, Valencia  
<https://www.bricodpot.es/>
- Bauhaus – C/ Adelina Jabaloyas Blasco, 1-17 46980 Valencia-Paterna  
<https://www.bauhaus.es/centros-bauhaus-tiendas/tienda-valencia-paterna/fc/809>
- Alfafar shopping centre – on the N430, south of the Turia canal. Huge number of furniture shops of different types.
- IKEA – Calle Alqueria Nova, 12, 46910 Alfafar, Valencia 900 400 922  
<https://www.ikea.com/es/es/stores/valencia-alfafar/>
- Bon Drap – Carrer de la Vila de Bilbao, 2, 46988 València, Valencia; is a very small factory/shop on the edge of La Pobla da Valbona. They sell towels, sheets, curtains, duvets, and baby clothes at 1/2 price of El Cortes Ingles.  
<https://www.bondrap.com/>

## Supermarkets:

- Consum has many locations, and many offer free parking. Delivery is free for purchases over €60. <https://www.consum.es/>
- Mercadona is everywhere, and many offer free parking. The Mercadona website <https://www.mercadona.es/> has an English translation. They deliver for about €7. They also supply turkeys; order 5 days before required and go in early the day you want them in case the ordering system has not worked!
- Carrefour – carries some U.S. brands and offer the convenience of being inside a mall-type setting with many other stores under the same roof. Some in the city of Valencia are open on Sunday. Like a Super WalMart, Carrefour stores carry clothes, home goods, auto supplies, etc. in addition to groceries. A peanut butter they carry, Capitan Mani, tastes very American. They also offer delivery service. <https://www.carrefour.es/>
- Lidl – another grocery supermarket located throughout the city. <https://www.lidl.es/>
- El Corte Ingles – department stores that also have a food hall and some specialty foods e.g. horseradish (not the sauce). <https://www.elcorteingles.es/>

**Restaurants** in and around Valencia: Navarro, Hundreds, Honest Green, Barbaros Smokehouse BBQ, Begin, Jenkin's etc. At Albufera; Restaurant Bon Aire, Restaurante L'Establiment.

**Bakeries:** Bakeries do not operate until a set time, they simply open until their inventory is gone. It is a point of pride when they sell out quickly; therefore you should pre-order or arrive early. Some recommendations:

- Pan de la Barraca - Located in Puzol, offer fresh breads and pastries. They make a delicious triple chocolate birthday cake for about 20 Euros.
- Forn Loreto - Family owned and operated whose specialty is “fartons”, a similar version of the éclair. Located at 35 Avenida de Valencia (also known as Bank’s street).
- Notre Dame Pastelería – (Puzol or Valencia locations). Offers fancy, homemade French chocolates. In addition, they make big, fancy ice cream cakes (40€). Tel: +34 961-424-087 or email: [notredamepedidos@gmail.com](mailto:notredamepedidos@gmail.com)

**Local Clothing Stores** in and around Valencia: Mango, Zara, Stradivarius, Bershka, Desigual, Oysho, Pull & Bear, Massimo Dutti, Lefties, Scalpers, Spagnolo etc.

## Pets:

- Pet Passports: If traveling in Europe with your pet, you must get a pet passport. This can be done through your vet.
- Pet Regulations: Pets must always be kept on a leash or chain in public places. Dogs must wear a muzzle if they are known to have bitten someone before, or if they are dangerous or animal health circumstances so recommend. Nevertheless, they may be let loose in designated parks. Animals may not be transported in public transport services, except in the case of guide dogs for the visually impaired.
- Pet Stores:
  - Alfican – Offers dog grooming, flea collars, and food. Located in Puzol.

