



WELCOME TO QATAR!

A RESOURCE GUIDE FOR
FAMILIES AT AL UDEID AIR BASE



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FOREWORD



WELCOME to Al Udeid Air Base, home to the forward headquarters of United States Air Forces Central Command, the Combined Air and Space Operations Center, and the 379th Air Expeditionary Wing!

This Resource Guide is for those selected for, or interested in, an accompanied tour in Qatar. The information contained herein will help both you and your family make a smooth transition from your current base of assignment.

If approved for command sponsorship, you and your family will live in secure, gated housing community in the city of Doha, close to modern shopping and entertainment venues. You will receive virtually the same financial entitlements as those who are deployed here, plus a cost of living adjustment (COLA). You will also earn short tour credit while you and your family experience a once in a lifetime opportunity to live in a vibrant, culturally diverse Middle Eastern country.

Having said this, you should know that this experience is not without a few challenges. Qatar is considered a remote assignment and the base is still “expeditionary” in nature. It does not have such traditional support facilities as a commissary or child development center, so families must live primarily on the local economy.

In closing, know that the Command Sponsorship Program Manager stands prepared to assist in your transition. Please feel free to contact them if you have any questions or concerns. I look forward to working with you in the near future.

Sincerely,

Jason R. Armagost

JASON R. ARMAGOST

Brigadier General, USAF

Commander, 379th Air Expeditionary Wing

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MUST KNOW ITEMS

CONCURRENT TRAVEL OF DEPENDENTS

Concurrent travel of dependents with the military member is not automatic and depends primarily on the availability of housing at the time of your report date. If concurrent travel is not authorized and the military member arrives ahead of the family, he or she will stay in on-base quarters until issued keys to the off-base residence.

PASSPORTS AND VISAS

Visas are no longer required for entry into Qatar. All active duty personnel and their family members need to have **official, no fee (maroon) passports** prior to arrival in Qatar. Applications for official, no fee (maroon) passports will be processed by your servicing passport agent at your local Force Support Squadron (FSS). This is typically a 6-8 week process; however, if you are within 120 days of your report date, you can request expedited processing of your passport applications.

You must have official passports to apply for Qatar residency. You may also want to obtain a regular tourist passport at your own expense for international touring purposes (apply at any post office). For more information on passports, please visit the DoD Passport Matters website at:

<https://passportmatters.hqda.pentagon.mil/index.aspx>

IMMIGRATION PROCEDURES

Command sponsored family members of US military personnel and DoD civilians may travel into the country via Hamad International Airport or the Al Udeid Air Base (AUAB) Passenger Terminal. Family member travel via military means in and out of AUAB must be coordinated through either your local or AUAB commercial travel office (TMO/CTO).

NOTE: For initial entry into Qatar, CSP members will use their military CAC or dependent ID cards and their sponsor's PCS orders for immigration documentation. Once residency is established, all

CSP members will use their Qatari IDs and passports as immigration documentation to enter (immigrate) and exit (emigrate) Qatar. **Visas** are **NOT** to be purchased. If a visa is accidentally purchased, please contact the Host Nation Coordination Cell (HNCC) ASAP to help rectify the situation as hefty fines can be levied if visas are not cancelled in a timely manner.

RESIDENCY

In order to live in Qatar, it is required that you and your family members obtain a residency permit, better known as a Qatar ID. HNCC will assist you with this process upon your arrival.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

If you encounter an emergency in transit or after arrival, call your sponsor. You may also call:

- Al Udeid Command Post at DSN 318-455-5620 and ask to speak to your gaining commander (24/7)
- For immigration matters, the Host Nation Coordination Cell (HNCC) at DSN 318-437-6107/6108 (0900-1700 local*) or Cell Phone 011-974-5551-0815 (after hours)
- US Embassy in Doha at commercial 011-974-4496-6000 (emergencies only)

MEDICAL

The 379th Expeditionary Medical Group (EMDG) located on Al Udeid AB is an expeditionary hospital designed primarily to care for deployed military members in an acute care setting, and is not staffed or equipped to provide routine or continuity of care for children or members with chronic conditions. Therefore, when considering an assignment to Al Udeid, it is important to understand the majority of care for dependents, especially children 12 and under will be provided by an off-base provider utilizing the TRICARE overseas program administered by International SOS. A high western-standard of medical care exists in Doha and English is spoken widely in the medical community. There are some cultural differences you may experience when accessing healthcare in Doha such as separate waiting rooms for men and women; however, overall the experience is similar to what you would experience in the United

MUST KNOW ITEMS

States. In addition, many medical facilities in Doha are accredited by international healthcare accrediting agencies such as the Joint Commission International and the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards International. NOTE: All families must be cleared via the overseas clearance process in order to PCS to Al Udeid. This overseas clearance is accomplished by your home station Military Treatment Facility.

If you have additional questions on the availability of healthcare, a healthcare guide is posted on the Families at AUAB website. In addition, if you would like to discuss healthcare availability or have any healthcare questions prior to arrival, please do not hesitate to contact us at DSN 318-455-5332.

