

# NRDC – ITALY Welcome Guide



As of January 14, 2021

## **Introduction**

Congratulations on your assignment to NATO Rapid Deployable Corps – Italy (NRDC-ITA). This unique assignment will be professionally and personally rewarding for you and your family. While at NRDC-ITA you will work at a multinational NATO Corps level headquarters. Living and working at NRDC-ITA will be quite different from your previous assignments due to our location in Solbiate Olona, Italy. Working for NATO and living in Italy requires flexibility, especially as you in process and establish your family upon arrival. To make your transition as smooth as possible, please review this document in detail and contact your sponsor with questions.

### **Disclaimers:**

1. The inclusion of civilian companies, schools, websites, etc. in this document does not constitute endorsement by the Department of Defense or any affiliated or subordinate agency or unit.
2. The information in this document is subject to change; contact your sponsor or the NSE to confirm conflicting information or to eliminate confusion.

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# Background

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## **NATO**

During this assignment you will serve as a U.S. Soldier, Airmen, or Sailor working in a NATO headquarters. You will learn more about NATO's structure, forces, and locations in the US and Europe upon arrival. Review the following sites for additional information about NATO:

<https://www.nato.int/>

<https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/north-atlantic-treaty-organization-nato>

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## **NRDC-ITA**

NRDC-ITA is one of several NATO Force Structure (NFS) units and has approximately 450 NATO personnel assigned, the majority from the Italian Army, Navy and Air Force. Contingents of various sizes from 18 NATO national contingents work on Ugo Mara Barracks (UMB).

<http://www.nrdc-ita.nato.int/23/WHAT-IS-NRDC-ITA->

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## **U.S. Contingent**

The US contingent consists of 20 personnel who work in different sections of the NATO headquarters. A mix of 18 officers and NCOs, with two Air Force and one Navy position serve in Peacetime Establishment (PE) positions in the NRDC. The remaining two personnel consist of the contingent National Support Element (NSE). The NSE consists of one SFC and one local national employee who provide support before your arrival and during your tour. The senior American officer is the Senior National Representative (SNR) and the senior NCO is the Senior Enlisted Advisor (SEA).

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## **U.S. Chain of Command**

While working for NATO at NRDC-ITA, all Soldiers are assigned to a U.S Army headquarters. The Army portion of the contingent is assigned to B Co, AFSOUTH Battalion, U.S. Army NATO BDE. The Air Force and Navy personnel have a different chain of command. All assigned personnel can expect to remain current on traditional service related training requirements, such as weapons qualification, fitness tests, mandatory training, etc.

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## **U.S. DoD Support Sites**

The nearest US DoD installation is US Army Garrison (USAG) Italy's Caserma Ederle in Vicenza. This small US Army installation provides the majority of traditional support associated with a CONUS military garrison, e.g. commissary, exchange, movie theater, Army lodging, medical clinic, drivers licensing, ID card support, etc. The drive to Caserma Ederle is approximately 2.5 hours, one way, via autostrada. Aviano Airbase provides some USAF specific support and is roughly 3.5 hours, one way, by car.

# Pre-Arrival

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## Arrival Date Selection

Based on local schedules and procedures we strongly recommend arriving in June or early July. Doing so will likely provide the appropriate amount of time to find a local Italian or international school and find a house or an apartment to rent. We recommend this arrival period for two reasons. First, the NRDC will be closed for a minimal manning period from late July to the first week of September. Second, many Italian businesses will completely close during long stretches of August for Ferragosto, a vacation period for many Italians. During Ferragosto, primarily essential businesses such as grocery stores and pharmacies will remain open. Only a few real estate agents will likely be working in August, and even if you find a working realtor many landlords will be on vacation. Additionally, schools may be at maximum capacity if you seek enrollment late in the summer. In short, arrive early to limit frustration. If you do arrive in late July or August be prepared to stay in a temporary furnished apartment well into September or possibly later.

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## Document Preparation

Shortly after receiving your orders request a no-fee official passports for dependents. Your orders should also state that your dependent passports require Italian mission visas. These visas, generally valid for one year, authorize your family members to reside in Italy until you obtain your local residency documents (discussed later).

Depending on the text written in PCS orders the SM may be required to arrive with official passports. If your orders do not allow for a sponsor no-fee passport we recommend attempting to amend your orders accordingly. If this becomes a point of contention with your losing passport office contact your sponsor or NSE for assistance. SM official passports can also be requested upon arrival. We recommend the SM and all family members arrive with valid tourist passports for personnel travel that will not expire within the first year of your time here.

Since the tour of duty for most US members is three years, we also recommend arriving with US identification documents that will not expire during your tour, e.g. state issued driver's license. Those of driving age will require valid US driver's licenses to receive the US Forces driver's license.

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## Codice Fiscale

Codice Fiscale (CF) are the Italian equivalent of a social security number and they are mandatory for the sponsor and each dependent. CF's are required for many transactions, such as Italian bank account, phone contract, medical assistance at Italian hospitals, kid's sports clubs, rental contract, etc. The NSE will send a pre-filled application, which you will sign in blue ink, scan, and return via email. The NSE requires your orders, front and back copy of military ID's passports, and all family member visa's before they can submit the CF application. Once

approved by the Italian authorities you will receive a CF number and you may receive a wallet sized CF card. Arrival with CF's already established is essential for many in processing and setup tasks.

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## **Previewing Housing Options**

There is no DoD housing in our area, therefore all contingent members live in Italian houses or apartments. The SM and family, with significant assistance from the NSE, are required to find, contract, and move into a safe house or apartment. TLA, government payment for a temporary hotel or apartment while you search, is normally provided for up to 60 days after arrival. We recommend researching the OHA rate for Solbiate Olona and using the two following websites to get a sense of what kind of house or apartment will best suit your family: <https://www.immobiliare.it> and <https://www.casa.it/>. If you cannot translate these Italian sites with a browser, then the NSE will assist before and after your arrival. Feel free to contact your sponsor to confirm the exact location of the HQ and where current members of the contingent currently live in relation to the HQ. Please note that school selection is generally the first significant family priority and school choice often significantly influences in which town or city contingent members live. See below for additional information about houses.

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## **Military Postal System (MPS) Mailbox and Address**

Your sponsor will coordinate with the NSE for your MPS address before your arrival. See the mail portion below for additional information about how to receive and send mail.

### **Postal Services**

The contingent NSE does not offer a full-service USPS post office, however, there is a full- service post office on Caserma Ederle which will allow the purchase of money orders, official as well as certified mail options. The NSE is trained on US postal procedures and regulations to allow service members and families to mail both letters and packages directly from the NSE into the USPS via MPS. Contingent members are responsible for wrapping and purchasing and affixing postage for all letters and packages and filling out required customs forms for all packages before transferring to the NSE. The mail room includes individual boxes for 24-hour access to letter mail, USPS shipping boxes, labels, customs forms, etc. Parcels are limited to a maximum weight of 70 lbs. SM can pay and print postage via the USPS Click and Ship site at <https://www.usps.com/ship/online-shipping.htm>

Based on a customs agreement, our MPS mail is picked up by the NSE directly from the nearby Malpensa airport on Tuesdays and Thursdays in TMP vehicles.

Our MPS address template:

SM Name NRDC-ITA

Box #

APO AE 09602-9997

The Italian postal system is also available using your home address at the local post offices. Packages may incur fees/taxes when picking up from the Italian Post Office.

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## **Pet Shipment**

Shipping pets into Italy is a privilege, not an entitlement and doing so requires medical and customs documentation as discussed in detail at the following USAG Italy website:

<https://home.army.mil/italy/index.php/my-garrison-Italy/pcsguidevic/pre-arrival-vicenza/traveling-pets>

# Initial Arrival and Integration

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## Coordination with Sponsor

Communicate frequently with your sponsor to share your pre-arrival milestones and your travel schedule. Schedule air travel to Malpensa airport (MXP) with your travel office. Once your travel plans are set your sponsor will schedule or help you schedule your initial temporary lodging and required appointments at Caserma Ederle for U.S. Army in processing.

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## Reception

A member of the contingent, a sponsor or a delegate, will pick up you and your family at the Malpensa airport and transport you to temporary lodging. Le Robinie Golf Club and Resort is the preferred initial temporary lodging since it is close to the NRDC and Malpensa airport. Le Robinie has both hotel rooms and furnished apartments that are walking distance from the NRDC and a large supermarket.

