

# Deployment of US troops along US-Mexico border will stretch into a fourth year, Pentagon announces



A soldier from the 1st Armored Division, Fort Bliss, Texas, conducts observations along the international border near Nogales, Ariz., Feb. 27, 2019. (Keith Anderson/U.S. Army)

---

As many as 3,000 troops will be deployed along the U.S. border with Mexico until Sept. 30, 2022, stretching the military's mission there into a fourth year, the chief Pentagon spokesman said Tuesday.

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin approved a request to extend the mission that supports the Department of Homeland Security along the southwest border, Pentagon Press Secretary John Kirby told reporters. Austin signed the request June 23, according to a defense official who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

Austin authorized up to 3,000 troops to serve on the mission, which is down from

the 4,000 approved to serve at the southwest border for fiscal 2021, Kirby said. Deployments will continue to be staffed primarily by National Guard troops working in a federal status under the command and control of U.S. Northern Command, the defense official said.

About 3,800 troops are deployed now to the southwest border in support of U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents. The troops are a mix of active-duty service members and National Guard troops from nearly two dozen states. Their work includes helping to identify, monitor and analyze patterns of unauthorized entry and alert Border Patrol agents.

The Defense Department has spent more than \$840 million on the mission so far, according to a February report from the Government Accountability Office.

Former President Donald Trump first ordered National Guard troops to the southern border in April 2018 and added active-duty personnel to the mission about six months later.

When President Joe Biden took office in January, he ended construction of a physical border wall initiated by Trump but he has kept the troops in place.

Following the extension of the mission, governors in Ohio and North Dakota announced approval to send Guard troops on the federal deployment.

These federal missions are separate from state-level missions ongoing in Arizona and Texas, where Republican governors disagree with the way that the Biden administration is handling border security.

Both states have activated hundreds of Guard members to serve at the border in support of state law enforcement. South Dakota and Arkansas announced last month plans to deploy Guard troops to support Texas' state-led mission.

---

Source:

<https://www.stripes.com/theaters/us/2021-07-06/us-mexico-border-troops-immigration-crisis-2071343.html>

[Disclaimer]