HOUSING

The housing brochure located on the Families at AUAB webpage will help you understand the policies, guidelines and standards for living in the local community. Most importantly, it will help make your stay as comfortable, safe and pleasant as possible. We urge you to read this material thoroughly. In addition, if you would like to see pictures, floor plans, and more, please contact: 379ECES.HousingManager@auab.afcent.af.mil

DRIVER'S LICENSE

After receiving your Qatar ID also known as your residency permit, Qatar requires you and your family members to obtain a Qatar Driver's License (QDL) for off-base driving. Prior to receiving your QDL, only DoD civilians and military members may operate government leased vehicles with a valid, non-expired US driver's license with picture. CSP dependents will need an international driver's license (IDL) to lease and/or drive a personal vehicle while awaiting their QDL. You can only drive a rental car in Qatar for 6 months using an IDL. Several companies offer IDLs (e.g. AAA) and it is recommended that you and your dependents purchase an IDL prior to arrival in Qatar. The IDL becomes null and void once a Qatar Residency card has been issued.

If your US driver's license will expire during your tour in Qatar, renew it before you leave the US. You should also ensure that the word "temporary" does not appear on your US license. Additionally, your driver's license must include a picture. Individual states may automatically extend a license for active duty military, but the State of Qatar will not recognize a driver's license beyond its expiration date or without a picture.

If you are unable to obtain an IDL prior to your departure for Qatar, you can obtain a temporary QDL for a fee. However, you cannot obtain a temporary QDL if you have already applied for residency.

US EMBASSY SUPPORT

US consular officers at the US Embassy in Qatar assist Americans who encounter serious legal, medical, or financial difficulties. They can also provide information about dangerous conditions affecting your overseas travel or residence. One way to receive information from the US Embassy is through the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP), which is a free service provided by the US Government to US citizens who are traveling to or living in a foreign country. Americans living in Qatar who enroll in this online service will receive routine information from the US Embassy in Qatar. To enroll in STEP:

1. Visit <https://step.state.gov/step/>
2. Click "Create an Account," follows instructions.
3. Once you have created an account, you can register with a specific US Embassy or Consulate by clicking on the "Add Overseas Residence" button.

SPONSORS

Prior to arriving, you will be assigned a sponsor from your gaining unit who will help answer any questions that arise as you prepare for this assignment, and also assist you with transition actions after your arrival. If you do not have a sponsor within 30 days of your report date, please contact the Command Sponsorship Program Manager by e-mail at 379EFSS.FSM@auab.afcent.af.mil or call DSN: 318-437-7862.

LOCAL COMMUNITY

OTHER RESOURCES

For updated information about living in Qatar including health care, transportation, city maps, where to shop and eat, how to dress, sightseeing, leisure activities, banking, and more, check out the following:

“MARHABA” is available online:
<https://www.marhaba.qa/>

Or in Doha bookstores, major supermarkets and hotels.



“QATAR RESIDENT’S GUIDE” is available online.



CURRENCY

Qatar’s monetary unit is the Qatari riyal (QR), which is divided into 100 dirhams. Banknote denominations include QR1, QR5, QR10, QR50, QR100, and QR500. Coins most commonly found are 25 and 50 dirhams.

VETERINARIANS AND PET BOARDING

Veterinary services are limited, but the standard of care is high. As there are no official pet sitter or dog walking services in Qatar, most residents get neighbors to look after animals for short periods or house them in a boarding facility during longer periods. Demand for pet boarding is high; it is recommended you book well in advance.

As of June 2011, the Qatar Ministry of Environment requires that any pet arriving in Qatar, not already registered with them, must be presented for registration within 48 hours of arrival, have its microchip scanned, original vaccination history reviewed, and all supporting documents collected. In addition, all pets leaving Qatar must be microchipped.

AIRPORT

Hamad International Airport is located at the southern end of the Corniche waterfront area. It is home to Qatar Airways and several other airlines.

<https://dohahamadairport.com>

Airport Security: 4410-9555

Customs: 4457-7457

Immigration and Passport Control: 4465-6490

TRANSPORTATION

It is the member’s responsibility to procure personal transportation. Several options exist in this regard.

- You are authorized to ship **one** privately owned vehicle (POV); however, Qatar does not allow the import of vehicles that are more than **5 years old**.

⇒ Read the POV SHIPMENT article under the “Relocation Matters” section of this guide

- You may choose to lease a vehicle. Local leases range in price depending on the type of vehicle you choose.

LOCAL COMMUNITY



- You can also purchase a car in Qatar once your residency is approved. There are both new and used cars available in the local market. Although some US banks will not provide auto loans for vehicles purchased in Qatar, you may be able to secure a personal loan.
- Professional taxi services are available, but you may experience extended wait times or delayed response during peak travel hours due to high demand. For this reason, most residents drive their own vehicles or hire a personal driver or local driving service.

Concierge service desks at your respective housing compounds maintain a list of local drivers for hire.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Here are some of the popular groups you will find in Doha.

AMERICAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION (AWA) OF QATAR. AWA meets monthly to share experiences, make acquaintances, provide a resource for those new to Qatar and learn more about local culture. Membership is open to any woman resident of Qatar who is a citizen of the U.S. or whose spouse is a citizen of the Americas. More information can be found at <http://awaqatar.com>.

DOHA BAY RUNNING CLUB. This is a group of mainly European expatriates who meet socially and for distance running and swimming. Go to www.dohabayrunningclub.com.

DOHA GARDEN CLUB. The club promotes good gardening practices through the correct usage of appropriate plants and plant materials sensitive to the local environment. Go to www.dohagardenclub.com.

DOHA MUMS. Formed in November 2008, Doha

Mums (formerly Doha Expat Mums and Kids) is a community of over 1,400 passionate mothers who come together to celebrate all things family. Go to www.dohamums.com.

QATAR PROFESSIONAL WOMEN'S NETWORK (QPWN). An informal networking group for Qatari and expatriate professional women. Open to any woman regardless of nationality, profession, age, or educational background. Women who are currently not working outside the home and want to maintain their professional network and skills are also welcome. Go to www.qpwn.org or email info@qpwn.org.

