



**State of New Jersey**  
DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS  
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*Brigadier General*  
*The Adjutant General*

**TAG POLICY 21-02**

**13 July 2021**

**THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S PHILOSOPHY**

1. **Purpose.** As the Adjutant General of New Jersey and Commissioner of Military and Veterans Affairs, I am privileged to serve alongside outstanding Citizen Soldiers, Airmen, and Civilians protecting our State and Nation and caring for those who serve and who have served, their families, and survivors. We stand at the ready in support of our Veterans, Service Members, and fellow Citizens. This document outlines my philosophy and vision for our organization. In the absence of a specific policy, I encourage leaders to utilize this guidance to understand my overall intent.

2. **Vision.** The New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs will be ready, relevant, and engaged in the communities that we serve with a focus on people, readiness, modernization, and reform.

3. **Mission.** Provide trained and ready forces – prepared for rapid response to a wide range of civil and military operations – while providing exemplary services to citizens and Veterans of New Jersey.

4. **Priorities.**

a. People

(1) People First. The well-being of our Soldiers, Airmen, and Civilians must always be at the forefront of our minds. I expect leaders to put their people first with zero exceptions. Every member of the team should feel valued for his or her contribution.

(2) Live the Army and Air Force Core Values. As we focus on our people, we develop subordinates into strong, ethical leaders who – regardless of branch of service or civilian status – live the Army Values (Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage) and the Air Force Core Values (Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence In All We Do).

(3) Suicide Prevention. Leaders have a responsibility to cultivate a climate where seeking help is a sign of strength. We have to be there for one another. Being there means understanding the signs of those contemplating self-harm, encouraging them to seek support, and if necessary, reaching out through our respective Chains of Command to get our teammates the help they need. We achieve this objective by fully supporting the Army and Air Force's suicide prevention programs and New Jersey's Employee Advisory Service (EAS). I expect the Division of Veterans Services to improve our services and ability to provide support to those in crisis. Regardless of our place in this organization, every leader has a fundamental

responsibility to ensure the safety and well-being of our teammates. My door is always open to those seeking help.

(4) Sexual Harassment and Assault are not acceptable. Leaders will foster a climate of dignity and respect through adherence to the Army Values and Air Force Core Values. We prevent Sexual Harassment and Assault incidents before they occur by providing training, resources, and support to Soldiers, Airmen, and Civilians. We achieve the prevention objective by fully supporting the Army's Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention (SHARP) Program, the Air Force's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program, New Jersey's State Workplace Violence Policy, and the State Policy Prohibiting Discrimination in the Workplace. Leaders will hold offenders accountable while providing care to survivors.

(5) Support Our Families. The foundation of successful service involves respect for the families who share in the sacrifice of Veterans, Soldiers, Airmen, and Civilians. Our organization will be family-friendly. For Service Members, that means single parents and dual military couples will have a family care plan. Leaders will also ensure that spouses are made to feel welcome and included in unit family readiness activities.

(6) Employer Support. Employer support is critical to the success of our organization. Heightened readiness and training expectations of National Guard and Reserve Service Members in an unpredictable environment requires us to increase the level of service predictability as well as to develop innovative, flexible ways to minimize employer impact. We will promote the Department of Defense Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Program to increase employer awareness and cooperation and to promote the benefits of hiring our heroes.

#### b. Readiness

(1) Build Ready and Resilient Teams. More than any point in our history, we face a complex and evolving security environment that requires increased reliance on the National Guard. The New Jersey National Guard must maintain readiness to deploy for contingency operations while also remaining prepared to execute domestic civil support missions. As a result, I expect leaders to build ready and resilient teams that are proficient in warfighting functions while also capable of responding to emergencies here at home. This includes the individual maintenance and improvement of physical fitness, medical and personal readiness, and continued professional development.

(2) Plan and Prepare for Emergencies. Our organization will incorporate lessons learned from previous State and Federal responses to anticipate threats and vulnerabilities. Specifically, all facilities will develop, practice, and improve upon existing emergency operations procedures.

#### c. Modernization

(1) The Force for the Future. The National Guard is the primary combat reserve of the Army and Air Force. Like our active duty counterparts, we will modernize to meet threats from peer competitors. Modernization is a continuous process requiring collaboration across our entire organization. Leaders will support the modernizations of units, equipment, and capabilities. The end state is a New Jersey National Guard that is lethal, deployable, and ready to fight to protect the United States of America.

(2) Build and Sustain Partnerships. Whether serving Veterans or executing military operations, our organization's enduring partnerships benefit state and national interests and enhance the safety and security of those we swore to serve. I expect that leaders will continually improve multinational, joint, interagency,

public, and private collaboration. Specifically, we will continuously engage with Veterans Service Organizations. In addition, enhancement and expansion of New Jersey's engagement with the State Partnership Program (SPP) is a priority. The current SPP with Albania has matured to the point where its focus can begin shifting from military-to-military towards military-to-civilian and ultimately civilian-to-civilian collaboration. This will enable our state's public and private sectors to leverage whole-of-society relationships and capabilities to facilitate broader interactions spanning government, economic, and social spheres. The New Jersey National Guard will also be well-positioned to acquire an additional partner nation. We will actively apply to obtain a second SPP as new countries are nominated and approved by the U.S. Department of State and Office of the Secretary of Defense.

d. Organizational Development and Reform

(1) Adapt and Reform. Organizations that adapt and reform practices, methods and policies remain relevant and are highly effective. I expect a climate that is inclusive, respectful, and ensures psychological and physical safety. These tenets depend on mutual trust and a firm foundation built upon openness, transparency and feedback. Leaders at all levels must foster diversity of thought and environments that are inclusive of all members. Leaders are encouraged to take acceptable risks and experiment with new ideas.

(2) Reimagining Veterans' Services. Caring for those who have borne the burden of service and those who continue to serve drives our organization's daily activities. We will leave our organization better than we found it so that we can be ready to meet the needs of Veterans and their families. We will deliver services that are mobile, adaptable, and relevant. My desired end state is to ensure that all New Jersey Veterans receive access to the federal and state benefits that they have earned, that we serve as a resource for those seeking those benefits, and that the heroes entrusted to our care are healthy, safe, and empowered.



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