

THURSDAY, MAY 22, 2025

THE FORT JACKSON LEADER

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FIELD DAY



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DOD program expands online ID card capability

By ARMY MAJ. WES SHINEGO
DOD News

In an effort to improve the quality of life for military personnel and their families, the Defense Manpower Data Center has expanded its online uniformed services identification card issuance system to include overseas service members and dependents.

Online issuance and renewal of ID cards initially launched as a pilot program in 2023 to streamline the process and allow sponsors to remotely request cards online. The cards are printed by the Government Publishing Office and securely mailed to the recipients, eliminating the need for in-person visits to ID card facilities.

Shirley Bush, deputy program manager for the DMDC's Real-time Automated Personnel Identification System and Common Access Card program, highlighted the impact of the capability and noted that it has already reduced in-person ID card transactions by over 300,000 since its inception.

"From my own experience, this capability significantly improved my family's quality of life," said Bush, who served in the Army Signal Corps and remains a military spouse. "When my husband was stationed at Fort Knox, (Kentucky), and I was in Dallas, he was able to complete my USID card application online, and the card arrived at my home without the hassle of finding a local RAPIDS site."

Sarrah Carter, chief of the Fort Jackson's Military Personnel Division, said the post community is included in this.

"The online option is available for all CAC holders via Skip the Line and Re-



Photo by VERAN HILL

Veronica Harding, Human Resource Assistant with the Fort Jackson ID Card Section, helps a retiree with a new ID card. A Department of Defense program aims to reduce in-person ID card appointments by allowing patrons to order new cards online and have them mailed to them.

quest Online <https://idco-pki.dmdc.osd.mil/idco/view-family-info>," she said. "Once they complete the online request, their new CAC will be printed by the Government Publishing Office and securely mailed to the recipients. After receipt of the new CAC, the recipients go online to activate the card and mail in their old CAC."

They must activate the card online themselves, she added, the local CAC office cannot activate it for them.

Bush emphasized that feedback from

users has been overwhelmingly positive, with 96% of participants rating the online system as valuable and efficient.

"As the deputy program manager for (ID Card Office Online), I'm proud to be part of a team that directly benefits my family and thousands of others," she said. "It's incredibly rewarding to see real-time impacts on our military community."

The recent expansion allows service members and dependents residing at Army, fleet, or State Department post office

addresses overseas to use this convenience, further demonstrating DOD's commitment to modernization and efficiency, key goals emphasized by President Donald J. Trump and Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth.

"We ... (must) ... rapidly field emerging technologies (to) remain the strongest and most lethal force in the world," he said.

Any automated process that helps the warfighter focus on their core purpose — lethality — is welcome, and IDCO is doing its part, according to Bush. She noted that the system is not only helping families but the Defense Department as well.

"When service members are overseas, renewing an ID card often meant costly trips to central locations," Bush explained. "By extending IDCO overseas, we've eliminated unnecessary travel, saving taxpayer resources and enhancing operational readiness."

Regarding safeguards designed to protect personally identifiable information throughout the process, Bush said cards are only mailed to addresses already validated in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System.

"Security is paramount," she said. "Sponsors must log in using their CAC or DOD credentials, and cards are shipped to verified addresses only. They remain inactive until receipt confirmation, ensuring our personnel's information stays secure."

Looking forward, Bush shared that DMDC is planning additional enhancements, including allowing service members and dependents to upload updated photos directly into the system and potentially expanding services to locations without direct military postal services.

ON THE COVER

Martin Quesada and Abigail Fought sixth graders at C.C. Pinckney Elementary School, hop down the course during a sack race held during the school's Field Day, May, 16.



Photo by ROBERT TIMMONS

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THE FORT JACKSON LEADER

Fort Jackson, South Carolina 29207

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Commanding General Maj. Gen. Daryl O. Hood
Garrison Commander Col. Timothy Hickman
Command Information Officer Robert Timmons
Media Relations Officer Nathan Clinebelle
Social Media Manager Veran Hill

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Who's the best?