TUESDAY LADIES GROUP (TLG). Formed in February 1976 as the British Ladies Coffee morning. TLG has become an international ladies group with over 40 nationalities represented. The group welcomes those new to Doha, shares information and advice about living here, provides activities to join, and supports each other during your time in Qatar. Go to www.tlgdoha.com.

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

Here is just a small sampling of the many activities in Doha for families with children:

- Aspire Play Park - Doha's largest park with a lake, jogging track, and shaded areas
www.aspirezone.qa
- Circusland - features a large play area with carousels, arcade games, a soft play area, rides
www.landmarkdoha.com / 4487-6111
- Gondolania - located in Villaggio Mall, indoor ice skating rink, gondola boat ride, roller coaster, kiddie rides, and more
www.gondolania.com / 4403 9800
- Jungle Zone - located in Hyatt Plaza, jungle-themed activities for kids
www.hyattplaza.com / 4499-9699
- Ray's Reef - a small play area for younger children and babies at the Royal Plaza mall
www.royalplazadoha.com / 4413-0000

LOCAL COMMUNITY

Useful Websites

Embassy Services

qa.usembassy.gov

US Embassy in Doha

Qatar Information

www.expatswoman.com/qatar

Supports individuals and families settling in the Middle East

www.iloveqatar.net

Comprehensive and up-to-date information about Qatar

<http://qatarhappening.com>

Up-to-date information about events in Qatar

www.gov.qa

Qatar government portal

www.timeoutdoha.com

Guide to Doha's restaurants, nightlife, films, and things to do

www.qatarliving.com

Current event listings

www.mdps.gov.qa/en

Statistics about Qatar

www.dohamums.com

Informative articles, insight and expertise to include classified ads

www.digitalqatar.net

A blog for technology enthusiasts

www.onlineqatar.com

A guide to visiting and living in Qatar

News and Media

<http://ameinfo.com>

Middle East business resource

www.dohanews.com

Provides latest news from World News Network

www.gulf-times.com

One of Doha's three main news sources in English

www.qatar-tribune.com

One of Doha's three main news sources in English

www.thepeninsulaqatar.com

One of Doha's three main news sources in English

Culture

www.edu.gov.qa/en

Information on school education in Qatar

www.qm.org.qa/en

Qatar Museums

<http://marhaba.qa>

Qatar's premiere information guide

Travel and Tourism

www.visitqatar.qa

Qatar tourism authority

www.katarahospitality.com

Hospitality company in Doha

<http://arabianadventuresqatar.net>

A top tourism company in Qatar

<https://qia-qatar.com>

A top tourism company in Qatar

<http://qittour.com>

A top tourism company in Qatar

EDUCATION

EDUCATION IN QATAR

There is no Department of Defense Dependent School in Qatar, so all school age children attend local private schools in the area or are home schooled. Those two options are both funded by the Department of Defense Educational Activity (DoDEA).

PRIVATE SCHOOLS

You will find that many private schools in Qatar provide a quality of education that is on par with or exceeds many US schools. However, many have waiting lists and one of the biggest challenges parents face is securing admission to their school of choice.

You should research schools that interest you as soon as you know you are coming to Qatar, and apply for enrollment as soon as you are approved for the Non-DoD School Program (NDSP) (see “Paying for Education”). Once accepted for CSP, the School Liaison Officer on base will contact you with a list of schools attended by students from Al Udeid. They will help answer any specific questions and walk you through the application process for each individual school. Each school has specific registration requirements that must be completed prior to enrollment, some of which you may be able to accomplish prior to arriving in Qatar.

To find out more about schools, contact the Al Udeid School Liaison Officer, at the Airman and Family Readiness Center, at 379efss.arc@auab.afcent.af.mil or call DSN: 318-437-8001

HOME SCHOOLING / VIRTUAL LEARNING

The home schooling community in Doha is well established. If this is a more viable option for you, you may find the Doha Home Educators website especially useful:

<http://dohahomeeducators.wordpress.com/>



DoDEA also offers its fully-accredited “DoDEA Virtual High School” (DVHS) to expand access to education and provide curricular options similar to programs delivered within DoDEA schools.

Currently, DVHS is only for students in grades 9 through 12. Nevertheless, with over 44 courses available, and more to be added in the future, the online courses in DVHS have the same level of rigor and adhere to the same standards of the traditional DoDEA curriculum. DVHS courses are customized, standards-based courses specifically designed to meet DoDEA graduation requirements of 26 credits for a standard or Honors diploma.

Children who meet the eligibility for the Non-DoD School Program NDSP are eligible to attend DVHS.

More information on the DVHS program can be found here: <http://www.dodea.edu/virtualhs/DVHS/dvhs/>

PAYING FOR EDUCATION

At overseas/international locations where there is not a Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) school, NDSP supports a variety of options for your children, ranging from public or private schools to homeschool programs. We encourage you to contact the NDSP Liaison responsible for your area of assignment as soon as possible for specific school information. Your receiving command can provide contact information for the NDSP Liaison. Additionally, NDSP has a team of education specialists who are available to provide transition and educational support and coordination for all students, including those with special needs.

For more information, please contact the School Liaison Officer or visit the NDSP website at:

<http://www.dodea.edu/nonDoD/>

EDUCATION



NURSERIES AND PRE-SCHOOLS

There is are no Child and Youth Programs or Child Development Center on Al Udeid AB, or other on-base options for childcare like you would find at overseas bases. However, there are off-base nurseries and pre-schools, as well as mother and baby groups in Doha, who are a good resource for childcare.

