



For Immediate Release
May 25, 2012

Persian Gulf War Era Vets Need to Apply for Ohio Veterans Bonus

COLUMBUS – The clock is ticking for veterans of the Persian Gulf War era – they’ve got to get their applications in by December 31, 2013, to be able to receive the Ohio Veterans Bonus.

Ohio voters overwhelmingly approved the Ohio Veterans Bonus in November 2009, and the law implementing it specified that the bonus for Persian Gulf War era veterans would only be in effect until December 31, 2013. Even though the date is more than 18 months away, the Ohio Department of Veterans Services is encouraging veterans of that era not to delay.

“December 2013 might seem like a long time away, but as the old saying goes, it will be here before you know it, so we want to spread the word now,” Ohio Department of Veterans Services Director Tom Moe said. “We know that the military services were a lot larger during the time of the Gulf War, and since service anywhere in the world during the eligible time qualifies, we believe we’ve got a lot more who should be getting the bonus.

“If you’re a veteran of that era, take the time to apply, it’s a very simple process,” Director Moe continued. “We also ask that our veterans of other eras, and our families, let everyone they know who served in the Persian Gulf era to get busy and apply before it’s too late.”

Based on estimates from the U.S. Department of Veterans’ Affairs, the Ohio Department of Veterans Services believes roughly 75,000 Ohio-resident Persian Gulf War era are eligible. So far, a total of 8,174 of these veterans have received the bonus.

In total, from August 2010 through April 2012, the Ohio Veterans Bonus has paid over \$47.1 million to 56,327 Ohio resident service members and veterans, of all qualifying time periods, and eligible families. So far, the largest single largest group of veterans to receive the bonus are those who served in Iraq, amounting to 19,284 recipients.

Veterans of the Persian Gulf War era as well as the eras of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are eligible, as well as the next of kin of those killed in action. The bonus is not subject to federal or state taxes, and can be used for any purpose.

The Ohio Veterans Bonus is available to veterans who served more than 90 days active duty, not for training, during the periods of the Persian Gulf War and the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. For the Persian Gulf, the eligible period is from August 2, 1990 through March 3, 1991; for Afghanistan, from October 7, 2001 through a date to be determined by the President, and for Iraq, from March 19, 2003 and also through a to-be-determined date. Payment can be received for active duty service anywhere in the world during these periods, but is higher for veterans who served in the Persian Gulf or in Afghanistan or Iraq. Eligible veterans must have been Ohio residents at the time of their entry into the service, and must be Ohio residents currently.

The bonus pays \$100 a month to veterans who served in the Persian Gulf theater, or in the countries of Afghanistan or Iraq, up to a maximum of \$1,000. For veterans who served elsewhere, the payment is \$50 a month up to a \$500 maximum. Veterans medically discharged due to injuries sustained in combat can receive \$1,000, plus up to \$500 for months of service elsewhere. Family members of those killed in action or who died from disease as a result of their in-theater service can receive a bonus of \$5,000 plus whatever the service member was eligible for, up to a total of \$6,500.

Veterans needing more information or who want to apply can call toll-free to 1-877-OHIO VET (1-877-644-6838) option 2, visit www.veteransbonus.ohio.gov, or visit any county veterans service office (see www.dvs.ohio.gov for an interactive map of the county offices). The department also provides information about the bonus through its social media.

The Ohio Veterans Bonus continues a tradition of bonuses to reward Ohio veterans that dates back to the Civil War; however, these other war bonuses are now closed.

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Media needing more information, contact - Mike McKinney at 614-728-0235 or Michael.mckinney@dvs.ohio.gov.