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## NSE In processing

Based on your arrival day plan to visit the NRDC for a few hours of in processing with the NSE. The NSE will provide the following documents that will facilitate in processing at Caserma Ederle: Memorandum for driver license video training and for TMP license.

Reassignments - When a SM out-processes from B Co their main POC is the B Company NSE in Milan, Italy. The Company coordinates issuance of PCS orders from the BN MPD/S1 in Naples, Italy.

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.

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## Caserma Ederle Initial In Processing

Shortly after your arrival in Italy expect to travel from Solbiate Olona to Caserma Ederle for a 2-3 day long in processing trips. This trip seeks to complete, as much as possible, US Army in processing and set the conditions for you and your family to focus on settling on a house and selecting a school. While in processing inform agencies that you will work at NRDC-ITA, i.e. not at Caserma Ederle. This is especially important when starting your in processing in the one-stop building or Central Processing Facility (CPF), located just outside the main entrance to Army lodging.

Review the USAREUR holiday calendar before planning trips to any US DoD installations:  
<https://media.defense.gov/2018/Dec/20/2002074735/-1/-1/0/AEP350-1.PDF>

Tasks to complete while at Caserma Ederle:

1. Driver's testing for NATO driver's license (requires valid US driver's license)
2. TMP driver's license (only for SM, if you pass the regular driver's test) (generally not same day pickup)

3. Register ID cards in IACS base access system.
4. HHG: Inform transportation office of arrival and provide local contact information.
5. Ration card in central CPF office: A paper card used to track and authorize the purchase of limited items, e.g. hard liquor, tobacco, etc. at AAFES locations in Europe.
6. In process finance (Special appointment in building 28, not CPF finance). Bring all travel documents to fill out your travel voucher.
7. In process medical and dental clinic: Drop off medical records and review MEDPROS status. If any medical statuses expire soon, e.g. hearing, immunizations, HIV, etc. attempt to resolve them during this trip. Also ensure that the SM and family are enrolled in Tricare Prime Remote Overseas.
8. CIF: Review record and schedule required issue (off-post location near Caserma Ederle)

Optional tasks to complete at Caserma Ederle:

1. Open a BNL bank account: Not mandatory at Ederle, requires CF, orders and ID card (see next paragraph for additional details about banking)
2. Start local mobile service: Starting a pay by month service for less than 50 Euros per phone number, per month, is easy to complete at the mobile store in the AAFES mall. There are other options available on and off-post.
3. Visit off-post site of VPC, vehicle inspection / registration, and housing appliance warehouse to review policies and schedules (short drive from Ederle).
4. Fuel card at AAFES customer service. The fuel card can also be obtained at the NRDC Support Brigade. If you obtain your fuel card at the exchange any subsequent changes to the card will require driving to Caserma Ederle.

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## **Driver's Licensing**

Upon arrival, obtaining your Allied Forces in Italy (AFI) driver's license at Caserma Ederle is a high priority for the service member and the spouse. You must have your SETAF driver's license to pick up and register your vehicles, as well as utilize the NSE van. Driver's testing and licensing occurs in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Ederle CPF building (near Army lodging). The multiple-choice test has two sections: traffic signs and traffic laws. Studying for the test is highly recommended, even if you've been stationed in Europe previously. Review the study guide and road signs in the following link:

[https://home.army.mil/italy/application/files/8015/3252/7515/drivers\\_guide.pdf](https://home.army.mil/italy/application/files/8015/3252/7515/drivers_guide.pdf)

Note: AFI SETAF license is only valid in Italy and some European countries therefore getting an International Driver's license or International Driver's Permit is highly encouraged and can be done so prior to arrival. This can be accomplished at your local AAA office and costs \$20 per license. For more information on the International driver's license visit the site below:

<https://www.aaa.com/vacation/idpf.html>

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## **NRDC In-Processing**

Based on your arrival date, Army in processing, and housing hunting with the NSE and the NRDC in processing may occur at different times. The NSE and sponsor will assist in gathering the required documents to inprocess the NRDC to receive your HQ access badge (SM only) and

NATO identification card (SM and spouse).

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### **After Initial In-Processing**

Due to several variables, each contingent member's inprocessing and integration schedule may be slightly different (including USAF and USN service members). Generally, expect to spend 3-5 days, shortly after your arrival, in processing the NSE and Caserma Ederle. Shorter subsequent trips to Caserma Ederle may be required for residual tasks such as TMP license pickup, vehicle registration, vehicle pickup, etc. Once your initial in processing period is complete the next focus will be selecting a school, if applicable, and a house while living in temporary lodging. These two events can occur concurrently and may be interdependent since school locations generally influence where contingent members live in relation to the NRDC. The NRDC HQ leaders and contingent understand and expect that this process can take between 4-6 weeks. Keep your sponsor and the NSE informed and ask questions.

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### **Permesso di Soggiorno**

A Permesso Di Soggiorno is an Italian residency permit that authorizes family members to legally reside in Italy (not required for SMs). Upon arrival in Italy the Italian mission visa in your family's official passports provides legal cover for residing in Italy. That said, the permesso application process should start immediately after your lease is finalized. Application locations depend of the town in which you live and the procedures often vary by location. The housing manager will assist in making appointments and attend meetings with local immigration agencies. The paper permesso generally arrives a few weeks after your second appointment at the local immigration office and is generally valid for one year. Family members should carry official passports and permessos at all times since they confirm legal residence in Italy. Both Italian and European authorities can ask for your permessos at any time. Required documents include: Copy of applicant passport data page, copy of visa, four passports sized picture per, NRDC statement of service, copy of military orders and copy of house/apartment lease.

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### **Spouse Employment**

The dependents of service members are authorized to stay in Italy based on the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA). Dependents are limited in their off-base employment options if they seek to retain all of protections offering under the SOFA. See the link below for additional information from the Caserma Ederle legal assistance office:

<https://home.army.mil/italy/index.php/my-garrison-Italy/pcsguidevic/living-vicenza/spouse-employment>

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### **Clearances**

The NATO Secret, SF86 renewals, and other clearances are process by the ASSOUTH Bn S2 through the B Co NSE.

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## Casualty Reporting

In case of casualty or serious injury contact the Company Commander of 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.

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### **SHARP /MEO / EEO CCIR**

For policies and procedures concerning SHARP/ MEO/ EEO please see the Company, Battalion, and Brigade policy letters. Below is the contact information for the Brigade and Battalion SHARP Representative and MEO / EEO ne

**BDE SARC:** DSN: 314-549-6666

COMM: +49 0611-143-549-6666

24 HR SHARP HOTLINE: 53-SHARP OR 0611-143-537-4277

**BN SARC:** NCN: 272-1341

COMM: +39 081-721-4105

ON CALL Duty Phone: +39-331-685-0920

**BDE MEO:** DSN: 314-542-3054

COMM: +49 172.969.0826

**BN EO Rep:** NCN: 433-5506

COMM: +39 081 721 5506

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## Assignment Hiring

Talent management for NATO billets is managed in AIM2/EMC by EUCOM J1 with SAO input. National assignments managed by USANATO Brigade. Civilian hire actions worked by Co / BN / BDE HQs.

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## 350-1 Training

The Milan NSE will conduct a DTMS pull bi-monthly to update the tracker on who is overdue for 350-1 Training. Training will be held via in person face-to-face or on a computer in the NIPR café. It is the Soldiers responsibility to ensure they are not overdue for training that can be conducted online. The leadership will coordinate for all other training to ensure the Soldiers are in compliance. Soldiers must complete AT Level 1, SERE Level A, and IA/Cyber Security before arriving to AGS. Most computers will be on the NATO Secret and you will not be able to access Army online training on these computers.

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## IT Support

IT support is found at the BN HQ in Naples Italy. The company will process NIPR account requests

and issue NIPR computers and hotspot devices. VPN access can also be requested from the B Company HQs NSE if needed. Most of your emails will be on NATO Secret servers; the VPN can be used to access your .mil emails.

### **Hand Receipts**

The property books are controlled by the Company Commander at B Co HQ Naples, Italy.

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### **UCMJ**

UCMJ Company Grade is held by the Company Commander. UCMJ Field Grade is held by the AFSOUTH Battalion Commander.