Most nurseries and pre-schools in Doha are not just a “day care” institution, but follow formal international curricula designed to facilitate educational and social development of children. They are open 5 days per week, but some will allow you to enroll children for fewer days. Rates depend on the age of the child and how often they attend. A typical estimate is QR 2,000 (\$550 USD) / per month for a 2-year-old child attending 5 days per week. (NOTE: DoDEA will not fund nursery, pre-school, or pre-K education.)

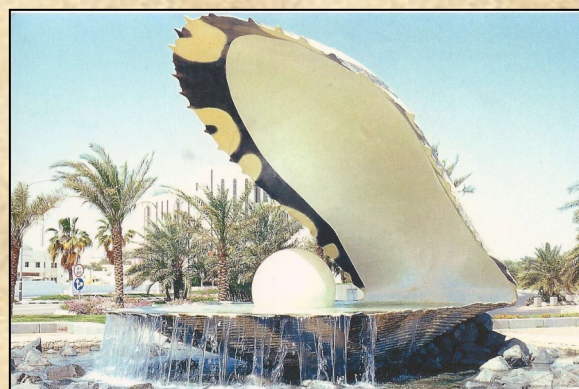
A recent Qatari Educational Council ruling set the nursery age limit at 4, at which time a child must be in a pre-K program, not a nursery.

Playgroups are also popular in Doha and typically meet in homes, housing compound clubhouses or public parks. An excellent resource for information on nurseries, pre-schools, and playgroups used by expatriates in Doha is www.dohamums.com.

COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

For families with college-aged dependents, there are several internationally renowned universities with branches in Qatar, to include Texas A&M, Carnegie Mellon, Northwestern, and Georgetown. They offer a wide range of degrees with both full- and part-time studies available.

Al Udeid also offers on-base degree programs to both military members and their dependents. College classes are offered by Central Texas College and the University of Maryland’s University College-Europe. For more information, you can contact the Al Udeid Education Office via e-mail at al_udeidbtes@auab.afcent.af.mil or DSN 437-8710.



To call an Al Udeid DSN line from a commercial line outside of Qatar, dial 011-974-4458-9555, wait for the dial tone, then dial the seven digit DSN number

To call an Al Udeid DSN line from within Qatar, dial 4458-9555, then the seven digit DSN number

RELOCATION MATTERS

RELOCATION ASSISTANCE

Inbound relocation services include a 1-day Family Right Start orientation coordinated by the Airman and Family Readiness Center. This orientation will help ease your transition to Qatar, and includes information on safety, security, traffic conditions, customs regulations, and many other important issues.

Please use the A&FRC as your relocation information center. They have answers to many questions and can refer you to other sources for more detailed information. A&FRC can be reached by e-mail at 379efss.arc@auab.afcent.af.mil or call Commercial: 011-974-4458-9555 ext. 437-8001 DSN: 318-437-8001.

LOAN LOCKER

The A&FRC has a small loan locker with items available on a temporary basis until your household goods arrive or for 90 days, whichever comes first. Available items include:

Comforter	Steam Iron
Chopping Board	Sheet Set
Silverware	Towel Set
Vacuum Cleaner	Dinnerware
Dish Drainer	Kitchen Knife Set
Cooking Utensils	Can opener
Coffee maker	Glasses
Hair Dryer	Ironing board
Mixing Bowl Set	Broom/Dust Pan
Mop/Bucket	Garbage cans
Laundry basket	Measuring Cups
Heat Pads (Cooking)	Pillows

HOUSEHOLD GOODS SHIPMENTS

The total weight of household goods shipped to Qatar is limited to 25% of the full Joint Travel Regulation (JTR) weight allowance or 2,500 pounds, whichever is greater.

Qatar has strict customs guidelines on what and how items may be shipped. You should speak with a personal property counselor at your local instal-



lation Traffic Management Office (TMO) to ensure all entitlements and benefits are understood and applied for. You should also reference the Personal Property Consignment Instructions Guide located at <https://tops.ppcigweb.sddc.army.mil/ppcig/menu/home/warning.do>. This site offers the latest information on restrictions and instructions for shipping items into Qatar, and is only accessible from a government computer.

PROHIBITED ITEMS. The following items are prohibited and must not be packed or hand carried into Qatar:

Handcuffs	Night Vision Goggles
Military issued batons	Laser Pointers
Ammunition clips	Camera Glasses
Gun parts	Spy Sunglasses
Hunting knives	Privately Owned Firearms
Police zip ties	Swords (display/non-display)
War Trophies	Parts of military weapons
Toy weapons	Vehicles parts
Pornography	Alcohol
Pork	Small Arms Protective Insert (SAPI) Plates

If shipped, these items will be permanently confiscated by the Qatari Customs Agents and you and/or your family may be permanently deported. To ensure you qualify for full replacement value of any damaged or lost items, register at www.move.mil

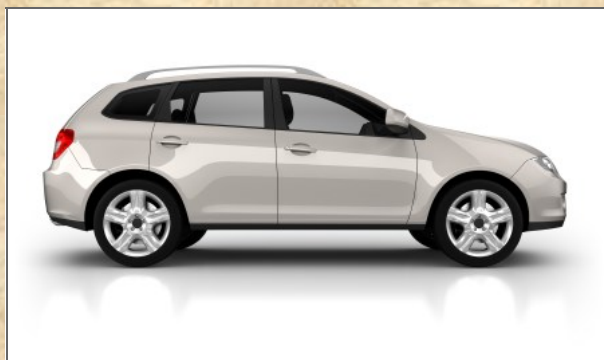
RELOCATION MATTERS

UNACCOMPANIED BAGGAGE. Shipping your unaccompanied baggage (UB) as early as possible will ensure your household items are here and ready for delivery when you arrive. Include items for comfort and those that allow you to perform your duties while waiting for your household goods to arrive. These recommended items include, but are not limited to, kitchen items, bathroom items, clothing, linens, iron, etc.

