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Demolition of Navy Gateway Inns and Suites begins

Photos by MC2 Molly Tice

Left: The west wing of the Navy Gateway Inns and Suites (NGIS) building onboard NAS Meridian as of Nov. 11. Right: Demolition begins on the east wing of the NGIS building on Oct. 24. The \$3.2 million contract was awarded to Tybe-Garney Construction. The NGIS ceased operations on March 31, 2019.

A historic shutdown is over. It leaves no winners and much frustration

By Kevin Freking
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The longest government shutdown in history has come to an end, with almost no one happy with the final result. Democrats didn't get the health insurance provisions they demanded added to the spending deal. And Republicans, who control the levers of power in Washington, didn't escape blame, according to polls and some state and local elections that went poorly for them.

The fallout of the shutdown landed on millions of Americans, including federal workers who went without paychecks and airline passengers who had their trips delayed or canceled. An interruption in nutrition assistance programs contributed to long lines at food banks and added emotional distress going into the holiday season.

The agreement includes bipartisan bills worked out by the Senate Appropriations Committee to fund parts of government — food aid, veterans programs and the legislative branch, among other things. All other funding would be extended until the end of January, giving lawmakers more than two months to finish additional spending bills.

President Donald Trump signed the legislation Wednesday, just hours after the House passed it. The Senate had passed it Monday.

Here's a look at how the shutdown started and is likely to end:

What led to the shutdown? Democrats made several demands to win their support for a short-term funding bill, but the central one was an extension of an enhanced tax credit that lowers the cost of health coverage obtained through Affordable Care Act marketplaces.

The tax credit was boosted during the COVID-19 pandemic response, again through President Joe Biden's big energy and health care bill, and it's set to expire at the end of December. Without it, premiums on average will more than double for millions of Americans. More than 2 million people would lose health insurance coverage altogether next year, the Congressional Budget Office projected.

"Never have American families faced a situation where their health

Photo by Jacquelyn Martin

President Donald Trump displays the signed funding bill to reopen the government, in the Oval Office of the White House, Wednesday, Nov. 12, 2025, in Washington.

care costs are set to double — double in the blink of an eye," said Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y.

While Democrats called for negotiations on the matter, Republicans said a funding bill would need to be passed first.

"Republicans are ready to sit down with Democrats just as soon as they stop holding the government hostage to their partisan demands," Senate Majority Leader John Thune, R-S.D., said.

Thune eventually promised Democrats a December vote on the tax credit extension to help resolve the standoff, but many Democrats demanded a guaranteed fix, not just a vote that is likely to fail.

Thune's position was much the same as the one Schumer took back in October 2013, when Republicans unsuccessfully sought to roll back parts of the Affordable Care Act in exchange for funding the government. "Open up all of the government, and then we can have a fruitful discussion," Schumer said then.

The first year of President Donald Trump's second term has seen more than 200,000 federal workers leave their job through firings, forced relocations or the Republican administration's deferred resignation program, according to the Partnership for Public Service. Whole agencies that don't align with the administration's priorities have been dismantled. And billions of dollars previously approved by Congress have been frozen or canceled.

Democrats have had to rely on the courts to block some of Trump's efforts, but they have been unable to do it through legislation. They were also powerless to stop Trump's big tax cut and immigration crackdown bill that Republicans helped pay for by cutting future spending on safety net programs such as Medicaid and SNAP, formerly known as food stamps.

The Democrats' struggles to blunt the Trump administration's priorities has prompted calls for the party's congressional

● Shutdown, page 2

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Congress votes to reopen the government, with extra money for Wedgetail, Navy shipbuilding

By Alyssa Schonhaut
Breaking Defense

WASHINGTON — After 43 days, the House today voted to end the longest government shutdown in history, putting in place stopgap funding until Jan. 30 — and putting in place language to fund a handful of specific defense programs.

The 222-209 vote, which fell largely along party lines, came just days after Monday night’s Senate vote for the budget plan, and was signed late Wednesday by President Donald Trump. Along with keeping spending levels to those of fiscal 2024 until the end of January, the bill ensures furloughed workers receive backpay and brings back workers who were fired during the shutdown.

The government shut down Oct. 1 after Congress failed to pass an FY26 budget. Six weeks later, seven Democrats and one Independent Senator voted with Republicans to pass the bill in a 60-40 vote. One Republican Senator, Rand Paul from Kentucky, voted against the bill.

