



# Ohio Adjutant General's Department

JOHN R. KASICH, GOVERNOR

MAJOR GENERAL MARK E. BARTMAN, ADJUTANT GENERAL

November 22, 2018

To the Soldiers, Airmen and civilian employees of the Ohio National Guard,

On this Thanksgiving Day, as we give our individual thanks for our many blessings, I want to express my sincere appreciation for your hard work this past year. You focused on personal readiness, service before self, and the National Guard's preparedness for state and federal missions.

However, the holiday season is a time for you to focus on your Families. Please ensure you pass on my undying gratitude to those who help you the most. They are a vital part of our operational force, and we would not be able to function as an organization without their support. Being a military spouse or a military child can be difficult, especially when a loved one is away from home for annual training or deployment. Their sacrifice and support on the homefront are incomparable.

Thanksgiving starts a busy holiday season. While holiday parties and family get-togethers can be an enjoyable time, it can also lead to stressful, thoughtless and/or risky behaviors.

To all Soldiers and Airmen, take care of each other. Some of you may be struggling with feelings of sadness, loneliness, or depression. I urge you to stay connected with your battle buddy or wingman and check in on one another, open a seat at your Thanksgiving table for someone who may be alone this holiday. If you need assistance, ask for it, never be ashamed or embarrassed to ask for help. Remember, that is a show of strength. Psychological health coordinators are available free of charge for consultation, and the OhioCares website has resources at [www.ohiocares.ohio.gov](http://www.ohiocares.ohio.gov) or at the non-crisis phone number, 1-800-761-0868.

While you enjoy time with your loved ones this holiday, be careful and take care of yourself and your career. Distracted and impaired driving are unsafe and illegal. Make sure you put away the cell phone when you're behind the wheel. If you've had too much to drink, use a designated driver, or a rideshare service like Uber or Lyft to get you home safely.

Your health and well-being are important.

On behalf of the Joint Force Headquarters leadership, I wish you and your Family a safe and Happy Thanksgiving.

Always ready, Always there!

Maj. Gen. Mark E. Bartman

Ohio Adjutant General