- Kiwoko – Animal supplies, food, and live animals/reptiles/fish. Tel: +34 962-741-169 1000 – 2200 (on side of the Leroy Merlin store in El Osito Park area of L’Eliaana – online says La Pobla de Vallbona as address)
- Veterinary clinics: There are many veterinary clinics throughout the area, some with 24-hour emergency services. To find a clinic in your postal code, visit the Colegio Oficial de Veterinarios de Valencia website at [www.icovv.com](http://www.icovv.com).
  - TuriaVet – Clara is an English speaking vet whose clinic has a surgeon and a dog groomer with reasonable prices. The groomer, Cassandra, also dog-sits. Located at Avinguda del País Valencià 7, 46117 Bétera, Tel: +34 961-046-801
  - VeterSalud – Juan - English speaking vet, Calle 110, No 21, La Cañada; +34 961-323-188, [ishybaq@terr.es](mailto:ishybaq@terr.es)
  - Clinica Veterinaria Merbru - Dr. Mercedes Bosch Bru and staff are very kind with reasonable prices. Mercedes speaks good English. Tel: +34 961-465-122 1000 – 1330 & 1600 – 1930. Carrer Pare Buenaventura, 22, 46530 Puzol (East central Puzol, behind the Chinese restaurant).
  - Zoolandia near San Antonio; Tel: +34 961-350-608; <https://zoolandiatiendaanimales.es/>
  - VetSalut at Patraix; Tel: +34 961-059-088; <https://www.vetsalutvalencia.com/>

### **Vehicle Repair/Maintenance:**

- Talleres Gracia at Jesus; Tel: +34 963-574-099; [eurotaller.com](http://eurotaller.com)
- Auto Repair at Jesus; Tel: +34 963-421-239
- Brillaxpert at Betera; auto detailing
- DetailCar at Heron City; auto detailing

**Cinemas:** A few cinemas in Valencia show films in English: (Original version w/Spanish subtitles).

- Cines Babel | Cines Albatros – Valencia, [www.cinesalbatrosbabel.com](http://www.cinesalbatrosbabel.com)
- Cines Kinopolis (Heron City) – Paterna, <http://heroncity.com/valencia/heron-city-paterna/cines-kinopolis/>
- Yelmo Cines – Valencia, [www.yelmocines.es](http://www.yelmocines.es)

### **Beauty and Barber Salons:**

- Centro de Estetica Feminino at Rocafort. Lucy is Australian and offers waxing, facial treatments, electrolysis, massage and much more. Tel: +34 690-630-170
- Victor Glamutey; at Valencia Center; reservations via booksy
- Carlos Conde Peluqueria; at Valencia Center; reservations via booksy
- Barbershop Manolo; at Valencia Center; reservations via booksy
- Malik Peluqueria; at Carrer Forces Armadas 3, L’Eliaana

**Computer Printer Cartridges:** You can have your empty cartridges refilled at much less cost than buying a new one (not available for Epson Inkjet cartridges). Contact Alba (speaks perfect English); Tel: +34 961-060-970 or Cell: +34658-721-769. (“La Javura” Sinagogue - Calle Baro de Patraix, 13, Door #3 46018)

### INCOMING PCS CHECKLIST

1	Apply for no-fee passports for entire family (including service member).	
2	Complete Overseas Medical and Dental Screening. Contact the NSE if you have questions about available support facilities in Valencia.	
3	Bring a 90-day supply of necessary medications. If required, ensure you have two pairs of glasses and inserts. Upon arrival, call TRICARE to enroll into Prime Remote Overseas and to transfer eligibility to Eurasia-Africa Area.	
4	Separate and hand carry all In-processing documents: Leave form, Orders and amendments, DD93, SGLI, ID card, ID tags, Finance documents, Training records, CIF records, Security clearance documents, OER/NCOER/AER, birth certificates, passports, POA, school documents, and vehicle shipping/insurance documents.	
5	Ensure family is enrolled in DEERS. CAC and driver's licenses are current and will not expire within the tour.	
6	Arrange temporary lodging and rental vehicle. Recommended for 60 days.	
7	If shipping a vehicle, complete and have a dealer sign/stamp the vehicle data form.	
8	If applicable, research and contact schools for information.	
9	Strongly recommended to request advance pay.	
10	Convert dollars to Euros to cover anticipated initial expenses.	
11	Complete and submit the Housing Questionnaire in Enclosure (3).	
12	Complete and submit the Mailbox application in Enclosure (4). Upon mailbox assignment, log-in at USPS or notify your local Post Office and businesses with the change of address. Purchase several books of stamps and establish a Click-n-Ship USPS account (or something similar) to make shipping packages easier.	
13	Complete and submit the NATO DTS Personnel Request in Enclosure (5). Ensure previous command releases you in DTS.	
14	If you plan to use a credit card, research for a card that does not charge foreign transaction fees.	
15	Purchase European adapters.	
16	Ensure your uniform inventory is adequate or more, to include rank, badges, medals, ribbons, winter gear etc.	
17	Check to see if your DA Photo is up to date. The nearest DA Photo labs are in Germany and Italy.	
18	If bringing pets, plan ahead to ensure proper times are met for shots and documents. Also, contact SATO about transportation.	
19	Bring unlocked cellphones.	

