



News for U.S. Military Widows in Korea

1. **No September Visit to Seoul:** There will be no RAO visit to Seoul in September because Chusok falls on the second Tuesday. The next RAO visit to Seoul will be on October 10. If you need assistance before October, please call the RAO at 031-661-1441.
2. **Seoul Visit Location Changes in October:** For nearly two years, the RAO has been meeting with retirees and widows in the lobby of the Dragon Hill Lodge. Now that the new Army Community Center has opened, the RAO will move to that building. Starting in October, the RAO will be located in Room 103 of the Army Community Center, Building 4100, from 9:00am to 12:00pm on the second Tuesday of each month. The Army Community Center is located just past the Dragon Hill Lodge across from the hotel's underground parking. In addition to being a more suitable location for meeting, the ACS building contains a number of services that can assist retirees and widows.
3. **Black Marketing:** The July 28 issue of the Osan base newspaper had a story about black marketing. It reported that nearly 30 people had been identified for black marketing and all of them "were family members of retired or deceased military members." In addition to losing their ration card privileges, they have been barred from the base. We also have to remember that, although black marketing is also done by dependents of active duty members, there is a big difference between the active duty and the retiree/widow communities. Active duty personnel and their dependents are here on military orders. No action would be taken against them as a group, and any ration control violations would be handled on an individual basis.

We have to remember that the ration card privilege for retirees and widows is a privilege, not a guaranteed right. If the command or the Korean government decide that it's too much of a problem, then the privilege could be cancelled for the entire group. The most vulnerable group is widows, followed by the military retirees. Ration cards were originally authorized only for widows of active duty members who died in Vietnam. Later it was extended to all widows. If the Korean government decides to enforce the widow authorization, then only those widows whose husband died in Vietnam would be authorized to have a ration card. Retirees are here voluntarily. It would be easy for the Korean government to say that because they choose to live here voluntarily, retirees should not be allowed to have special privileges that give them an economic benefit over other residents of Korea.

If we want to keep this privilege, we should follow the rules. If, on the other hand, some of us continue to ignore the rules, then both the retirees and the widows could suffer. Before that happens, ask yourself what you would do if you lost access to the Commissary and Exchange. Think seriously about it, because it's a serious matter.

4. Mailbox Reminder: If you have an APO mailbox, you should be checking your mail at least once a week. If you cannot, due to illness or other reason, please ensure there is someone you trust who can check and pick up your mail for you.

Also, if you are going to be on vacation, in the hospital, or gone for some other reason, you should notify the post office to hold your mail until your return. If you don't do this, your mailbox could be closed.

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