

THE SANDPAPER



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Expanded Use-or-lose Leave Law Set to Expire Soon

By DoD News, Defense Media Activity

WASHINGTON, March 31, 2015 - With the expiration of a law that allowed service members to carry up to 75 days of leave from one fiscal year to the next, troops should plan to carry no more than 60 days of leave into fiscal year 2016, defense officials recently announced.

Service members will automatically lose any accumulated ordinary leave in excess of 60 days on October 1, 2015, officials said. Troops covered by special leave accrual rules may still carry up to 120 days from one fiscal year to the next, officials noted.

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013 extended the authority to carry over an additional 15 days of leave (total of 75 days) to September 30, 2015.

Leave Carry-over Limit

Previous authority was set to expire September 30, 2013, but DoD recommended a 2-year extension of the 75 day leave carry-over limit in 2013 to provide ample time for affected members to plan and use accumulated leave and to coincide with the reduction in combat posture in Afghanistan.

The fiscal year 2010 National Defense Authorization Act initially extended the 2008 temporary authorization for all service members to carryover an additional 15 days of leave because the high operations tempo resulted in less opportunity for members to use the leave they had earned.

The 75-day leave carry-over limit does not apply to members who qualify for Special Leave Accrual; they may carry over up to 120 days of leave.

Members may qualify for Special Leave Accrual if they:

- Served on active duty for a continuous period of at least 120 days in a hostile fire or imminent danger pay area;
- Were assigned to a designated deployable ship, mobile unit, or other similar prescribed duty as determined by the service secretary concerned; or
- Performed qualifying duties designated by the Secretary concerned.

Service members are encouraged to check their Leave and Earnings Statement and talk with their finance office to help understand their correct use-or-lose balance and to work with their commands to manage their leave balances throughout the rest of this fiscal year.

LES Projections

Although previous LES's did not account for the 75-day leave carryover expiration in projecting use-or-lose leave amounts, officials from the Defense Finance and Accounting Service say those LES projections have now been corrected for active component Army, Navy, and Air Force service members. They will appear on the April LES.

Members can access their April LES through the myPay system as of April 23, 2015. However, the projected use-or-lose balance will only take into account leave that was charged to members' accounts through April 22.

Any leave taken or posted to the members' account after that date will not be reflected. Reserve component members with projected use-or-lose leave, will be contacted individually by DFAS and given their use-or-lose balance.

Inside This Issue

02	From the Triad
03	Spotlight
04	Commissary
05	Local History
06	CYP



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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

FROM THE TRIAD



CO
CAPT W. Doster



XO
CDR A. Schlismann



CMC
CMDCM W. Marcus

We have finished a very busy spring season which included a highly successful Air Show and are gearing up for summer. This year, the entire NAF El Centro team worked especially hard on both air show preparations and execution. From all reports we've seen, their work was recognized and resulted in a truly professionally run air show.

Our efforts did not go un-rewarded either with a nice profit generated that goes directly into the base's MWR account. Look for some quality of life improvements as a result of that. Thank you everyone for your hard work and understanding during this year's show. Next year we'll look to make some improvements and outpace our results from this year!

Speaking of MWR and quality of life, I want to hear from you, the Sailors and families who use NAF El Centro facilities every day.

What do you like? What do you want to change? What do you want to add? I have the ability to make changes to suit your needs, but I need to know what those needs/desires are.

As I wrote in my last article, I want to make every effort to improve the quality of life for everyone who calls NAF El Centro home. I need your help, so if you have some ideas on ways to improve anything on base let me know. Do you want to see the commissary hours change? How about Take 5 hours of operation or the base swimming pools?

Use the link below, use the Quality of Life Representatives in the work spaces, or even the comment box located in Take 5.

