

Public Safety Agencies Continue To Support Residents' Right To Peaceful Protest As National Guard Completes Mission

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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SPRINGFIELD – As the Illinois National Guard completes its mission in support of municipalities across the state, the administration is continuing to work with local governments to protect Illinois residents and safeguard their rights to peacefully protest.

The Illinois State Police (ISP) and Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) will continue to work with local governments to address the needs of local communities as they arise.

“I am grateful to the brave men and women of the Illinois National Guard whose work, alongside the Illinois State Police, allowed Illinois residents to safely exercise their right to protest and helped protect communities and local businesses throughout the state,” **said Governor JB Pritzker.** “As we move forward, we must pair protest with policy. That means investing in communities of color and reforming our broken systems of law enforcement and criminal justice. I am committed to working with our partners in the General Assembly and community leaders across our state to get this done.”

Thanks to the strength of Illinois’ robust mutual aid networks and the assistance of citizen soldiers and airmen from the Illinois National Guard (ILNG), more than 300 peaceful protests took place throughout the state over the past weeks, allowing citizens the ability to exercise their First Amendment right and draw light to racial injustice in our country.

On May 31, Governor JB Pritzker activated about 375 ILNG soldiers following a request from the City of Chicago to support local law enforcement. An additional 550 soldiers and airmen were activated in the coming days to support Illinois State Police operations throughout the state. The Illinois National Guard troops allowed for the reallocation of personnel within the Illinois State Police and municipal police departments.

The ISP mobilized 430 officers from outside Divisions to assist with the statewide protests and civil unrest. These additional officers supplemented the nearly 985 available Troopers in the Division of Patrol. Troops from the ILNG joined the ISP and local law enforcement to assist by securing street closures, controlling traffic flow and providing security at locations that had been targeted by looters and vandals.

“The Illinois State Police has always had a close working relationship with the National Guard. Many of our troopers served or currently serve in the Illinois National Guard to aid their communities and country. We appreciate their help in our continuing mission to protect people, peaceful protests and property,” **said ISP Director Brendan F. Kelly.** “We will continue to partner with the Illinois National Guard and Illinois Emergency Management Agency to make sure that rights and property of the residents of Illinois are and continue to be protected.”

“The Illinois National Guard are citizen-soldiers, drawn from every community in Illinois to help when we are needed,” **said Brig. Gen. Richard Neely, the Adjutant General of the Illinois National Guard.** “I’m thankful to our communities and their

support of our Illinois National Guard members. During these difficult times, we were reminded time and again of the generous kind-hearted nature of our communities and their members who came out to show support of our Guardsmen and women who were on mission. Makes you proud to be from Illinois.”

“Illinois’ robust mutual aid network is skilled in all-hazards and all-disciplines, and this proficiency allows for expedited resource sharing from personnel to equipment,” **said IEMA Director Alicia Tate-Nadeau.** “These associations and organizations continue to answer the call for help, and this local to local collaboration is true testament of the strength of our state’s response efforts.”

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Illinois Department of Public Health is recommending that anyone who participated in recent protests should seek a COVID-19 test, regardless of whether or not they are exhibiting symptoms. These tests are offered for free and without proof of insurance at any of the state-managed Community Based Testing Sites:

Location	Address	Times
Aurora	1650 Premium Outlet Blvd Aurora	8:00am – 4:00pm while daily supplies last
Auburn/Gresham /Chatham	SMG Chatham 210 W 87th Street Chicago	8:00am – 4:00pm while daily supplies last
Bloomington*	1106 Interstate Drive Bloomington	9:00am – 5:00pm while daily supplies last
Champaign	Market Place Shopping Ctr 2000 N. Neil Street Champaign	8:00am – 4:00pm while daily supplies last

East St. Louis*	Jackie Joyner Kersee Ctr. Argonne Drive East St Louis	8:00am – 4:00pm while daily supplies last
Harwood Heights	6959 W. Forest Preserve Rd. Chicago	7:00am – 3:00pm while daily supplies last
Peoria*	Peoria Civic Center Fulton Street Parking Lot Peoria	8:00am – 4:00pm while daily supplies last
Rockford	1601 Parkview Avenue Rockford	8:00am – 4:00pm while daily supplies last
Rolling Meadows	Rolling Meadows HS 2901 Central Road Rolling Meadows	8:00am – 4:00pm while daily supplies last
South Holland	South Suburban College 15800 State St South Holland	8:00am – 4:00pm while daily supplies last
		8:00am – 4:00pm

Waukegan

102 W. Water Street
Waukegan

while daily supplies
last

*Walk-up testing is available at Bloomington, East St. Louis, and Peoria.

To learn more about the availability of COVID-19 testing, please visit, www.coronavirus.illinois.gov.