Photos by Staff Sgt. Dana Clarke

The Drill Sergeant of the Year competition for the Army Training Center and the U.S. Army Drill Sergeant Academy is underway. On the second day of the competition, candidates went through stations consisting of drill and ceremony, holistic health and fitness tasks, and stations to replicate yellow and red training phases. The competitors also conquered the Fit to Win obstacle course, followed by a heat casualty station.

The awards ceremony takes place today at 2 p.m.



Community Updates

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Moncrief Closing

All Moncrief services, including the pharmacy and the appointment call center, will close early on June 12 for internal training. EMS will remain open to take emergency calls.

Birthday Ball Tickets on Sale

Tickets for the 250th Army Birthday Ball are on sale now. Join Fort Jackson in celebrating the 250th Birthday of the U.S. Army at the Army Birthday Ball. The ball takes place at 5 p.m. June 14 at the 1917 Club, 5700 Liberty Division Road. Lt. Gen. Milford "Beags" Beagle, commander, U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, will be the guest speaker. Scan the QR code for more information and to purchase tickets.



Tenant Satisfaction Survey

Your opinion matters. The Army wants to hear from you. Your feedback can make a big difference in the quality of life for Soldiers. The Army is investing significantly in barracks and unaccompanied housing improvements and survey feedback will be guide the Army's efforts to provide quality, safe and secure housing. The completely confidential survey will be emailed from ArmyHousingSurvey@celassociates.com. OMB Control Number: 0704-0553. OMB Expiration date: 05/31/2025

Safety Training

The Installation Safety Office presents

various safety training classes. To register for the Army Traffic Safety Training or Local Hazards training classes, go to the website <https://airs.safety.army.mil/default.aspx>. To register for the Unit Safety Officer training, contact your Safety Specialist.

■ Basic Riders Course: Tuesday - Thursday (0 seats open)* ; June 24-26 (0 seats open)*; July 29-31 (5 seats open)

■ Advanced Riders Course: July 8 (6 seats open)

■ Intermediate Drivers Course: June 12 (8 seats open); July 22 (20 seats open)

■ Remedial Drivers Course: July 8 (12 seats open)

■ Unit Safety Officer Course: June 3-4 (9 seats open); July 8-9 (22 seats open)

* Safety officials encourage those wishing to attend in case of no shows.

Club Beyond

Club Beyond at Fort Jackson is taking high schoolers and middle schoolers to overnight camps this summer. High school camp will be from July 6-12, and middle school camp will be from July 27-31. Scholarships are available to active duty dependents.

Victory Fresh

Victory Fresh offers healthy alternatives to fast food. Victory Fresh offers Grab and Go entrees, a Build Your Own Power Bowl station, Hot BBQ bar, and brick oven pizzas during lunch hours of 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Additionally, Grab and Go items are available during extended hours and breakfast is available from 7-9:30 a.m. Victory

Fresh helps patrons manage fueling their bodies in a healthy way, within the time constraints of an on-the-go lifestyle.

Water Quality Report

Fort Jackson's 2024 Water Quality Report is now available. This report contains important information about the source and quality of your drinking water. If you would like a paper report, call (803) 790-7288 to pick up a copy.

First Friday Golf

Maj. Gen. Daryl O. Hood, Fort Jackson commander, invites you to join him for First Friday Golf the first Friday of every month. This is a Captain's Choice event and will begin at 11:30 a.m. at the Fort Jackson Golf Club. You may enter your own team or sign up as a single and be paired with a group. Entry fee is \$45 for FJGC members and \$55 for non-members. The entry fee includes applicable greens fee, user Fee, cart, prizes, and a boxed lunch. Register ASAP by calling the pro shop, at (803) 562-4437.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

TODAY

The MURPH

All day at Perez and Vanguard gyms. Come to any Fort Jackson gym at any time during the day, pick up your scoresheet and do this challenging workout of the day, where competitors must run a mile, do 100 pullups, 200 pushups, 300 squats and run another mile.

