

Pentagon Drafts Plan for National Guard Deployment in Chicago

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The Pentagon is developing plans to deploy several thousand National Guard members to Chicago as early as September, according to officials familiar with internal discussions. The move comes as President Donald Trump escalates efforts to crack down on crime, homelessness, and illegal immigration in major U.S. cities.

The Defense Department, in a statement Saturday, declined to comment directly on the reported plans but acknowledged its constant coordination with other agencies. “We won’t speculate on further operations. The department is a planning organization and is continuously working with other agency partners on plans to protect federal assets and personnel,” the statement read.

Speaking on Friday, Trump criticized Chicago’s leadership and signaled that federal intervention may be imminent. “Chicago is a mess,” Trump said. “And we’ll straighten that one out probably next.” The President has repeatedly targeted Democrat-run cities, arguing they have failed to control violent crime and urban disorder.

The proposed military deployment follows Trump’s recent calls for governors to send National Guard troops to Washington, D.C. Three Republican-led states responded by sending units hundreds of miles to the capital. Trump has also previously ordered deployments to Los Angeles during unrest tied to federal immigration enforcement, despite objections from California’s governor.

Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker, a Democrat, said the state had not been contacted by the administration about possible deployment and dismissed the need for outside military intervention. “Donald Trump is attempting to manufacture a crisis, politicize Americans who serve in uniform, and continue abusing his power to distract from the pain he is causing working families,” Pritzker said in a statement.

Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson, also a Democrat, expressed concern about federal troops being stationed in the city without state approval. “The problem with the President’s approach is that it is uncoordinated, uncalled for, and unsound,” Johnson said. He noted that Chicago’s crime statistics have improved significantly over the past year, with homicides down 30 percent, robberies down 35 percent, and shootings down nearly 40 percent.

The prospect of deploying the National Guard into a major U.S. city raises constitutional questions about federal authority versus state control. Governors typically control Guard units unless federalized by the President under specific legal conditions. Without a declared emergency, state leaders often argue that unilateral federal deployments are unlawful and politically motivated.

Critics contend that such moves undermine local law enforcement and stoke political tensions. Supporters argue that federal action is necessary when states or cities fail to

maintain order and protect public safety.

The potential deployment underscores Trump's broader strategy of highlighting law-and-order issues as the 2024 campaign season intensifies. By focusing on Chicago, a city long criticized by Republicans for crime rates and Democratic leadership, the President is drawing a sharp contrast with his opponents while pressing his tough-on-crime platform.

For now, Pentagon officials insist that no final decision has been made. But the ongoing planning signals that military involvement in Chicago is being seriously considered, setting up a likely clash between federal authority and local leaders in the weeks ahead.