Yokosuka community seeks answers at town hall meeting

Compiled by CFAY Public Affairs

The following are questions and answers from the Yokosuka Town Hall meeting held at the Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka Benny Decker Theater April 4:

Q: Can a shuttle bus be provided from housing areas to the ships?

A: Due to funding constraints, we cannot add an extra on base shuttle. However, the current base shuttles begin running at 6 a.m. and have several stops throughout housing and along the waterfront. The bus schedule can be found at the following locations: Fleet and Family Service Center, lobby of Navy Exchange main store, mini-marts, food court areas, Navy Gateway Inns Suites and Navy lodge lobby.

Q: Can the Narita Shuttle accept excess baggage if it is on a member's orders?

A: Currently, the shuttle service does make every effort to accommodate excess baggage if it is on a member's orders. However, the bus has limited storage capacity, so in a case when the bus is full of passengers, and there is not enough storage space for all excess baggage, the shuttle staff will work with the member on a plan to get all of their baggage to the base. If a member just has one or two excess bags, that is usually not an issue. In the case that a member has a considerable amount of oversized equipment, we ask that the member let us know when they are making their shuttle reservation, and that way we can better support them when they arrive.

Q: Can reservist use the galley?

A: In accordance with NAVSUP P-486 a reservist must be participating in Inactive or active duty training to be authorized to eat in ashore galleys. The member should have paperwork documenting their status.

Q: Why are civilians not permitted to eat at the Galley?

A: Based on the installation Commanding Officer's policy statement dated 25 June 2010, which is derived from the NAVSUP 486, feeding civilians (i.e. federal employees, retirees, dependants, guest, etc.) it is unwarranted and contrary to the congressional intent for funding the feeding of Sailors. In the future, during unexpected circumstances when all other dining facilities on base are closed, I will authorize all Temporary Assigned Duty civilians on orders to eat in the galley on a paying basis.

Q: Why aren't TAD personnel allowed to get a base drivers license or be allowed to drive with an International Drivers License?

A: All Temporary Additional Duty (TAD) contractors/civilians who report to CFAY on orders can submit a waiver to the current COMFLEACTINST 5800.2G via their parent command to Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka. Depending on the length of the orders (short or long term) will determine the issuance of a USFJ Form 4EJ (CFAY Drivers License) or authorized usage of said International Drivers license to rent and occupy such vehicle on the installation. With the appropriate approval, member(s) will be authorized to rent a vehicle and/or obtain a temporary vehicle pass (via the Vehicle and Registration office) for the duration of the temporary assignment.

Note: All TAD personnel who rent a vehicle via local source are required to utilize the Vehicle and Registration office for temporary passes. All local contractors who are conducting work onboard the installation must use the Industrial Security Office for temporary passes while long term administrative paperwork is completed.

Q: How will parents be notified in the future if there are significant bus delays due to severe weather or other emergent event?

A: CFAY Emergency Management Officer (EMO) and the Yokosuka Complex Transportation Officer (YCTO) have exchanged contact information with each other and has implemented a process to provide more timely information on significant bus delays. The new process will be made available to all parents with children who ride the school buses.

Q: Can something be done about contractors who drive recklessly on base?

A: We will reiterate safe driving practices to contractors and review the license revocation policy.

Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka Commanding Officer Capt. David Owen listens to a question from the crowd during a town hall meeting in Fleet Theater, April 4. Owen holds several town hall events at each of the locations under Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka to give community members a chance to ask questions and voice their concerns.
Photo by Joe Schmitt

Q: Can some clarification be provided on who can post fliers for private businesses on base. Can their be some way of authorizing legitimate fliers, such as a stamp, that could be used.

A: Instructions issued by Commander, Fleet Activities, Yokosuka, strictly prohibit advertising for either private employment or private organizations in Military Family Housing (MFH). Individuals wishing to advertise either events or business services or goods are encouraged to place an advertisement in the Seahawk or through other non-official means.

Q: Can table wipes be made available so patrons can clean their own tables at the NEX food courts?

A: We have positioned a "Sanitation Wipe Stand", for customer use in the Main Street Food Court. Additional wipe stands are on order to cover all NEX Food Outlets.

Q: Can a photo kiosk be ordered?

A: The Kodak Photo Machine is located right across from the Flower Shop in the Main Store and is operational.

Defense commissaries announce coupon policy changes

By Rick Brink, DeCA public affairs specialist

FORT LEE, Va. – Changes are on the way in how commissaries handle coupons and product returns without receipts, among other things, as the Defense Commissary Agency enacts customer service policy changes to protect the commissary benefit.

"The average coupon user might not notice the policy changes because they are aimed at preventing possible misuse of the commissary benefit – primarily using coupons to get large amounts of cash back," said Joseph H. Jeu, DeCA director and CEO.

Commissary shoppers are big users of coupons, as evidenced by DeCA's consistent ranking among the top 10 grocery retailers in coupon redemptions over the past several years. Commissaries welcome coupon usage, and to acquaint customers with the changes in the coupon acceptance policy, it has been posted on the agency's website at http://www.commissaries.com/inside_deca/publications/directives/DeCAD40_6_PC_3.pdf and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/YourCommissary.

Key changes, which go into effect May 1, include:

- Gift cards will be issued to a customer, in conjunction with cash, whenever a transaction total reflects $25 or more is owed to the customer due to coupon "overages" (when the face value of the coupon exceeds the selling price of the item purchased and the transaction results in a negative balance)
- Gift cards will be issued to customers, in conjunction with cash, for refunds of $25 or more when a receipt is presented showing the merchandise was originally purchased with gift cards
- Gift cards will be issued to customers, in conjunction with cash, for refunds of $25 or more when a receipt is not presented
- Clarification for instances of suspected privilege abuse
- Update to the coupon acceptance policy that clarifies dot-scan barcode requirements and pin requirements for unique numbering, that photocopies and counterfeit coupons are not accepted, and that coupons must be printed in English

The changes harness the scope of the new commissary gift card, which has been in use since last summer. Available only in denominations of $25 and $50, issuing gift cards as an alternative to paying out large sums of cash brings DeCA in line with other retailers' practices and ensures DeCA's cash flow is not adversely impacted. Amounts under $25 will be in cash.

"Commissaries are providers of a benefit that sell groceries at cost, and using the gift cards to cover certain refunds and coupon 'overages' discourages practices contrary to DeCA's mission," Jeu noted.

"We value coupon usage because it helps our customers boost their savings," Jeu said. "These changes are in the best interest of all concerned to help ensure that coupons continue to be a great source of savings for our customers."