



NEWS RELEASE

Defense Commissary Agency

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New Fort Bliss Commissary to open June 29

Six-day celebration offers food sampling, prizes, promotional prices

*By Nancy O'Neill,
DeCA West public affairs officer*

FORT LEE, Va. – The Defense Commissary Agency will open a new commissary at Fort Bliss, Texas, June 29, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony at 9 a.m.

DeCA has a six-day celebration planned to delight all members of the family, and the events and shopping will kick off immediately following the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

The event will feature spectacular savings as commissary vendors have stepped up to offer hundreds of promotional prices. The six-day event will be marked with food sampling, drawings for prizes and other festivities. Commissary vendors will give away several televisions, a washer and dryer set, a motorcycle, an SUV and hundreds of smaller prizes to customers. On grand opening day and June 30, there will also be a soccer kick, a football toss, two race car simulators, a super slide, a clown and face painting for children.

“We’re excited to offer the commissary savings benefit to the growing military community at Fort Bliss in DeCA’s newest store,” said Joseph H. Jeu, DeCA director and CEO. “Every inch of this store was designed to make shopping an enjoyable and comfortable experience.”

The store is located at 1620 Marshall Road, on the south end of Freedom Crossing at Fort

Bliss, a first-of-its-kind shopping, dining and entertainment marketplace located on a U.S. military installation. The mall opened in November 2010 with an Army and Air Force Exchange Service main store, food court, theater and other retail shops. The addition of the commissary, anchoring one side of the mall, will make retail shopping more convenient on Fort Bliss.

With the grand opening less than a month away, workers are completing installation of product shelving; and the store staff is busy ordering and receiving merchandise to fill the shelves.

“The store is simply beautiful inside, and the modern shelving and refrigeration cases will allow us to pack in a wider variety of products than we’ve been able to fit in the current store,” said Store Director Mike Mena. “We will be able to offer our customers even more of the quality products they’ve come to expect.”

By commissary standards, the new Fort Bliss Commissary is a large store — one of the 10 largest in DeCA’s 250-store inventory. Features of the new store include more than 60,000 square feet of sales area; 28 checkouts, eight of which are self-checkouts; full-service meat and produce departments; an international deli and bakery; an olive bar; hot foods; a fresh fish market; sushi-to-go and rotisserie chicken.

DeCA has included some of the latest environmental and energy efficiency innovations into the store design, and some of them don’t even require an engineering degree to understand, said Mena. The ceiling has large skylights to allow in natural light and automatic lighting controls. A heat-reflective roof will further reduce the commissary’s energy needs in the hot Texas climate.

Construction on the \$20.3 million commissary began in August 2009, on a contract awarded to Leducor Construction, Inc., based in San Diego. Construction was funded with Department of Defense Base Realignment and Closure funds.

Mena said that when the new store opens, the commissary hours will change to better meet the requests of shoppers and to align with operating hours of the mall. The hours will be Monday to Thursday from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., Friday and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.

The current store, which has operated since 1981, will close at 9 p.m. June 27. Workers will use June 28 to shift the commissary operation to the new store, Mena said.

The Fort Bliss Garrison will take possession of the old commissary building when DeCA moves into the new store, and it is considering several reuse options for the facility, according to John Kirby, deputy director of the Fort Bliss Garrison Plans and Training Directorate.

-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 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.*

Cutline: