

## **JCSOUTH, VERONA SPONSOR PROGRAM**

### **THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING A SPONSOR**

The sponsor assigned must be a member of the U.S. military and the sponsor should be matched as closely (in rank and family composition) as possible.

1. Pay grade.
  - a. Be an E-5 or above whenever possible (for all E-5's and below).
  - b. Be equivalent or same pay grade for all (E-6 and above) whenever possible.
2. Marital/Dependent Status.
3. The same division where the service members will be assigned.
  - a. SUSO will assign sponsors for all officers.
  - b. The US-NSE will assign sponsors for all other personnel.

### **ONCE A SPONSOR HAS BEEN SELECTED, THE US-NSE WILL:**

1. Send Appointment of Sponsor Notification Letter to sponsor.
2. Send Sponsor Notification Letter to sponsor's supervisor.
3. Send Welcome Letter to inbound service member.
4. Sponsor is required to send a personal letter within 7 days of receipt of sponsor notification and give a copy of their letter to the US-NSE Sponsor Coordinator.
5. Sponsor should keep the US-NSE informed of important data regarding inbound personnel such as marital/dependent status, names and birth dates of dependents, arrival date, etc...
6. Once arrival date is confirmed, sponsor makes hotel accommodations accordingly.
7. Sponsor's can reserve the NSC Van to pick-up the inbound service member up at the airport.

### **SPONSORS SHOULD:**

1. Have at least six months remaining in the command from the time the member reports onboard, and have been on board at least 6 months if at all possible.
2. Be familiar with the command and it's location.
3. Be available to assist the newcomer during the first few days after arrival.
4. Be knowledgeable about available resources so that if information is needed, he or she knows where to get it.
5. Be willing to do more than the minimum to ensure a smooth transition to the new command.
6. Be someone whose attitude will create a positive first impression.
7. Be someone who believes in the potential value of the sponsor program.
8. Sponsors are required to pick up the service member and family members from the airport and take them to the TLA hotel; to ensure they have food and essential items, and to guarantee the service member and their family do not spend their first weekend alone at the hotel.

### **FOR THE SPONSOR**

Knowing what to expect and having a specific contact person at a new duty station can make the difference between a good move and a bad one. The sponsor can play a major role in making it a good move. Although the member may have mixed feelings about being assigned a sponsor, the member must also realize that the success of any program rests with those who are charged with the responsibility for implementing it. Even if the member did not "volunteer", the member should look upon their duties as challenges and opportunities that will be worth the time and effort they put into them. Duties of a sponsor can be broken into (1) pre-arrival, (2) arrival, and (3) post-arrival. The following is a checklist provided as a means of ensuring that the sponsor takes all the necessary actions.

## PRE-ARRIVAL

Once you have been assigned as a sponsor you should consider the following:

1. Read your command instruction on the Sponsor Program.
2. Draw upon the knowledge gained from your own experience as a newcomer.
3. Draw upon your experience with the sponsor program. If you did not find your sponsor to be helpful, decide what was lacking and try to make improvements.
4. Ask previous sponsors in your division/command for suggestions or help in meeting your requirements. Even if you have been a sponsor before, do not take the program for granted.
5. Contact the person you are sponsoring as soon as possible. Use DSN, if available, to begin the process of exchanging information.
6. Send a handwritten personal welcome letter to the new member. Let them know you have been assigned as their sponsor and you will do all that you can to assist them in making their move as smooth as possible. Be sure to include your work (commercial and DSN) telephone number. When possible, a sponsor should also include their home telephone number and e-mail address. Make sure and ask them to notify you as soon as possible of their leave address, anticipated date and time of arrival, airline and flight number, and hotel needs (family size, ages of children, pets, etc).
7. Inform the new member of our Verona Command Website <http://www.setaf.army.mil/verona/> which will answer many of the frequently asked questions concerning the command, local area, school, housing, etc....
8. Relay pertinent information to the individual you are sponsoring:
  - a. Your address.
  - b. Their new mailing address. Coordinate with the Post Office for Box number. Incoming personnel can get issued their mail boxes 30 days prior to arrival by having their sponsor bring a copy of their PCS orders to the APO.
  - c. Your work number (both DSN and commercial), and your home phone number and e-mail address.
  - d. Any other special information that would be helpful, i.e. housing, schools, medical and dental, exchange, commissary, spouse employment opportunities, vehicle info, etc....
9. If you and the new member are both married, ask your spouse to communicate with the new member's spouse. Children also would probably enjoy corresponding with other children.
10. Act as liaison between the new arrival and base organizations. If the expected arrival has questions you cannot answer, refer them to someone who can help them out.
11. Make reservations at the TLA hotel for arriving families. Inform the service members they will receive a Temporary Lodging Allowance (TLA) for up to 60 days while looking for suitable housing.
12. Find out whether they will be bringing any pets so you know where the reservations would best suit them. Explain to them their options, and get their preference on which hotel they would be most comfortable staying at.
13. Inform them, once housing is located, loaner furniture and appliances are available pending arrival of their household goods. Inform them that pots, pans, dishes, linens, etc., are not included in the loaner furniture package, and should be sent in their unaccompanied baggage.
14. Inform them not to bring their large American appliances, as they will not be compatible with Italian gas sources or electricity. Let them know they will be provided with a stove, refrigerator, dishwasher, freezer, washer, dryer, ect... during the duration of their tour living on the Italian Economy. Let them know storage facilities are not available.
15. Let the service member know they should contact you before they arrange to pack-out their household goods so they won't have bought or brought the wrong items, or left the only thing they need back home in storage.
16. Inform them that Italian homes are very different from American houses, and that electricity here is 220 volt/50 cycle. Let them know that American electric appliances (except clocks) will work on a transformer, but they are more expensive to run than the 220/50 cycle models.
17. Tell them you do not recommend bringing 110V electric heaters or fans because of the high cost of running transformers for a long period of time. Tell them they can usually find portable gas or kerosene heaters and 220V fans from departing members.