Ensure your home station TMO understands that the Personal Property US Government Bill of Lading (PPGBL) is required on all personal property shipments to Qatar.

- Send advance PPGBL to ASG-Qatar, Doha, Qatar.
- Provide both the airway bill and PPGBL numbers.
- UB must be declared: "Used Personal Effects for Personal Use" on Personal Property Government Bill of Lading.
- All inbound shipments are subject to a cursory inspection by Qatar Customs Officials.
- All carrier agents in CONUS must use the carrier that Surface Deployment and Distribution Command has for Qatar to avoid your goods being held in a customs warehouse for an extended period of time.

Note: Do not route personal property through Camp Doha, Kuwait or consign property to the American Embassy or American Consulate.



PRIVATELY OWNED VEHICLE (POV) SHIPMENTS

ONE VEHICLE ALLOWED. You are authorized to ship one POV at government expense. Your vehicle must be in good condition and without darkly tinted windows, or the local traffic directorate will not allow you to register it.

RESTRICTIONS. Qatar forbids the import of:

- Vehicles manufactured more than 5 years from date of arrival in Qatar
- Right-hand drive vehicles
- Vehicles with dark tinted glass

SHIPPING YOUR POV. Vehicles will be shipped via boat and must be containerized. You will need to sanitize the vehicle, ensure all items are taken out of the interior and trunk and provide a set of keys to the carrier. It is helpful to ask the carrier to put the vehicle in the container backwards so the engine is facing the door so that if the battery is dead on arrival, it can be jumped. They should also be shipping the vehicle individually, in a 20 foot container. Your vehicle will be delivered to the central receiving and shipping point in Qatar where the transportation office will sign for it. The container will not be opened until you arrive so that you can perform a joint inspection with a counselor. **Ensure Vehicle Processing Center ships your POV in a sea container to the Port of Hamad.** Ship through the Defense Travel System for tracking. Maintain a copy of the DD Form 788 or commercial equivalent with your vehicle registration for customs clearance.

TIMING. Most vehicle shipments take 90-120 days from the time the vehicle is dropped off until the time the vehicle arrives in Qatar, longer processing times can be experienced if your vehicle is arriving close to or in the month of Ramadan. You can track your vehicle shipment on www.pcsmypov.com.

RELOCATION MATTERS

PETS

PETS WELCOME. Dogs and cats may be brought to Qatar but they cannot be less than four months old and they must have a veterinary certificate of good health and rabies vaccination issued within 30 days prior to date of entry.

PERMIT. Qatar requires an import permit from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Agriculture. Cats with proper documentation are allowed to enter with no difficulty, but some breeds of dogs are not admitted. Application forms for import permits may be obtained from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Agriculture or through an agent such as Qatar Pet Travel. A copy of the pet's health certificate/vaccination record must be submitted with the application. Qatar does not quarantine healthy pets that have a permit.

REGISTRATION & MICROCHIP. As of June 2011, the Qatar Ministry of Environment requires that any pet arriving in Qatar not already registered with them, must be presented for registration within 48 hours of arrival, have its microchip scanned, original vaccination history reviewed, and documents collected. Also note that as of April 2012, all pets leaving Qatar must be microchipped.

RESTRICTIONS. The following breeds of dogs are not allowed to enter Qatar:

Afghan Hound	American Staffordshire Terrier
Boerboel	Boston Terrier
Boxer	Bull Terrier
Bulldog	Chinese Shar-Pei
Doberman	Great Dane
Japanese Akita	Neapolitan Mastiff
Rottweiler	Staffordshire Bull Terrier

However, breeds come off or are added to this list regularly, contact HNCC for additional information.

PET TRANSPORTATION. You will pay out of pocket to fly your pet here, even on military aircraft (cost can vary). Commercial airlines have different rules, so check with your carrier for specifics well in advance. Some airlines will **NOT**

ship pets during temperature extremes and others limit the size of the carrier. It is encouraged that you check with your airline for specific information.

FOR MORE INFORMATION. The following websites may be helpful in helping you plan your pets relocation to Qatar:

www.pettravel.com/immigration/qatar.cfm

www.qatarpetrelocators.com/index2.php

<http://dohavets.com/pet-relocation/>

<http://qatarvet.com/pet-relocation/>

FINANCIAL PREPAREDNESS

Living in Qatar is expensive. Although gas is much cheaper here than in the US, you may find your monthly grocery bill is more expensive based on your personal preferences. That, combined with the potential expense of a rental car or driving service, makes it imperative that you consider your financial situation before you apply.

Accompanied permanent party personnel receive almost all of the financial entitlements as those who are deployed to this location—plus a cost of living allowance (COLA).

For the most current pay rates and entitlements, visit www.dfas.mil. For actual COLA, go to: www.defensetravel.DoD.mil/site/colaCalc.cfm

PCS REPORTING PROCEDURES

If travelling to Al Udeid via the AMC Military rotorator for your PCS, military members are allowed to travel in civilian clothes.