I look forward to hearing from you. See you around the base

- CO

To submit your question, comment or concern, send an email to the paper at:

W_ELCN_PAO_SANDPAPER_GS@NAVY.MIL

(put CO SUGGESTION in the subject line)



IN THE SPOTLIGHT



CPOs Celebrate 122 Years of Excellence

On April 1, 2015 the Chief Petty Officers of NAF El Centro celebrated their 122nd Birthday. “If I could coin one word for this year’s birthday theme, it would be ‘progress,’ said Mike Stevens, Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy. “Our Navy is 239 years old – could you imagine where our Navy would be without progress?”

“We went from wind-powered sails to coal-powered steam. Now we sail under nuclear power. Our aircraft have gone from propeller power to jet power,” Stevens added. “Without change, there is no progress. Change is not always easy, but that’s ok, because hard is what Chiefs do.”

To begin the day and set the tone for the events to follow, the CPO Mess conducted Morning Colors. Later that day they broke off into teams and personally went through each of the departments and tenant commands to speak directly with Sailors and the civilians here on base.

Lunch was served in the Galley and each Chief brought with them a deserving Sailor. Together they dined and discussed the future of the Navy. For dessert a large Birthday cake was served to the crew.

After an afternoon of leadership training and personalized ceremonies to thank their families, the CPO Mess showed up in full force for the Comedy Show presented by MWR.



MONTHLY DET LOADING



MONTH	TOTAL DETS	FOREIGN DETS	PERSONNEL	AIRCRAFT
APR	11	2	1242	80
MAY	8	2	1137	88



**Numbers subject to change based on availability of hangar space and time of squadron det request.

Fact or fiction:

What do you know about your commissary benefit?

By Kevin L. Robinson, DeCA public affairs specialist



FORT LEE, Va. – What a commissary patron knows about their commissary benefit – how it works, its history and its features – can make all the difference in how they use it.

Just ask Air Force Command Chief Master Sgt. Stuart M. Allison, the Defense Commissary Agency's senior enlisted advisor to the director.

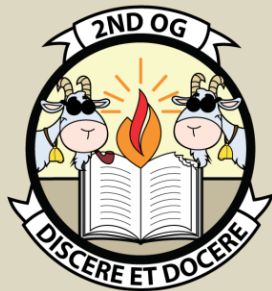
"The best way to use the commissary benefit is to be an informed shopper," Allison said. "By 'informed,' I mean being aware of what the benefit is and how it began. Do you know about our great savings in produce, meat and other grocery products? The more you know, the more the benefit works for you."

So, to help commissary shoppers, here's Allison's quick guide of *fact-versus-fiction* information:

- *The commissary is only authorized for married military members living in on-base housing:* **Fiction.** Where a person lives or their marital status does not influence commissary access. All that matters is their status as an authorized patron. Active duty military, reservists, retirees, 100 percent disabled military veterans, Medal of Honor recipients and their authorized family members are all authorized to shop.
- *Case lot sales can save patrons upwards of 50 percent:* **Fact.** DeCA's Commissary Customer Appreciation case lot sales offer savings of 50 percent or more on club pack and full-case items. Customers can go to www.commissaries.com to find out scheduled sales. They can also find this information on their store's Web page.
- *The Defense Commissary Agency isn't connected to its patrons in cyberspace:* **Fiction.** DeCA reaches hundreds of thousands of patrons online through social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, Foursquare and Pinterest. Through social media, DeCA gets instant feedback from customers on promotions, store conditions and product preferences. The sites also draw patrons to www.commissaries.com for more information to maximize their benefit.
- *DeCA has a rewards card that gives its patrons access to digital coupons:* **Fact.** The Commissary Rewards Card is a convenient way for customers to save even more with about 160 digital coupons. Patrons can download those digital coupons to the Commissary Rewards Card from the commissary website or from Smart Source "direct to card." iPhone and Android apps make it even easier for customers to review their coupon accounts, as well as locate commissaries and their contact information.
- *Patrons can only access commissary products in a commissary:* **Fiction.** DeCA's Guard/Reserve On-Site sales extend the commissary benefit to Guard/Reserve members and their families who don't live near a commissary. These sales are hosted by nearby commissaries in cooperation with Guard/Reserve units that have at least 150 members stationed in an area. Although designed for reservists, any authorized patron can shop during the sales. A listing of on-site sales can be found at www.commissaries.com.
- *The 5-percent surcharge is a tax:* **Fiction.** The 5-percent surcharge, mandated by Congress, is returned to commissary patrons in the form of continually improved commissary facilities – new stores, as well as renovations of existing ones. The savings of 30 percent includes the 5-percent surcharge.
- *Military commissaries date back to the 1860s:* **Fact.** Although DeCA was formed in 1991, the modern era of sales commissaries actually began in 1867. It was then that enlisted men received the same at-cost purchasing privileges officers had already enjoyed for four decades. From the start, commissaries were meant to allow the Army to "care for its own." The stores provided wholesome food beyond official rations, and the savings supplemented military pay.
- *Baggers are commissary employees:* **Fiction.** Baggers are not commissary employees, and are paid solely by the tips from commissary patrons in exchange for bagging/carryout services. Baggers are self-employed and work under a license agreement with an installation commander.