18. Inform them that Italian homes have tile or marble floors, so large rugs are a good item to include in their shipment. Also, most Italian homes do not have closets, and few if any kitchen cabinets. Let them know that they can usually pick up these items from departing members.
19. Inform them of the necessity of having a valid driver's license prior to coming to Italy due to the remote location in Verona. Inform them in order to obtain the required Italian translation driver's license, they must already possess a current stateside driver's license.
20. Let them know about the necessity of having a car in Italy due to our remote location in Verona. Let them know if they are shipping a car, you recommend shipping it early, due to the requirements and necessity here. Let them know that if they don't want to ship a car, however, that they can easily pick up a reliable used one here from a departing service member for a reasonable price.
21. Provide them with information about different car insurance options (i.e. Geico and USAA).
22. Let them know that the Italian government requires Soggiorno Permits for all DOD civilian personnel and family members. Tell them to make sure and bring important documents (i.e. passports, visa's, birth and marriage certificates, etc...)
23. Request that the new member acknowledges receipt of materials and that they keep you informed on their itinerary, reporting date, and any special needs they may have.

### **ARRIVAL**

Upon arrival of the individual, you should consider the following:

1. Meet the incoming individual and/or family at arrival point. Ensure you have a vehicle, which is sufficient to pick up the family and their luggage, or arrange to have someone go with you to assist. As a sponsor, you may want to call the airport/air terminal to confirm the reporting member's flight arrival time. A hand-held sign can be helpful to readily identify yourself to the new service member. If, for any reason, you are not able to meet the member and his/her family at the airport, you are responsible for informing your supervisor and ensuring arrangements are made for someone else to meet them. The US-NSE must be informed any time there is any changes to the report date or when the assigned sponsor cannot meet the incoming member and their family.
2. Accompany them to temporary lodging.
3. Assist them in finding a place to eat.
4. Before departing on the first day, ensure member has information on how they can contact you.
5. Arrange for temporary transportation if required.
6. Assist in getting the member to the exchange or commissary for immediate needs.
7. Assist the member with check-in procedures (i.e. command, medical, dental, etc...)
8. Familiarize the new arrival with local facilities, and also base facilities in Vicenza.
9. Introduce the new member to the people in their new division/command.
10. Remember the feeling and confusion that you experienced when you first arrived, and try to be as helpful to this person as you can. Ensure the new service member and their family is well taken care of, especially during the first 72 hours after reporting. Get them to the hotel and allow them to get caught up on their sleep. Make arrangements with the member to get them to the PX and Commissary within 24 hours. Ensure the member checks into the US-NSE the first working day after their arrival.

### **POST-ARRIVAL**

Once the relocation has taken place, you should consider the following:

1. Continue to assist the member during the first few weeks, or months, with other needs, such as buying/registering a car, locating and moving into permanent housing, etc....
2. Do everything possible to help your new arrival settle in and feel welcome.

### **ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR SPONSORS AT OVERSEAS COMMANDS**

Because of the critical need for additional information on the part of those being transferred to an overseas remote location, such as Verona, the sponsor should also consider the following:

- Make telephone contact considering the time differences and DSN constraints.

- Use first class mail and send pre-arrival material to the individual's leave address if that is necessary to ensure receipt.
- Make yourself available after the individual arrives and assist them in the process of overseas adjustment.

The above list is not exhaustive, and sponsors are encouraged to use initiative and ingenuity to increase the effectiveness of the program. If you sponsor someone as you would want to be sponsored the following occurs:

- You will create a positive first impression that will have a favorable impact on job performance.
- You will facilitate the relocation, lessening the stress for the service member and their family.
- You will have the personal satisfaction of taking on a difficult task and doing it well.
- Ask yourself if you had to do it all over again, what would you do differently. Make some notes and share them with others who will be acting as sponsors. Your comments about problem experiences and recommendations for improvement are critical to the continued success of the sponsor program here in Verona.

**A SAMPLE WELCOME LETTER SHOULD INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING**

- Introduce yourself and give a warm welcome.
- Provide the member information on how they may contact you (home address, work and home phone numbers, e-mail address, etc....)
- Ask them about their dependents. If they will accompany, mode of transportation, ages, birth dates, etc....
- Ask them to keep you posted on their travel and arrival plans. You are required to keep the US-NSE and the Sponsor Program Coordinator informed of any changes the member may make (arrival date, dependent status, etc...).