***All forms MUST be submitted to your sponsor or to the NSE, if applicable.***





# U. S. National Support Element Valencia, Spain

## Housing Office Newcomer Information Data Sheet

Name:				Date:			
Price Range:	LOW:	\$	HIGH:	\$			
# Family Members:		Ages:					
<b>TYPE OF HOUSE LOOKING FOR:</b>							
<input type="radio"/>	DETACHED HOUSE/CHALET	# BEDROOMS		STORAGE			
<input type="radio"/>	APT/PISO	# BATHROOMS		DEN/OFFICE			
<input type="radio"/>	TOWNHOUSE/ADOSADO	BASEMENT		LAUNDRY ROOM			
<b>AMENITIES/OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:</b>							
<input type="radio"/>	GARDEN	<input type="radio"/>	DECALCIFIER	OTHER:			
<input type="radio"/>	GARAGE	<input type="radio"/>	SAUNA				
<input type="radio"/>	POOL	<input type="radio"/>	PETS ALLOWED				
<input type="radio"/>	WALK-IN CLOSET	<input type="radio"/>	JACUZZI				
<b>AREA DESIRED:</b>							
<input type="radio"/>	VALENCIA (CENTER)	<input type="radio"/>	TORRE EN CONILL	OTHER:			
<input type="radio"/>	RIBA-ROJA	<input type="radio"/>	ROCAFORT				
<input type="radio"/>	L'ELIANA	<input type="radio"/>	PUZOL				
<input type="radio"/>	BETERA	<input type="radio"/>	LA CAÑADA				
<input type="radio"/>	PATERNA	<input type="radio"/>	SANTA BARBARA				
<b>REMARKS:</b>							

## **TEMPORARY LODGING OPTIONS**

Service members are free to choose any hotel as their temporary lodging option. Ensure to confirm your max OCONUS TLA daily allowance with your Finance Office or visit <https://www.travel.dod.mil/Travel-Transportation-Rates/Per-Diem/Per-Diem-Rate-Lookup/>.

TLA entitlement is up to 60 days during house hunting and requests for over 60 days will be approved on a case-by-case basis, provided there is a valid justification.

The use of AirBnB options are discouraged. DFAS will only reimburse AirBnB options if an itemized receipt (similar to a hotel) can be provided. AirBnB service and cleaning fees are not authorized for reimbursement.

We highly recommend making hotel reservations as soon as possible, especially in a touristic city like Valencia where hotels are in high demand, particularly during the summer months. There are many options in and around Valencia; however, ensure you look for factors such as size, space, parking availability, nearby public transportation, distance to work, as well as traffic situation, and pet friendly accommodations if applicable.

Below are a few recommended temporary lodging options used by service members in the past. Visit the websites and choose the best place suitable for you or your family's needs.

### **VALENCIA DOWNTOWN**

#### **The Westin Valencia by Marriott**

The Westin Valencia is ideally located, in the city centre, close to the historic center, the commercial area and the City of Arts and Science of Valencia. Pets friendly. On-site parking is available for a fee and Arago Metro station nearby.