SATURDAY THROUGH MONDAY Waterpark Memorial Day Opening

11 a.m., Palmetto Falls Waterpark. The

Fort Jackson Movie Schedule

3319 Jackson Blvd.
Phone: 751-7488

SATURDAY, MAY 24

■ Lilo and Stitch (PG)

WEDNESDAY, MAY 28

■ Lilo and Stitch (PG)

- Ticket sales open 30 minutes before each movie.
- Movie times and schedule are subject to change without notice.

Fort Jackson waterpark will open for Memorial Day weekend. For more information, call (803) 751-4796.

SATURDAY

Beach Day

Noon to 5 p.m., 4420 Leesburg Road. Join the Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation at Weston Lake to celebrate the beach opening. There will be paddle boats, paddle boards, bounce, houses, games and beach access. For more information, call (803) 751-5253.

TUESDAY

Safe Talk Class

9 a.m. to noon, Training Support Center. Join us for a safe talk class to identify people with suicidal thoughts and con-

See **EVENTS:** Page 10

THE FORT JACKSON LEADER

SEND ALL
SUBMISSIONS TO

usarmy.jackson.93-sig-bde.mbx.atzj-pao@army.mil

Deadline for events to be included in the Community Updates is one week before publication. Include the time, date and place the event will occur, as well as other necessary information.

If you submit an article on an event that already has taken place, please send it as soon as possible. Tuesday is the last day we will be able to accept an article for publication the following

Thursday. Include the date and place of the event, as well as a description of what took place. Please include quotations, if possible.

With any photo you submit, include IDs — rank, unit, and first and last names. All submissions will be edited and published using Associated Press Style.

Questions? Call (803) 751-3615.

South Carolina on the eve of the American Revolution

By **HENRY HOWE**

Director, Fort Jackson Museum
Community

(Editor's note:
This article is part of
a recurring column
honoring the Army
during the service's
250th birthday)

On the eve of the American Revolution, South Carolina emerged as a vibrant colony, marked by its wealth, rich culture, and an undercurrent of unrest.

As tensions with Britain intensified throughout the 1760s and early 1770s, the colony found itself at a crucial crossroads, caught between allegiance to the Crown and the invigorating call for independence that resonated throughout the colonies.

Economically, South Carolina stood out as one of the most affluent colonies, its prosperity woven into the cultivation of lucrative crops like rice and indigo. Charles Town, the bustling principal city, served as a cornerstone of trade and commerce, alive with the sounds of merchants and ships arriving laden with goods.

The agricultural elite, influential over both wealth and politics, had deep ties with Britain, making them initially reluctant to part ways with the Crown.

However, the burdens of British taxation, exemplified by the Stamp Act (1765) and the Townshend Acts (1767), began to stir discontent.

Inland, the backcountry population, comprising of small farmers, skilled artisans, and diverse immigrants, grappled with different challenges.

Many felt neglected by the political elite in Charles Town, leading to resentment toward the farming aristocracy. Some backcountry settlers embraced rebellion, while others clung to their loyalty to the Crown, believing royal governance could provide stability.

This division would later ignite a bru-



U.S. Army photo

A map of the southern colonies - Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia circa 1763. South Carolina had one of the strongest economies leading up to the war, but loyalty to the Crown was divided.

tal civil conflict within South Carolina.

Politically, resistance to British policies grew. South Carolinians engaged in boycotts of British goods and formed local committees to incite and organize protests.

By 1774, South Carolina elected delegates to the First Continental Congress, demonstrating readiness to unite with fellow colonies.

The colony's Provincial Congress began to act as a defiant shadow government.

By 1775, the British-backed South Carolina's colonial governance structure had effectively crumbled.

