

FLAG VOICE # 515
Coast Guard Safe Homes Initiative

"Keeping our people safe; complying with new federal standards"

In 2019, the Coast Guard launched the Safe Homes Initiative (SHI), a service-wide effort to ensure Coast Guard owned housing is compliant with federal environmental health standards. Effective January, 2020 the federal standards include more stringent levels for lead dust. In order to ensure the health and safety of our members and their families, the Coast Guard is contracting state certified environmental risk assessments for all Coast Guard owned homes constructed prior to 1979 (lead containing paint regulations were strengthened in 1978).

The Coast Guard has approximately 2,700 active homes in inventory. Of these, approximately 1,200 were built prior to 1979. The assessments test homes for lead, asbestos, and radon. Funding to complete assessments has been distributed to the field. Our goal is to complete assessments and take swift action to address any findings exceeding federal standards in time for AY20 transfer season.

For AY20, we will not allow at risk families (defined as children under the age of 7 and pregnant women) to move into homes constructed prior to 1979 that have not been assessed and cleared for occupancy. This policy is intended to prevent a family from being placed in a situation where they are forced to relocate mid-tour, and possibly shortly after moving in. It is a preventative measure. We have identified the maximum entitlements by law that we can provide for families that are required to move early but those entitlements only go so far to relieve the burden a family endures when forced to make an un-expected move. PSC is fully engaged in the AY20 assignment process and is integrated into the planning and execution of the Safe Homes Initiative. They are actively monitoring and communicating with impacted units and members in receipt of PCS orders.

Support and communication are key components of SHI. Our goal is to provide all of our members with timely support and accurate information throughout this process. We continue to post updates on the Coast Guard's Safe Homes Initiative website, at dcms.uscg.mil/Safe-Homes-Initiative. I will be releasing an ALCOAST shortly to formally announce these efforts.



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