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### **Challenges**

You will be working on an Italian base which is 2.5-3 hours from the nearest Army Base (Vicenza). This means you'll be living off post, if you have children they will be going to schools off post, and most medical appointments will be run through the International SOS. This is a unique unit that will call for a steep learning curve when it comes to all the facets of moving to a foreign country.

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# Housing

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## Introduction

Selecting a house or apartment for your family will be rewarding, but at times a frustrating, unique opportunity to select a place that will significantly define your experience in Italy. Based on your family and available options, there are opportunities to live in a detached house with a yard or an apartment in an Italian town. If you want a villa in the countryside, you will have a secluded, quiet lifestyle, but you'll have to drive to many conveniences. If you choose a place in town, you'll be walking distance to many conveniences, but without as much outdoor space or as large a home. Feel free to talk to your sponsor and other contingent members about their experiences. Of note, the process of selecting and moving into your Italian home is different, cumbersome, slow, and often frustrating. Be prepared for the entire process, from initial visits to finalizing a lease, to take approximately 4-6 weeks.

SM's and their families are authorized up to 60 days of Temporary Lodging Allowance (TLA) as you search for and finalize your house or apartment. Le Robinie is usually the initial TLA selection, due to its proximity to the NRDC, however, alternative options such as hotels or Air BnB's that can immerse you in your target communities as you narrow your housing search.

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## Expectations

There are quality housing options available and our Overseas Housing Allowance (OHA) generally allows contingent members to live in the upper end of local market. That said, expect differences from American housing (noting the following notes are generalizations). First, the electricity is 220 volts (See below), Second, Italian houses and apartments are smaller than American equivalents. Garages are often smaller and street parking may be a necessity. Closets can be smaller and some houses may have very little closet space. A yard for animals or children may not be possible and public play areas may not be near your home. Some landlords may not allow animals, especially large dogs (bringing a large animal may limit your options). Air conditioners and screened windows are not common. Often, appliances are smaller, and the Ederle FMO can offer large appliances, e.g. fridges, washers, etc., to compensate.

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## Impact of School Selection on Housing Search

Contingent members with school aged children generally select a school before finalizing their housing. Children's ages, their projected activities, desired family distance from school, and other variables may impact how far from the school and the NRDC you chose to live. Ensure to ask the bus routes for prospective schools since where your children can catch the bus, and how long they will spend on the bus daily may impact your decision. Currently contingent members live in the following three areas: Arese, Varese, and Como. These locations generally result in a 20-40-minute commute, one way, to the NRDC.

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## NSE Support

Housing support is the primary mission of our NSE local national employee. In accordance with AR 210-50 and local policies, the Housing Manager (HM) assists incoming and current contingent members with housing. The assistance includes contacting realtors to setup appointments.

While the HM maintains a list of reliable local realtors, SM are not restricted to said list. The SM is responsible for actively searching for a house or apartment, establishing utility contracts, arranging for delivery of HHGs, government furniture/appliances, and preparing forms for financial allowances.

The housing manager will provide the mandatory template for the bilingual lease during your in processing. Do not sign any proposals, commitments, or leases until they are reviewed and approved by the HM. Please note that the leases may also require review by both the Ederle housing and finance offices, via the HM, before you are authorized to sign a lease.

Additionally, see below for additional clarity reference the support available by the HM to the SM, noting that the HM also provides mail support and other support to the contingent as directed by the NSE NCOIC:

| <b>Housing Manager Task</b>   | <b>Mandatory Support<br/>(Not optional)</b> | <b>Optional Support<br/>(Upon SM request)</b> |
|---|---|---|
| Contact realtors to setup appointments  |   | X   |
| Assist with searching for housing options upon arrival  |   | X   |
| Negotiate items to be included in housing leases  |   | X   |
| Advise on housing options based on income, family size, localities, location of schools, pets, transportation, etc.   |   | X   |
| Assists with utility setup, adjustments, and cancellations  |   | X   |
| Provide written and verbal translation services for housing and non-housing related items such as communicating with utility companies, repair services for housing, and car repairs. |   | X   |
| Upon arrival conducts housing in brief (includes furnishings and transportation support)  | X   |   |
| Review all draft and final lease documents BEFORE service member or spouse signature  | X   |   |
| Maintain non discriminating list of realtors or property managers and provides list   | X   |   |
| Assists during all housing inspections, arrival and departure, and opening and  | X   |   |

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| closing utility contracts, and the in processing and clearing of the housing office. |  |  |
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### Italian Realtor Norms

There are some differences between American and Italian realtors. The same houses and apartments are often listed by different realtors. If you visit a house with one realtor, you may find yourself visiting the same house if you switch agents. You can review listings and contact different realtors directly or work with one realtor. If you do request information on different listings via a website, like immobiliare.it, please note that once you contact an agency about an individual listing, they will work with you only directly, not another realtor. If you later find a realtor you like and want them to work on your behalf, agencies you previously reached out to through immobiliare.it will want you to work only with them.

Ensure your realtor is licensed, since there are some unlicensed operators. A licensed realtor will likely not be offended if you ask for confirmation. Contact HM for support or clarity.

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### Move In Expenses

1. Security Deposit: As you define the content of your lease the landlord will prescribe an amount for a security or damage deposit, often the equivalent of 1-3 months. If you leave the house in good condition and all damage claims are settled with the landlord you receive the deposit upon departure. Finance can provide an advance for the deposit.

2. Advance Rent: Landlords may also require a 1-3-month advance rent and finance can again provide an advance.

3. Agency Fee: The realtor usually requires a fee that is generally equivalent to 10% of the annual rent for their services. Once your lease is confirmed finance will pay the realtor fee directly via electronic payment. This transaction will appear on your LES one time as MIHA-Rent as both an entitlement and a deduction, with the totals cancelling each other.

4. Contract Registration Fee (this is 1% of the annual rent): HM will provide details in person.

5. Painting: During lease negotiation confirm expectations for pre-lease and post-lease painting of the house or apartment. Since a departure painting of a house is normal in Italy, the HM will help coordinate payment of the painting fee by the Ederle housing/finance office. Note that the painting should not exceed two month's rent. The painting fee will be paid directly to the SM, who is then responsible to transfer the fee to the landlord.

**6. Additionally, all move-in related expenses must be claimed by the sponsor, including the end-of-tour painting fee, within 11 months of arrival.**

7. Please note that even though service members receive a Dislocation Location Allowance (DLA), TLA per diem, and other PCS related expenses to defray moving costs that service members may temporarily experience up-front costs. This could include hundreds and possibly thousands of euros/dollars for new utility contracts and other move in expenses shortly after arrival. Additionally like other PCSs correcting incoming entitlements and pays can often take weeks, therefore service members are recommended, not required, to have a few thousand dollars set aside to help ease financial concerns when in processing.

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### **Security Systems**

Service members can also request for the installation of a security system in their house if you could not negotiate for one in your lease. Please note that local crime levels are low with rare exceptions, such as home or vehicle break-ins. Approval for a security system is NOT guaranteed and the HM will assist and approve. The approval process for a security system can and often takes 1-2 months after your lease is signed. If the system is paid for by the government and installed it remains the property of the landlord after your departure.

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### **Allowances**

Monthly SM's will receive an Overseas Housing Allowance (OHA), an associated utility allowance, and a Cost of Living Allowance (COLA). The allowances are designed to cover the costs of housing, utilities, and living in a foreign country with higher prices for some goods and services. OHA rates and utility allowance rates are found here (our location code is IT066): <https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/ohaCalc.cfm>.

COLA rates: <https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/cola.cfm>

Please note that all three rates may fluctuate based on exchange rates and other factors.

Unlike CONUS BAH, which is linked to a zip code, monthly OHA allowances are based on lease totals. For example, if your lease total, e.g. the amount to pay your landlord each month, is 2000 Euros, your OHA will equate to that amount (based on the fluctuating exchange rates). Consider maximizing your monthly OHA as you negotiate with your landlord for additional items, such as a security system, appliances, etc.

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### **Voltage Differences**

U.S. outlets supply 110 volts, 60 hertz and Italian outlets supply 220 volts, 50 hertz. This difference is important to determine which small or large appliances, 110 or dual voltage, to bring in your HHG. FMO will provide one transformer per family and transformers are readily available for purchase. That said, new small 220-volt appliances are available for purchase in the

Ederle AAFES and used appliances are also often listed for sale on social media, second hand sites, and the Ederle thrift store.

