

FACT SHEET
TRANSFERS TO W. T. SAMPSON ELEMENTARY/HIGH SCHOOL,
GUANTANAMO BAY, CUBA

Guantanamo Bay Location

The U. S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay (GTMO) is located near the southeastern tip of Cuba. The climate is normally hot and humid with rain at different times during the year. The terrain has a combination of flat land and hilly areas with different vegetation and plant life, including banyan trees, palm trees, grass, and cacti. Mountains are visible near and beyond the boundaries of the military installation. GTMO has both ocean and bay adjacent to the outer limits of the land and multiple beaches for the use of residents. The water color includes multiple shades of blue and green, which makes the views of the water spectacular. Please contact the W. T. Sampson Elementary/High School Principal for more information at (757) 458-3500/2207 or emilio.garza@am.dodea.edu.

School Community

GTMO is a small community, and W. T. Sampson Elementary/High School (E/HS) is a small, unit school. Many residents, including teachers, like being stationed here. The school has grade levels Sure Start Program through twelve. The average student enrollment is about 250 students. All this enables the teachers to learn their students' academic strengths and needs. Even though the school is small, extracurricular activities are offered, including clubs and sports.

Because of the school structure, teachers often need to teach more than one content and grade level. This includes teachers of specials/electives, middle, and high school classes. Other certified staff, such as counselors, have to work with both elementary and secondary levels.

GTMO Cuba is an overseas assignment, and W. T. Sampson E/HS falls under the DoDEA Europe negotiated agreement. Also, the school is administered through a DoDEA Americas district. As such, there are differences between this assignment and other overseas assignments.

Housing

You will need to submit an application for housing to the GTMO Housing Office as soon as you receive your PCS travel orders, and you will need to contact the GTMO Housing Office at (757) 458-4172/4174 to get the most current housing policy information.

Based on current information, incoming DoDEA personnel have to live in GTMO and are provided housing. DoDEA personnel who are the sponsors and are accompanied by authorized dependents are assigned company grade or field grade housing, depending on their pay step. Accompanied DoDEA sponsors do not pay rent or utilities. Unaccompanied DoDEA personnel are assigned unaccompanied housing. They pay the utilities and fair market rent, but they receive a living quarters allowance to pay for all this. If permanent quarters are not available, the housing office will provide temporary housing.

The houses are equipped with kitchen appliances, to include a microwave, and a washer and a dryer. Before the household goods (HHG) are packed, DoDEA personnel should contact the housing office to ensure their house will have sufficient space for their HHG.

Since the shipment of HHG to GTMO can take 4 to 12 weeks, the housing office staff will ensure that loaner furniture is delivered and set up in the incoming teacher's house. Also, we will designate a school employee to be the incoming teacher's sponsor to assist with the transition. The school sponsor will assist in getting a hospitality kit (pans, dishes, etc.). When the teacher's HHG are delivered, the loaner furniture and hospitality kit have to be returned. Unless the teacher has USAA insurance, there is no option for personal property insurance.

Internet, Telephone, and Cable TV

Limited internet, telephone, and cable television services are available in GTMO. T-Mobile is the cellular telephone service available at this time. Residents can purchase different plans, which can include a provision to use the cellular telephone as a hotspot for wireless internet service. Via Sat is another internet vendor and offers different plans. The houses have telephone service for calls within the installation at no cost. Residents provide their own telephone. Cable TV is available at the user's cost. Armed Forces Network is available at no cost to residents.

Privately Owned Vehicles (POVs)

Your Human Resources Office will determine the authorization and provide information regarding shipment of vehicles. Normally, teachers can ship one automobile, motorcycle, or scooter to GTMO at government expense.

Vehicles must be registered with the GTMO Vehicle Registration Office (VRO). This requires a vehicle inspection at the auto skills shop here (for a fee). Then, you will take the inspection form, PCS orders, valid drivers license, motorcycle safety card (if registering a motorcycle/scooter that has 50 cc or larger engine) and vehicle insurance to the VRO to register the vehicle. Helmets must be worn if operating or riding on a motorcycle or scooter. USAA and California Casualty are the two companies that provide vehicle insurance in GTMO. The teachers' union coordinated with California Casualty to provide insurance coverage for teachers.

Vehicles brought to GTMO should be in good operating condition because auto repair services are limited. Also, we discourage bringing cars that are still under warranty plans which require servicing at an authorized dealership because that will not be possible at GTMO.

