



CIVICS IN REAL LIFE

The National Guard

Civics is all around us. There is a lot to know about the government and how “We the People” interact with the government and each other. Let’s help each other expand our civic literacy.



Some states have activated the [National Guard](#) to help with the COVID-19/Novel Coronavirus pandemic. For example, the Guard has helped set up field hospitals, delivered food to hard hit communities, helped enforce executive orders, and supported testing for the virus with [Community Based Testing Sites \(CBTS\)](#).

The National Guard is one way that governments seek to implement the expectations of the [Preamble](#) of the U.S. Constitution. Ensuring domestic tranquility, providing for the common defense, and promoting the general welfare are among the goals and purposes of government at both the state and federal level. The Guard has a dual mission, with both federal and state responsibilities. The National Guard is composed of reserve components of the United States Army, called the [Army National Guard](#), and the United States Air Force, called the [Air National Guard](#).

The National Guard exists in all 50 [states](#), three territories and the District of Columbia. During peacetime each state National Guard answers to leadership in the 50 states, three territories and the District of Columbia. State and territory National Guard forces are commanded by the governor through a [state adjutant general](#). The governor activates the Guard during local or state-wide emergencies, such as storms, drought and civil disturbances.

During national emergencies, the [president has the authority](#) to mobilize the National Guard and put the Guard on federal duty status both domestically and overseas. When federalized, Guard units fall under the same military chain of command as active duty and reserve troops. Even when not federalized, the National Guard has a federal obligation mission to maintain properly trained and equipped units, available for prompt mobilization for war, national emergency, or as otherwise needed.

To Do and To Think: What is happening with the National Guard in your state? Explain how the National Guard is being used to protect life and property, preserve peace, order and public safety, or to contribute to national, state, and local programs.



Illinois National Guard



Florida National Guard



Wyoming National Guard

Learn MORE about the role and responsibilities of state government. Free registration may be required.

- [State and Local Government Obligations & Services](#), from Civics360
- [National Guard Covid19 Response](#), from the National Guard
- [Stimulus Package Impact on the National Guard](#), from the National Guard Association of the United States



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