Shutdown Affects Quality of Life, Readiness Programs

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WASHINGTON — The government shutdown that began at midnight will affect the operating status of quality of life and family readiness programs offered by the Defense Department to service members and their families, Pentagon officials said.

Operating hours and status may vary at the local installation level, officials said in a statement, adding that addresses and phone numbers for installation and state resources available to active duty, National Guard and reserve service and family members at the Military Installations website.

"We are working with each of the military services to keep as many doors open as possible during the government shutdown," Julie Blanks, the acting deputy assistant secretary of defense for military community and family policy, said. "We will be operating within the fiscal guidance passed down from senior Defense Department leadership."

Guidance on Specific Activities

The list below provides guidance as to what to expect regarding the operating status of these programs while the government is shut down:

-- Military OneSource: The Military OneSource website and call center will remain fully operational. Military OneSource is a Defense Department-wide program that promotes the quality of life of service members and their families by delivering information, referrals, confidential counseling and other services in person, online and by telephone. The service is available worldwide 24 hours a day, seven days a week, at no cost to the user and regardless of the service member's activation status. Visit their website or call 800-342-9647.

-- Child Development Centers: Contact your local CDC or installation for details and guidance.

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-- Department of Defense Education Activity: DODEA schools and district offices worldwide will remain open. Headquarters and regional offices will be affected by the shutdown.

-- The Military and Family Life Counseling program will continue uninterrupted. The MFLCs will perform routine functions. If an MFLC is unable to access the installation during a shutdown, officials said, they will work offsite until they are able to access the installation.

-- Military exchanges will be open worldwide.

-- Overseas commissaries will remain open, including two stores in Guam and one in Puerto Rico. Commissaries in five remote stateside locations also will remain open: Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center Bridgeport and Fort Irwin in California; Coast Guard Station Kodiak and Fort Greely in Alaska; and Dugway Proving Ground, Utah. The remainder of stateside commissaries will follow an orderly shutdown to reduce the amount of perishables on hand and properly safeguard equipment and facilities. For more details, go to the Defense Commissary Agency website, or its Facebook and Twitter pages.

-- Family Support Centers: Staffing will be determined by installation commanders.

-- Family Advocacy Program: Each service will determine staffing at each installation.

-- MWR: Morale, Welfare and Recreation programs, nonappropriated fund activities and other operations necessary to support those activities not affected by a shutdown will continue. Examples of these excepted activities are operation of dining facilities, physical training and child care activities required to support readiness.

-- My Career Advancement Accounts: Financial assistance requests will be continue to be approved. In addition, Spouse Education and Career Opportunities career coaches will continue to be available to provide comprehensive education and career counseling services. Call the SECO Career Center at 800-342-9647 or visit the SECO website and continue to monitor the MyCAA portal for any updates.

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