

Location Fact Sheet — Afghanistan

Living in Afghanistan

Accommodations vary based on location. It will either be hard buildings or tents. The site you are located at will be determined by the Country Manager upon arrival in country and will be based on mission requirements at that time.

Mail

Mail will go through the Military Postal System (APO) and usually takes about 2 weeks. Packaged mail takes slightly longer. Just like in the States in preparation for holidays, mail does take longer and planning for that is important. All mail arriving in Afghanistan is subject to inspection. See below for a list of prohibited items:

- 1) Alcoholic beverages
- 2) Material used in production of alcoholic beverages (i.e., distilling material, hops, barley, malts, yeast, etc)
- 3) Pork or pork by-products
- 4) Religious material contrary to the Islamic faith (i.e.: anything defaming or speaking badly of the Muslim people or their religion)
- 5) Anything depicting a nude or semi-nude person, pornographic or sexual items
- 6) Firearms or ammunition
- 7) Non-authorized political materials.

Telephone & Internet Service

These services will vary by site. Most sites have a phone bank available and internet privileges at the MWR facility. Some sites have commercial internet with a monthly cost. Do not expect hi-speed internet, as it is not available. You can also purchase a local cell phone, which is pay as you go.

Laundry

Laundry service and/or self-service machines are generally available on post at no cost.

Dining

All sites have dining facilities that provide three to four meals a day. Some of the larger sites also have limited fast food joints.

Finance

As ATM's are not available at all sites, we recommend you bring a checkbook.

Dress Code

All personnel are required to wear collared shirts with shirt tail tucked in with long pants and covered shoes. OSP and Mechanics may wear T-shirts.

Unauthorized clothing (on duty):

- Any type shirts with sleeves cut off
- Any type of open toed shoes
- Any type of shorts
- Shirts with profanity or that promote attention to the employee
- Sweat Pants
- DCU pants with any type of shirt that is not military issue to match the pants

Weather

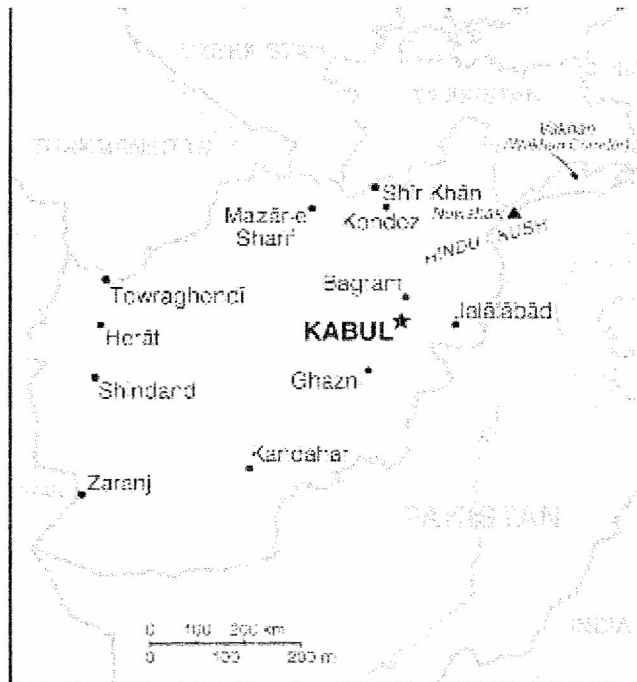
Afghanistan is a country land-locked on all sides and surrounded by the rough and rugged Hindu Kush Mountains. Afghanistan has the typical arid to semi-arid climate of the Russian Steppes. Weather in Afghanistan is characterized by dry, hot, cloudless summers and severe winters. The areas lying in the northeastern part of the mountains experience sub-arctic conditions having dry, cold winters.

The weather is marked by great variance in temperatures from region to region. It is accompanied by huge differences in day and night temperatures and summer and winter temperatures. The drought-ridden regions of the southwestern plateau experience daytime temperatures of 35 degree Celsius. Jalalabad is among the hottest places in the country recording the maximum temperature of 49 degree Celsius in the month of July. January temperatures fall to -15°C or below in regions situated at high altitudes in the mountains.

