Selling or Renting Out Your Home

Deciding what to do with the house you own when orders come

DECIDE: SELL OR RENT?

- [ ] Get a market analysis for both the sale price and the monthly rent.
- [ ] Compare rent against mortgage, taxes, insurance, HOA and repairs.
- [ ] Budget for months with no tenant and for big repairs from far away.
- [ ] Check how renting affects your VA loan entitlement for your next purchase.
- [ ] Talk to a tax professional about the capital gains exclusion for military.

IF YOU SELL

- [ ] Choose an agent who has sold homes for military families.
- [ ] Time the listing around pack-out, showings and your report date.
- [ ] Make small repairs and declutter before photos.
- [ ] Plan who handles closing if you've already moved (power of attorney).

IF YOU RENT IT OUT

- [ ] Interview property managers; compare fees and what's included.
- [ ] Switch to a landlord insurance policy.
- [ ] Check HOA and local rental rules or permits.
- [ ] Screen tenants: credit, income, rental history and references.
- [ ] Use a written lease with a move-in inspection and photos.
- [ ] Set aside a reserve for repairs and empty months.

BEFORE YOU LEAVE

- [ ] Change the locks and keep spare keys with the manager or agent.
- [ ] Leave manuals, warranties and vendor contacts for the home.
- [ ] Set up rent deposits and bill pay you can manage remotely.

Know the military tax break

Normally you must live in a home 2 of the last 5 years to exclude the gain when you sell. Service members on qualified official extended duty can suspend that 5-year period for up to 10 years. Ask a tax professional how it applies to you.

Current as of November 2026. Rules change, so confirm details with your installation offices and official sources before you act.