For the most part, defense programs will have to operate under FY25 funding levels — which is to say, FY24 levels, as FY25 was a full-year continuing resolution. However, there are a few notable exceptions.

For example, the bill provides nearly \$200 million for the Air Force’s E-7 Wedgetail, despite the Trump administration’s attempt to kill the program. Unpersuaded that the

radar plane’s capabilities can be backfilled by other platforms and eventually shifted to space, the legislation directs the Pentagon to keep the Wedgetail’s development on schedule so that it can transition into production. It also directs unobligated procurement funds for the aircraft to be shifted into its ongoing research and development.

Additionally, roughly \$1.1 billion is earmarked to be spread over 14 shipbuilding programs in order to help them complete ongoing work. Some of the programs include the Ford-class aircraft carrier program, which will receive \$150 million and the Virginia-class submarine program, which will receive a combined total of over \$510 million across line items.

Once the government is reopened, Congress can focus on reconciling the House and Senate versions of the 2026 defense policy bills. The House passed its version of the National Defense Authorization Act in September, while the Senate approved its own version a month later.

One of the biggest issues to be hashed out is that the Senate’s version of the NDAA has a topline roughly \$32 billion over both the Pentagon’s budget request and the House’s NDAA.

Once Jan. 30 comes around, the House and Senate will have to reconvene to try to pass a FY26 budget. At that point, it is possible the government shuts down once again if an agreement can not be reached.



Photo by MC2 Trinita Lersch

The world’s largest aircraft carrier, USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78), transits the Strait of Gibraltar, Nov. 4, 2025. Gerald R. Ford, a first-in-class aircraft carrier and deployed flagship of Carrier Strike Group 12, is on a scheduled deployment in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations to support the warfighting effectiveness, lethality and readiness of U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa, and defend U.S., Allied and partner interests in the region.

● **Shutdown**

leadership to take a more forceful response.

This time around, Schumer demanded that Republicans negotiate with Democrats to get their votes on a spending bill. The Senate rules, he noted, requires bipartisan support to meet the 60-vote threshold necessary to advance a spending bill.

But those negotiations did not occur, at least not with Schumer. Republicans instead worked with a small group of eight Democrats to tee up a short-term bill to fund the government generally at current levels and accused Schumer of catering to the party’s left flank when he refused to go along.

“The Senate Democrats are afraid that the radicals in their party will say that they caved,” House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., said at one of his many daily press conferences.

The political stakes in the shutdown are huge, which is why leaders in both parties have held nearly daily press briefings to shape public opinion.

Roughly 6 in 10 Americans say Trump and Republicans in Congress have “a great deal” or “quite a bit” of responsibility for the shutdown, while 54% say the same about Democrats in Congress, according to the poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

At least three-quarters of Americans believe each deserves at least a “moderate” share of blame, underscoring that no one was successfully evading responsibility.

Both parties looked to the Nov. 4 elections in Virginia, New Jersey and elsewhere for signs of how the shutdown was influencing public opinion. Democrats took comfort in their overwhelming successes. Trump called it a “big factor, negative” for Republicans. But it did not change the GOP’s stance on negotiating. Instead, Trump ramped up calls for Republicans to end the filibuster in the Senate, which would pretty much eliminate the need for the majority party to ever negotiate with the minority.

The Congressional Budget Office says that the negative impact on the economy will be mostly recovered once the shutdown ends, but not entirely. It estimated the permanent economic loss at about \$11 billion for a six-week shutdown.

Beyond the numbers, though, the shutdown created a cascade of troubles for many Americans. Federal workers missed paychecks, causing financial and emotional stress. Travelers had their flights delayed and at times canceled. People who rely on safety net programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program saw their benefits stopped, and Americans throughout the country lined up for meals at food banks.

“This dysfunction is damaging enough to our constituents and economy here at home, but it also sends a dangerous message to the watching world,” said Sen. Jerry Moran, R-Kan. “It demonstrates to our allies that we are an unreliable partner, and it signals to our adversaries that we can’t work together to meet even the most fundamental responsibilities of Congress.”

