Executive Department
State of Idaho

State Capitol
Boise

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
STATE OF IDAHO
BOISE

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 2020-19

ACTIVATION OF THE IDAHO NATIONAL GUARD TO PROVIDE SUPPORT IN RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

WHEREAS, the health and safety of all Idahoans is the greatest priority of our state and its leaders; and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has labeled the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) a pandemic that poses a serious public health threat; and

WHEREAS, as of November 12, 2020, there have been nearly 10.5 million confirmed cases of COVID-19 and approximately 242,000 deaths in the United States and 78,279 confirmed or probable cases of COVID-19 and 749 deaths in Idaho due to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, in Idaho, cases of COVID-19 have been reported in all forty-four (44) counties and community spread of COVID-19 has been confirmed in forty-three (43) counties. One (1) Idaho county had the highest per-capita number of cases in the country at one point in time; and thirty-one (31) of Idaho counties have had an average percent positivity of greater than 10 percent, which is double the White House recommendation, in the last month; and

WHEREAS, rapid community spread has caused some local hospital to have to significantly reduce operations to protect its health care workers and caused patients to have to travel or be transported into other counties to be treated for COVID-19 or other illnesses and injuries. Idaho's rural communities are particularly at risk because of limited health care capacity and staff; and

WHEREAS, cases in Idaho have risen sharply in the past several weeks and are rising in most counties in the state. As a result, hospitals across the state of Idaho, including the Veterans Affairs Medical Center, are at or nearing capacity. Due to the increase in COVID-19 patients, hospitals have had to divert patients to other hospitals within the state and, in some instances, to neighboring states. Hospitals in surrounding states are also experiencing a surge of COVID-19 cases and may not be able to receive Idaho patients; and

WHEREAS, the recent surge of COVID-19 cases in Idaho has put a significant strain on health care workers, resulting in staffing shortages across the State. Shortages have resulted from staff members testing positive for the virus or coming into close contact with someone who has COVID-19. Without health care works and support staff, hospitals are not able to utilize their capacity; and

WHEREAS, the Idaho Military Division is committed to maintaining domestic emergency response readiness in the Idaho National Guard; and guiding the state, through the Office of Emergency Management, in effectively preparing for, responding to and recovering from all hazards; and

WHEREAS, one of the Adjutant General's three strategic imperatives is to continue developing and strengthening our homeland security and emergency response readiness; and

WHEREAS, Idaho is committed to being prepared and protecting Idahoans from COVID-19. There continues to be a risk to life and the continued operation of public infrastructure as a result of cases of COVID-19 throughout the State of Idaho, and the activation of the Idaho National Guard will assist in our State's battle against this deadly virus.

NOW, THEREFORE I, Brad Little, Governor of the State of Idaho, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of this state do hereby order:

1. *The activation of members of the Idaho National Guard pursuant to Idaho Code § 46-1008. One hundred (100) National Guardsman are ordered on Active Duty for a period of thirty (30) days to provide additional support to the State of Idaho in its emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic.*

2. *Funding for the activation of National Guardsman pursuant to this Executive Order will be provided from the Disaster Emergency Account established in Idaho Code § 46-1005A.*

3. *The Adjutant General of Idaho is authorized to direct activated Idaho Guardsman as necessary to assist in efforts to respond to and combat the COVID-19 pandemic in Idaho.*

4. *This Executive Order will expire in thirty (30) days unless extended, rescinded, or amended in writing by the Governor.*

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the State of Idaho at the Capitol in Boise on this 13th day of November in the year of our Lord two thousand and twenty.

BRAD LITTLE
GOVERNOR

LAWERENCE DENNEY
SECRETARY OF STATE