All the hotels under Marriott brand, like Westin Valencia Hotel, have a special Military fare under your Per Diem. You can directly make your reservations through the website, choosing from the "Government & Military" option from the drop-down "Special Rate" menu. You must show your valid Military ID at check-in, otherwise rate will be increased to best available one.

<https://www.marriott.com/en-us/hotels/vlcwi-the-westin-valencia/overview/>

#### **Hotel Melia Plaza**

Located in the Plaza del Ayuntamiento central square in Valencia. The Meliá Plaza provides 101 rooms, all of them with wooden parquet floors and new beds in the centre of Valencia. They come with air-conditioning, excellent soundproofing, satellite TV, TDT and Canal +, telephone, WiFi internet, minibar, safe and fully equipped bathroom. Kitchen and laundry facilities are not available. No Pets allowed. Parking is available for a fee and Xativa Metro station nearby.

<https://www.melia.com/en/hotels/spain/valencia/melia-plaza>

### **Hotel Valencia Oceanic by Melia**

Hotel Melia Valencia offers spacious, bright, and comfortable rooms. It is located near the Congress Centre with excellent access to and from anywhere in the city via car or using the nearby bus station. No Pets allowed. Parking is available for an additional charge. Kitchen and laundry facilities are not available.

<https://www.melia.com/en/hotels/spain/valencia/melia-valencia>

### **AC Hotel Valencia by Marriott**

AC Hotel Valencia is in the northern part of the city near the Oceanografic and the Museum of Arts and Sciences. You can choose from six types of rooms according to your needs and preferences. This hotel offers the AC Lounge space, where it is possible to enjoy private areas to read, work and/or taste all kinds of dishes and drinks typical in Valencia. No Pets allowed. Parking is available for a fee. Bus line nearby.

All the hotels under Marriott brand, like AC Valencia Hotel, have a special Military fare under your Per Diem. You can directly make your reservations through the website, choosing from the “Government & Military” option from the drop-down “Special Rate” menu.

<https://www.marriott.com/en-us/hotels/vlcak-palacio-santa-clara-autograph-collection/overview/>

### **Palacio Santa Clara Hotel – Autograph Collection Hotels by Marriott**

Palacio Santa Clara is a Modernist hotel located in the city center. You can ask for a personalized fare with your booking, which can include breakfast. They offer double rooms with a neat and smart style and many features like A/C, cable television, fiber internet, king size beds, and many other amenities. Parking is available at a next-door parking building for a fee. Colon Metro station nearby. Small dogs might be accepted.

<https://www.marriott.com/en-us/hotels/vlcak-palacio-santa-clara-autograph-collection/overview/>

Palacio Santa Clara belongs to Marriott and has a special Military fare under your Per Diem. Hence, meeting the requirements, you can make your reservations through the website, choosing from the “Government & Military” option from the drop-down “Special Rate” menu.

### **Plaza Picasso Apartamentos**

Located in a great area near the Turia gardens, coffee shops, restaurants, Nuevo Centro Mall, and Yelmo Cinemas (English movies available). Plaza Picasso Apartamentos offers 60 rooms with one or two bedrooms and accommodates from two to four guests. Prices include the following services: front desk 24/7, water and electricity (within a rational consumption), cleaning every 3

or 7 days, depending on the contract, clean linens and Wi-Fi. No pets allowed but they could make an exception for small, non-barking dogs or cats.

<https://www.plazapicasso.com/en/>

### **Sercotel Sorolla Valencia**

Sercotel Sorolla Valencia is a recently built hotel in the North part of the city, really close to the CV-35 highway exit. They have rooms with double rooms and familiar rooms, with extra beds for children. They offer different fares, including buffet breakfast and discounts for longer stays. Parking is available for a fee; and pets 7 kilos and under are welcomed. On-site parking available for a fee and Empalme Metro station nearby.