Royal Governor Lord William Campbell fled Charles Town in the face of surg-

ing Patriot sentiment.

Enlistments into militias blossomed across the colony, signaling an unmistakable readiness for war.

However, the air remained thick with division; not all residents were in favor of rebellion.

Loyalist sentiments remained strong, particularly in the backcountry, painting a complex backdrop for the bitter internal conflict that lay ahead.

On the eve of the revolution, South Carolina citizenry stood divided.

Its wealth, strategic location, and internal tensions would make it a central theater in the coming war, one that would test not just loyalty to empire or cause, but the very fabric of its society.

DOD volunteer reductions trim civilian force

By **C. TODD LOPEZ**

DOD News Service

With two opportunities to apply for a deferred resignation and a hiring freeze in effect for all but the civilian career fields deemed most critical, the Defense Department is working toward successfully implementing its workforce acceleration and recapitalization initiative using voluntary reductions in force.

The initiative, announced March 28, 2025, in a memorandum from Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, is part of a larger plan to rebuild the U.S. military to meet current and future demands.

"To deliver on my commitment to urgently rebuild our military, revive the warrior ethos and deliver maximum deterrence, we must aggressively refocus every available resource towards our core mission," Hegseth said. "We will realign the size of our civilian workforce and strategically restructure it to supercharge our American warfighters consistent with my interim National Defense Strategy guidance."

With 900,000-plus civilian employees across the department, the initiative requires not just moving civilian employees around from one agency to another to maximize the workforce but also, in some cases, reduce that workforce.

Tim Dill, performing the duties of the deputy undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, said the department has achieved most of its workforce resizing efforts using voluntary separations, particularly through

Having a FIELD DAY

Story, photos by **ROBERT TIMMONS**
Fort Jackson Public Affairs

C.C. Pinckney Elementary School students had a “field day” competing in various relay events during a celebration aimed at honoring the upcoming end to the school year.

“Field Day in elementary schools is an outdoor event near the end of the school year where students participate in various physical activities and games, fostering teamwork and sportsmanship. It’s a fun way to celebrate the end of the school year and get students active,” said Jahmael McMillan, the school physical education teacher.

The day includes activities including traditional games like three-legged races, sack races, tug-of-war, baseball hit, basketball shot, soccer relay, hula hoop challenge, and an egg and spoon relay.

It is important for schools to hold field days because it helps students “develop valuable skills like self-control, waiting their turn, and sportsmanship,” McMillan said. “It also provides a chance for students to showcase their physical abilities and work together as a team.”

The field day is held in May not only to celebrate the end of the school year, but because the weather is “s more favorable for outdoor activities.”

Students were broken down into teams by class and with the winning team receiving a ribbon.

(Clockwise from above) Fifth and sixth grade students from C.C. Pinckney Elementary School start their field day with a sack race.

Aubry Gent, a Pinckney fifth grader, concentrates hard as she begins the egg and spoon relay.

Jahmael McMillan, school physical education teacher give directions during the event.

Hadley Immel, sixth grade students, shows off her winning hula hoop routine.

Teachers Jarrett Mitchell and Lisa West help keep ensure the field day goes smoothly.

Maddox Chiasson, a fifth grade student, tries to hit a ball as far as he could.

Fifth grader Charlotte Jackson races to keep her red egg on her spoon.



Do you 'fashion' the Army inspired clothing trends

By **SGT. 1ST CLASS NICHOLAS NOFZINGER**
Army News Service

(Editor's note: This article is part of a recurring column honoring the Army during the service's 250th birthday)

The average person probably believes the worlds of the military and fashion are mutually exclusive. Fashion is a popular style or trend that often includes rare, high-priced wearable art. While the military prides itself on utilitarianism, a calling born of necessity while wearing clothing designed for heavy wear-and-tear.

It may come as a surprise, therefore, that the Army's fondness for design extends to more than just the most updated lethal weaponry, vehicles and warfare tactics. Its impact on fashion can be seen daily worldwide, without the consumer realizing its history.

