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## Washington, DC National Guard Now Armed Amid Security Measures

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Washington, D.C. The Pentagon has confirmed that National Guard troops stationed in the U.S. capital will now be armed as part of heightened security operations. The order, issued by U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, applies to nearly 2,000 National Guard members currently deployed across the city, including several hundred flown in from Republican-led states this week. Officials have not provided immediate details on the rationale behind the policy change.

Until this week, both Pentagon and Army officials had emphasized that troops patrolling Washington would remain unarmed. Sources familiar with the matter, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said city officials were informed of the change quietly before the public announcement.

The development follows former President Donald Trump's public calls to reinforce law and order in the capital, which he has frequently characterized as experiencing elevated crime under Democratic leadership. In statements made before the Pentagon's announcement, Trump highlighted the presence of National Guard troops and local police in the city, claiming a reduction in violent incidents and increased public engagement.

Trump also criticized local leadership, urging D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser to ensure that crime statistics reported to the public are accurate. "Mayor Bowser must ensure that crime data reflects the reality in the city," he said in a public message.

The National Guard's deployment is part of ongoing efforts to support law enforcement in major urban centers during periods of heightened security concerns. While officials have not outlined additional measures following the arming order, the presence of the troops aims to assist local authorities in maintaining public safety.

City officials have generally coordinated with the Pentagon on deployment protocols, including patrol schedules and engagement rules. The shift to armed patrols represents a significant policy change, as the capital has traditionally relied on unarmed support for routine National Guard assistance.

Experts in public safety note that armed National Guard units can serve as both a deterrent to crime and a reassurance to local communities. However, they also emphasize the importance of clear operational guidelines to prevent misunderstandings or incidents during civilian interactions.

Washington, D.C., has faced scrutiny in recent years regarding crime rates and public safety measures. The federal and local coordination reflects broader debates about urban security, law enforcement practices, and the role of federal forces in municipal jurisdictions.

While the move is framed as a measure to enhance security, local advocacy groups have urged transparency and accountability to ensure that the deployment aligns with civil liberties and public safety goals.

The Pentagon and city authorities continue to monitor the situation closely, with further updates expected as operations progress.