"Doing your homework can pay off at the cash register," Allison said. "If you want to save more, boost your commissary knowledge. Tune in to DeCA's social media sites, and check the commissary website for the current sales flyer, ongoing promotions, the lineup of Commissary Value Brands and available digital coupons for your Commissary Rewards Card.

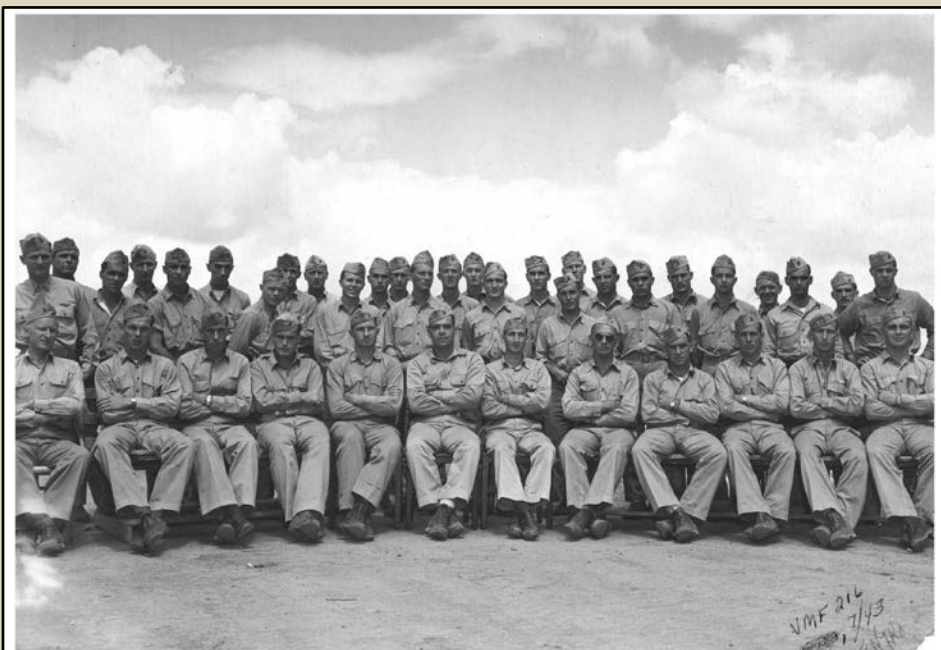
"It's your benefit," he added. "Take the time to understand it and use it."



LOCAL HISTORY BY TWO OLD GOATS

VMF-216, an El Centro first

Many people know that the base here began life as a Marine Corps Air Station. VMF-216 was the first fighter squadron stationed here. Commissioned January 1, 1943, the Bulldogs would leave their home later that year and spend the next two years fighting in the Pacific Theater. The squadron was decommissioned after the war ended in 1945.



