



West Virginia National Guard  
Public Affairs Office  
1703 Coonskin Drive  
Charleston, WV 25311



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## PRESS RELEASE

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WV National Guard  
Public Affairs Office  
(304) 561-6762

### WVNG update on COVID-19 response

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – “Our efforts over the last two weeks and going forward will have a pivotal impact on the spread of this virus and how our state is able to respond. We must continue to implement all the necessary precautions and follow the advice from the CDC, Dr. Marsh, Dr. Slemp and DHHR,” says Maj. Gen. James Hoyer, Adjutant General of the West Virginia National Guard. “We cannot lose focus as we move forward in our efforts to combat this virus. Every action we take now will make a difference.”

Currently, nearly 300 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

Our force continues to maintain support to the state’s coordinated response to this public health emergency. Over the last 24 hours, we have received shipment of critical personal protective equipment (PPE) and are distributing it across the state today, which includes 278,000 gloves, 18,480 N95 masks and 12,400 gowns. Additionally, the WVNG provided logistical support for the delivery of 30 PAPRs to St. Mary’s Medical Center and 10 PAPRs to Monongalia County Health Department yesterday.

Our work with the Department of Education and the Mountaineer Food Bank continues as more than 1,220 30-day family of four meals were packaged yesterday with the assistance of WVNG Soldiers.

Over the weekend, the WVNG will continue to provide critical support for the state’s needs to include PPE distribution, training of PPE donning and doffing for hospitals and first responders, food bank assistance and data tracking and analysis with our epidemiology partners.

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 have been providing assistance with food box building and distribution at with the Mountaineer Food Bank and with the Greater Greenbrier County Long Term Recovery Committee.
- 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.
- 19 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 120 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 is building a network of epidemiology analysts from to assist DHHR with COVID-19 tracking and analytics.
- 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 continues to in order to facilitate the needs of the state for COVID-19 testing or training of health care providers and first responders.

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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For more information, contact the West Virginia National Guard Public Affairs Office at: (304) 389-8184 or email: [holli.r.nelson.mil@mail.mil](mailto:holli.r.nelson.mil@mail.mil).

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