When you arrive in Qatar, you will be met by your sponsor. If traveling with dependents, you will be taken directly to your off-base residence. If you arrive ahead of your dependents, you will go to Al Udeid AB and reside in on-base lodging until your dependents arrive. You must in-process with the Personnel Support for Contingency Operations (PERSCO) team within 1 day of arrival to start in-processing actions, to include submitting residency applications.

AL UDEID SUPPORT SERVICES

AIRMAN AND FAMILY READINESS CENTER

The Airman and Family Readiness Center (A&FRC) at Al Udeid AB can assist you during your transition to/from Qatar, and while living here. Services include:

INDIVIDUAL, FAMILY AND GROUP COUNSELING for active duty and family members, Courses on stress management, parenting and other topics. The Military Family Life Counselor (MFLC) can help with marital problems, stress, anger and other issues.

FAMILY READINESS AND FINANCIAL PLANNING, budget, investment and debt counseling.

SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT AND TRANSITION ASSISTANCE offering knowledge of local employment opportunities, veteran's benefits, resumes, and job search process.

RELOCATION ASSISTANCE, INTERCULTURAL RELATIONS, SPONSORSHIP training for individuals and families. Offers 1-day Family Right Start orientation, a computer based-system for information on other military installations, a "Smooth Move" program, and "Military Youth on the Move" online workshops.

A SCHOOL LIAISON OFFICER to help answer questions about the local school system and help with enrollment in the Non-DoD School Program (NDSP).

Hours of Operation: 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily

DSN: 437-8001/8184/6267/7080

E-mail: 379efss.arc@auab.afcent.af.mil

FINANCE OFFICE

Hours of Operation:

7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday - Friday;

9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday - Sunday

DSN: 455-5262

E-mail: 379ecptscustomerserv@auab.afcent.af.mil

BASE EXCHANGE (BX)

There is no Commissary at Al Udeid AB, but the BX offers limited food items. Although large for the area, the BX sometimes sells out of certain items for brief periods due to popular demand and long shipping timelines. Credit cards, debit cards and EagleCash cards are accepted.

AAFES also operates barber and beauty shops, alterations and custom tailor shops, a gift shop, and a jewelry shop.

Hours of Operation:

BPC Main Exchange - 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily

CC Exchange - 24/7

DSN:

BPC Main Exchange (437-4019)

CC Exchange (437-8751)

CHAPEL SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

The 379th Air Expeditionary Wing's Chaplaincy provides spiritual care to all Airmen and their families, and will accommodate accompanied families' religious support needs to the maximum extent possible. This includes advising personnel associating with local religious communities off the installation and appropriately identifying and publicizing off-base worship opportunities.

Keep in mind that although practitioners of non-Islamic faiths can worship in areas specifically designated by the state in Doha, many command sponsored families choose to use the chapel services at Al Udeid AB or at the neighboring Army post, Camp As Sayliyah. To learn more about times of worship, to learn about volunteer opportunities, or to speak with a chaplain call Victory Chapel at the number below.

Hours of Operation: 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily; 24-hour on-call chaplain support

DSN: 437-8811 or call Command Post after hours at 436-0160

E-mail: 379aewhc@auab.afcent.af.mil

AL UDEID SUPPORT SERVICES

HOST NATION COORDINATION CELL

The Host Nation Coordination Cell (HNCC) serves as a liaison between base agencies and the host nation. Its many services include translation, travel clearances, customs, and immigrations coordination including passports, residency permits, and base access.

Hours of Operation: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily

DSN:

Customs (24-hr on-call: 437-5111 / 5585-2139);
Immigrations (24-hr on-call: 437-6107/5551-0815);
Security (24-hr on-call: 437-6104 or 5589-1157);

E-mail:

379AEW/HNCCWorkflow@auab.afcent.af.mil

EDUCATION CENTER

The Education Center provides multiple testing opportunities including the ACT, AFCT, AFOQT, CDC, College Level Testing (CLEP and DAN- TES), language testing (DLAB and DLPT), both officer and enlisted PME, WAPS and also proctors college examinations. Additionally, the center has computers for educational purposes & on-site college courses through the University of Maryland.

Hours of Operation:

8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday - Thursday and Saturday;
10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Friday; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday

DSN: 437-0015

E-mail: Al_Udeidbtes@auab.afcent.af.mil

LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER

The LRC is similar to a public library offering a variety of books, CDs, DVDs, and Blu-Ray movies. There are computers available, as well movie rooms for your enjoyment.

Hours of Operation: 24/7

DSN: 437-7673/7002

QUICK FACT

“CC” stands for Coalition Compound
“BPC” stands for Blatchford-Preston Complex

LEGAL ASSISTANCE

The 379th Air Expeditionary Wing’s Legal Office provides legal assistance such as wills, powers of attorney, and notaries, subject to availability. AF legal assistance attorneys are not authorized to represent service members and dependents in off-base disputes. Individuals with off-base disputes should retain the services of a host nation attorney. The Legal Office does not have a host nation attorney on staff, so any questions about local law need to be addressed with a Qatari attorney at the member’s expense.

Military members and their dependents are guests of the host nation and are subject to their laws and regulations. While criminal jurisdiction may be ceded to the US for certain offenses, this is never guaranteed and service members and dependents should be mindful to understand and obey all local laws and regulations.