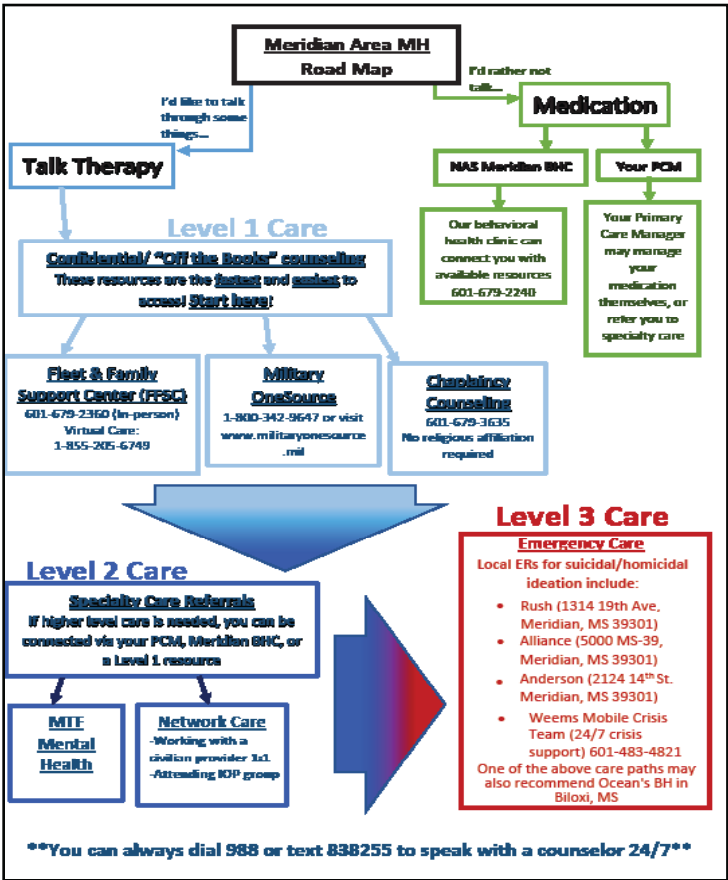
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www.ffsp.navy.mil



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SARC: 601-481-4274

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Suicide Hotline: 800-273-8255

Military OneSource: 800-342-9647

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LOCAL HAPPENINGS

Nov. 12-19: Meals for the Needy. Mt. Calvary Baptist Church will provide a hot meal to anyone who needs one on Wednesdays from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Nov. 13: Friendsgiving at the Threefoot. Gather your favorite people and join us at 601 Local inside The Threefoot Hotel for a festive Friendsgiving celebration. Enjoy a specially crafted menu filled with seasonal favorites, delicious cocktails, and the cozy atmosphere that makes this holiday all about connection. Whether you're celebrating with your chosen family or simply looking for a night of great food and laughter, this ticketed event is the perfect way to kick off the holiday season. Come ready to eat, sip, and make memories you'll be thankful for. Reserve your spot today!

Nov. 15: Rose Hill Storytelling Conference. This is the only event in this category presented in this area. It is a teaching as well as entertaining presentation known at Rose Hill Storytelling Conference. Come and listen to a variety of stories as presented by professional storytellers presented by local and as well out of town tellers. Also enjoy the time of the storytelling interviews when attendees may learn the art of storytelling and as well learn to tell their own stories. Free event. For more info: 601-479-2483

Nov. 20: Merry Nightmarket. The MAX and Earth's Bounty invite you to celebrate the holidays at Merry NightMarket. Kick off your holiday shopping & stop by The MAX for great food & drink, artists, artisans, farm vendors, food trucks, live music, and more. Free and open to the public.

Nov. 21-22: Lauderdale Cpunty Sheriff's Rodeo. The 1st Annual Lauderdale County Sheriff's Rodeo is coming to Meridian on Nov. 21st & 22nd. This exciting two-day event will bring family fun, community spirit, and some real rodeo action to Lauderdale County Agri-Center. Specialty entertainment provided by The Misfit Cowboy. Advanced tickets can be purchased online for \$10/\$5 or at the gate for \$15/\$10. All proceeds will go to support Wesley House and Care Lodge of Meridian.

Nov. 22 - Jan. 4: Winter Wonderland. During the holiday season, the Mississippi Children's Museum – Meridian transforms into a magical Winter Wonderland! Bring the whole family for festive crafts, reindeer workshops, and plenty of seasonal fun. Go sock skating in the Snowflake Village exhibit, write your very own letter to Santa, and enjoy a visit with Santa himself!

