



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
MILITARY DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
WILLIAM A. O'NEILL ARMORY
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Strength in Diversity

Over the past two weeks, Americans have exercised their First Amendment rights by calling attention to inequities that continue to affect significant segments of our population. Their message is rooted in our nation's founding principles and reflects the values of our National Guard. The National Guard stands out as an example for the rest of the nation as we have long recognized that our organizational strength and ultimate success rests upon a culture of diversity, inclusion, and treatment of all persons with dignity and respect.

The Connecticut Military Department and Connecticut National Guard does not condone or tolerate unlawful discrimination or mistreatment of any member of the armed forces of the state or civilian employee. Equitable and nondiscriminatory treatment of all persons is not only a basic human right but also improves morale, productivity, unit cohesion, and increases the combat effectiveness of our organization. We must continue open dialogue and efforts to implement our standards to treat all members and employees fairly and to provide all an equal opportunity to succeed. Any allegation of discriminatory behavior will be promptly investigated and addressed by the command. Discriminatory behavior will not be tolerated.

If any member of the Connecticut National Guard, armed forces of the state or civilian employee believes that they have been the victim or observer of an act of unlawful discrimination or other form of personnel mistreatment, that person is bound by our standards to report it to their chain of command, supervisor or other responsible agency official. Our leaders need to be made aware of any discrimination within their responsibility and afforded the opportunity to resolve conflicts at the lowest level. Engagement and action at the lowest level promotes a climate dedicated to fairness. It allows us to participate in constructive conflict resolution and aides in the development of a common understanding. Every element of our organization has access to trained Equal Opportunity representatives that can provide expert assistance to address discrimination concerns. In cases where a resolution cannot be reached at the lowest level, members and civilian employees have the right to file formal complaints with the organization's respective Equal Employment Opportunity representatives.

I challenge our leaders at all levels to take every opportunity to effectuate positive change. We pride ourselves on our successes, but there is always room for improvement. I welcome all members' and employees' civil and responsible discourse, to have courageous conversations, about race, diversity and equality. I encourage our junior members and employees to share their experiences. In such conversations, there is zero tolerance for discriminatory, sexist, or racist conduct or speech. Diversity is our strength. Exercise that strength by treating all people in accordance with our values.

*DIVERSITY
IS OUR
STRENGTH!*

Sincerely,

FRANCIS J. EVON, JR.
Major General
The Adjutant General