

Town Hall Questions & Answers

The following questions were asked during the live Town Hall event on the Mountain Home Air Force Base Gunfighters Facebook page on 23 April 2020:

Medical/Mental Health Support - I have a spouse wondering if the AFRC could make all that contact info available, such as Military Family Life Counselor or who else they can call to talk to if they experience increased stress, anxiety, depression, suicidal thoughts, etc during this time, even for those that may be hesitant to call the AFRC. She is a counselor and very concerned. Thank you. *We can certainly have the A&FRC echo our announcements of MFLC services, as well as other counseling services. We have a great story on our base website [here](#). ---Col Sandelier*

- Is antibody testing coming to the med group? If so, is there a plan to test all military personnel and dependents? *Currently, testing is available for patients with symptoms as directed by our healthcare providers. The AF is working towards finding a reliable antibody test, and ability to accomplish testing for screening as indicated. ---Col Aastrom*

- How do we get information out to everyone about the Military Family Life Counselor or others they can call to talk to if they experience increased stress, anxiety, depression, suicidal thoughts, etc since we are isolated? *The MFLCs are definitely available, both for adults and children. Their numbers are: Military & Family Life Consultant for adults: (208) 810-6388 CDC/Youth Center Counselor: (208) 590-2709 ---Col Sandelier*

On-Base Services & Access *Col Goodman here...lots of questions about what to open, when. Facts are that some things we have control over, some we don't. Every decision to open or change the level of service or access will be tied directly to risk management, how much medical capacity we have so we don't overwhelm our providers, protecting our mission capabilities, and preserving the health of Airmen, Families, and our Community. I suspect we'll make some incremental changes moving forward and I have a team dedicated to identifying those decision points. I don't see social distancing, hygiene, face coverings changing anytime soon.*

- How does Idaho's 4 stage plan to reopen affect the base? *I watched Gov Little's address today and have the plan in front of me. The two sets of guidance I'm balancing are the State's and DOD/ACC. DOD's guidance may be more restrictive but as much as practicable, I plan on mirroring the State of Idaho and being a good neighbor. That's in order to take care of our Airmen, families AND the community. ---Col Goodman*

- When will visitor passes be restored? *Great question. Right now visitor passes are authorized in a limited manner to support our on-base residents' needs for family care plans and to receive deliveries. Squadron Commanders can authorize those passes. Visitor passes for a social visit are unfortunately not authorized at this time. Once the Public Health Emergency is terminated, we can assess the risk of authorizing visitor passes for social visits. ---Col Sandelier*

- When are the basketball goals going back up at the Annex and why were they taken down in the first place? As well as the volleyball nets. *Taking the basketball rims down was a measure we had to put in place to ensure our fitness annex could remain open, yet be as safe as possible. Unfortunately, playing a team sport like basketball is difficult to enjoy while practicing good social distancing. As soon as it is safe to play basketball, we will certainly bring back the rims. ---Col Sandelier*
And another service our AAFES team is adding to keep us safe-- "curbside" pickup. Starting tomorrow, if you shop AAFES online, you can choose "pick up in store", and get it brought out to your car! Designated pick-up parking spots will be identified, and will have a phone number to call or text to have your purchase brought out to your car. ---Col Sandelier

- Any idea when the main gym will be open again? *Good evening! At this time, we are still getting after flattening the curve and protecting our Airmen and families, and do not have a specific date for reopening the main fitness center. That being said, please stay plugged into this Facebook page for updates! ---366 PA*

- I have seen one flyer that the annex gym is open but with limited support. Does that mean that retirees can still use the annex? I am getting conflicting information. *Yes, the Fitness Annex is currently open, and access to it is the same as always. ---Col Sandelier*

- So no restriction for retirees to use [the annex gym]? Because another flyer says we have to limit our access to the base and does not include the annex gym; it only lists the commissary, bx, medical facility and post office. *This is FSS/CC. You are welcome to use the annex, social distancing and face coverings required. ---Lt Col Strickland*

- With the annex gym, do we have to wear a mask? *While visiting the gym, social distancing of 6 feet is to be maintained. If within <6 feet radius, a face covering or face mask is to be worn. ---Col Aastrom*

- As a disabled vet am I still able to register my VA ID to use at the commissary? *You still have to go to the VA to get the ID but we are accepting VA IDs at authorized facilities. ---366 PA*

Childcare - Realizing the base has to balance DoD and state regulations, which will drive the decision to reopen the CDC? The Governor announced that daycare facilities can reopen on May 1. *Thanks for the question. Yes, Stage 1 of the Idaho Rebounds plan does allow off-base daycare facilities to open, and that is great news. Our assessment of the risk to do so on base is undoubtedly related to those same risks and concerns. We will open when we're comfortable that it is safe for our children. --- Col Sandelier*

- When will you be opening the CDC for mission essential personnel? *Of course caring for our children is of utmost importance to us. A date has not yet been determined to begin CDC & Youth Center operations. The safety of the children in that program is our primary concern. We will certainly make an announcement once a date is established. ---Col Sandelier*

Work - Has AFPC stopped/frozen hiring for civilian positions? *AFPC is continuing hires for civilians--the focus is on local hires but there's still options for exceptions to policies depending on the location/position someone is applying to. ---366 PA*

- How will units allow mil to mil families with school age children to balance work and home? This also means editing the outdated family care plan to incorporate these types of situations. *Our current environment has definitely added stress to some home systems. The traditional family care plan does not fit in some situations. Nevertheless, units are working individual cases to ensure we take care of airmen. We just have to communicate with each other. Your unit leadership has to know your unique challenges. ---Command Chief Snider*

- Has the wing authorized civilians to return back to base? Such as for work? *We are still conducting max telework and only asking that mission essential personnel come physically to work. ---Command Chief Snider*

PCS/Leave/Deployments - Will there be any new information regarding extensions on PCS? Or are they all on track still? *At this time DOD has stopped movement with a few exceptions. Please work with your unit leadership. Please visit [this link](#). ---Command Chief Snider*

- What deserves a PCS exemption and how do I get one? *Hardships, humanitarians, and mission essential are few criteria for exemptions. Again, if you have questions regarding your specific situation contact your unit leadership. ---Command Chief Snider*

- When could we possibly see out-of-state leave being approved? *This is Col Goodman. I look forward to being free to travel about the state and country. That said, the release of travel restrictions are tied closely to the Health Protection Condition*

that has been dictated by DOD. When HPCON changes and are pushed back down to the installation, we can start to loosen leave and travel policies.

- Any idea on when those deployed will be allowed to return? Due to the public nature of this forum, for specific situations, please work with your unit leadership as they have the most up to date information regarding deployment movements. Also, the reality is that the unit must be replaced prior to them being released to come home, and that process is likely including a pre-deployment quarantine. Getting our deployed safely home to their families is a HUGE priority of mine! The good news is that the return of several units has been approved and it's now just logistics. Stand by for further. ---Col Goodman

Mission *Hey all, Col Goodman here. I want you know that the Mission/Operational aspect of the Gunfighters is amazing! We're as ready now (or more!) as we were two months ago to answer our nation's call if required. Jets are flying, training is happening--all through safe teaming constructs and hygiene! Thanks for your patience in this unique time! [#Gunfighterstrong](#)*

Other *- Can we start a community garden in one of the vacant lots on base? Thank you for the input...I'm always open to good ideas! I know for a fact that water logistics is a complicating factor but I'll ask around. ---Col Goodman*