Nov. 23 - Dec 31: Trees of Christmas at Merrehope. November 23 –Dec. 31. Monday – Saturday – 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Sunday – 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Adults \$15, Military & Senior Citizens \$10, Students \$5. Experience the Wonder at the 57th Annual Trees of Christmas at Merrehope, where 70 stunning trees and exhibits transform the historic 20-room mansion into an eleborate holiday showcase. With each room uniquely styled by talented designers, visitors are immersed in a world of creativity, beauty, and holiday spirit. Experience the Wonder through ever-changing, thoughtfully curated displays that draw thousands of guests from across Mississippi, the United States, and around the world.

Dec 4 - Dec 7: A Christmas Carol, the Musical. Join Meridian Little Theatre for A Christmas Carol, The Musical, a heartwarming retelling of Charles Dickens' beloved classic. Filled with festive music, lively performances and a powerful message of hope and generosity, this family-friendly production brings our community together to reflect on what truly matters: kindness, connection, and the spirit of giving.

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HOMES/APARTMENTS

For Rent: 3 BD/2 BA. West Lauderdale School District. No HUD, Renter is responsible for all utilities, 1 year lease, \$1700 a month, \$1700 deposit. Contact 662-694-1696

For Rent: 2 BD/1 BA, 600 sq. ft. Rent is \$1275/Month with a \$1275 Security Deposit. Rent includes an 8x11 Storage Unit, In Unit Stackable Washer/Dryer, granite countertops and Stainless Steel appliances. Pets are negotiable. No Smoking. Contact Rhonda at 601-488-1963

For Rent: 3 BD/2 BA, 1100 Sq. Ft. Rent is \$1425/Month with a \$1425 Security Deposit. Rent includes an 8x11 Storage Unit, In Unit Stackable Washer/Dryer, granite countertops and Stainless Steel appliances. Pets are negotiable. No Smoking. Contact Rhonda at 601-488-1963

For Rent: 2 BD/1 BA unfurnished home

in North Hills. Available May/June. Call 601-504-5415.

For Rent: 3 BR/2 BA home in a quiet family neighborhood comes with all appliances (incl. W/D), and is convenient to NAS Meridian, schools, shopping, activities and major employers in the area. Outside, there's a large fenced yard with patio and an attached 2-car garage with keypad entry. All electric with central AC/heat. Contact Leslie Turner, 601-527-4670 to view. See Zillow listing for more information and to submit applications. Rent \$1,750 per month.

For Sale: 3 BD/4 BA home with 2965 sq ft of lake view home in beautiful, gated Lake Eddins in Pachuta. Entertainer's kitchen with huge eat at bar. Brick floors in main living areas, all new floor covering in remaining areas, total remodel. Gorgeous brick w/natural cypress home, 2 car garage w/bonus room. Asking \$299,900. Will include

additional lot on water for fishing/boat storage w/ asking price. Call 601-720-1420.

For Sale: 2275 sq ft 3BR/2.f BA with attached 2 car garage built in 1996 on appx 1.15 acres. New roof and fresh paint in August 25. Seperate 25x30 detached garage. Covered front porch. Nice covered back patio with new ceiling fans. Located 5 miles to Clarkdale school, 5 miles from I-20 and a 20-25 minute drive to NAS. Contact: Marsha Boyken 601-917-3900

For Rent: 1 BD/1 BA. Entire House in North Hills District. Listed on AIRBNB or can book direct. Daily or weekly rates plus cleaning fees. Contact: 601-504-5415.

MISCELLANEOUS

Event Space for Rent: Deer Creek Banquet Hall. 6000 sq. ft. indoor with 1600 sq. ft. outdoor spaces for rent for gatherings and events. Call Reginald at 251-455-1559.

Listings in the "Sale...Or" column are free!
Submission deadline is the Wednesday prior to production.
Email information to nasmeridianpao@gmail.com

'Feed the Force' | Mercy Chefs steps up as shutdown strains military and federal families in Hampton Roads

By Kamilah Williams
WTKR News

NORFOLK, Va. — Hundreds of local families received vital food assistance on Wednesday as Mercy Chefs, a nonprofit disaster relief organization, distributed 500 boxes of meals to furloughed government workers and military families at Naval Station Norfolk.

The event was part of Mercy Chefs' "Feed the Force" initiative, an effort to ensure no service member or government employee goes hungry during the ongoing government shutdown.

Henry Graham, a supervisor at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard and a Chesapeake resident, was among those in line. For him, the relief was sorely needed.