Dual voltage lighting fixtures and lamps can run on 220 voltages with a plug adapter (The outlets in the EU and in Italy are different than the US). Plug adapters and European light bulbs are available in the PX, commissary and on the local economy.

Unplug your transformer when not in use since they consume a lot of electricity. Leaving your transformer on, even without device drawing electricity, will increase your energy bill.

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### **Government Provided Furniture**

The Furnishing Management Office (FMO) office is near Caserma Ederle, on the same compound as the VPC, vehicle registration, and inspection. The FMO offers a wide range of appliances and furniture available for the length of your tour. Once your lease is signed you can visit the FMO office to schedule delivery. Since our homes are a long drive from FMO, delivery and pickup is generally only available on Wednesdays. Common FMO items used by contingent members are washers, dryers, refrigerators, freezers, standing closets, and transformers. We do not recommend bringing large American refrigerators, freezers, washers and dryers since they are often too large for Italian houses and offered by FMO. The NSE maintains a folder that includes the list of FMO offerings (with pictures). Contact your sponsor or the HM if you need to review before arrival.

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### **AFN Decoder and Television**

FMO can also provide an Armed Forces Network (AFN) decoder at no cost. The decoder provides access to the DoD AFN network of television stations. Please note that using the decoder requires a satellite dish and then coordinating satellite installation or movement with your landlord. You will have to purchase or provide a dish at your own risk. The satellite orientation is Eurobird 9 degrees east and could require a professional for installation and adjustments.

Internet television such as HULU, Netflix, Apple TV, Roku, etc. also facilitate viewing US content. A VPN or DNS blocking service may be required to access some shows or content. Additionally, Sky TV, provides a robust cable package of TV shows, Sports, News with the option to watch the non-Italian only channels in English. Italian TV is also available for free by using the terrestrial TV. Most houses are equipped with satellite systems that can be used for free, similar to over-the-air systems in America.

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### **Other Considerations and Recommendations**

Don't make an offer on a place until you have met the landlord. Your relationship with your landlord is just as important as how much you like the home. Ensure your lease clearly articulates the expectations of both you and your landlord to reduce any future confusion and conflict. For example, ensure to agree on what the landlord will maintain in your house or apartment and who is responsible for all utilities.

If you select an apartment ensure you inquire about and confirm any mandatory apartment or condominium fees. Clearly understand who will pay these fees and consider negotiating to include these fees into your lease.

We recommend asking your realtor to conduct a joint move in inspection, with the HM. to identify any existing damages. You can also request the realtor to take detailed photographs upon move in as an additional method to confirm the condition of the house.

Occasionally landlords will remove their kitchens when they depart, leaving a house without a functioning kitchen. If you experience this unusual situation consider negotiating the installation of a kitchen as part of your lease, noting the earlier comments about maximizing your monthly OHA allowance.

You will receive a utility allowance, however you cannot work all utilities into your lease. Contact the HM or your sponsor for additional assistance.

Another consideration is the cost of the daily commute from your prospective home. The first consideration is the cost of fuel, noting we receive a monthly allowance of reduced cost fuel. Exceeding your monthly allowance of fuel rations will result in paying the much more expensive regular rate. Second, we pay full price for road tolls and they are much more common in Italy than the United States, especially on the autostrada. Tolls can be calculated using: [https://www.autostrade.it/autostrade\\_en-gis/percorso.do](https://www.autostrade.it/autostrade_en-gis/percorso.do)

When selecting housing consider the following:

1. Proximity to schools, stores, grocery, freeway/traffic, and the NRDC
2. Energy efficiency
3. Heating and cooling options (AC or windows with screens are not a given)
4. Appliances
5. Windows
6. Fireplace
7. Physical security, i.e. fencing, alarm systems, external visibility in/out, window bars
8. Vehicle parking or garage
9. Utilities (including internet speed, gas, electricity, landline phone, cell coverage, etc.)
10. Square meters, i.e. living space.

# Banking

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## Banking

We can generally access US banks accounts and conduct transactions online while posted at NRDC-ITA. That said you will need an Italian bank account to conduct transactions such as cashing checks, rent, utilities, etc. The most popular bank used by the contingent is Banca Nazionale del Lavoro (BNL) since there is a branch on Caserma Ederle that services service members and their families. A BNL much closer to the NRDC, in Gallarate, may allow contingent members to open and service accounts at their location. To open an account at BNL, you will need a CF, passport, and military identification. We recommend opening a joint account with your spouse and getting a Bancomat (ATM) card for the SM and spouse. Make an appointment with the bank manager to setup your initial account as it may take at least an hour and will require many signatures.

There are several differences between banking in the US and Italy. Some banks will charge a fee to cash checks and transfer funds, even if you have an account. Most ATMs have a single transaction withdrawal limit, generally around 250 Euros. Your account will include a 27-digit International Bank Account Number (IBAN) that you can use to pay bills and transfer funds online. Even though BNL has many branches in Italy and you can use BNL ATMs in Italy, the bank branches are not fully linked, like in most US banks. For example, if you open your BNL account at Caserma Ederle and later need to makes change to your account, then you have to return to that branch in person.

Additionally, you can deposit cash into you BNL account with your Bancomat card at certain BNL ATMs. BNL also provides a website and app to conduct transactions and to review your account. Contingent members often setup allotments to their BNL accounts.

# Utilities

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## General

Broadly, due to taxes and other considerations, electricity, gas, and other home-based utilities are generally more expensive in Italy than the US. Furthermore, many Italian 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. Utility payment varies, with some offering payment at one of the many local tabaccheria shops, online via US credit cards, or with a BNL account.

When you arrive and depart, ensure to record meter readings. Most utilities will require a CF and IBAN to start contracts. Keep records of your transactions and payments for all utilities. Landlords and relators can help with establishing utility contracts. If you are responsible for a utility, according to you lease, ensure the utility is in your name, and not the landlord or relator. According to Italian 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.

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## Cell Phones

Starting a pay by month service for less than 50 Euros per phone number, per month, is easy to complete at the mobile store in the Ederle AAFES mall. A CF, military ID and or/ passport are the required documents. There are alternative options to setup service off-post and the service providers include Vodafone, TIM (Telecom Italia), Wind, Illiad, and TRE. Cell phone coverage can be searched at: <https://www.nperf.com/en/map/IT/-/-/signal/>

We recommend unlocking your US cell phone prior before arrival so that installing a SIM card is the only step required to initiate service. US law requires cell companies to unlock your phone if you are PCSing or deploying via orders. The contingent uses various methods to communicate, including mobile service and apps. Please note that mobile phones and other electronic devices are not allowed in the NRDC-ITA HQ building; however, they are allowed in others locations on the caserma, including the NSE.

## **Internet**

There are multiple internet service providers that can be identified and possibly compared online. Examples include Fastweb, Vodafone, TIM, Wind, EOLO, and Sky. The installation of home internet can take an average of 2-3 weeks. Some areas have fiber, i.e. high-speed connectivity, some providers will also require a landline number when requesting internet service, and some will require using a company router. Broadly speaking, especially since companies have different policies, after you sign your contract with your provider, you can schedule an appointment for a technician to setup your service.

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## **Gas**

Establishing gas service will require coordination with your landlord or relator to change the account to your name with a CF, passport, bank account, and other identification.

When posted in Europe the Utilities Tax Exemption Program (UTEP) reduces the cost of gas and other utilities (in our area UTEP is only applicable for gas). UTEP allows service members to not pay the sizeable taxes, ranging from 32-48%, levied on home gas. Once your gas service is established and you have received your first bill (can arrive 1-6 months after starting service) contact the HM to enroll in the UTEP program. While UTEP enrollment may take several months and include an annual service fee, roughly \$250, UTEP will significantly reduce your gas bill during your tour. Enrolling in UTEP may require switching your servicing gas account to a different company, without interrupting your service. Once you've established your housing location, keep in mind that UTEP can only be accessed if you are an AIM customer. Please refer to HM for any additional questions

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## **Electricity**

Setting up your electricity is similar to other utilities. Electricity will be more expensive and you can expect for similar variances in billing cycles and payment options as other utilities in Italy. Electricity prices are generally different based on the time of day, often less expensive at night, encouraging consumption at non-peak periods. Depending on your home, simultaneously using several large appliances in your home may trip the circuit breakers, based on the Kw rating you choose in your contract. It is sometimes possible to increase your home Kw rating, for an increased load, depending on the size of the home

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## **Water**

Water can be included in your lease or another utility to pay. Discuss with your landlord and ensure the agreement is clearly stated in your lease.

