



Military exchanges prep for influx of online customers

Reserve Officers Association

The Veterans Online Shopping Benefit will become available on military exchange websites starting Nov. 11, and the exchanges are stocking up in anticipation of a huge increase in customers. More than 235,000 veterans have already been verified for the benefit, but as many as 18 million individuals may be eligible.

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Thank you for your service: Commissaries salute military with special November events

Defense Commissary Agency

Commissaries worldwide will salute the military community in November with special events and promotions including high-value coupon booklets for free frozen turkeys. "We're recognizing our military and their families, and all veterans who have served and sacrificed for our nation," said Tracie Russ, the Defense Commissary Agency's sales director.

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Military Families: We Appreciate You!

National Military Family Association

November is Military Family Month, a time for the nation to focus on the uniqueness, braveness, and total awesomeness of the military family. Just like yours and mine, military families face challenges in the day-to-day. But unlike many Americans, military families face (and overcome) challenges most will never understand.

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Special Report: Military Family Support

U.S. Department of Defense

The Defense Department joins the nation in honoring the commitment, sacrifices and contributions families of service members make every day in support of the military and the nation. Learn more in the Defense.gov special report.

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Lawmakers weigh massive reforms to VA health care

Military Officers Association of America

The House Veterans Affairs Committee held a hearing Tuesday to discuss proposals that could drastically overhaul the VA health care system and allow more veterans to get care closer to home. Lawmakers, VA officials, and veterans service organizations weighed in at the Oct. 24 hearing on draft legislation that could make it far easier for patients to receive care in their communities.

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Bill would dramatically increase veterans' life insurance payouts

Military Times

On Friday, Republican Rep. Steve Pearce introduced legislation to overhaul the life insurance program for service-connected disabled veterans, raising the cap on payouts from \$10,000 to \$95,000 and giving eligible veterans more time to sign up for the program. "Veterans injured in combat face many challenges as they return home and adjust back into civilian life," he said in a statement.

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As retirement decision looms, less than half of eligible troops have taken mandatory training

Military Times

With about two months to go before eligible service members can opt into the new Blended Retirement System, less than half of these 1.6 million troops have completed the mandatory training. About 43 percent of the service members eligible to choose the new retirement system have taken the required course, Defense Department spokesman Army Maj. Dave Eastburn said. The opt-in period starts Jan. 1, and eligible service members have all of 2018 to make their BRS decision. [READ MORE](#)

Student-loan forgiveness program in jeopardy

USNI News

A federal program encouraging public service by paying-off federal school loan balances is poised to be canceled, potentially leaving thousands of active-duty officers with mountains of debt they expected to be forgiven. Called the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program, former President George W. Bush rolled out the plan in 2007 to encourage people earning expensive college degrees to work for the federal government. [READ MORE](#)