"Being a government employee and being furloughed, people really need relief, really need help," Graham said. "Nobody probably thought this shutdown was going to last this long, but it's lasting, and people are really suffering."

Graham, considered an essential worker, said this isn't his first experience with furloughs. "This is my second time being furloughed," he said. "The first time, I got paid. So that's one of the big differences right there."

The demand for food was so high that every

box had been claimed, said Ann LeBlanc, president and co-founder of Mercy Chefs.

"And then we have 200 additional, and then we're back on Nov. 21 in the same spot," LeBlanc said. "Even if the government shutdown is over by then, at this time of the holidays, these families need more support to catch up, and we'll be honored to come alongside them."

LeBlanc says each grocery box contained enough shelf-stable foods to provide 50 meals, including items such as milk, soup, macaroni and cheese, pasta, rice, canned chicken, tuna, and fresh produce like celery, potatoes, and onions.

LeBlanc said the support from the community and recipients has been deeply moving.

"I had a gentleman jump out of his car and give me a huge bear hug to say thank you," she said. "They're struggling, and they're just so thankful they have something to make for dinner tonight."

Mercy Chefs has partnered with the Coast Guard, Navy, and other local organizations to expand its support across the region and the country, delivering boxes at locations such as Fort Campbell and Fort Hood.

Graham emphasized the critical role government workers and military families play.



Photo by WTKR

Volunteers and workers helping distribute meal boxes.

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE](#)

USS St. Louis (LCS 19) Returns from Deployment in Support of Southern Border Operations

Courtesy Story
Commander, U.S. 2nd Fleet

NAVAL STATION MAYPORT, Florida – The Freedom-variant littoral combat ship USS St. Louis (LCS 19), operating under U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) in the Gulf of America, returned to Naval Station Mayport after completing a surge deployment on November 10, 2025.

The Freedom-variant littoral combat ship USS St. Louis (LCS 19), along with the "Valkyries" of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 50 Detachment 5 and embarked U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET) 408.

U.S. Navy assets are deployed under U.S. Northern Command's maritime homeland defense authorities with a U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment embarked to enable maritime interdiction missions to prevent the flow of illegal drugs or other illegal activity. USNORTHCOM is working together with the Department of Homeland Security to augment U.S. Customs and Border Protection along the southern

border with additional military forces.

"The crew of St. Louis is grateful for the opportunity to support and defend the homeland," stated Cmdr. Lee Shewmake, commanding officer, USS St. Louis (LCS 19). "We are always ready to demonstrate the U.S. commitment to international cooperation and supporting regional security and prosperity. Our Officers and Sailors onboard welcome every opportunity to collaborate with our partners, strengthening our interoperability and shared goals in the area."

In support of USNORTHCOM's mission to restore territorial integrity at the U.S. southern border, St. Louis reinforced the nation's commitment to border security by enhancing maritime efforts and supporting interagency collaboration. The ship's deployment highlights the Department of War and Navy's dedication to national security priorities, contributing to a coordinated and robust response to combating maritime-related terrorism, weapons proliferation, transnational crime, piracy, environmental destruction, and illegal seaborne immigration.



Photo by MC3 Jasmin Aquino

The Freedom-variant littoral combat ship USS St. Louis (LCS 19), operating under U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM), returns to Naval Station Mayport, Fla., after completing a surge deployment, Nov. 10.

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE](#)

Hegseth Declares End of Acquisition System 'As You Know It,' Tells Contractors to Adapt or 'Fade Away'

Courtesy Story
National Defense Magazine

"The defense acquisition system as you know it is dead," Secretary of War Pete Hegseth said in a major speech delivered to industry representatives Nov. 7 at the National War College in Washington, D.C.

In the more than hour-long speech, the secretary of war promised to upend the Defense Department's acquisition system, told members of the industrial base to do their part to speed up deliveries or leave the business and vowed to reform the foreign military sales system.

"This is not a speech. This is not a fire and forget. This is the beginning of an unrelenting onslaught to change the way we do business and to change the way the bureaucracy responds," he said.

One particular source of inefficiency, Hegseth said, has been the Joint Capabilities and Integration Development System process, or JCIDS, which defined acquisition requirements for defense programs.

The Defense Department is cancelling

JCIDS, "which moved at the speed of paperwork, not war," he said. The Joint Requirements Oversight Council will be reoriented to start identifying "joint operational problems," which "will drive the priorities for the entire department."