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## **Garbage**

Garbage collection procedures and associated costs vary widely by town or city. The fees could be included in your rent or may be an expense. Be prepared to separate and recycle your garbage, in different color bags. Failure to sort your garbage can result in fines. Some locations require transporting lawn clippings to the city dump via POV. Your local municipal building will provide small trash cans, trash bags, and pickup schedules. Note you may be required to pay for bags or related items to sort garbage.

# Vehicles and Driving

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## Introduction

Although the Italian public transport system is generally cheap and efficient, we recommend having at least one vehicle for private transportation. Given the distance between the HQ and our home, most families have two cars. One vehicle can be shipped at government expense and some contingent members have used civilian shippers to bring a second vehicle to Italy. Families are authorized to register up to three vehicles and all vehicles must be registered at the Ederle vehicle registration. To drive in Italy, we must obtain a license, have insurance, register the vehicle, and pass an inspection. After passing the inspection, the sponsor is eligible to obtain a fuel card. The vehicle registration office, Vehicle Processing Center (VPC), and vehicle inspection areas are co-located on Torri di Quartesolo (a ten-minute drive from Caserma Ederle).

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## Drivers Licensing

See arrival section.

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## Vehicle Registration

You can have three active vehicle registrations per family with each registration valid for one year. When registering each vehicle will receive Armed Forces in Italy (AFI) number and Italian / EU cover plates. The cover plates are a force protection measure to ensure our vehicles are not readily identifiable.

Vehicle registration can be time consuming and can take several trips. First, determine the size plates required for your vehicles, i.e. long thin EU style plates or more rectangular plates (similar to US plates). The front plate is the same, while the back plate can be one of two options. The registration office understands we are far from their office and your sponsor may be able to reserve your plates before your first trip to Ederle. Once the registration office provides your plate numbers contact your insurance company to get a printed copy of your proof of insurance. Then you can obtain your physical license plates to finish the registration process with the inspection. Consider if your vehicle has the correct plate mounts, which can be purchased on base, before you attempt the inspection (the inspection facility is close to the registration office).

The free safety inspection requires a SETAF driver's license, vehicle registration, first aid kit, reflective vests, and a warning triangle. The inspectors will use SETAF (ABN) Regulation 190-3 Appendix C form to conduct the inspection to ensure the vehicle meets Italian and USAG Vicenza safety requirements. The inspectors will require you to exit to drive it into the inspection facility. The most common reasons for inspection failure include: INOP lights, worn tires, exhaust leaks, loose mountings, uneven brakes, worn brake pads, and windshield cracks. If your vehicle fails the inspection, the registration will be labeled temporary until the identified fault is corrected and the vehicle is reinspected. This can become a significant issue if your vehicle requires a rare or US spec only part not available at the Ederle auto repair center or a local auto

parts store. Some vehicle parts, such as oil filters, brake pads, etc. are more expensive locally and can be found via the Ederle auto center, local vendors, or ordered via MPS. Vehicle registration requires the following:

1. Original title and/or registration documents
2. Proof of insurance as required by Italian Law
3. SETAF license
4. PCS orders
5. Military ID card
6. \$30 for admin fee
7. €5 for initial registration fee
8. Additional Euros for road taxes when registering a second or third vehicle. The tax total is dependent on engine size. (The registration office accepts credit and bank cards).
9. Other documents may be required based on from whom the vehicle was purchased.
10. Power of Attorney (if applicable)

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### **Local Vehicle Purchases**

It is possible to purchase vehicles from other service members (requires a trip to Ederle to complete the transaction). Cars can also be purchased from local nationals and local dealers; however, the process is more complex. Purchasing a second vehicle has implications for the end of tour clearing. Since we are in Italy under the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) you cannot sell vehicles to some personnel. Additionally, when purchasing vehicles consider if they are European or US specs, and if you intend to take the vehicle to your next assignment.

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### **Vehicle Processing Center**

If you ship a vehicle at government expense it will be delivered to the Ederle VPC. Since the shipment to Italy can take from 45-90 days we recommend shipping your vehicle at least 45 days prior to your arrival. The website [pcsmypov.com](http://pcsmypov.com) is available to check the status of your POV shipment. Since all vehicles must pass a detailed inspection before registration and use in Italy, ensure vehicles are in excellent condition. Vehicles must have winter capable tires or snow chains during the winter. The tires must have the Mud and Snow (M&S) symbol, so consider shipping vehicles with these tires installed or locally purchasing snow chains.

Incoming vehicles generally arrive via the Bremerhaven port and are moved to the VPC via truck. Vehicles are not always ready for pickup on their arrival day at the VPC due to customs requirements. Once the vehicle is available make an appointment since the pickup can take several hours. There are several options to reach the VPC for the pickup including a ride from a sponsor, the NSE TMP, or the train. Travel to the VPC can be reimbursed.

Bring the following documents for vehicle pickup: copy of 788 shipping document, copy of PCS orders, military ID card, SETAF driver's license, and POA (if the SM will not be present). Upon arrival conduct a thorough, joint inspection of your vehicle before departing. If you discover any unreported damage after leaving the VPC contact the contractor immediately to file a claim.

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## **Vehicle Insurance**

Insurance is mandatory and can be obtained through multiple companies. Insurance rates for Italy are generally more expensive than the US. Many contingent members use USAA. A few options near Caserma Ederle include:

1. USAA: (toll free from Italy) 800-878-422 (connects to an English-speaking policy service office in the UK). Also 00-800-531-87220 and 00-800-531-81110.
2. Geico local office +39 0444-504-366 located near the main gate.
3. Lloyd Italico +39 0444-566-094 located just off post.

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## **Fuel Cards and Motor Oil**

Gasoline and diesel fuel are much more expensive in Europe than the United States. Once your vehicles are registered you can receive a fuel card that facilitates paying cheaper rates for fuel. The card, similar to a fleet card or credit card with a pin, can be obtained at the Ederle exchange or NRDC support brigade. The card will be linked to a personal credit card and after each fuel purchase the linked personal card is charged the discounted fuel rate, usually 1-3 days after the purchase. The card can only be used at Eni or AGIP stations in Italy, either in person or at the pump. After each fuel purchase the user will receive an email that highlights the details of the purchase and the remaining monthly ration limit. The bills to your payment option will show as a Naval Exchange (NEX) charge.

When purchased at a dealership or gas stations motor oil is expensive. While motor oil cannot be purchased in AAFES facilities in Italy the common viscosities are available at large grocery stores and auto part stores. Motor oil can be purchased online via Amazon. Engine oil filters for most US vehicles are available at the Ederle AAFES Car Care Center in. Used oil and filters are expensive to recycle in Italy but can be turned into the AAFES garage free of charge.

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## **Motorcycles**

Motorcycles are considered vehicles in Italy, requiring a motorcycle rating on your SETAF license to register a motorcycle. You are not allowed the motorcycle rating on your SETAF license unless you already are a registered motorcycle driver in the US and you must have attended either the Basic Motorcycle Safety Course or Advance Riders Course before applying for the SETAF motorcycle rating. The Ederle vehicle registration office recognizes that we are a long distance from the Vicenza Caserma Ederle and has not enforced the safety inspection but they will require the other documentation, such as the SETAF license with the motorcycle rating and proof of Motorcycle Safety Course MSF Card before they will consider issuing license plates.

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## **Ugo Mara Caserma Vehicle Pass**

Once your vehicles are registered at Caserma Ederle an important step upon your return to Ugo Mara Barracks is the NRDC vehicle pass. An NRDC-ITA identification card, created by the on-post Italian Army support brigade, is required for the pass. Contact your sponsor and/or your NRDC office to confirm hours and local procedures. This process is exclusively for the NRDC and results in a plastic card that allows access to the Italian Army compound in your vehicles. Spouses can also obtain a vehicle pass after receiving their NRDC-ITA identification card.

