



Ohio Adjutant General's Department

Mike DeWine, Governor

Major General John C. Harris Jr., Adjutant General

June 4, 2021
Log# 21-17

For Immediate Release

Ohio National Guard, State Defense Force to complete successful food bank mission in July

COLUMBUS, Ohio — After more than a year assisting in Ohio food banks and warehouses, emergency support from Ohio National Guard and State Defense Force members will conclude next month on July 2.

"Over the past 15 months, our Ohio National Guard members have stepped up in many different ways, and I am extremely grateful for their service and dedication," said Gov. Mike DeWine. "Their work to help distribute more than 56 million pounds of food at Ohio food banks was crucial to ensuring that those who needed food during the pandemic didn't go hungry."

Leading up to July 2, the Ohio Adjutant General's Department will be working with the Ohio Association of Foodbanks and 14 food banks and regional warehouses across the state to mentor and train new or returning volunteers and staff members in successful processes and procedures that have mitigated COVID-19 risks at each facility.

"We could never have imagined a mission such as this prior to March 2020, but I'm proud of how our men and women stepped up to the task. They not only significantly increased the productivity of food banks across the state during the pandemic, but also made long-lasting and personal friendships with their food bank partners," said Maj. Gen. John C. Harris Jr., Ohio adjutant general.

Harris said the transition from the mission will allow Guard and State Defense Force members to return to their civilian jobs, school, and their military training.

"We want to extend our deepest gratitude and thanks on behalf of Ohio's food banks and the millions of Ohioans who received critical food assistance as a result of the hard work, support, and dedication of the Ohio National Guard Soldiers and Airmen who have served this critical hunger relief mission. Quite frankly, we could not have delivered the tremendous response without their leadership and assistance. We will never forget this gift of service," said Lisa Hamler-Fugitt, Ohio Association of Foodbanks executive director.

Members of the Adjutant General's Department continue to collaborate with other state agencies on COVID-related missions, including administering vaccines and processing Pandemic Unemployment Assistance claims.

The adjutant general is a member of the governor's cabinet and is responsible for the command of the Ohio National Guard, composed of the Ohio Army National Guard and Ohio Air National Guard; and the Ohio State Defense Force, composed of the Ohio Military Reserve, Ohio Naval Militia, and Ohio Cyber Reserve.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: [High-resolution imagery](#) and [video b-roll footage](#) depicting the food bank mission are available on the Ohio National Guard's [Defense Video Imagery Distribution Site \(DVIDS\) page](#).

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: Stephanie Beougher, public information officer, at 614-506-3490 or stephanie.k.beougher.nfg@mail.mil.

See more about the Ohio National Guard's role during the COVID-19 response:
<https://ong.ohio.gov/stories/covid19/index.html>

For current information and stories on the Ohio National Guard:

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