



U.S. ARMY GARRISON BENELUX

COVID-19 Update - April 8

WHY THIS UPDATE NOW ?

Secretary of Defense Mark T. Esper strongly encourages military personnel, DoD civilians, their family members, and DoD contractors to follow CDC guidelines on the use of cloth face coverings in public settings, or where other physical distancing measures are difficult to maintain. Accordingly, the USAG Benelux Garrison Commander is putting measures in place to regulate the wear of face coverings through the garrison footprint.



MANDATORY WEAR OF FACE COVERINGS

Effective Friday, Apr. 10, to reduce the risk for the entire community, the wear of face coverings will be mandatory on all AAFES, DeCA and Post Office facilities through the USAG Benelux area of responsibility. We are doing great as a community at protecting ourselves; this will help even more. Starting on this date we'll institute an initial phase of "soft enforcement" to give you time to prepare. You'll still be allowed in, but will be reminded by either MPs or staff at the facility that starting on Apr. 13 the face covering will be mandatory and the "grace period" will be complete. Screening teams at the gates will take part in this initiative by reminding everyone of the necessity to abide by the rules. As of Monday, Apr. 13, the Military Police patrols will enforce the measures. Not having a face covering could result in the denial of access to the above facilities. Security check points may require the lowering of face coverings for identification purposes.



FACE COVERING DO'S AND DON'TS

DO:

- ✓ Make sure you can breathe through it
- ✓ Wear it whenever going out in public
- ✓ Make sure it covers your nose and mouth
- ✓ Wash with soap and warm water after using



DON'T:

- ✗ Use if under two years old
- ✗ Use surgical masks or other PPE intended for healthcare providers

ALSO: Soldiers are authorized to wear the neck gaiter and other cloth items, such as bandanas and scarves, as face coverings. However, people should not fashion face coverings from Army Combat Uniforms or other materials that have been chemically-treated. Personal protective equipment, such as N95 respirators or surgical masks, must be reserved for use in medical settings.

OTHER MEASURES IN PLACE

All organizations through our area of responsibility have put some extraordinary measures in place:



- Visitors policy remains revoked and all stores continue to conduct 100% ID card checks at the entrance
- Bagging services remain suspended at AAFES and DeCA
- The Commissary is open from 10 a.m. to 10.30 a.m. for highrisk customers
- Footprints have been placed on the floor to help everyone respect physical distancing.
- All our Commissaries and PXs are now equipped with Plexi-glas shields at the register to avoid projection of droplets.
- Use of shopping carts is mandatory
- Hand washing stations have been placed in strategic locations. Please use them
- Payment per credit/debit card is encouraged
- Task Force Screen has been screening visitors at the gates
- Task Force Clean has been cleaning offices and facilities every day

HOW CAN YOU HELP ?

- The USAG Benelux is in need of volunteers for the DeCA Shopping Program. Volunteers will shop and deliver groceries to US ID card holders with Commissary privileges, who are unable to shop for themselves due to COVID-19 quarantine/self-isolation. Volunteers will take customer orders, shop for the items in the store, coordinate payment between the cashier and customer, and deliver the purchased Commissary goods to the customer.



Interested? Contact the Task Force Personnel COVID-19 Volunteer POC at DSN 368-9623, or civilian +32 (0)2 717.9623.

- The Chièvres Commissary is seeking volunteers to assist in stocking between the hours 9 p.m. and 2:30 a.m. For sign up instructions, email Demetri.Elsberry@deca.mil and CC Jungmin.Cox@deca.mil, denis.mayer@deca.mil, and estrella.deguzman.be@deca.mil. Commissary phone number is +32 (0)68.276480.

DIY FACE COVERING

There is not one design that is the consensus gold standard for a DIY face covering. However, the CDC website has a few patterns, including one that involves a coffee filter and another that requires no sewing - just scissors and the willingness to sacrifice a T-shirt. Surgeon General Jerome Adams released a video of himself making a mask out of cloth and rubber bands. Find some links on: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html> and <https://www.dvidshub.net/image/6164934/us-army-europe-face-covering-tactics>



U.S. Army Guidance: <https://www.army.mil/coronavirus/>
U.S. Department of Defense: <https://www.defense.gov/Explore/Spotlight/Coronavirus/>
Military Health System: <https://www.health.mil/news/in-the-spotlight/coronavirus>
COVID-19 in Belgium: <https://info-coronavirus.be/fr/news/>
Dutch Ministry of Health, Wellness, and Sport: <https://www.rivm.nl/node/152921>
German Federal Ministry of Health: <https://www.bundesgesundheitsministerium.de/en/press/2020/coronavirus.html>