Here are five major fashion items inspired by the Army.

Aviator Sunglasses

From the runway to faces around the globe, "aviator" sunglasses were initially developed for Army Air Corps pilots prior to World War II. If you have ever wondered why these sunglasses have their distinctive shape, it is for much more than fashionable reasons. The design protected the eyes of pilots from 360-degree sunlight, as well as covering the entirety of the eye socket for even more shielding from the sun's rays. Next time you throw on your favorite pair of aviators, remember you have the Army Air Corps to thank.

Cotton T-Shirts

You read that correctly. Your favorite go-to clothing item became a fashion staple following the return of Soldiers from World War I. Before then, the cotton t-shirt was exclusively an underwear item and not believed appropriate for wear on its own in public. Tens of thousands of Soldiers were issued the cotton t-shirt as an undershirt for their uniforms. Returning home from war, these heroes began wearing the cotton T-shirt solo when out and about.

Combat Boots

Initially designed for Soldiers to pro-

tect their feet and ankles while marching through unknown and treacherous terrain, the combat boot has been incorporated into the collections of countless designers. Its adoption by the civilian population gained prominence as a symbol of protest with the punk movement of the 1980s. Its influence

on fashion continues today, with iconic design house Prada continuing to update its longstanding line of combat-inspired footwear.

Outerwear

Fashionistas crave the styles that will walk the major runways during Fall/Winter fashion season, mostly for the new and stylish coats

that will be shown. Many may not know, however, that a large majority of the coats being seen are heavily inspired by military duty uniforms. The iconic "Eisenhower" jacket, a waist-length, double pocket, pleated coat with an adjustable waistband, was issued to Soldiers in World War II and has now made a comeback as an optional item of the Army Green Service Uniform. Parkas and field jackets were designed for differing weather environments (Korea and Vietnam, respectively) and have been heavily featured in collections of designers since first being worn by Soldiers.

Camouflage EVERYTHING!

Millennials will remember the fashion trends of the early 2000s, including glitter crop tops, low-rise jeans, fleece jackets over two or more popped-collar polos camouflage pants, shorts, and shirts. Before the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, teenagers grew up during a period of peacetime following the Persian Gulf War, often turning to familiar staples seen in early news coverage of military action. After the start of the Global War on Terror, camouflage clothing gained popularity as patriotism and national pride increased. Some Soldiers serving may even associate this fashion trend with their first experience wearing the uniform.

The Army has influenced fashion trends through the widespread adoption of military-inspired styles. The Army's impact extends beyond the battlefield, shaping civilian clothing and expressions of pride in our nation. As fashion continues to evolve, military aesthetics remain a powerful symbol of service and resilience.



Photo by ROBERT TIMMONS

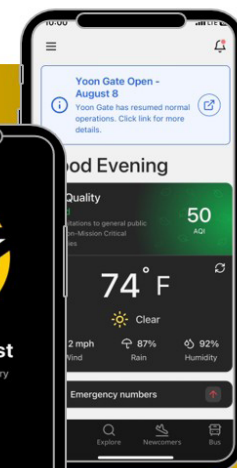
In Agreement

Col. Timothy Hickman, garrison commander, signs a proclamation of an Intergovernmental Service Agreement with the City of Columbia May 15 as Clint Shealy, Assistant City Manager for Columbia Water watches. The agreement states the city will provide stray animal services for Fort Jackson. IGSA's are agreements between the Army and local government agencies to help provide services in their mutual best interest, while improving installation support services.

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Army makes new adjustments to retention policy due to high demand

Army. G-1, Public Affairs

Amid continued high demand for reenlistment, the U.S. Army announced two updates to its retention policies to improve retention forecasting while ensuring Soldiers have sufficient time and guidance to make informed reenlistment decisions.