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## **Telepass**

As previously mentioned toll roads, especially for highways, are common in Italy. Telepass is a convenient system of in car RFID readers that allows drivers to transit toll booths quicker, track toll usage, and payment of tolls via an Italian bank account. The easiest method to sign up and obtain the two Telepass readers is to request the documents when establishing your BNL account at Caserma Ederle. Occasionally, the Ederle BNL will have readers on hand, however, if not then the BNL will call when your readers arrive and are ready for pickup. Installing the readers in the car is simple and allows drivers to use the quicker telepass lanes for many tolls in Italy.

You can also obtain the readers at the local Punto Blu office near any toll booth along the highway. Telepass users can also register their accounts online at [www.telepass.it](http://www.telepass.it) and use the telepass app; both allow users to view the status of their telepass accounts. Your initial telepass payment is set to your BNL account and can later be changed to a credit card by visiting a Punto Blu office.

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## **TMPs**

The NSE maintains two mini-vans from the Caserma Ederle TMP office. The vans are used to deliver and pickup mail from Malpensa and other official duty related tasks. All contingent members with valid TMP licenses from Caserma Ederle can use the vehicles for official business after coordinating with the NSE. Sponsor medical appointments on and off-post are an authorized TMP use, however, dependent medical appointments are not. Family members can ride in TMPs with a licensed driver, provided the addition of the family members does not incur additional costs or force a service member to not use the vehicle. The rules for official TMP use are complicated so discuss your TMP use plans to ensure regulatory compliance.

# Medical and Dental

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## **TRICARE Enrollment (International SOS & Military Treatment Facility)**

Most active duty members and their families permanently assigned in remote locations of Europe, Africa, and the Middle East are covered by TRICARE Prime Remote Overseas (TPRO). 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 and International SOS, the largest remote site health care service in the world. International SOS is a government sourced company that facilitates medical care for our service members and families due to our distance from a traditional Military Treatment Facility (MTF).

Family members may choose between TPRO and TRICARE Standard coverage. Standard is a program that offers greater flexibility in provider choice, but members have co-pays and deductibles. Active duty members and family members may also choose to enroll with a Military Treatment Facility (MTF). However, if you choose this option you must coordinate all care through the MTF and there's no funding available for travel.

International SOS is the primary means to coordinate most routine and specialty care. Consider ISOS as your Primary Care Provider (PCM). Just as TRICARE Prime members who live near a MTF must first coordinate their care with their Primary Care Manager, you must first coordinate care with International SOS by calling 800 915 994 or 0049-808-762 8133. If you fail to coordinate routine care with the International SOS first, you run the risk of having to pay a substantial percentage of the bill or Active Duty claims may be denied. The key point is that everyone enrolled in TPRO must use an International SOS provider for all routine care.

Based on the size of the supported population, in our case the contingent and family members, International SOS establishes a network of providers. This includes International SOS conducting site visits to providers to confirm the quality of care and available resources at each site. Generally, but not always, if you require routine care SM or family members can schedule an appointment and then inform International SOS. Once informed International SOS will create a care authorization and send the document to local provider and to the sponsor. If all goes well, the provider will receive the authorization and the SM will not pay for the routine care out of pocket. Occasionally, with established network providers or an out-of-network provider the SM will be required to pay for the care and then submit a claim for direct deposit reimbursement. Generally, the cost of care in Europe is much cheaper than the US, e.g. emergency rooms visits for less than 200 Euros.

SM's are generally required to pay for prescriptions from local providers and submit a reimbursement claim with International SOS. Some prescriptions can be filled by military providers in Germany, via our virtual care support.

Please note the network and non-network providers are civilian, local national medical facilities who decided to accept International SOS, and Tricare by extension, to support our small

population. They are not exclusive to our contingent and have many other patients. Providers English-speaking capability varies. Generally, most doctors can and do speak English and, if required, translation assistance is available with the NSE.

The network of providers is flexible, i.e. we can add and delete providers via the NSE, noting additions may take 3-6 months to complete. The NSE NCO is trained on how the Tricare and International SOS networks operates and is your primary point of contact for any issues.

Please note that you will experience different norms regarding patient privacy, space, and timings for appointments than the US. If you receive unacceptable care or service from a provider or International SOS capture all relevant information and file a complaint online via the ISOS website.

If SM's require a mandatory medical exam at a military facility discuss with the NSE to consider travel and reimbursement. More broadly, we must maintain Army, and associated service, medical readiness, e.g. MEDPROS. Review your MEDPROS status routinely and use scheduled personal or duty-related trips to use the MTFs for specialty care, e.g. HIV screening, annual dental exam, retirement physicals, annual hearing tests, immunizations, etc.

Please note that since we have medical care from Tricare, via International SOS, we can be refused non-emergency care at the Ederle MTF. That said, recently the MTF continues to support SM and family members for routine and specialty care. Personnel often schedule appointments at the MTF and plan trips to other agencies on Ederle during that same trip.  
The appointment line is 044.461.9000

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## **Dental**

Active duty dental care is covered by International SOS and the process is identical to medical care described above. Soldiers can use Ederle dental clinic for routine appointments.

Family members should be enrolled in the United Concordia Companies Inc. (UCCI) program. Premiums are automatically deducted from the service member pay and documented on his/her/LES. Enrollments can be done online by the sponsor:  
<https://secure.ucci.com/gdpr/index.html>

Local care is also an option and family member can choose their dentist noting that United Concordia operates differently than TRICARE. First, ensure to understand the claim processes and then file your claim after the exams, orthodontics work etc. If your family members require, orthodontic care ensure discuss if using the MTF or a civilian provider is the best option. This is important since using a civilian provider for family orthodontics may incur out-of-pocket expenses. ISOS does not support dental appointments for family members.

Print off UCCI claim form before each dental appointment since the dentist needs to sign the document and have the UCCI claim form(s) for each individual scheduled for care. Once care is complete and the SM has paid, collect receipts, and file a claim via mail, email or fax:

Mailing Address

United Concordia, TDP OCONUS Dental Unit,  
P.O. Box 69418,  
Harrisburg, PA 17106-9418

Fax: 001-701-260-7367 with full header page.

Email: [tdp\\_oconus@ucci.com](mailto:tdp_oconus@ucci.com)

When settled, the NSE will schedule a Tricare brief for new SM's and their families.

Further reference are available at:

<https://tricare.mil/Plans/HealthPlans/TPRO>

# Quality of Life

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## **Travel**

Travel within and beyond Europe is encouraged and affordable. Budget airlines offer cheap flights within Europe from MXP airport and other airports in Italy. Public transportation and European highways also makes visiting sites in Europe enjoyable. Use the minimal manning periods to explore Europe. Finally, review the force protection requirements for all travel destinations via the online Foreign Clearance Guide (FCG) since some locations; Turkey, Africa, etc. have extensive pre-trip requirements that can require approval at the General Officer level weeks in advance.

# Contacts

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## Emergency

112: General Emergency Number

113: Police

115: Fire

118: Ambulance

All numbers have Italian and English speakers (or quick transfers to translators)

For emergency translations contact the Caserma Ederle Vicenza MP Station: 0444 71 7114

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## Area Hospitals

Varese Ospedale: 0331 699 763

Busto Arsizio: 0332 278 480

Ospedale San Raffaele (Milan): 02 264 32697

Ospedale Valduce (Como): 031 324 111

Caserma Ederle Clinic: 0444 51 7484

Ensure your family knows the location and phone numbers for your nearest hospital

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## Other

Caserma Ederle phone numbers and operating hours:

<https://home.army.mil/italy/index.php/contact/phonebook>

Contingent NSE:

DSN: 634-6790

Commercial: 0444 71 6790

NRDC Carabinieri: 033.134.6022 (Mar. Flavio Borroni)

The Italian international dialing code is +39.

NSE Company Commander:

DSN: 314-646-6081

Commercial: 0039-335-189-6443

NSE Company First Seregant

DSN: 314-646-6082

Commercial: 0039-044-471-6082

## **Annex A: International Schools**

This annex describes area schools, in alphabetical order, and includes a mix of information direct from the schools and from parents. Contact each school to confirm all information and feel free to contact parents for their perspectives on each school.