Hours of Operation:

8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday - Friday;
9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday

DSN: 437-2707

E-mail: 379aewja@auab.afcent.af.mil

POSTAL OPERATION

Al Udeid AB has a postal operation for mailing outgoing packages and letters, and has limited post office boxes to receive mail. Packages and letters mailed to you in Qatar can be sent to a PSC box, or the military member’s unit address; arrival of mail can vary for a variety of reasons.

Please note that you cannot send or receive alcohol, pork products, fireworks, or pornographic material. Doing so violates U.S. Central Command and U.S. Postal Service policies. Note also that there is no registered mail service, only certified mail.

Hours of Operation:

8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday - Saturday and
9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Sunday.

DSN: 437-0099

AL UDEID SUPPORT SERVICES

FITNESS CENTERS

There are two fitness centers that provide a variety of cardio and weight equipment. The staff manages aerobic classes, fitness incentive programs, a robust fitness event line-up to include intramural sports, tournaments, fun runs and an indoor lap pool (at the BPC Fitness Center).

Hours of Operation: 24/7

DSN: BPC Fitness Center (437-0044); CC Fitness Center (437-8711)

MENTAL HEALTH CLINIC

Hours of Operation: 7 a.m. - 5 p.m. daily

DSN: 455-5227

Emergency after hours care may be accessed through the main hospital.

OUTDOOR POOL

A large 25-meter outdoor pool complex is located in CC and is used for lap swimming and recreation.

Hours of Operation: 5 a.m. to 10 p.m. Tuesday - Sunday; closed Monday for cleaning

DSN: 437-8912

COMMUNITY ACTIVITY CENTERS

The two CACs are places to relax and unwind. Billiards, ping pong, card tournaments, video games, and musical instruments are available daily for your enjoyment.

Hours of Operation: 24/7 for both locations

DSN: CC (437-8763); BPC (437-0064)

LOUNGES

There are three lounges available for your enjoyment. The Kasbah, the Zink, and the Fox Sports Skybox are open to all US and Coalition military, their spouses and dependents, US Government civilian employees and DoD contractors. This is a venue to gather and socialize, watch a sporting event, dance or listen to music, gather with friends

and coworkers, or to relax and unwind.

Hours of Operation: The Kasbah and Zink are open from 6 p.m. to midnight Sunday - Wednesday, 6 p.m. - 2 a.m. on Thursday and 5 p.m. to 2 a.m. Friday - Saturday. The Fox is open 24/7.

DSN: 437-3902/3903

MOVIE THEATERS

At the CC Theater, patrons can enjoy new releases provided by AAFES. There is a \$3 fee for new release movies; movies in the BPC theater are free. Monthly movie schedules are posted throughout the base at various locations or on the AUAB SharePoint.

Hours of Operation: 24/7

DSN: CC (437-7091); BPC (437-7091)

DINING FACILITIES

Al Udeid AB has the largest food service operation in the Air Force and largest in the US Central Command Area of Responsibility Dependents are welcome at all locations and meal times, and meals are billed through the sponsor.

Hours of Operation:

- BPC/Manhattan DFACs:
 - Breakfast - 5 to 8:30 a.m.
 - Lunch - 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
 - Dinner - 5 to 8:30 p.m.
 - Midnight - 11 p.m. to 2 a.m.
- Independence DFAC: 24/7
- Hot Grab-n-Go:
 - Breakfast - 5 to 8:30 a.m.
 - Lunch - 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
 - Dinner - 5 to 8:30 p.m.
- Cold Grab-n-Go: 24/7

Phone numbers:

- BPC DFAC (437-4023)
- Independence DFAC (437-8833)
- Manhattan DFAC (437-5171)
- Hot Grab-n-Go (436-0858)
- Cold Grab-n-Go (437-3211)

TIPS FOR NEW FAMILIES

ALCOHOL AND PORK. There is one store off-base in Doha where you can purchase alcohol and pork: the Qatar Distribution Center (commonly referred to as the QDC). You can purchase a license to do so, after obtaining a residency permit. There are limits on how much you can buy each month, and a membership fee is required. You will also need a salary verification form which is processed through HNCC. Remember: do not send alcohol or pork products in the mail, do not ship it in your household goods, and do not try to bring it in your suitcases!

APPLIANCES & ELECTRONICS. Small appliances are easy to find here with a variety of price categories. However, if you can buy 220V blow dryers and curling irons, we highly recommend bringing them. They are available but can be more expensive and lower quality. Most laptops, iPads, etc. are dual voltage, but it is best to check.

GRILLS. Charcoal is prevalent and easier to find legally than propane. However, if you want a propane grill, you should know that they can be expensive here and have different connections than those in the U.S. If you ship one, it may need work done to get the connections right. You can purchase grills in the BX. Propane can be purchased at many places where you see a “WOQOD” sign, but make sure you get the correct connection adapter and hose pieces.



The initial propane tank costs \$100 and refills cost \$5-15. You can purchase 12Kg or 6Kg tanks. The propane tanks are larger than in the States and do not fit cozily, out of the way with the grill. They are also plastic, which helps to see the fluid level, but may not take the heat well.

BEDS. For your comfort, bringing a mattress pad is highly recommended. You may want to send to your sponsor or unit address so it's waiting for you when you arrive. Also, the beds are not the same size as American beds but deep-fitted king sheets fit the king beds and full-sized sheets fit double beds if you fold them under. Quilts work well as they are warm enough in the winter (or easy to layer), and cool enough in the summer with the air conditioning. Finally, high-quality bed linens are very expensive and harder to find.

CELL PHONES. A cell phone is vital here! You can get a local phone or see if your phone company will unlock your phone for use here.

