



Exchange and commissary shopping in Germany after retirement



Retired members of the U.S. military services, their accompanying dependents, and certain categories of widow(er)s and of unaccompanied dependents may be authorized use of PX (Post Exchange) and DeCA (Defense Commissary Agency) sales facilities in Germany under an agreement between the Customs Executive Agent and the German Ministry of Finance. These arrangements also apply to "grey area" retirees (reservists who are otherwise eligible for retirement but are under 60 years of age) but **do not apply** to retired civilian employees and **do not apply** in other countries.

For you and your dependents to shop in U.S. sales outlets, you must first obtain a U.S. Forces Verification of Status of U.S. Forces Retired Personnel /Unaccompanied Dependents (AE Form 550-175K) from military customs offices in Germany. For this, you will need to present your retirement orders, passport and ID card in person, and you must intend to live in or visit Germany for 30 days or longer. Military widows(er)s must be residents of Germany. Then take the verification to the German customs office serving your area of residence and you will receive a German Customs Certificate (Pink Card), which has an initial validity of two months. The Pink Card and your retiree ID card allow you access to post exchanges and commissaries in Germany where you may only buy non-rationed items.

Pink Card holders are required to return to this German customs office no later than the 5th day of every month and present all cash register sales receipts for the previous month. The receipts are totaled and you then pay a fixed import tax (currently 17.5% but subject to change) on the total. Only then will your Pink Card be extended for another month. To ensure your Pink Card remains valid, it is important to report to German Customs even if you do not make any purchases. If you plan to be away from home for some time, tell German Customs before you leave and make arrangements to pay the duty/tax on the purchases you plan to make elsewhere in Germany during that time upon return to your residence. German Customs has the authority to withdraw your Pink Card if you fail to meet your obligations. Due to the complexity of unaccompanied dependent authorizations, people seeking information should contact the CEA SOFA Office at DSN 381-8141/7354 or CIV 0621-730-8141/7354 for assistance.