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### **American School of Milan (ASM)**

[www.asmilan.org](http://www.asmilan.org)

K. Marx 1420090, Noverasco di Opera, Milan, Italy

High school: Parents of high school should communicate with ASM staff about graduation requirements in the initial discussions. Students attending in grades 9 and 10 should not experience any concerns transitioning to a school following a US curriculum to earn a US high school diploma. Students that will be in location for the 11<sup>th</sup> and/or 12<sup>th</sup> grade years have some unique considerations. To earn the IB Diploma, students must be in this program for the entire 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade years. The IB program is a scripted course of study that requires the two years of blended coursework in order to be prepared for the final exams and meet diploma requirements. Students that will not be in location for both years should discuss options for graduation with ASM staff. An American diploma can be awarded providing students meet ASM requirements but all coursework presented follows the IB curriculum subject specific content.

Most of the class work is on a required laptop that the school provides for rental or purchase (NDSP reimburses rental but does not reimburse for the purchase of computers).

After School Sports/Teams are available at this level. The children compete with other English-speaking schools within Italy and some outside of Italy (Germany, Switzerland, Spain), resulting in routine travel. Additionally, these activities can cost anywhere from 200-400 euros per activity per child.

Electives similar to the States are available – especially Fine Arts. Emphasis on service and leadership – one period is devoted to some form of service.

Middle School:

Grades 6 – 9, multiple teachers

American based curriculum with a laptop requirement

No sports except in form of After School “Classes” that you pay for.

Many classes are different from American experiences, e.g. more projects, more correspondence between classes, and learning games/ activities frequently that gets them out of the classroom.

Primary / Intermediate

Grades K-2 Primary, Grades 3-5 Intermediate

Multi-age classrooms where students learn via hands on games and activities

Contact the school via the website as soon as possible since the application is quite lengthy and requires physical forms with doctor input. ASM offers a full day program for students in grades Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. ASM presents an American style, international program preparing students for success in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program that begins the last two years of high school.

Special Note: This is a private school that follows their governing rules and Italian laws. They are not required to follow US special education requirements, honor and IEP, can refuse enrollment to children. There is no school based speech therapy nor occupational therapy. The in-school support is limited and may be different from American experiences.

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### **The British School of Milan, Sir James Henderson (BSM)**

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

Via Pisani Dossi, 16, 20134 Milano Italy

BSM provides English language educational opportunities for grades K-12 with a British curriculum and the International Baccalaureate curriculum.

Special Education: Minimum services are offered in the elementary years only.

High school students: If a student will not be in location for both the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade years, parents are encouraged to reach out to the NDSP Education Specialist for unique needs in these grade levels. If not in location for both years, this could prevent a timely high school graduation.

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### **European School of Varese (ESV)**

<http://www.eursecva.eu/scuolaeuropea-eng/>

Via Montello, 118 - 21100 Varese

ESV requires second language education throughout Primary School. As early as second grade, students will experience instruction in the second language in courses such as Humanities. Typically, students select from French, German or Dutch. Upon entering Secondary School (6<sup>th</sup> grade) student are required to take a non-language course such as math or science completely in the second language (French, German or Dutch). In order to learn the academic content, students need to be fluent in the language. Parents should consider the requirements of learning academic learning in a second, non-native, language and the characteristics of their child as an academic learner before selecting this option. This school follows a European education model which is often different from the American education program. The program is set and few changes are made to accommodate an individual student. Some families have had issues with the level of communication from the school and interactions with the teachers while others have had good experiences. Students in grades 6-12 share the same campus. This can be an uncomfortable situation for younger students given the liberal allowances for this age group such as a designated smoking area on campus.

Important notes: When a sponsor elects a school with the language of instruction less than 100% English such as ESV and there are English speaking options in location, students are not eligible for supplemental funding for tutoring nor will the one-time fees be paid a second time if the program is not satisfactory to the parent and a request is made to change schools. . Sponsors need to consider this option carefully before selecting. Please see this information on the NDSP website for those that may consider this option. <http://www.dodea.edu/nonDoD/upload/English-School-Available-in-Location-Non-English-School-Selected.pdf> .There is NO option for an American/US diploma.

Secondary Cycle (American Grades 6-12): Designed to progress students to achieve the International Baccalaureate (IB) by the end of their final year. The IB is a two-year program, so there is very little benefit to leaving after the Junior Year and while there are IB programs across Europe, most require the student to be at the same school for both years. The first foreign language (L2) is taught from 1st class primary and becomes the teaching language for religion /ethics, human sciences and history/geography from the 3rd class secondary and beyond. The second foreign language (L3) – a choice of three languages (French, German, and English) is taught from the first year of Secondary School. Moreover, it is possible to choose a third foreign language (L4) from the 4th class. Latin can be chosen from 2nd secondary and beyond. Besides the mother tongue, two foreign languages and math, other compulsory subjects in 4th and 5th classes of secondary are chemistry, physics and biology, as well as history and geography in the first foreign language (L2). Moreover, the students have to choose amongst optional subjects, like Latin, ancient Greek, economics, third foreign language, art, music or ICT. In the second semester of the 5th class the students make their choices for the last two years (the IB cycle). Thus, depending on the courses the school is able to organize on the basis of the students' numbers, they compose a study program that meets the prerequisites of their future studies at university.

Primary Cycle (American Grades 1-5): Teaching takes place in the mother tongue/dominant language in one of the five language sections: Anglophone (EN), French (FR), German (DE), Italian (IT), or Dutch (NE). From the first class all the pupils are taught in second language: English, French or German (chosen by parents). In the Primary School emphasis is placed on mother tongue, mathematics and the first foreign language, but art, music, physical education and environmental studies are also important, as are European Hours, when children of different nationalities meet and participate in a variety of activities. In the European Hours they intermix the language sections while doing activity (craft, music, PE) that requires communication, but allows for learning without requiring the precision of language that would be needed for math, science, etc. The kids do get to pick (in the more senior elementary years) what their progression of European Hours activities will be.

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### **International School of Como (ISC)**

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

Via Adda, 25, 22073 Fino Mornasco CO, Italy

ISC offers a full day program for students in Pre-Kindergarten through 12th Grade. ISC offers the International Baccalaureate (IB) program in all grades. ISC is a fully authorized IB School

(PYP authorization received in 2006, MYP authorization received in 2014) and it has received, in February 2018, full authorization to offer to the students the IB Diploma Programme. Classes are taught in English. Some classwork is completed with the use of a computer.

Primary Years = US grades Kindergarten – 5

Middle Years = US grades 6-10

Diploma Years = US grades 11-12

**Primary Years:** The Primary Years Programme (PYP) is an established world-renowned programme rooted in inquiry, international mindedness and the IB Learner Profile. It is a concept driven programme following six themes which are transdisciplinary in their approach. Students in Kindergarten and Transition follow four units of inquiry throughout the academic year and from Grade 1 upwards follow six units of inquiry during the course of the year.

**Middle Years:** ISC Middle School offers the IB Middle Years Programme (MYP) which is the next step in the IB continuum of international education. It currently cover ages 11-16/MYP 1-5. Thereafter, the ISC offers the last 2 years of the internationally recognized IB Diploma Programme (IB DP). The MYP builds on the foundations acquired in Elementary school, encouraging students to become independent, internationally minded, and lifelong learners.

All of our students receive a rich curriculum which is comprehensive and challenging, helping students build a strong foundation in the major subject areas as well as several foreign languages. Skills are developed alongside knowledge, and the students become thoughtful, creative and valuable members of the International and Italian communities.

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### **International School of Milan (ISM)**

<https://www.internationalschoolofmilan.it/>

Via Maggio 20, Baranzate; NW Milan

ISM offers a full day program for students in Kindergarten through 12th grade with the International Baccalaureate (IB) program in all grades. Classes are taught in English, under a British Curriculum. Some classwork is completed with the use of a computer. There are no specific requirements for the type of computer or iPad. NDSP reimburses the rental fees of a computer but not the purchase of a computer or iPad. ISM is located within a 15-20 min drive from Arese, so families that live in Arese and attend ISM have the option to drive or use the bus system.

Diploma Years = US grades 11-12

Middle Years = US grades 7-10

Primary Years = US grades Kindergarten -6

**Diploma Years:** In the Upper Years of the Secondary School (US Grades 11-12) students' work towards the completion of the IB Diploma Programme. (IBDP), which ISM offered since 1997. Students study six subjects during the two-year period. Three subjects are selected from the higher level and three from the standard level in addition to three core components: a course in

Theory of Knowledge, a program of Creativity, Action of Service, and an Extended Essay. All courses are examined partly by continuous assessment but there is a major series of written tests at the end of US Grade 12 covering all the work completed in each subject over the two-year course period.