CAR INSURANCE. Many U.S. companies do not insure cars here and you may be expected to pay one year up front in local currency if you use a local company. Prices vary widely based on the value, age, condition and size of the vehicle.

CAR PURCHASE. If you purchase a car here, it will likely need to be paid for in cash. Also consider what you will do with the car after your tour ends. It may be difficult to have someone else sell it for you with a power of attorney, so selling it yourself before you return may be the best option.

CAR REGISTRATION. If you ship your car, the registration process can be lengthy, but the Host Nation Coordination Cell at Al Udeid will help with this process and provide an Arabic-speaking translator. All associated fees must be paid in local currency

TIPS FOR NEW FAMILIES

CHRISTMAS & HOLIDAYS. Christmas trees, lights and some decorations are available in Doha. If you bring decorative lights from the States, they must be plugged into a transformer to convert the electricity. Large amounts of electricity stress the outlets, so beware of overloads. Decide up front how many decorations to ship.

CLOTHING: Don't forget to pack sweaters and a few coats. It is very humid here, and it is wise to layer from November to February. Boots are common, especially with expats. April to August it is HOT! Men and women should avoid exposing their knees, shoulders, cleavage or stomach, and not wear tight, revealing clothing out of respect for local customs.

- For women, maxi dresses are a great idea. If they are sleeveless or strapless, just add a thin, short-sleeved cardigan or shirt. Scarves are a good idea to wear with lower cut shirts/blouses.
- Men can get away with a polo shirt and jeans or slacks almost all year long.
- Housing compounds are not very strict about swim wear in the pools. Many ladies wear 2 piece swimsuits in the pool, then wear cover-ups (that do not cover knees/arms) when going back and forth from the pool to their residence.
- There are "dress up" opportunities when suits and sport coats are appropriate, such as symphony performances, 5-star hotel dining, high tea, off-base church events, special holiday events, etc. Women should bring at least one formal wear outfit for balls as there will be opportunities to wear them.
- Clothing choices during Ramadan are more strict. Men and women **must** cover their elbows and knees during this time. Short sleeved shirts can be worn at any time other than during Ramadan.



DRIVING. Roundabouts are very common in Doha, and have their own rhythm, but in time you will get used to the flow of traffic. Here are some additional tips:

- At traffic lights, green lights blink 5 times before the light changes to yellow (amber). Stop when you see the blinking green light because the amber cycle is VERY short and you will probably not make it through the intersection before the light turns red.
- Some intersections are equipped with cameras and take pictures of cars that run red lights. If you are caught, the fine ranges between QR1,000-10,000 (\$274-\$2,740) and you may not be notified of the violation. You can check online at www.moi.gov.qa/site/english/ under the "Traffic Violations" link on the right side of the page.
- Roads are rarely marked by name. Most signs say where they are going or the neighborhood they are near. Also, many roads change names at roundabouts.
- There are 5 concentric roads moving out from the Corniche in the southern part of the city called A, B, C, D, and E Rings. Crossing these "rings" are three roads you will use often: Salwa Rd, the shopping and restaurant road; Grand Hamad Street, which runs through the souqs; and Al Rayyan which runs toward Education City.

TIPS FOR NEW FAMILIES

EAGLE CASH CARD. “Eagle Cash” is a stored value card program used in lieu of cash or checks at Al Udeid AB. Eagle Cash is accepted for transactions on base, and not all stores accept debit or credit cards. For this reason, we recommend family members get an Eagle Cash card as well as the active duty member. This is done at the Al Udeid Finance Office.

FACEBOOK. Check out these sites for the latest information about the base:

- www.facebook.com/379AEW

HOME GOODS.

- If you enjoy gardening you might want to pack gardening tools such as rakes, shears, outdoor brooms and flower pots. Manual mowers and weed eaters usually suffice for ground maintenance.
- Housing compounds are furnished similarly in terms of art and furniture. If you want to decorate your home in a unique way that reminds you of home/holidays/family/favorites, be sure to pack accordingly.
- Storage bins and plastic drawers/tubs can be more expensive than in the U.S. Your house or apartment may have a storage room, but it will not have outdoor storage.

KITCHEN ITEMS. Bring what you normally use on a day-to-day basis. It is also wise to bring serving plates for special occasions. You may find that cookware/kitchenware is not of the same quality here, and you can get by with what you bring. Nevertheless, we have had families who wish they had brought more kitchen items from home (pots and pans, bake ware, cooking tools, dishes, serving trays, etc.) for potlucks and such. Remember: 120V items will need a transformer to work. If you drink wine, bring your wine glasses as there are not many options locally and what is available gets picked over very quickly.



WATER. Tap water in Doha is considered potable, but many families filter and/or purchase bottled water. You can buy a water dispenser for about QR400 (~\$110) that holds 5-gallon bottles of water which are delivered to your villa weekly. In Doha, there is abundant hot water in the summer as most houses have cisterns on the roof that are heated by the sun but no cold water. If you need to do laundry with cold water you may need to fill a tub or bucket with water the night before and wait for it to cool before washing. Some residents shut off their indoor hot water tanks in the summer and use the water as the cold water supply.

LADIES ONLY. There are many “ladies only” places. The gyms often have ladies only times, restaurants have “family sections” (men are allowed in only when with their families), and many businesses will have ladies divisions. Some of the malls have “families only” nights as well as some of the medical hospitals.

WEEKENDS IN DOHA. The local weekend is Friday-Saturday, not Saturday-Sunday. This is important to note if you will have children in school or if you prefer to shop on Friday or Saturday evenings (when the crowds are largest).