These changes, which begin June 1, include suspending most retention extensions and reinstating the 90-day reenlistment window, aligning retention procedures with mission success and force management objectives. Special circumstances will be handled on a case-by-case basis. More details are outlined below.

Retention Extensions — Soldiers who are not deployed or deploying with an ETS date before Oct. 1, have until May 31, to obtain retention extensions (under general circumstances), which allow them to extend their service without officially reenlisting. Soldiers who ETS after Oct. 1, can extend under specific conditions outlined in Army

regulation 601-280.

Reenlistment Windows — Beginning July 1, Soldiers will be allowed to reenlist from the time their reenlistment window opens until 90 days from their ETS date. Soldiers less than 90 days from their ETS dates will be unable to reenlist.

The Army's retention success has enabled the adjustment of reenlistment options for Soldiers with an ETS date before the end of fiscal year 2026. This adjustment balances the Army's current needs while preserving Soldiers' opportunity to continue serving.

"As the Army adapts to evolving needs and conditions, we have to make sure our retention policies keep pace, said Master Sgt. Kindra Ford, Senior Army Retention Operations noncommissioned officer. "We're working hard to keep career counselors, Soldiers, and leaders up to date to help them make informed decisions about their careers."

In April, the Army surpassed its fiscal



U.S. Army photo

Soldiers raise their hands to reenlist during a 2018 ceremony at the U.S. Army Drill Sergeant Academy.

year 2025 reenlistment goal by retaining 15,600 Soldiers, 800 more than the 14,800 target. The Army's retention success also

coincides with it recently exceeding 90% of its recruiting goals in May as it continues to build on its recruiting momentum.



Photo by NATHAN CLINEBELLE

Into retirement

Staff Sgt. Bernard F. Madros from the Leader Training Brigade, salutes Maj. Gen. Daryl O. Hood, Fort Jackson commander, during the 1st Battalion, 13th Infantry Regiment graduation, May 17. Madros was recognized for his 20 years of service to the Army.



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Events

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nect them with help. Anyone including family members, friends, community member can attend. For more information, call (803) 751-2915

JUNE 3 Meals in Minutes & Your Budget

10-11:30 a.m., MS Teams. Army Community Service Financial Readiness Program, in partnership with the Fort Jackson Armed Forces Wellness Center will host Meals in Minutes. Learn how to save calories while also optimizing your budget. AFWC and ACS provides programs and services to improve and/or maintain readiness of the military community. Registration is required. For more information, or to register, please call (803) 751-5256, or (803) 751-6749.

JUNE 5 Wine & Yoga

5:30-7:30 p.m., Incheon Lake Park. Sip on a drink while practicing Yoga helps lessen anxiety, create a more relaxed body and of course ... fun. It is well known that wine relaxes the body and mind. To register or for more information, call (803) 751-3700

JUNE 7
National Whitewater Center Trip
7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., Marion Street Station. Join Fort Jackson Outdoor Recreation for a day of adventure at the U.S. Whitewater Center. The trip includes white-water rafting, zip lines, rock climbing, mountain biking and more. The cost is \$60 per person and includes transportation. Must be 8 years or older. Patrons must register at Marion Street Station. For more information, call (803) 751-3484.

JUNE 14
Strongman/Strongwoman
10 a.m., Vanguard Gym. What a great way to celebrate the Army's 250th birthday. There will be five fun, exciting and

challenging events to test your strength. There will be prizes for males and females in all weight classes. Sign up and weigh-in at Perez Gym, Vanguard Gym or at the Sports Complex by June 12. For more information, call (803) 751-5839.

Newcomers Orientation Tour
7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., Strom Thurmond Building. Join Army Community Service for a historical trip to Charleston, South Carolina. The trip visits the International African American Museum. Plus, patrons can explore the Historic City Market for unique finds and lunch (on your own). In addition, they can enjoy the vibrant atmosphere of the Charleston Farmers Market for more shopping and entertainment. Come, connect with other military families while learning about South Carolina history. Space is extremely limited so reserve your spot today For more information, call (803) 751-5256.

