



West Virginia National Guard  
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## PRESS RELEASE

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WV National Guard  
Public Affairs Office  
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### **W.Va. Guard continues support to State's COVID-19 response**

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – Currently, nearly 370 members of the West Virginia National Guard (WVNG) are serving the State of West Virginia by augmenting civil authorities through four lines of effort:

- Operationalizing of the event
- Stabilization of the population
- Logistical movement of critical supplies
- Information and analytics to combat the virus

Since our last update, our logistical team has received 307,950 gloves; 27,416 gowns; 28,500 surgical masks; 71,920 N95 masks; 1,536 face shields and 300 coveralls from the national stockpile. The WVNG will facilitate the distribution of these supplies to healthcare facilities around the state tomorrow, alongside the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (WVDHRR) and the West Virginia Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (WVDHSEM).

Over the last 24 hours, the Guard's support to the Greenbrier County Long Term Recovery Committee closed out, and Guard personnel were directly involved in the production and distribution of more than 10,370 packaged meals through that mission. In Gassaway, 10 Soldiers assisted in the packing of 851 family of four meals and another team of Soldiers began work at the Facing Hunger Food Bank in Huntington.

The WVNG provided proper cargo, box handling and PPE wear training to Wal-Mart in Nitro today and is working with the Retail Association to solicit additional retailers, convenience stores and food establishments who are interested in similar training.

Four Guard personnel began work today to assist with traffic control at a drive through testing site in Huntington. The Guard will support additional testing sites as requests are vetted and approved through the State Emergency Operations Center in the coming days and weeks.

The WVNG has conducted the following missions since coming on duty to support the state in all aspects of COVID-19 preparation and response:

- 18 Soldiers are providing assistance with food box building and distribution at with the Mountaineer Food Bank and with the Facing Hunger Food Bank in Huntington.
- WVNG medical personnel are supporting the COVID-19 hotline in Charleston, answering calls and providing information to concerned citizens. Additional medical personnel are being assigned to provide planning expertise to state agencies in areas such as long-term care facilities, epidemiology and contact tracing support.
- 23 liaison officers from the WVNG are working hand-in-hand with the various West Virginia agencies who are leading the response to COVID-19 to include the Department of Health and Human Resources, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, and Department of Education.
- The WVNG's Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosive (CBRNE) Battalion, the 35th Civil Support Team (CST), and the 35th Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP) have provided classroom and hands-on personal protective equipment (PPE) instruction to more than 150 first responders and hospital staff from Kentucky and West Virginia, in order to help prepare them on how to minimize cross-contamination through proper wear of, "donning" and "doffing" of PPE.
- Five Soldiers provided capabilities for conducting COVID-19 swabs in Morgantown March 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> utilizing PAPRs PPE that can be decontaminated and reused, greatly reducing the use of disposable, one-time-use PPE.
- Soldiers continue to provide logistical support for delivery of PPE from the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (WVDHHR) and West Virginia Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (WVDHSEM) to hospitals and health departments.
- The WVNG has fielded a network of seven epidemiology teams to assist DHHR with COVID-19 tracking and analytics.
- We continue to provide logistical pickup and transfer of PAPRs and canisters to various health care networks in the event of a surge of patients.
- Our CBRN field is facilitating COVID-19 PPE training for retailers, restaurants, convenience stores, health care providers and first responders.
- Four Soldiers are providing traffic control assistance to a drive through testing facility in Huntington.

All current and future missions performed by the WVNG are a part of a coordinated state-level public health preparation and response effort for the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, initiated by Governor Jim Justice, and being led by the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources.

The West Virginia National Guard has a bench of nearly 6,400 experienced and proven Air and Army National Guard professionals who frequently train side-by-side with state and local emergency responders, making them well-suited for domestic operations.

Our National Guard members work and live in every community have a proven record of accomplishment supporting civilian authorities during and after homeland emergencies.

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