In JCIDS' place will come three new entities, he said: the Requirements and Resourcing Alignment Board that will "tie money directly to" the top warfighting priorities; the Mission Engineering and Integration Activity to rapidly experiment and prototype solutions; and the Joint Acceleration Reserve, a funding pool set aside to quickly field promising capabilities.

The military services have also been directed to reform their own requirements processes to cut red tape, engage industry earlier and align their priorities with the new joint system, Hegseth said.

With these changes to requirements development, "speed replaces process, money follows need, joint problems drive action, experimentation accelerates delivery and the services move faster and smarter," he said.



Photo by PO1 Alexander Kubitza


Secretary of War Pete Hegseth delivers remarks at the National War College at Fort McNair, Washington, D.C., Nov. 7.

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE](#)

FFSC Hours:
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Fri.:
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N9 Nook

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November

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1 Start a new fall tradition!
Military and Military Family Appreciation Month!						
2	3 National Housewife's Day	4	5	6 Game Night @ Liberty	7	8 Axe Throwing Competition
9 Need to talk? Call the FFSC Virtual Counseling line @ 1-855-205-6749	10 Happy Birthday Marine Corps!	11	12 Housing Residents: Fall Candle Making @ Housing Community Center	13 Make and Take Turkey Craft @ Library	14 Family Fun Day @ Library	15 Turkey Trot 5k
16	17 MWR 3 Point Shoot & Medicine Ball Toss @ Gym	18 Recipe Swap @ Housing	19 MWR Turkey Golf Shoot	20 General Savings & Budgeting - Navy Federal @ Library	21 Grab & Go Breakfast @ CDC	22
23 Share something your thankful for with your family!	24	25 Housing Residents: Painting Harvest Items @ Housing Community Center	26	27	28	29
30 Questions regarding this calendar? Call Kasie at 601-679-2360						



FFSC Events

November is Military Appreciation Month! This month, we take time to honor the strength, resilience, and sacrifice of our military families. Throughout November, we encourage everyone to show appreciation for the families beside our heroes; whether through as simple thank you, an act of




Join Fleet and Family for our RECIPE SWAP

Do you have a favorite recipe you love to cook? Great! Join us to meet new friends and snag a new recipe to share with your family!

Where: Housing Community Center
Day: Tuesday, Nov 18, 2025
Time: 1pm-2pm
Contact: 601-679-2360
Submit recipes to:
kasie.d.mcinnis.naf@us.navy.mil


Recipe tips:
Be sure to add measurements and instructions on your recipe!
Include to a photo of your finished dish to show off how good it is!

****multiple submissions welcome****



GROUP EXERCISE SCHEDULE

All classes are FREE to authorized patrons. For more information call 601.679.2379.



MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
		5:05 Rock Jenni		
9:15 HIIT Jenni	9:15 Lower Body Strength Jenni	9:05 HIIT Jenni	9:05 Upper Body Strength Jenni	9:15 FIT Friday (NOFFS Endurance Refuel) Jenni
1:00 Circuit Training Jenni			11:00 Total Body Jenni	
	12:00 YOGA Jenni			

HIIT is a workout that consist of short energy burst followed by quick recovery

Total Body Strength: a workout that works lower and upper body and core

Lower/Upper Body Strength: workouts that use exercise machines and free weights to increase muscle strength

Circuit Training: a workout that consist of multiple workout stations that are rotated through during the workout

NOFFS & COMMAND PT SESSIONS AVAILABLE BY APPOINTMENT



TURKEY EVENTS

13 NOVEMBER
ANDREW TRIPLET LIBRARY
Make and Take Turkey craft

17 NOVEMBER
SONNY MONTGOMERY FITNESS CENTER
3 point shoot & Medicine ball toss (winner will receive a turkey)

18 NOVEMBER
LIBERTY CENTER
Shake your Tail Feathers game (winner will receive a prize)

19 NOVEMBER
COMMUNITY RECREATION
Turkey Golf Shoot (winner will receive a turkey)

21 NOVEMBER
COMMUNITY RECREATION
3D Turkey Shoot (winner will receive a turkey)

17-21 NOVEMBER
MCCAIN REC. CENTER-BOWLING
Bowling for Turkeys (3 strikes in a row) (winner will receive a turkey)

***Rules and guidelines for individual events will be posted at the participating facility. No pets allowed.**

Follow these programs to see updates!

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