



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

Customer Fact Sheet 6

Retention of Service Families Accommodation (SFA)

Q. I have been posted but my family and I are settled in our current SFA and location. Do we have to move?

A. Rules on entitlement and eligibility to occupy SFA are laid down in the Tri-Service Accommodation Regulations JSP 464 (TSARs). Service Personnel Policy/Accommodation, Families and Welfare in consultation with Single Service Authorities sponsor – not Defence Estates. We implement the regulations on their behalf. TSARs state that entitlement is for SFA at your new Duty Station. This is to enable entitled Service personnel to be accompanied by their spouses and children, as they are posted from one location to another.

Q. Are there any circumstances under which I can retain my current SFA?

A. For a variety of reasons, you may wish to retain your present SFA, rather than move on to your next Duty Station. However to avoid disadvantaging an entitled family, DE will normally only grant retention in exceptional circumstances. These exceptional circumstances have been agreed by the three Services and are also contained in JSP 464, Chapter 8. The rules on retention are somewhat different for entitled Naval and RM families, who may retain their SFA in Portsmouth, Plymouth and Clyde irrespective of postings, promotions or numbers of children.

Q. What if my child is in the middle of a school year?

A. One of the most frequently requested reasons for retention is continuity of a child's education before public examinations. Retention is admissible for one academic term (or 4 months) leading up to an examination. Retention may also be possible if a child cannot transfer schools within 2 years of public examinations. When considering retention on educational grounds, including special educational needs, families should seek advice from the Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS), Trenchard Lines, Upavon (Tel: 01980 618244). Families must obtain an Educational Impact Statement to support the application, which can take some time.

Q. Are there any other circumstances under which I may be granted retention?

A. To avoid repeated upheaval, retention is admissible if, within the space of 11 months, there would be an initial move of short duration followed by a second move.

If you have a short notice posting, retention of up to 3 months is possible when less than 6 weeks notice is given and retention of up to 1 month can be granted when you receive less than 3 months notice of a posting. Limited retention for a period of 28 days can also be authorised in cases where SFA is not available at the new Duty Station.

Retention of SFA may also be granted on welfare or medical grounds. Each case is considered individually by the Local Service Commander (LSC) and in consultation with the appropriate welfare, medical or educational agencies.

Occupants in SSFA may exceptionally be granted retention on the same grounds as for SFA. Terms and Conditions of the Licence to Occupy still apply.

- Once authorised, retention is an extension to your entitlement for the required period only and would not exceed 12 months. After 12 months re-application is necessary
- If you have a valid reason for pursuing a request for retention (it is noteworthy this does not include spouse's employment or education), please notify the Housing Information Centre as soon as possible.

NB: Involuntary Separated Tours would not result in a family having to vacate their present SFA during the operational tour or course.