Time Zone

GMT + 4.5.

Info about Afghanistan:



List of sites:

Bagram Air Field

- South Node
- RNOSC
- North Node – FOB Hub

Legacy FOBS

- Qalat
- TarinKowt
- Orgun- E
- Ghazni

Kabul Metro Area

- Camp Eggers
- Camp Phoenix
- ISAF
- NKC
- Camp Morehead

Kandahar Air Field

Sharana

Salerno

Fenty - Jalalabad

Info for our Afghanistan sites:

Bagram-Bagram Airbase is located in the Parwan Province approximately 7 miles southeast of the city of Charikar and 27 miles north of Kabul. The Airfield is served by a 10,000 foot runway built in 1976 capable of serving large cargo and bomber aircraft. Bagram Airbase has three large hangars, a control tower, and numerous support buildings. There are over 32 acres of ramp space. There are five aircraft dispersal areas with a total of over 110 revetments.

KABUL

Kabul-Kabul is the capital and largest city of Afghanistan with a population variously estimated at 5 to 6 million. It is an economic and cultural center strategically situated in a narrow valley along the Kabul River, high in the mountains before the Khyber Pass. Kabul is linked with the Tajikistan border via a tunnel under the Hindu Kush Mountains. It is about 5,900 feet above sea level. Kabul's population is multicultural and multi-ethnic, reflecting the diversity of Afghanistan, with Pashtuns, Tajiks, and Hazaras all comprising the bulk of the city's population. Kabul is still in the process of being rebuilt following decades of war and devastation, so accurate census counts remain difficult and only rough estimates are available.

KANDAHAR

Kandahar is one of the oldest cities that the world has known. Kandahar's date with history goes back to the time of the epic Mahabharata (possibly 3120BC Indo-Aryan era). The present city of Kandahar was founded in the 4th century BC by Alexander the Great, near the site of the ancient city of Mundigak (established around 3000BC). It was also known as Alexandropolis, after its founder, Alexander. The city has been a frequent target for conquest because of its strategic location in Central Asia, controlling the main trade route linking the Indian subcontinent with southern Persia and the Persian Gulf.

Kandahar-The Kandahar Airfield has a runway length of 10,500 feet. Located 15 miles from the city of Kandahar, this air field is one of the most remote, landlocked and desolate places the Army has ever tried to build a combat base, but it makes for a perfect hub for the coalition to go on missions into the mountains to battle the Taliban or perform reconstruction projects that range from digging a well for a village to setting the stage for national elections and ratifying a constitution.

Payroll

Payroll is done bi-weekly. Every second Friday your paycheck will be deposited into the bank account you supplied us. You will receive your first paycheck 2 to 3 weeks after your arrival depending upon when you arrive in the payroll cycle.

You may qualify for a tax-exempt status provided certain conditions are met. You are advised to speak to a tax advisor before traveling to Afghanistan to find out how to meet those conditions. ITT does not withhold Federal Income Tax unless you specify an amount on your W-4. This can be further discussed at your in-processing. FICA and Medicare Taxes are deducted.

Guidelines for Conduct

1. Afghanistan is a conservative and religious society that looks to Islam as the source of its laws and customs. These are very different from those of western countries. It is quite easy to do something that will give offense unintentionally. If you mind the dos and don'ts of this packet, you will have a successful tour here, and possibly establish friendships with your Afghani counterparts.
2. General sensitivities. The following matters are particularly sensitive to Afghanis, as their views differ markedly from those held in the West. The list is not all-inclusive, but it does touch on the major areas where there have been problems in the past.
 - a. Alcohol and drugs: Consumption of alcohol is prohibited in Afghanistan, as is the use of narcotic drugs in any manner.
 - b. Pornography: Pornography is banned here; it is also more broadly defined here than in the west. Playboy, Penthouse, and similar magazines are expressly banned, as are videotapes with nudity or sexual content. Do not attempt to smuggle pornography into the country or to have it mailed to you, as this could be very embarrassing to the United States. Such actions are considered Class A offenses and lead to immediate employment termination.
 - c. Women: Islam teaches that women hold a position of special honor and dignity, and the society goes to great lengths to protect them from even the suspicion of anything, which might question their honor. Many native women wear an abaya, or long black shawl, to cover their heads and bodies, as well as a veil. It is very unlikely that any Afghan man will introduce you to his wife if you are invited to his home. Social functions with no women present are the norm. You must avoid doing anything that would suggest you are sexually interested in an Afghan woman, as this will bring great dishonor to her and her family. You should avoid staring at women or attempting to speak to them. You should also refrain from asking your acquaintances about their wives. It is inappropriate to ask about their names or health.
 - d. Male-female relationships: Islam disapproves of relationships between men and women outside marital relationship. Public manifestations of intimacy, such as holding hands or kissing (even on the cheek) should be avoided. Co-habitation of males and females who are not related or married is forbidden. Expensive fines, jail terms, and expulsion are "normal" punishments.