Back Row:
Robert Davey, Francis Mattingly, Paul, Mathew Allen, Henry Means, Murphy, Chandier, Elwood, Bill Haganah, Knight, Snyder, Henry, Neil Kidwell, Jackson McGowan, Bill O'Brien, Lowell 'Stub' Wilkerson, Walter Straughn, Charles Schwartz, Tom Fitzgibbons, John Barton, Rudy Radosevich, Bob Anderson, Dwight Dempster, Gunner Hurst, Wayne Hancock, Gunner Joseph L'Heureaux, David Riley

Front Row:
Gunner Burman, Rolland Marker, Harrison, Bob Martin, Benjamin Hargrave, Rivers J. Morrell, Jr., Lawrence 'Cloudy' Faulkner, Dr. George Ulrich, John Kamps, Jean Patton, Ennis Walden, Guy Kemper



Due to the extreme high summer temperatures in El Centro, flight training typically began at 4 AM and ending by noon or was scheduled for after sundown. So intense was the midday heat that the risk of blowing a tire on the landing strip was very great.

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housewares, and a little bit of random stuff to
make you go "HMMMMMM."
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JOB Links for Employment

Federal Jobs: <http://www.usajobs.gov>
DoD Jobs: <http://www.militaryconnection.com/dod.asp>
Employment Development Department's California Jobs:
<http://www.caljobs.ca.gov/>
Imperial County Jobs: <http://imperialcountyjobs.org/>
Energy Conservation: <http://www.tetrattech.com>
HOUSING/ Contract ALUTIIQ: <http://www.alutiiq.com>
AOC: <http://aocwins.com/>
HAZMAT/ SERCO: <http://www.serco-na.com/Default.aspx?Page=HomePage>
JET MART/NEX: <https://www.nexnet.nexweb.org/pls/nexjobs/work4us>
MWR: <http://navylifesw.com/sandiego/about/jobs/>
NMCI: <http://h10134.www1.hp.com/services/>
SECURITY/CONTRACT/LOCKHEED MARTIN : <http://www.lockheedmartinjobs.com>

CO Suggestion Box Locations

**Jet Mart
AOC Bldg
NGIS Bldg 401
Weapons
Oasis**

HELPFUL NUMBERS

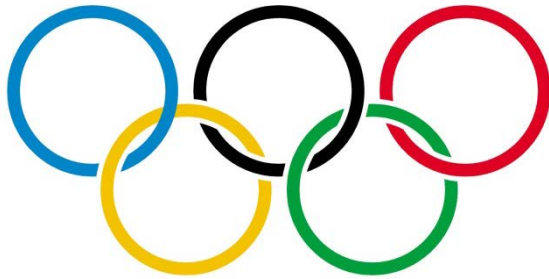
Chaplain's Office--760-339-2290
Drug and Alcohol Advisor--760-339-2603
Medical Emergency Room--911
Duty Corpsman--619-804-1037 / 619-804-1520
FFSC--1-800-273-8255
Suicide/Crisis Center Hotline--1-800-342-9647
SAPR--760-540-1053
Victim Advocate Duty Phone--760-644-2913

HAPPENING AT THE CYP

Base Hosts 2nd Annual Mini-Olympics

By Velvet Espinoza

In support of the Boys and Girls Club Week, the Child and Youth Programs partnered with the Boys and Girls Club of Imperial Valley for the 2nd Annual Mini Olympics held at NAF El Centro's very own track and field. The Mini Olympics was a fun filled event in which eleven teams of children competed against each other in eleven different sports events. The children were aged 5 to 17 and were teamed up with children in their age category from all over the Imperial Valley. Events included the Long Jump, 100 Meter dash, Shot Put, and team events such as Tug of War, and a 3-Legged Race. After each team completed all the events each child was presented with a medal and a certificate. The event concluded with lunch and a water balloon fight. Our Federal Fire Department also helped the kids cool off with their fire truck spraying water during the water balloon fight. The CYP would like to thank all the wonderful active duty volunteers and departments that helped out to make this event possible. We hope to see everyone again at next year's Mini Olympics!



Children run through an obstacle at the Mini-Olympics held at NAF El Centro.



Children compete in a game of tug-o-war at NAF El Centro during the 2015 mini-Olympics