JUNE 21 Juneteenth Fun Run

8 a.m., Palmetto Falls Water Park. For more information, call (803) 751-3700.

JULY 4
Save the Date
4 p.m., Hilton Field. Mark your calendars. Fort Jackson's 4th of July Celebration will be held July 4 at Hilton Field. There will be food trucks, games for children, and the best fireworks in the Midlands.

JULY 12
Private Weapons Day
10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Aachen Range. Shooters can shoot at targets between 25-200m. Paper targets, spotting scopes, tables and chairs are provided. Patrons can shoot rifle or pistol at a day rate or on an hourly rate. Pre-register at Marion Street Station. All weapons must be registered on post. No automatic weapons or .50 cal allowed. Age 12 and up; 17 and younger must be accompanied by an adult. For more information, call (803) 751-3484. For information about registering your weapon, call (803) 751-6019.

WORSHIP SCHEDULE	FAITH GROUP	DAY	TIME	PLACE
	CATHOLIC MASS	SUNDAY	9:30-10:30 A.M.	MAIN POST CHAPEL
	CATHOLIC MASS	TUE-FRI	NOON	MAIN POST CHAPEL
	GOSPEL SERVICE	SUNDAY	10:30 A.M.	KINGS MOUNTAIN CHAPEL
	GENERAL PROTESTANT	SUNDAY	11 A.M. TO NOON	MAIN POST CHAPEL
	REVIVE SERVICE	SUNDAY	5 P.M.	MAIN POST CHAPEL
	JEWISH SHABBOS SERVICE	FRIDAY	6-7 P.M.	CENTURY DIVISION CHAPEL
	INITIAL ENTRY TRAINING	DAY	TIME	PLACE
	CATHOLIC MASS	SUNDAY	8-9 A.M.	SOLOMON CENTER
	PROTESTANT CONSOLIDATED SERVICE	SUNDAY	9:30-10:30 A.M.	SOLOMON CENTER
	CHURCH OF CHRIST	SUNDAY	9-10 A.M.	CENTURY DIVISION CHAPEL
	HISPANIC PROTESTANT SERVICE	SUNDAY	11 A.M. to NOON	SOLOMON CENTER (1st and 3rd Sundays)
	GOSPEL SERVICE	SUNDAY	11 A.M. to NOON	SOLOMON CENTER (2nd and 4th Sundays)
	ANGLICAN	SUNDAY	9:30-10 A.M.	LIGHTNING CHAPEL
	ISLAMIC SERVICE	SUNDAY	8-9 A.M.	LIGHTNING CHAPEL
	JEWISH SERVICE	SUNDAY	10:15-11:30 A.M.	120TH AG BN (for trainees in 120th only)
	THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS	SUNDAY	10:30 A.M. to NOON	CENTURY DIVISION CHAPEL
	HEATHEN/PAGAN	SUNDAY	11 A.M. to NOON	LIGHTNING CHAPEL

Force

Continued from Page 5

two deferred resignation programs and a hiring freeze.

“The majority of the civilian workforce optimization initiatives have been voluntary measures,” he said. “We’ve been asking, ‘Are there people that would like to take paid leave and move on to something else, whether it’s a new job or retirement?’”

In his messages to the workforce, the defense secretary said he wants to make reduction decisions as voluntary as possible to minimize the need for involuntary separations later on. So far, Dill said the department has not made a decision regarding a reduction in force, a process through which the department could involuntarily lay off civil servants.

In late January 2025, the Office of Personnel Management offered a federal governmentwide Deferred Resignation Program, which was available for two weeks. Under that program, federal employees could volunteer to resign from their positions, but continue to get paid until the end of September.

The department also offered its own DRP, billed as “DRP 2.0,” that was available April 7-14.