<https://www.sercotelhoteles.com/es/hotel-sorolla-palace>

### **OUTSIDE VALENCIA**

#### **Residencial El Oasis**

Residencial El Oasis village has seven bungalows. Each bungalow has one master bedroom, two double rooms, one single room, a full kitchen, living room with fireplace, two full bathrooms (one with a bathtub and another one with a shower), Wi-Fi, AC, heaters, front and back terrace, and a grill. The installations are family friendly and offers a big garden, two pools, tennis courts, gym, trampoline and bikes. Pet-friendly and only 15 min away from work and 20 min from downtown Valencia. It is located in the town of La Eliana and it is one of the most desired options for Service Members and their families.

<https://www.el-oasis.com/>

#### **The Aparthotel Wellness**

Aparthotel Wellness is located between the technologic park of Paterna and the residential area of Mas Camarena. With 60 apartments of different characteristics, their facilities offer you a wide range of quality services. You will find complete-equipped apartments with living room with kitchen, air conditioning, LCD TV, safe, bathroom and Wi-Fi, among other services. It is a 10-minute car drive from downtown Valencia and just 20 minutes away from work (Betera). They accept pets for a fee and discount prices on 30 or more consecutive nights.

<https://www.aparthotelwellness.com/>

### **Aparthotel Albufera**

Located right next to the Albufera Natural Park and well connected to the city of Valencia. It offers 97 spacious and bright apartments with the services of a 4-star hotel. These fully equipped, exterior apartments have a modern and functional design and capacity for 2 to 5 people. They also offer services such as premium Wi-Fi, underground parking with video surveillance and access to a fantastic sports area. No pets allowed.

<https://www.apartotelalbufera.es/en/>

### **Hotel Ad Hoc Parque Golf**

Located by the Betera golf course and is only a 10-minute drive to base. Pet friendly for a fee. Special rates on long stays. It is a nice option if you want a quiet and relaxing stage in a location between the base and the city.

<https://www.adhochoteles.com/en/hotel-ad-hoc-parque-golf/>

### **Hotel Mas Camarena**

Located by the industrial park and the Mas Camarena residential area, close to the Valencia Futbol Club. It is just 20 minutes away from base. Pets allowed for a fee.

<https://www.hotelmascamarena.com/EN/home.html>

## **Sponsor Information**

EDIPI:

Last Name:                      First Name:                      MI:

Sponsor Type: AD, Retired etc.

Service: USN, USA etc.

Rank:

Personal Email:

Phone:

Expected Date of Arrival:

Expected Date of Departure:

## **List of Family Members (using the mailbox)**

First Name    Last Name    MI

Once mailbox address is issued, change your address at a local Post Office or online at:

<https://moversguide.usps.com/mgo/disclaimer>

<https://www.usps.com/manage/forward.htm>

## DTS Gain/Create Personnel Request Form

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Middle Initial: \_\_\_\_\_

Full SSN: \_\_\_\_\_ Civilian \_\_\_\_ Military \_\_\_\_ Active \_\_\_\_ Reserve \_\_\_\_

Rank: \_\_\_\_\_ Military Branch of Service: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Name & UIC: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: PSC \_\_\_\_\_ BOX \_\_\_\_\_ FPO, AE \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Routing List: \_\_\_\_\_

Resident Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Cellphone or Home Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

CDO Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ CDO Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Duty Station Mailing Address: PSC \_\_\_\_\_ BOX \_\_\_\_\_ FPO, AE \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Work

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ UIC: \_\_\_\_\_

GOVCC Number (last 10 digits): \_\_\_\_\_ GOVCC Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Checking Routing No. \_\_\_\_\_

Checking Account No. \_\_\_\_\_ OR Savings Account No. \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE ENCRYPT AND EMAIL THE ABOVE INFORMATION TO:**

[NAVEURAF-6FLT\\_N02-F\\_Travel@us.navy.mil](mailto:NAVEURAF-6FLT_N02-F_Travel@us.navy.mil)

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Enclosure (5)