



British Forces Germany Health Service

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Visiting relatives

Many families in BFG welcome visitors into their homes and it is important to remind everyone about sponsoring your visitors and what this does and does not entitle them to.

Will my visitor(s) need a Visa?

Depending upon the visitor's nationality depends on whether they require a visa to visit Germany. For example; relatives and friends of Foreign and Commonwealth (F&C) personnel who are planning to visit will usually need a Schengen Visa prior to arrival, unless they have a British passport or a British National (Overseas) passport. The visitor will need to apply for a visa at the German Embassy in the country that they live in. Before the Embassy will issue a visa they usually require a number of documents from both the sponsor (yourself) and the visitor, in order to support the visit. It is the responsibility of the visitor to satisfy German Immigration requirements. Further information may be obtained from the Unit Welfare Office.

Do I need to inform anyone about my visitor(s)?

Regardless of nationality, all personnel should obtain a 'Visit of a Close Relative' form from their Unit Welfare Office (UWO). Each visitor should carry this form at all times along with their passport during their stay in BFG. This enables them to come and go around the station/garrison facilities and also to shop for non-rationed goods in NAAFI retail outlets on behalf of you, the sponsor.

Does my visitor(s) need Travel/Medical Insurance?

All visitors, regardless of nationality, should ensure that they take out full travel/medical insurance which should cover the duration of the visit. Service Medical Centres are not mandated to provide treatment. However, where possible, free urgent treatment may be carried out on a privilege basis but your visitor will not be covered if onward or specialist treatment is needed, even if they are

sponsored. All visitors should carry enough medication with them as some drugs and medicines are not available through Service Medical Centres.

In respect of F&C visitors, travel insurance including medical cover and repatriation is required if you apply for a Schengen visa (actual repatriation clause needs to be presented to the Consulate).

In addition to medical insurance, British Nationals should also obtain a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). EHIC application forms are available from post offices or online at www.ehic.org.uk. The combination of EHIC and travel insurance should cover medical treatment (including hospital treatment) and MEDEVAC if necessary. **Visitors who do not have appropriate cover may be liable for all medical costs.**

ENDS

Notes to editor:

1. British Forces Germany Health Service (BFG HS) provides healthcare services to military personnel and entitled personnel serving in Germany and Belgium and manages Primary Healthcare services for the European Isolated Detachments (ISODETS) through the Joint Support Units medical centres.
2. The Telephone Advice Service software used for Out of Hours treatment in all our Medical Centres won top prize in the Innovation and Service Development category at the Military and Civilian Health Partnership Awards, held in November 10. The awards recognise best practice in the delivery of healthcare to the Armed Forces, their families and veterans.
3. For more information about the BFG Health Service, including the latest news, publications and public health advice visit our website <http://www.bfgnet.de/bfghs/bfghs.html>

