

GOVERNOR KATIE HOBBS

STATE OF ARIZONA

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EXECUTIVE ORDER

**Executive Order 2025-01**  
**Establishing Operation Desert Guardian**

**WHEREAS**, Arizona leads the fight against Transnational Criminal Organizations (TCOs) that profit from the illegal smuggling and trafficking of drugs, weapons, and people across the border between Arizona and Mexico; and

**WHEREAS**, since 2023, my administration has invested over \$100 million in city, county, and state law enforcement agencies to disrupt the flow of weapons, human smuggling, and dangerous drugs, including fentanyl, in Arizona; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2023, I signed Executive Order 2023-17 ordering the Arizona National Guard to Arizona's Southern Border as part of Operation SECURE (Safety, Enforcement, Coordination and Uniform Response) to support the Arizona Department of Public Safety (AZDPS), county sheriffs, and local law enforcement agencies working on fentanyl interdiction, analytical support, and human smuggling enforcement efforts; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2024, as directed in Executive Order 2023-17, I established Arizona's first-ever Border Coordination Office in the Arizona Department of Homeland Security (AZDOHS) to enhance coordination between state and local agencies (including local and county law enforcement agencies), federal agencies, and community organizations to address border-related security and humanitarian services; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2024, to build on successes from Operation SECURE, I established and signed into law funding for the SAFE Initiative (Stopping Arizona's Fentanyl Epidemic), under which Task Force SAFE mobilized the Arizona National Guard to assist U.S. Customs and Border Protection in combating drug trafficking and other illicit activities occurring along the border Ports of Entry; and

**WHEREAS**, since Task Force SAFE launched in July 2024 and as of February 16, 2025, our Arizona National Guardsmen have supported the seizure of 19,554,237 fentanyl pills, 6,598 pounds of other illicit drugs, and 237 weapons, for a total street value of \$48,967,972; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2024, AZDPS troopers also seized 2,645 pounds of fentanyl, valued at \$35.5 million; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2024, I signed HB2245, known as the Ashley Dunn Act, to establish minimum sentences for high-volume fentanyl traffickers responsible for thousands of overdoses in recent years; and

**WHEREAS**, these initiatives demonstrate how a multi-faceted approach consisting of intelligence sharing, education to reduce demand, prevention, and enforcement of the law have worked to expose and disrupt TCO networks; and

**WHEREAS**, Arizona's communities play a critical role in public safety, trade, and economic development and deserve the support and protection from state, local, and federal entities in combatting TCOs; and



**WHEREAS**, AZDOHS, AZDPS, and Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs (AZDEMA), county sheriffs, and local law enforcement agencies serve as the front line in combatting threats posed to Arizona's communities by TCOs.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Katie Hobbs, Governor of the State of Arizona, by virtue of the power vested in me by the Arizona Constitution and the laws of this State, hereby order and direct as follows:

1. The AZDOHS, AZDPS, and the AZDEMA shall immediately establish Operation Desert Guardian, a joint task force (JTF) focused on the identification, deterrence, interdiction, and dismantling of TCOs. Additional Arizona state agencies may be called upon to join the JTF on a temporary or permanent basis depending on their expertise or authority.
2. The AZDOHS shall convene the JTF and ensure a coordinated, collaborative strategy with state agencies as well as county sheriffs, local law enforcement agencies, and federal law enforcement agencies who join the JTF.
3. Unless otherwise directed by my office, the JTF shall report on metrics to measure the success of interdiction, enforcement, and education operations no later than August 31, 2025.
4. This Executive Order shall not confer any legal rights or remedies upon any person and shall not be used as a basis for legal challenges to any action or inaction of a State Agency, officer, employee, or agent thereof.
5. If any provision of this Executive Order or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity does not affect any other provision or application of this Executive Order which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application. To achieve this purpose, the provisions of this Executive Order are declared to be severable.

This Executive Order shall take effect immediately upon signature.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the State of Arizona.



**GOVERNOR**

**DONE** at the Capitol in Phoenix on this Twenty-Fourth Day of February in the Year Two Thousand and Twenty-Five and of the Independence of the United States of America the Year Two Hundred and Forty-Ninth.

**ATTEST:**



Secretary of State

