

**STATE OF OHIO  
ADJUTANT GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT  
2825 West Dublin Granville Road  
Columbus, Ohio 43235-2789**

NGOH-HRO

1 December 2016

**MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION**

**SUBJECT:** Guiding Principles to all Commands in Planning and Displaying Holiday Decorations to ensure inclusiveness and respect for a wide range of Cultural and Religious Customs

1. The Human Resource Office, in conjunction with the State Diversity and Inclusion Advisor, offer the following recommendations to guide commands as they plan for the use of holiday decorations within their units. Having a festive environment, especially during the December/January holiday season is important to everyone. This can be easily accomplished in ways that are inclusive and respectful of a broad range of cultural and religious beliefs and traditions.
2. The following recommendations reflect the interests identified by representative groups within the Ohio National Guard. These guidelines are not meant as rules, but as a starting point and guide for planning within your commands. Holiday decorations must conform to all fire and safety regulations.
3. Begin by assuring a process for staff input into decorating plans. Invite staff to participate and provide information and items that reflect personal traditions and beliefs they wish to share. Planning groups strive for consensus and seek decisions that everyone can feel involved with. Plans include a means to share and learn about different cultural and religious celebrations and holy days. Decorations are respectful and sensitive toward the diversity of our Soldiers, Airmen, Civilians employees and their families. Efforts here should enhance work life and relationships, heighten diversity awareness and support fun at work. An individual's decision not to participate is also to be respected.
4. The following are Inclusive Strategies: Identify a period of time before and after the holidays for decorations to be put up and taken down. Invite Soldiers/Airmen to share and include decorations related to their traditions and holidays. Explain holidays & symbols so others learn from their meanings. Designate a common area to share various holidays/cultures. Allow for individual displays in personal work space where appropriate. Use a multicultural calendar to assist in planning and identify appropriate holiday salutations that can be used when speaking to others.

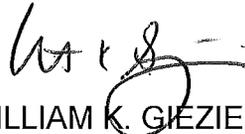
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5. Commands may choose to use an Alternative Neutral Theme. These themes may choose to focus on celebrations that are neutral and seasonal. For example, a "Winter around the World" theme or a theme that focuses on camaraderie, family and celebrating.

6. Any questions or concerns may be directed to MAJ Shaun Robinson, State Diversity and Inclusion Advisor, at (614) 336-7245, or [shaun.t.robinson.mil@mail.mil](mailto:shaun.t.robinson.mil@mail.mil).

FOR THE ADJUTANT GENERAL:



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