**Middle Years:** Students in grades 7-10 participate in the IB Middle Years Programme. (MYP) The academic programme is rigorous and challenging yet is exciting and engaging. A student-centered approach to learning where each individual can set his/her own personal targets throughout the school year. Technology is widely used and ISM implements a 1:1 programme where students can bring any laptop, tablet or netbook for personal use. The MYP prepares students for the two-year IB Diploma Programme offered in grades 11-12.

Students in grades 9 and 10 participate in IB classes. Typically, students do not experience difficulty with transferring this coursework to US credits towards a US diploma. Should there be difficulty in your next duty location, reach out to [ndsp.education.europe@eu.dodea.edu](mailto:ndsp.education.europe@eu.dodea.edu)

**Primary Years:** The IB Primary Years Programme (PYP) begins in Kindergarten and is provided through age 11 or 6th grade. This focuses on the development of the whole child in the classroom but also in the outside world and through other environments where children learn. It offers a framework that meets children's most important needs: academic, social, physical, emotional and cultural. In addition to core academic subject instruction, students attend classes in music and PE. Swimming lessons are provided in the school indoor pool at scheduled times during the school year for their PE class.

**Special Education:** ISM offers minimal support during the school day. Students may receive two sessions per week of support designed to promote success in the IB curriculum. There is currently no support program at the Middle or Diploma years. Students are expected to meet success rates for the IB diploma which offers only one, rigorous curriculum. There are no modifications allowed by IB for this curriculum at this time.

## School Selection

There are no DoD schools nearby, so contingent members use the Non-DoD Schools Program (NDSP) to home school, attend Italian schools, or attend international schools. Before arriving in Italy, you can research and communicate with nearby schools; however, NDSP will not commit funds to your education choice until you arrive in Italy. See the schools section below for general information and information about local international schools.

### NDSP

The Non-DoD Schools Program (NDSP), Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) program provides the funding and educational support for command sponsored dependents at NRDC-ITA 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, please note that NDSP cannot reimburse any fees until the sponsor is in Italy. 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 funds 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 Milan (ASM) 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 ASM, 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=10166&EffectiveDate=20190331>

In addition to the annual DSSR allowance, some one-time fees are also paid by NDSP, for example application fees. If you incur or pay a school application fee before arrival note that NDSP cannot start the reimbursement process until you are in Italy.

NOTE: NDSP 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, and hence worthwhile to pay out of pocket in order to allow NDSP to pay the application fee of the primary school later on.

Minimum Age Requirements: Based on DoD school regulations NDSP is limited in the funding and support available for children under five years old. See link below for detailed information about minimum age requirements:

<https://www.dodea.edu/nonDoD/generalInformation/eligibility/ndspageRequirements.cfm>

Other one-time fees often billed as Capital Assessment Fee or similar can be thousands of Euros. These are not assessed until the child is in location and are typically direct billed by the school to NDSP. It is important to choose wisely as if you elect to change schools during your tour, these fees may be your responsibility with the new school enrollment.

If children have special education needs, ensure they are enrolled in the EFMP program before departing your losing garrison. The local schools and private international schools do not follow US laws and may have different norms reference adhering to Individual Education Plans (IEP)s.

The school contract is between the parent and school with NDSP reimbursing allowable expenses billed to all students on the fee schedule for tuition and transportation up to the DSSR limits. Once the sponsor provides a bill from the school NDSP will generally pay all approved expenses, direct to the school. If a school recommends additional services, that incur additional expenses, such as additional after school support, assessments, additional coursework etc., the services MUST be pre-authorized with NDSP. Contact NDSP to determine if a requested service can be reimbursed at [ndsp.education.europe@eu.dodea.edu](mailto:ndsp.education.europe@eu.dodea.edu) or +49 611 143 545 1538.

For other questions email [ndsp.education.europe@eu.dodea.edu](mailto:ndsp.education.europe@eu.dodea.edu) or call +49 611 143 545 1538 from outside Germany. From within Germany call 0611 143 545 1538. This specific NDSP office, with an education specialist to support the contingent, is located in Sembach, Germany.

#### Out-of-pocket Expenses

Please note that due to US legal restrictions, NDSP and the DoD cannot reimburse SM's for school lunches. Inquire about the cost of school lunches when applying since they can be over 1000 euros per year, per child. Additionally, if the school requires uniforms, this expense will also not be reimbursed. Laptop rental can be

reimbursed, however, the purchase of laptops for school purposes cannot. Finally, if you change schools during your tour this may incur fees that NDSP cannot reimburse.

#### Local Options

Contingent members use home schooling, international schools, and Italian schools.

Home schooling is supported by NDSP. It is not necessary to have chosen a curriculum or course of study before registering with NDSP. That said, the sponsor must obtain approval for tuition and other expenses from NDSP, i.e. registration process complete, prior to incurring any expenses or signing any agreements and/or contracts. Once approved, parents will submit a home study / private instruction education plan. Guidelines and requirements for choosing a course of

study, enrolling in a virtual online school, the list of reimbursable expenses, and the reimbursement process are available at the following link:

<https://www.dodea.edu/nonDoD/generalInformation/educationalOptions/ndspHomeStudy.cfm>

Local Italian schools are also available and provide an exceptional opportunity for immersion into local communities. Please note that selecting a local school may result in children attending classes and activities exclusively or partially in Italian. The schools will most likely not follow a US curriculum or adhere to US standards. Additionally, some of the NDSP reimbursable fees may not be available for this option. Carefully consider this option by reviewing the following link and contacting NDSP:  
<http://www.dodea.edu/nonDoD/upload/English-School-Available-in-Location-Non-English-School-Selected.pdf>

Another option available is boarding schools. Due to the complexity, especially costs, if you are considering this option contact the NDSP education specialist.

Finally, there are several international schools in our area, generally with English as the primary school language.

## **Annex B: Medical Providers**

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The current list of International SOS providers includes:

### **Hospitals**

Ospedale di Circolo di Busto Arzizio  
Piazzale Prof. G Solaro, 3 Busto Arzizio, ITA

Ospedale San Raffaele  
Via Olgettian. 60 Milano, ITA

Azienda Socio Sanitaria Territoriale dei Sette Laghi  
Via Santi Cosma e Damiano 10 Varese, ITA

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### **General Practitioners/Primary Care Clinics**

Milan

Centro medico di Modrone  
Via Mercalli 11 20122  
Telephone: 0258 319808

Varese

Via Guilo Giordani 7, Varese  
Telephone: 0332 223355

Pediatrician  
Via Leonardo Da Vinci, 2 21040  
Caidate Di Sumirago (VA)  
Email: [Valeria.valdambrini@crslombardia.it](mailto:Valeria.valdambrini@crslombardia.it)  
Telephone: 0331 906971 (after duty hours)  
After duty hours: 0331 906966

Pediatrics:

Corso Vercelli 7 20122  
Telephone: 0258 319808

Via Leonardo Da Vinci, 2 21040 Caidate Di Sumirago (VA)  
Telephone: 0331 906971 (duty hours), 0331 906966 (after duty hours)

General Practitioner  
Via Guilo Giordani 7, Varese  
Telephone: 0332 223355  
Cell: 335 593 6475  
Email: [Irene.shultz@virgilio.it](mailto:Irene.shultz@virgilio.it)

OB/GYN:

Viale Lunigiana 15 20125  
Telephone: 026 704674

Physiotherapy:  
Viale Gorizia 14 20144  
Telephone: 0258 100061

Contingent notes:

Many contingent members use Dr. Paesani for women and children's care +39 0258 319808 ([www.aimclinic.it](http://www.aimclinic.it)), and Dr. Freilich for males and females (no children) +39 0258 319808. Dr Paesani's office is in the same neighborhood as The Last Supper. Dr Freilich is on the east side of Milan and is an FAA approved medical doctor. They're partners in a clinic called the American International medical Center (AIMC) located near the center of Milan. For OB/GYN support, Dr Guido Candotti is available in Milan.

## Annex C: Dental Providers

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The current list of recommended dentists includes:

Orthodontics/Dentist

Corso Italia 50, 20122  
Telephone: 286 450634

Dentist  
Via Como 18, Varese 21100  
Telephone: 0332 286616  
Email: [studiotritz@belsorriso.com](mailto:studiotritz@belsorriso.com)