



ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

1500 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-1500

3/25/2020

MANPOWER AND
RESERVE AFFAIRS

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS COMMANDERS OF THE GEOGRAPHIC COMBATANT COMMANDS

SUBJECT: Defense Commissary Agency Mission Critical Personnel and Services

In support of the Department's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, I am designating all DoD commissaries and operational support facilities as mission critical services and all Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA) store and operational support facility employees as mission critical except when otherwise determined by the installation commander in accordance with DoD Instructions (DoDIs) 6200.03, "Public Health Emergency Management (PHEM) Within the DoD," or 6055.17, "DoD Emergency Management (EM) Program." I am taking this action to provide for the continued readiness and support of our military members and families around the world.

While DeCA is hiring additional store employees under critical hire authority to maintain necessary staffing levels, the Secretaries of the Military Departments and geographic combatant commanders should be prepared to support sustainment of commissary operations with uniformed members and assets, if necessary to maintain critical operations. In addition, installation commanders should ensure continued installation access for resupply trucks and commissary-related support services (e.g., linen services and mission critical commercial activities contractors). This authority excludes non-mission contract services and personnel such as delis, bakeries, sushi stations, flower shops, and seafood stations.

I am giving authority to commissary store management to make local decisions on patron purchase limits to ensure stock levels are sufficient to meet demand, except when limited by the installation commander in accordance with DoDI 6200.03. DeCA will make operational decisions to ensure the safe and efficient operation of a commissary, including but not limited to operating hours, days, and staffing levels except when otherwise determined by the installation commander in accordance with DoDIs 6200.03 or 6055.17. Requests for joint force personnel or logistics support will be submitted by DeCA through the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness to the Joint Staff for appropriate review and action.

Providing for the care and feeding of our military members and families is a critical requirement that must be accomplished at all health protection condition levels. This memorandum shall remain in effect for the duration of the national emergency and any installation-declared public health emergency related to the COVID-19 outbreak. Should you have questions or concerns my point of contact is Robert Bianchi, Special Assistant for Commissary Operations, email: robert.bianchi@deca.mil, phone: 804-734-8720.

Virginia S. Penrod
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