

Commissary FAQ

1. Why are many commissary items unavailable?

Answer: Products such as select food items, batteries, detergent, and aftershave are unavailable in the specifications and in the quantities required by the Department and have been increasingly difficult to procure. This is due to factors beyond the control of the Department or its staff. The global pandemic caused by COVID-19 has impacted the global supply chain in ways not experienced by the world in many years. Essential raw materials are not making it to distribution centers and there is a shortage of workers in manufacturing centers and logistic companies.

2. Can individuals continue to shop even if the commissaries are not fully stocked?

Answer: Yes. However, previously allowable quantities of certain items may be cut due to limited availability e.g. candy bars-if a facility only receives 1700 candy bars and the population is 1700, then the allowable purchase will only be 1 candy bar per individual.

3. When does the Department anticipate that commissary operations will get back to normal?

Answer: We cannot predict but we believe that some items that are currently unavailable will be available within the next 30 days.

4. What is the Department doing to address the commissary shortage?

Answer: The Department is engaged in discussions with various vendors and will provide every individual in custody with a care package that will include assorted food and hygiene items. Every facility is also preparing for a special meal that will consist of Italian beef, peppers, fries/tots, and a baked dessert. Many facilities have ordered and received these supplies, but some have not received the supplies. For those facilities that have not received their supplies, please be advised that we reached out to a major vendor and asked them if they are able to provide the missing products. They are reviewing their existing inventory levels and will report back ASAP.

5. When will we receive the care packages?

Answer: The Department contacted five commissary providers and requested proposals for care packages. Each package will have a value of \$25 and will contain name brand hygiene items and miscellaneous food products. The proposals are due back to the Department by tomorrow, October 21st. We have informed vendors that we want deliveries to occur no later than mid-November.

6. Who can families call with concerns about their loved ones and their ability to get items?

Answer: Natalie Mason is the Department's family liaison. She can be reached at: 217-558-2200 ext. 6226.