



# Ohio Adjutant General's Department

Mike DeWine, Governor

Major General John C. Harris Jr., Adjutant General

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## **Ohio Army National Guard camouflage jerseys hit field for second season** *High school football teams honoring military again in 2020*

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Ohio high school football teams are showing their support for the military once again this year by growing the Operation Buckeye Guard program and wearing special camouflage jerseys to salute service members statewide.

This is the second season for the military-themed jerseys, courtesy of the Ohio Army National Guard, and the ninth year for Operation Buckeye Guard (OBG), a program started by the Ohio High School Football Coaches Association (OHSFCA) in 2011 to recognize military service under the Friday night lights.

"I personally want to thank the Ohio High School Football Coaches Association and all the football coaches who have shown their support for Ohio service members, past and present," said Maj. Gen. John C. Harris Jr., Ohio adjutant general. "As the 2020 football season unfolds, the Ohio National Guard stands ready to serve and support schools and communities on and off the field. Best of luck to all of the teams!"

The OHSFCA set a goal of 220 Operation Buckeye Guard sign-ups for 2020, and exceeded that goal with 237 high schools signing on by mid-August. Through OBG, high schools can request American flag helmet decals, school-branded patriotic banners, and various other promotions to support military appreciation activities, to include the jerseys sanctioned by the Ohio High School Athletic Association for home team wear.

"The Hometown Hero Game of the Week program is an amazing commitment by the Ohio Army National Guard to support the more than 35,000 young men who play football in Ohio," said Jerry Cooke, past president of OHSFCA. "A special 'thank you' to the more than 11,000 men and women of the Ohio Army National Guard for this commitment and all you do for America. The over 230 teams signed up for Operation Buckeye Guard are looking forward to supporting you."

According to Command Sgt. Maj. Justin Sprankle, the senior enlisted Soldier assigned to the Ohio Army National Guard Recruiting and Retention Battalion, there was such an overwhelming demand for the camo jerseys last year that more were ordered for this season, with 20 sets now available statewide.

"Though this year's football season brings with it many uncertainties because of COVID-19, one thing that remains solid is the Ohio Guard's commitment to our communities, and our

willingness to support military appreciation efforts during high school football games,” Sprankle said.

The Ohio Army National Guard comprises more than 11,400 Citizen-Soldiers, serving in about 100 units across the state. Benefits include 100% college tuition, paid job training, and affordable health care for part-time service.

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**EDITOR’S NOTE:** Please check with your local high school football team(s) to see if they will be participating in the Ohio National Guard’s Hometown Hero Game of the Week program. A high-resolution photo of the Army Guard camo jersey is available to download at <https://www.ong.ohio.gov/recruiting/images/ntl-guard-jersey.jpg>

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