

Maj. Gen. Torrence Saxe

Commissioner & Adjutant General

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Alaska National Guard

*Department of Military
and Veterans Affairs*

Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska

STATE OF ALASKA

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By Lt. Col. Candis Olmstead

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Alaska National Guard to provide assistance for presidential inauguration

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska — Airmen and Soldiers of the Alaska National Guard departed here this morning just before 9 a.m., headed to Washington D.C. to assist the District of Columbia National Guard and federal civilian authorities with the 59th Presidential Inauguration.

After an unprecedented four hours between the official request for volunteers and a complete volunteer list—with two days to equip, process and validate mandatory training requirements—70 Alaska National Guardsmen will join 25 thousand Guard members from every state and territory to assist with the historic event. They will provide crowd management; traffic control in and around the Capitol, National Mall and White House; as well as communications, logistical, medical, and public affairs support.

Enduring partnerships with local, state and federal agencies, built on trust and performance, directly contribute to the National Guard's success in homeland response. The Alaska National Guard assists civil authorities upon request, to perform missions we are equipped and trained for, when approved through proper channels.

“What you’re doing is historic,” said Maj. Gen. Torrence Saxe, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard, and commissioner for the Alaska Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, speaking to the troops at the Joint Mobility Center on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson the day they were scheduled to depart. “This is a moment for the state, this is a moment for the nation, but this is a moment for you, as well, because you are doing what others are asking of you. You’re standing up to help.”

About 20 Alaska Guard Airmen arrived at Joint Base Andrews Sunday, and the other 50 arrived there today around 3 p.m. The KC-135 Stratotanker from the Alaska Air Guard's 168th Wing that transported the group today had a maintenance issue, delayed the original flight on Sunday. They were rescheduled to depart Monday morning, but were delayed a full 24 hours due to inclement winter weather conditions. The Guard men and women were airborne today despite wind, rain and snow over an icy runway that required additional plowing just before takeoff to ensure a safe departure.

“Despite the fact that we were delayed, the entire team is in good spirits and is motivated to get to D.C and conduct the mission as we have been asked to do,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Mike Grunst, troop non-commissioned officer in charge.

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The National Guard is home to a wide variety of capabilities that can seamlessly integrate with interagency partners to enhance inauguration support capabilities.

Military involvement in the Presidential Inauguration dates back 232 years to when members of the U.S. Army, local militias (the modern-day National Guard), and Revolutionary War veterans escorted George Washington to New York City—the seat of government for his inauguration ceremony. The National Guard and other military units have continued this tradition of inaugural support ever since.

“Every night I’m on social media and see all of these things happening,” said Staff Sgt. Kirielle Sjoblum, an intelligence analyst for the 168th Operations Support Squadron. “It’s cool to have a chance to help instead of looking at it from afar,” she said.

Volunteer Guard members will be part of an event that supports the peaceful transition of power and ensures the safety and well-being of their fellow Americans.

“You’re ready, you’re trained, let’s get to it,” said Saxe in his final comment to the troops.

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Photos and video

1. **Attached pdf** includes story and a small selection of low-resolution photos for viewing on screen.
2. **DVIDS link** includes selected full-resolution photos. (Accessible from military computers.)
<https://www.dvidshub.net/video/780864/alaska-national-guard-provides-guardsmen-assist-presidential-inauguration>

VIDEO

www.dvidshub.net/image/6486874/alaska-national-guard-supports-59th-presidential-inauguration



Before travelling to Washington D.C. members of the Alaska National Guard process through the Joint Mobility Complex on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Jan. 19, 2021. The Guardsmen will join service members from every state and territory in the nation’s capital to provide support for the 59th Presidential Inauguration, Jan. 20. Up to 25,000 National Guard men and women have been authorized to conduct security, communications, logistical, and medical missions in support of federal and District authorities leading up and through the 59th Presidential Inauguration. The National Guard routinely performs these types of missions during major events and is able to seamlessly integrate with interagency partners. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Dana Rosso)



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Alaska National Guard service members board an Alaska Air National Guard KC-135 Stratotanker Jan. 19, 2021 at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson as they prepare to travel to Washington D.C. Up to 25,000 National Guard men and women have been authorized to conduct security, communications, logistical, and medical missions in support of federal and District authorities leading up to and through the 59th Presidential Inauguration. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Dana Rosso)





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Alaska National Guard Soldiers and Airmen load gear and equipment onto an Alaska Air National Guard KC-135 Stratotanker, Jan. 19, 2021 before traveling to the District of Columbia in support of the 59th Presidential Inauguration. The Alaska National Guard will join service members from every state and territory in the nation's capital to provide support for the 59th Presidential Inauguration, Jan. 20, in the District of Columbia. Up to 25,000 National Guard men and women have been authorized to conduct security, communications, logistical, and medical missions in support of federal and District authorities leading up and through the 59th Presidential Inauguration. The National Guard routinely performs these types of missions during major events and is able to seamlessly integrate with interagency partners. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Dana Rosso)