## PREVENTIVE LAW SERIES

# THE SOJOURNER PERMIT

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Upon transferring to Naples, one of the first tasks that military dependents and civilian employees must accomplish is obtaining a **Sojourner Permit,** *the Permesso di Soggiorno*. This process can be confusing because it occurs during the first week in Italy, so the following information is offered to help you both before and after you obtain your Sojourner Permit.

**What is a Sojourner Permit?** A Sojourner Permit is an Italian government document that certifies that a NATO force military dependent, or member of a civilian component, is a temporary legal resident of Italy. It is different from a Visa, which is merely an entry approval.

**Who must obtain a Sojourner Permit?** Italian law requires all foreign personnel entering Italy, other than an active duty member under military orders, to obtain a Sojourner Permit. Application must be made **within eight days** of arrival in Italy. Sojourner Permits are required for all military dependents, all members of a civilian component (DOD civilians, NAFI employees, technical representatives, Red Cross, NFCU, USO and employees of other organizations providing services to and enjoying a special status with the U.S. military) and their dependents.

**How do I obtain a Sojourner Permit?** As part of the Area Orientation process, the U.S. Region Legal Service Office, Europe, Africa, Southwest Asia (RLSO EURAFSWA) assists in the preparation of Sojourner Permit applications, and oversees the acquisition of the Sojourner Permit for all personnel attached to U.S. Navy commands in the Naples area. **Army and Air Force personnel stationed at AFSOUTH apply for Sojourner Permits through the AFSOUTH Provost Marshall's Office in Building "L".**

When you come to RLSO EURAFSWA, you will need:

1) Valid Official or No-fee passport with Visa (type D, *missione*)
2) Four passport photographs
3) A copy of your orders
4) A copy of your rental lease (only if you live in the Naples area)

***Please be advised that all applicants over 14 years of age must apply in person. Children under 14 years will be on mother/father soggiorno permit. Make sure you come with all passports and also pictures of all your children. A spouse or parent may not submit another family member's application, as each person's signature is required at the time of application.***

**What about fingerprints?** An Italian law, the Bossi-Fini Immigration Law of July 30, 2002, requires fingerprints to be taken upon applying or renewing a Sojourner Permit. For new arrivals, the

Italian officials will take fingerprints during indoctrination at the CAPODICHINO base movie theatre during Area Orientation.

**How do I renew my expired Sojourner Permit?** Only *one* month before the expiration date, you must visit RLSO EURSWA, which is located on the second deck of Building Admin II at Capodichino with the following documents listed below:

1) Letter showing your new rotation date from Italy
2) Updated Valid Official or No-fee passport (soon to expire passports will not be accepted)
3) Three passport photographs
4) Your old Sojourner Permit
5) Copy of your rental lease (only if you live in the Naples area)

**What are the Sojourner Permit office hours at RLSO EURSWA?** RLSO EURSWA accepts walk-ins for the application and renewal of Sojourner Permits during the following times:

Mornings:
Monday through Thursday: 0800 – 1200 and Friday: 0900 – 1200

Afternoons:
Monday, Wednesday and Friday: 1300-1530

***Please be advised that RLSO EURSWA cannot accept Sojourner Permit applications outside the above hours.***

**Processing by the Italian authorities can take two weeks to three months, so please be patient. Usually an e-mail will be sent for notification to pick up your soggiorno or you can contact us at 626-4576.**

**What do I do with my Sojourner Permit?** Make a copy of your Sojourner Permit and carry it with you at all times. Keep your original Sojourner Permit in a secure location, along with your passport. Immediately report the loss or theft of a Sojourner Permit to Italian Polizia and to RLSO EURAFSWA. Make sure your original Sojourner Permit accompanies you whenever you travel outside Italy.

Lost Sojourner Permits must be reported to the Polizia where you reside. Reports must be made in-person. Upon report, you will be provided a *denuncia di smarrimento* which must be carried with you in place of the permit while a new one is being issued. It is important that the document indicate it was produced on behalf of the Italian Questura with the words *rilasciato dalla Questura di Napoli/Caserta*. There are Polizia offices at the Capodichino Airport as well as JFC *(Carabinieri)*.

**What do I do with my Sojourner Permit when I PCS out of Italy?** You are **required** to check-out at RLSO EURAFSWA before departing Italy on Permanent Change of Station orders. Upon check-out, all Sojourner Permits must be turned in or check out will not be authorized from this office.