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March 23, 2020

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR AZ NATIONAL GUARD COVID-19 RESPONSE TASK FORCE LOGISTICS

Background. On January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization declared a public health emergency of international concern for the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). On January 31, 2020, the Secretary of Health and Human Services declared a public health emergency in the United States and announced new measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The current epidemic, which originated in mainland China, has demonstrated the capacity of the COVID-19 to spread globally. Arizona Governor Doug Ducey has communicated consistently with the public and directed state agencies to develop comprehensive and coordinated prevention and response plans for the COVID-19. The Arizona National Guard was activated by the Governor on March 19, 2020 to provide logistical support to our grocery and food bank supply chain in order to ease fears about food shortages.

What is the current mission of the Arizona National Guard?

The Arizona National Guard's mission is to surge logistical capacity to grocery stores and food banks around the state in order to make resources accessible to our communities with the greatest need.

Why is this mission suitable for the Arizona National Guard?

The National Guard is a well-trained, ready and reliable force that can be mobilized in a short amount of time to provide a multitude of support functions. With over 7,600 Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen we stand ready to support our State and our Nation when called upon. The National Guard has proven experience providing logistical support to our communities through times of crisis and emergencies like floods, hurricanes, and fires.

How did the Arizona National Guard determine gaps in the supply chain?

Leadership from the Arizona National Guard have met with work force developers, major food retailers, food banks and suppliers to identify where the gaps might exist and how best to work with those stakeholders to mitigate those shortfalls to support the long-term restoration of the distribution network.

How do communities and stores experiencing a food or supply shortage request assistance?

Local communities should work with their county emergency managers to communicate their needs and make requests to the state, to include this supply chain support mission. The counties prioritize the support requests for their communities and submit to the Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs (DEMA). DEMA then works internally with the Arizona National Guard and externally with store chains to finalize the mission, which includes confirming details such as when the supplies will be available for transport at a distribution center and/or when those supplies are expected to be delivered to the store in order to arrange the appropriate personnel and if needed vehicles to support.

During what time of day will this mission occur? Will I see Guard members in my store?

We expect the vast majority of these missions will occur during typical distribution and restocking hours, which is primarily during hours when a store is closed to customers.

How many Guard Members will support this mission?

More than 700 Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen are being mobilized to support this mission and cover the ‘final mile’ of logistics to ensure food and grocery items gets to our communities and citizens who are in need.

Under what authorities is the Guard being called up?

As Commander in Chief of the Arizona National Guard, Governor Ducey has this authority per the United States and Arizona Constitutions. Currently, the Arizona National Guard is being mobilized under state authorities referred to as State Active Duty, which is performed at state expense. On March 20, 2020, Governor Ducey submitted a request to U.S. Secretary of Defense Mark Esper to transition these activated members of the National Guard from State Active Duty to Title 32 status of U.S. Code, which provides federal funding for the National Guard but they remain under the command and control of the Governor.

Which Guard Members are being activated?

Members of the Arizona National Guard put serving the people and state of Arizona first. Protecting our communities is a top priority and we recognize there are many Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen already working on the frontlines of this emergency in our communities in critical roles that include public safety officers, first responders, and healthcare workers. Every effort will be made to avoid an involuntary activation of those Guard Members for this mission at the present time.

How are Guard Members protecting themselves from catching or spreading COVID-19?

Self-protection is key during this mission. Guard Members have received training on how to conduct these operations in a COVID-19 environment. By practicing social distancing and frequent hand washing, we can remain physically and mentally ready to support our communities.

For additional information on COVID-19, please visit www.azhealth.gov/COVID-19

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