e. Religious belief: Most are extremely devout Muslims, and by definition, believe in God. While they understand that most Americans are not Muslim, they do expect all Americans to be religious. To proclaim yourself an atheist or agnostic would shock any Muslim, and would raise questions about your personal integrity. No matter what beliefs you hold, avoid giving the impression that you are irreligious.

Proselytizing: Muslims believe in the same universal, all-powerful, divine being which Christians and Jews worship, and will be eager to tell you about Islam if you express an interest. At some time, someone will probably invite you to become a Muslim. He will do this out of a genuine concern for your well-being and salvation in the afterlife. While this may make some people uncomfortable, they should try to listen patiently and not appear to be annoyed. The invitation is made with full sincerity. Your interlocutor will usually change the subject if he sees that you are uncomfortable. Also, you should never try to convert a Muslim to your own faith. Aside from being illegal, it is unthinkable for a Muslim to abandon his faith.

f. Prayer: Muslims pray five times a day, individually and in congregations. The time of prayer is announced orally over the public address systems located in the minarets of local mosques. The prayer times are at the first light of dawn, high noon, mid-afternoon, sunset, and about an hour and a half after sunset. Genuflections and the repetition of certain utterances perform the prayer. You should never disturb Muslims when they are praying, and you should always try to walk behind them, or to the side, when you pass them. Never walk in front of people who are praying if you can possibly help it. Non-Muslims are not allowed inside of mosques. Do not attempt to enter or photograph a mosque.

g. Contamination: Muslims always wash themselves before praying. After a Muslim has done so, it is important that he not touch anything or do anything that will make him unclean before he performs the prayer. This sensitivity carries over into the other times of the day as well. Therefore, be especially careful not to touch people with your left hand (even casually) if you are offered a beverage or something to eat, always accept it with your right hand. Be careful that the soles of your feet are not pointed at someone when you cross your legs or sit on the ground.

h. Friendship and generosity: Afghanis, like many Arabs, are an extremely generous people. If you are not careful, they will literally "give you the shirts off their backs". Be careful not to be too lavish in your admiration of objects around you or you may be presented with one of them. If the object is small, you should protest that the donor is being too kind, but you may eventually have to accept it or risk giving offense. Accepting hospitality and gifts, however, does impose a tacit understanding of friendship, and friendship in the local view implies loyalty and reciprocity. Be prepared to host your friend or share food and gifts with him. When you are eating, it is always polite to invite people to join you, even if you really do not have enough to share. They will understand and politely refuse. You should do the same in these circumstances. A basic rule: when offered something, decline at least three times; when offering something, insist at least four times.

i. Greetings: When you approach a group of Arabs, it is your duty to say hello to them first rather than they to you. This is because the prophet Muhammad said that it is the duty of the one that arrives to greet those who are already there. If you wish to attract attention say, "as-salaam alaykum" (peace be upon you). Everyone will then drop his or her conversation to

acknowledge your greeting by saying, "Wa alaykum as-salam" (and upon you be peace). You can then begin your business.

US Embassy

Below is a link to the US Embassy and Consulate in Afghanistan:

<http://kabul.usembassy.gov/>

You are encouraged to further research information about Afghanistan online prior to your departure.

