



Release # 20-03-001
U.S. Army North
Public Affairs Office
Fort Sam Houston, TX 78234
Phone (210) 221-1785

March 26, 2020

Army North responds to COVID-19

FORT SAM HOUSTON, Texas – At the direction of U.S. Northern Command, U.S. Army North requested the deployment of units to provide defense support of civil authorities in response to the COVID-19 national emergency. This action enables the Department of Defense to establish a command and control framework to rapidly employ military capabilities to support our U.S. Government partners in this fight.

Led by Lt. Gen. Laura Richardson and headquartered at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, Texas, U.S. Army North is U.S. Northern Command's theater Army and serves as the Joint Forces Land Component Command for all federal ground troops in the continental United States for Homeland Defense and Defense Support of Civil Authorities. Army North is Northern Command's designated lead component to work with the Federal Emergency Management Agency to align federal military support to validated requests for assistance.

"I have requested this action so that, as the Secretary of Defense directs it, we rapidly and effectively deploy military capabilities in support of our U.S. government partners across the country who are responding to this national emergency," said Richardson.

"We have trained with our federal, state, and local partners to be ready to respond at a moment's notice to help the American people in their time of greatest need," she added.

Active Duty units supporting this mission are:

- Joint Task Force-Civil Support Headquarters, Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Va.
- 3rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command, Ft. Bragg, NC
- 4th Sustainment Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, Fort Carson, CO
- 63rd Expeditionary Signal Battalion, Fort Stewart, GA

In total, approximately 1,100 people are deploying for Army North in support of the lead federal agency helping communities in need. Service members from these units have already started movement to assist FEMA in New York and Washington State.

The service members assigned to this mission will provide medical, planning, communication, transportation and logistics support. They will not directly participate in civilian law enforcement activities.

In addition to these units, Army North has activated its ten Defense Coordinating Officers/Elements in response to a request from FEMA. These specialized 10-person planning cells, led by a senior Army colonel (O6), are co-located with each FEMA regional headquarters and serve as the Secretary of Defense's liaison to coordinate requests from the federal government for federal military assistance

Army North has also activated approximately 100 Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officers. The EPLOs are specially trained and experienced military reserve component officers, who assist the Defense Coordinating Officers in each of the states and territories. Together the DCO and EPLO network ensures that U.S. Northern Command, through Army North, is able to help federal, state, local, tribal and territorial leaders understand the unique military capabilities of the Defense Department and what type of military support may be appropriate and best suited for civil assistance missions.

-30-

Editor's Notes:

1. The U.S. Army North Public Affairs Office can be reached by phone at 210-221-1785/2787 or by email at usarmy.jbsa.arnorth.mbx.pao-media-operations@mail.mil
2. Follow the U.S. Army North Facebook Page [@usarmynorth](#) or on Twitter [@USArmyNorth](#)