Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):

As part of Secretary Austin’s commitment to take care of our people, and to ensure our Service members and families are able to secure affordable basic needs (including housing), the Department of Defense (DoD) has authorized automatic increases to 2022 Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) rates for 28 military housing areas (MHAs) across the United States.

Q. Why are some BAH rates increasing?
A. The Department is increasing BAH rates in certain MHAs because of unusually large spikes in median rental housing costs in some areas (an average of more than 20 percent), which has made it especially challenging for Service members and their families in the affected MHAs to find affordable housing in the vicinity of their duty stations.

Q. How can I find out which MHAs are affected, and what the increased BAH rates are?
A. Visit https://www.travel.dod.mil/Portals/119/Documents/BAH/BAH_Rates_All_Locations_All_Pay_Grades/PDF-Excel/2022_Automatic_BAH_Rate_Increases.pdf where the increased BAH rates in the affected MHAs are posted. The new rates can also be found on the BAH calculator at https://www.travel.dod.mil/Allowances/Basic-Allowance-for-Housing/BAH-Rate-Lookup. General information on the Basic Allowance for Housing, program is at: https://www.travel.dod.mil/Allowances/Basic-Allowance-for-Housing/.

Q. Do I have to apply to receive this rate increase? If so, what do I have to do to apply for a BAH increase?
A. No. The 2022 BAH increases are automatic. Service members do not have to apply for the increased BAH rates, nor are they required to certify they have incurred higher housing costs.

Q. What are the effective dates of the automatic BAH increases?
A. The BAH rate increases are effective as of October 1, 2022 and will continue through December 31, 2022. 2023 BAH rates will replace these automatically increased rates on January 1, 2023.

Q. Will I ‘rate-protected’ when the automatic BAH increases expire?
A. No. Although, normal BAH rate protection—which protects members from decreases in housing market costs—does not apply to these automatic rate increases, DoD is making every effort to ensure these rates remain as stable as possible and will not vary considerably from the 2023 BAH rates.

Q. What are the eligibility criteria to qualify for the automatic BAH increase?
A: Service members who are receiving BAH based on one of the affected 28 MHAs will receive the increase automatically. A member who is eligible for the higher BAH rate will remain eligible through December 31, 2022, unless a BAH status change occurs (e.g., promotion, demotion, dependency change) or the member has a permanent change of station (PCS) to a new permanent duty station (PDS).
Q. I PCS’d out of an MHA where I was receiving the automatic BAH increase. Do I get to keep the increased BAH rate for the rest of the year?  
A. No. Your eligibility for your automatic BAH increase ends on the date you are no longer authorized BAH for that location. However, if your new duty is in another affected MHA, you would be eligible for the increased BAH rate at the new PDS.

Q. What if a member PCS’s into an affected area during the October – December timeframe. Does the member get the 2022 BAH rates or the automatically higher BAH rates?  
A. A member reporting to a new PDS in one of the affected MHAs during October - December (the period when increased rates are in effect) will receive the automatically increased BAH rate.

Q. I’m assigned overseas, am I eligible for an increase in my housing allowance? What about if I receive BAH based on my dependents location or my old duty station in one of the affected MHAs?  
A. The automatic BAH rate increases apply only to Service members who receive BAH based on one of the 28 affected MHAs in the United States. It does not apply to the Overseas Housing Allowance. However, if you are stationed overseas, but receive BAH based on the location of your dependents who reside in one of the affected MHAs, or receive BAH based on your former duty station that is in one of the affected MHAs, you are eligible for the increased BAH rate.

Q. Why is the Department authorizing an automatic increase in 2022 BAH rates for only some Military Housing Areas (MHAs) when housing costs are increasing nationwide? Is there a process through which an installation not included in the eligible 28 can request a reconsideration of the BAH increase?  
A. Rental housing market data collected by DoD from March - August 2022 indicates rental housing costs in the 28 MHAs increased more than 20 percent over 2022 BAH rates. Other areas may have experienced overall rental cost increases as well, but not to the same degree as the 28 affected MHAs. To help ease the financial burden of rising housing costs facing Service members moving to new duty stations or signing new leases, the Department moved quickly to assess market changes across the country, determine which markets are most affected, and implement an automatic change in BAH rates in those areas.

There is no process for an installation to request reconsideration of the BAH increase. The Department is currently in the process of setting 2023 BAH rates for all MHAs, which will be effective January 1, 2023.

Q. What metric was used to determine the BAH increases?  
A. The Department relied upon verified, quality-controlled rental housing cost data collected in over 300 MHAs across the country during the period March - August 2022 (when housing markets are most active) to make its decisions about whether automatic increases were needed and where to apply them. Data was collected in every MHA for each of six housing types (1 and 2-bedroom apartments; 2 and 3-bedroom townhomes; and, 3 and 4-bedroom single family homes). For each housing type, the Department used total housing cost data (median rent and
average utilities) to calculate the average rate of increase across the medians of all six housing types to determine whether an MHA should be considered for a temporary BAH increase. The rental cost data was collected as part of the Department’s annual process used to set BAH rates each January. A copy of the BAH Primer, which provides additional detail on the BAH data collection and rate-setting processes, can be found online at https://www.travel.dod.mil/Allowances/Basic-Allowance-for-Housing/.