

# Keeping It Legal!

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## Updates to Servicemembers Civil Relief Act

Many military members are aware that pursuant to the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) they can terminate their apartment/home lease due to a Permanent Change of Station (PCS) or deployment. However, did you know that military members are also able to cancel a wide variety of other leases and contracts under SCRA? Members set to PCS or deploy can terminate auto leases, cell phone contracts, cable contracts, and internet service contracts.

On 5 January 2023, POTUS signed into law several Servicemember Civil Relief Act (SCRA) amendments. As described in the below summary- there are some very helpful new SCRA provisions, including: increased ability to

cancel contracts under SCRA (now including gym memberships and home security contracts), increased ability for dependents to cancel contracts under SCRA, additional flexibility in selecting tax residency for servicemembers/spouses, and increased portability of professional licenses for servicemembers and their spouses (though not for attorneys). If you do cancel a contract pursuant to SCRA, the service provider cannot impose an early termination charge, but any taxes or other unpaid obligations are still due. In addition, you still have to return any provider-owned cable boxes, modems, or similar equipment to the service provider to avoid being charged.

Servicemembers and their spouses may elect to use the servicemember's residence/domicile, the spouse's residence/domicile, or the permanent duty station of the servicemember for purposes of taxation.

There are various technicalities not covered here as the rules can vary by the type of contract. For example- to terminate many of the contracts listed above, it's required that the service provider's service not be available in your new location. If interested in potentially terminating one of these contracts, contact your local legal assistance office for additional details and further assistance.

### Your local JA Office is here to help.

To request an appointment:

1. Call 910-394-2341;
2. Send an email to: 43AMOG.JA.LegalAssistance.us.af.mil; or
3. Visit: <https://www.pope.af.mil/about-us/Legal-appointment>.

We provide notaries, powers of attorneys, and attorney consultations (the last by appointment).

For after-hours emergencies, call the Command Post (394-9000) to reach the on-call JAG.

### Ethics Corner

Please remember, the Joint Ethics Regulation (JER) and other ethics standards of conduct still apply in a deployed environment. While contractors may offer gifts to deployed Airmen under the mistaken assumption that the rules don't apply in theatre, Airmen should be aware that they will still be held to the same standards as you are at home. For those Airmen who would like to engage in off-duty employment while overseas (including Tik Tok enterprises and other digital ventures), you should consider mission impact and security issues as well. While mandatory for certain personnel, getting approval for off-duty employment is always prudent, whether you are overseas or at home.