Press Release

Release Nr: 2004-09

April 29, 2020

Fort Drum Public Affairs

Fort Drum officials announce a phased return to training, while some FMWR facilities will reopen next week

Fort Drum, NY - Soldiers of the 10th Mountain Division (LI) will slowly see training levels increase and community members will have more access to recreational services, as Fort Drum officials announced plans to begin a phased return of operations starting May 4.

Col. Jeffery Lucas, Fort Drum garrison commander, described it as a "methodical and with constant analysis" approach, as the installation moves from "mission essential" to "mission required" status to support more training opportunities.

"From the start, every precaution necessary has been taken to keep our community safe while maintaining Soldier readiness," Lucas said. "But we are in a place now where we can believe our consistently low infection rate allows us to begin a deliberate return to a training tempo that supports our ongoing global mission requirements."

The "mission required" status is a lower threshold for bringing Soldiers and civilian employees back to work, and it will be determined at the unit or director level. Lucas reiterated that it does not reflect a lower level of vigilance when it comes to preventing and mitigating the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19). Masks, social distancing and meticulous hygiene habits will still be a requirement for all living, working or visiting here.

According to the Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security, units will use training devices and simulations in small groups, and conduct live-fire training at the Staff Sgt. Michael H. Ollis Weapon Training Center (Range 2).

James Moore, DPTMS Training Division chief, said that Soldiers will follow all Coronavirus (COVID-19) safety protocols mandated on post, to include physical distancing and wearing face coverings, while training on simulators. There also will be limitations placed on how many Soldiers can train at once.

Units will gradually transition to small arms qualification on the outdoor range complex in the coming weeks.

"Soldiers will also be able to conduct tactical situational training exercises in small groups within their assigned local training areas in the cantonment area, always ensuring they maintain social distancing requirements and protocols," Moore said.

The training will be subject to constant analysis that will determine whether it continues on the same course or needs to be scaled back based on the COVID-19 infection rate in the area. Recently, the North Country was listed as having the lowest infection rate in the state at 1.2 percent.

Services will return at several Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation facilities beginning the week of May 4. On Tuesday, patrons can make appointments to service their vehicles at the Automotive Skills Center by calling (315) 772-7902. Additionally, car washes throughout post are open for use. The Remington Park trails and recreation areas will be open from dawn to dusk. Community members are asked to observe physical distancing while in public and to wear face masks when required.

Limited equipment rentals at Outdoor Recreation will be available for individuals, small group or family use. The center is open 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, by appointment only. The Outdoor Recreation Range will be open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, by appointment only, starting May 9. For details, call (315) 772-5169.

"We are excited to reopen our facilities to serve our Soldiers and families and civilians in a manner that protects the safety and well-being of our patrons and our staff," said Sharon Addison, FMWR director. "We ask for your patience and understanding as we implement new business practices that ensure compliance with installation policies."

Additionally, the Po Valley Child Development Center will reopen May 4 to currently registered and enrolled patrons in order to expand child care opportunities on post. Child care at the CDCs is limited to mission-required personnel only. People who want to submit paperwork or check to see if they qualify can contact CYS at (315) 772-6715.

For more information about the availability of FMWR facilities, visit www.facebook.com/DrumFMWR.

The Mount Belvedere access control point will resume 24/7 operations, starting at 5:30 a.m. May 2. Only Department of Defense cardholders - to include passengers inside the vehicle - will be allowed access through this control point. Non-DoD cardholders will be turned away and asked to enter through the Lt. Gen. Paul Cerjan Gate or Gas Alley Gate.

For details about current gate access, visit https://home.army.mil/drum/index.php/about/Garrison/public-affairs/coronavirus-update.

###

Media with inquiries regarding this press release should contact Fort Drum Public Affairs, Julie Halpin, julie.a.halpin2.civ@mail.mil, 315-772-8286.