



# NEWS RELEASE

## Defense Commissary Agency

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## DeCA seeking help for commissary patrons In wake of CertifiChecks bankruptcy

*By Corporate Communications*

**FORT LEE, Va.** – The Defense Commissary Agency and DoD officials are seeking an alternative that keeps commissary patrons whole, after the financial failure of CertifiChecks Inc., the Dayton, Ohio company whose gift certificates became worthless after it announced it would no longer administer the CertifiCheck program. The company had issued gift checks for the commissary since 2002. It announced Feb. 26 on its Web site that it had ceased operations and was filing Chapter 7 bankruptcy.

“We have been deeply concerned about how this situation has impacted our customers worldwide,” said Philip E. Sakowitz Jr., DeCA director and chief executive officer. “We have been working non-stop with senior leaders at DoD to find an acceptable solution to soften the blow of this unfortunate and unforeseen event on our service members and their families.”

In the meantime, pending announcement of a final decision, DeCA officials are suggesting that patrons hold on to their unredeemed certifichecks, rather than sending them to CertifiChecks as requested on its Web site.

“I want to assure our patrons that in dealing with this issue, from the outset, it’s been our aim – as well as that of those officials we’ve been working with at DoD – to do what’s best for our customers,” Sakowitz added. “I’m optimistic that when a final decision is reached, we’ll have done just that.”

- DeCA-

**About DeCA:** *The Defense Commissary Agency operates a worldwide chain of commissaries providing groceries to military personnel, retirees and their families in a safe and secure shopping environment. Authorized patrons purchase items at cost plus a 5-percent surcharge, which covers the costs of building new commissaries and modernizing existing ones. Shoppers save an average of more than 30 percent on their purchases compared to commercial prices – savings worth about \$3,400 annually for a family of four. A core military family support element, and a valued part of military pay and benefits, commissaries contribute to family readiness, enhance the quality of life for America’s military and their families, and help recruit and retain the best and brightest men and women to serve their country.*