



For Immediate Release
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Ohio Veterans Bonus Pays More than 60,000; Deadlines Loom

COLUMBUS – A total of 60,593 Ohio veterans and family members have received payments from the Ohio Veterans Bonus totaling \$50,893,704 – and other eligible veterans are urged to take advantage of this special thank-you for their service from Ohio voters.

Action is particularly critical for two groups of veterans – those from the Persian Gulf War and Iraq War eras. The deadline to apply for Persian Gulf veterans is December 31, 2013. Iraq War veterans face a deadline of December 31, 2014 to apply.

The citizens of Ohio overwhelmingly approved the Ohio Veterans Bonus in November 2009 for veterans of the Persian Gulf War, Iraq War and Afghanistan War eras. The law implementing the Bonus set a deadline for Persian Gulf War veterans to apply of December 31, 2013. The same law set the deadline for Iraq War veterans as the third year following a date determined by the President as the end of the conflict. Tentatively, this date is the termination date of the Iraq Campaign Medal, which was December 31, 2011, making the deadline for Bonus application for service in Iraq December 31, 2014. No deadline has yet been announced for the Afghanistan War.

“Every veteran who’s served during our recent wars is eligible for the Bonus,” Ohio Department of Veterans Services Director Tom Moe said. “We’re very pleased with the response we’ve had to this point, but we’re not going to rest in getting out the word. We particularly want to be sure that we reach all of our Gulf War and Iraq veterans.”

“I’m also calling on our entire Ohio veterans’ community to be sure that our veterans of today know about the Bonus, and take the time to apply for it,” Director Moe continued. “It’s a simple process that can be started with a phone call or some time online, or at a county veterans service office, and then followed up by mailing in the appropriate documents. Every veteran and their family deserves our thanks, and no eligible veteran should miss out.”

The Ohio Veterans Bonus is open to veterans of the Persian Gulf War era as well as the eras of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, regardless of where they served, as well as the

next of kin of those who were killed in action or died of disease as a result of in-theater service. The Bonus is not subject to federal or state taxes, and can be used for any purpose.

Specific criteria for award of the Ohio Veterans Bonus is service in the Armed Forces of 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 through December 31, 2011. 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 and at veterans' events, and has advertised the program in print and broadcast 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.