



NEWS RELEASE

Defense Commissary Agency

Corporate Communication

1300 E Avenue | Fort Lee, VA 23801-1800

Tel: (804) 734-8000, Ext. 8-6105 DSN: 687-8000, Ext. 8-6105

FAX: (804) 734-8248 DSN: 687-8248

www.commissaries.com

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Contact: Kevin L. Robinson, DeCA public affairs specialist
Tel.: (804) 734-8000, Ext. 4-8773
E-mail: kevin.robinson@deca.mil

DeCA announces Commissary Gift Card program

*By Kevin L. Robinson,
DeCA public affairs specialist*

FORT LEE, Va. – Extending the gift of groceries to authorized commissary patrons will soon be a lot easier thanks to the new Commissary Gift Card.

The gift cards, available in denominations of \$25 and \$50, will be available June 30 for purchase in stateside stores or online through <http://www.commissaries.com>. Commissary customers overseas can expect to see Commissary Gift Cards in their stores by early July. Customers there should stay tuned to their local store for card availability.

Anyone will be able to purchase the gift cards for commissary shoppers, said Defense Commissary Agency Director and CEO Joseph H. Jeu.

“These gift cards allow anyone to give the gift of groceries – whether it’s mom and dad at home helping their military child in Germany stock up for a holiday dinner or a senior noncommissioned officer who wants to introduce the commissary benefit to a junior soldier who has a family at Fort Hood, Texas,” Jeu said. “We are excited to unveil a program that will allow more people to take full advantage of their benefit.”

This is how the card works: Anyone can purchase the card, but only an authorized patron can redeem it. A customer uses the card as long as there is a balance on it; once the complete \$25 or \$50 total is exhausted, the card can no longer be used. There is no monetary change issued for unused portions of the card. Shoppers can use the remaining card balance in conjunction with other forms of payment, said Robert J. Bunch, chief of DeCA’s customer service division.

SVM, the global leader in gift card program management, is administering the Commissary Gift Card program on behalf of the commissary agency. SVM has provided businesses and organizations with gift cards for promotions, incentives and rewards for more than a decade.

“These cards allow us to offer the gift of groceries without a paper voucher or a gift check,” Bunch said. “And, the ability to order them online helps people who may not ordinarily be connected with the military, or even on an installation, to still be able to reach out to support the troops.”

Here are some quick facts about the Commissary Gift Card:

- The cards will be available at all commissaries worldwide – on a rack at full service, front-end registers – as well as through the DeCA website, <http://www.commissaries.com>.
- The cards expire five years from the date of purchase.
- Online orders incur a handling fee. These fees are not assessed to in-store orders.
- There is no limit to the number of gift cards that a purchaser can buy. However, DeCA officials recommend organizations and activities consider purchasing online if they need \$500 or more in gift cards.
- Commissary Gift Cards can be shipped anywhere in the United States. Outside the United States, gift cards can be shipped to APO, FPO or DPO addresses.
- For customer service questions, call the toll-free phone number, 1-877-988-4438, which also allows the user to check the card balance.
- DeCA is not responsible for replacing lost, stolen, destroyed or mutilated cards.

Once commissaries receive their first gift cards for sale, they will no longer sell gift vouchers. However, customers who have already purchased gift vouchers will be able to redeem them through Aug. 31, 2016.

“In the military we have a longstanding tradition of taking care of our own,” said Army Command Sgt. Maj. John M. Gaines Jr., DeCA senior enlisted advisor to the director. “However, this program also allows families at home, friends, our industry partners and charitable organizations to extend the gift of groceries to our commissary patrons. That’s a wonderful way to say ‘thanks’ for everything they do in serving our nation.”

DeCA began using gift vouchers in 2009 shortly after the agency’s gift check provider, CertifiChecks Inc., ceased operations on Feb. 26, 2009. Since then, customers have redeemed nearly 191,000 vouchers for about \$4.7 million in sales.

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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 amounting to thousands of dollars annually. For current savings figures for various groups – single member up to a family of seven – visit <http://www.commissaries.com>. 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.*