Under both DRPs, eligible employees were also offered Voluntary Early Retirement Authority, which allowed those employees to begin collecting retirement pay earlier than normal. Dill said some employees were also able to combine the two, accepting DRP and retirement, and might get paid on administrative leave until December.

“So that’s almost a full year of administrative leave,” he said. “It’s a very attractive and generous offer for those that might have been thinking about leaving the department.”

The department is now review-



U.S. Army photo

A child specialist with Child and Youth Services.

ing the effects of the second DRP.

“There is a lot of data to review, and there is a lot of mission analysis that goes into that for each of the military departments and components to look at where the concentrations of volunteering employees are,” he said. “For example, you might have a critical air traffic control function in one area where you know that you don’t need to retain every air traffic controller at that location. But could you let all of them take the DRP?”

Dill said the two DRPs were used to meet department needs rather than entirely driven by employees’ personal choices. This is because the department isn’t just looking to reduce numbers in general, it’s looking to shape the workforce to optimize it for the future.

With both DRPs, the department and military services could deny an employee’s request to take the offer if the department or service deemed it wasn’t in their best interest.

“The department gave the services and components the ability to

review each DRP request and decide whether they could afford to let that employee participate without an impact on mission-critical functions,” he said.

During the second DRP, Dill said even more consideration was given to which groups of employees the delayed resignation should be offered to. At the same time, they continued to retain approval authority to determine if an employee who volunteered would be allowed to take it.

“The secretary has given guidance that exceptions to DRP should be rare,” Dill said. “We want to maximize participation, but at the same time, we need to mitigate risk and ensure that we don’t allow participation where it (will) harm the department’s readiness or effectiveness.”

Early on in his second administration, President Donald J. Trump implemented a government-wide hiring freeze, and that’s still true today within the Defense Department.

In the past, DOD typically hired

about 6,000 people each month to fill vacancies left by retirements and other kinds of employee attrition. With a hiring freeze in place, the gaps in civilian employment are growing, reducing the size of the civilian workforce across the department.

That reduction in the workforce is not random; it’s targeted. However, the hiring freeze is not universal, as the department has exempted jobs it considers critical to the future workforce, such as those related to immigration enforcement, national security, public safety, shipyards, depots, cyber fields and medical treatment facilities.

“We never stopped bringing in new people to help the department achieve its goals,” Dill said. “We are bringing in employees right now, but far fewer employees than we would bring in (typically).”

Last month, the secretary also ordered the military departments, the Joint Chiefs, directors of defense agencies and others to submit plans that include proposed

future functional areas, consolidated management hierarchies, position titles and counts. Dill said those plans have since been submitted, and the department is now analyzing the requested input to develop a future workforce.

“That’s getting down even more into the technical details and further analysis on how we would get to that future-state organizational chart, and looking across the department and synchronizing each of those moves,” he said.

The review will identify functions that are no longer needed or duplicative and can be eliminated. Dill said an effort would be made to retain employees who can be used elsewhere to serve the department.

“We want to make sure that talented employees that have chosen to remain with the department are placed where their skills are best focused on the missions that we face today and not on some legacy requirement or mission,” he said.

Regarding probationary employees, Dill said the department had as many as 55,000 in January 2025, and since then, about 10% — 5,400 — have been dismissed. A probationary employee is one who, in most cases, has not yet been a federal employee for a full year.

Dill said the department faced some legal pushback, and some of those employees have been brought back into service, adding that DOD will continue to have a sizable civilian workforce.

While the department continues to realign and shape its civilian workforce, Dill said he appreciates those committed to the mission and supporting the warfighters.

“They’ve twice signaled their desire to remain in the department when they had an opportunity to take paid leave and depart,” he said. “We’re glad they are still here, and we’re excited to make sure that we match their skill sets against the most critical needs of the department.”

VICTORY... START HERE



A Drill Sergeant of the Year candidate speaks to members of the board during Fort Jackson's competition to determine its best drill sergeant.

Photo by NATHAN CLINEBELLE