GTMO Entry and Exit

GTMO is an isolated, restricted military installation. Residents may not go directly into Cuba from GTMO. To leave GTMO, the residents need to take the AMC rotator flight in a space available status to Jacksonville, FL, or if authorized, to Norfolk, VA. From there, they can travel to any location at their expense. Each person pays a small fee for his/her AMC flight ticket. The rotator flight is available on Fridays and every other Tuesday normally. A rotator flight was added for travel to Jamaica during the week. Another air travel option is to use IBC, a small commercial airline which offers flights to and from Fort Lauderdale, FL. Ticket prices vary.

Arranging transportation on and off the base when not traveling on orders requires time and patience, and this cannot be done on the spur of the moment. The command will do everything possible to help someone make arrangements in an emergency situation.

Family and friends can visit the DoDEA staff in GTMO. Staff members must submit Port Entry Clearance forms to the school front office at least 30 days prior to the visitors' arrival date. Visitors will need to be cleared through security before entry forms will be approved.

Shopping, Restaurants, and Mail

There is a Navy Exchange (NEX) with a commissary in GTMO. All military personnel and civilians can use the NEX. Many people shop online and receive their purchases by mail.

All personal and official mail is sent to the sponsor's workplace address. Most mail takes on average two weeks both inbound and outbound.

GTMO has a McDonald's next to the NEX parking lot and a Subway in the NEX breezeway. The bowling alley has two fast food restaurants. The Windjammer and Bay View offer restaurant-style dining. The Windjammer also doubles as a Pizza Hut service.

Post Differential

Based on current policies, the school staff (sponsors) are paid a ten percent post differential. They must submit a post differential request online at <https://webapps.dodea.edu/daps/index.cfm>. The post differential is paid in equal amounts each pay period. COLA is not authorized.

Teacher Pay Schedule and Leave

Teachers are paid in 26 pay periods if they request spread pay. Incoming teachers from DoDEA Americas are paid in 21 pay periods their first year in GTMO, and they can request spread pay for the next school year. The pay system and leave accrual are different from DoDEA Americas. Ten days of leave are front-loaded at the beginning of the school year. Three of these days can be used as any purpose leave. Teachers must be in a pay status to accrue leave. Going to an appointment off the island would require the school employee to use 3 to 6 days of leave. Teachers should get the details of all this from Human Resources and the finance office.

Hospital

The GTMO Naval Hospital offers many standard treatment services and limited dental, vision, and counseling services. Unless they have Tricare insurance, DoDEA personnel (sponsors) will pay out-of-pocket for services they or their dependents receive, and they will submit a claim to their health insurance. If their insurance does not include medical evacuation (MEDEVAC), DoDEA sponsors should purchase MEDEVAC insurance, even if they are military retirees, because a MEDEVAC can cost \$12,000 or more. Contact the hospital for more information.

If DoDEA personnel (sponsors) or their dependents have a medical or other condition that requires treatment or prescription, it is strongly recommended that they contact the hospital at **(757) 458-2998** to ensure their treatment and medication needs can be met here.

Child and Youth Programs

The Child and Youth Program (CYP) staff conducts many activities for children of all ages. The Child Development Center (CDC) has programs and childcare for children ages 6 weeks through

5 years. The School Age Care provides out-of-school activities for children in the Sure Start Program through 5th grade. The Teen Center and the Youth Sports and Fitness Program offer activities for children in grades 6 through 12 (and through the age of 18). Contact the CYP at (757) 458-4092 and CDC at (757) 458-3664 to get information about services and fees.

Pets

AMC travel with pets requires that the pets have booked pet space and be on your orders. At GTMO, you can have a maximum of two pets per sponsor/household; no breed restrictions at this time. Pets need a health certificate (DD Form 2209) and an airline letter of acclimation within 10 days of travel. All pets must be current on vaccinations and be accompanied with proof of vaccination. All pets must be microchipped. Pets are not allowed in the unaccompanied quarters. GTMO has no pet kennel service. Refer questions about pets to your Human Resources Office, GTMO Veterinary Clinic (757-458-2212), and GTMO Housing Office (757-458-4172).

Recreational Activities

The GMTO Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) Department does a good job. During the year, the residents can enjoy different activities for children, young people, and adults. Also, the MWR staff coordinates the intramural sports program, and the W. T. Sampson E/HS athletic teams participate in this program. Contact the MWR for activity information and required fees.

Water recreational activities are available. This includes swimming, scuba diving (requires fee for training certificate), snorkeling, and fishing. Boats can be rented at the Marina (requires the driver to get a captain's license). Deep sea fishing can be arranged for a fee.

Two outdoor, sit-down theaters show current movies and do not charge admission. The theater has a concession stand which sells snacks and soft drinks.

The Denich Fitness Center is used for a variety of exercise and wellness activities. It has indoor and outdoor facilities for exercising, cross-fitness-type activities, yoga, and more. There is a track around the football/soccer field which is used for jogging and walking.