

## US Adjusts Military Duty Status for Border Support as Immigration Pressures Mount

July 28, 2025

— Categories: Defence & Security



The U.S. Department of Defense has shifted the duty classification of active-duty military personnel deployed in support of immigration enforcement, moving them from federal active-duty (Title 10) status to state-controlled, federally funded duty (Title 32). This policy change aims to streamline command structures and enhance flexibility at the U.S.—

Mexico border, as the administration intensifies its response to illegal immigration and transnational threats.

Under the new framework, troops assisting the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) will serve under the authority of state governors while receiving federal pay and benefits. This arrangement, known as Title 32 duty, has traditionally been used for National Guard responses to domestic emergencies, allowing a faster, more locally coordinated approach while still maintaining national oversight.

According to defense officials, the reclassification allows for more agile support to immigration operations, reduces bureaucratic delays, and offers better legal clarity for service members working on U.S. soil. The move does not expand the scope of military authority in immigration enforcement but rather optimizes their support role, primarily logistics, surveillance, and administrative tasks, to ensure that civilian agencies maintain lead responsibility.

The administration's goal is to maximize border enforcement efficiency without crossing the constitutional lines that restrict military involvement in domestic policing under the Posse Comitatus Act.

From a center-right perspective, the shift to Title 32 is both pragmatic and constitutional. It enhances support for ICE and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) operations without overstepping legal boundaries, reinforcing the idea that immigration control is a matter of national security. It also underscores the administration's broader agenda to strengthen border security through coordinated federal-state efforts,

while avoiding the bureaucratic gridlock that often hinders a timely response.

Critics argue that any military involvement in immigration raises concerns about the militarization of domestic policy. However, supporters contend that the scale of illegal crossings, cartel activity, and human trafficking necessitates a robust, well-supported infrastructure, where the military's logistics and intelligence capabilities play a crucial non-combat role.

With border crossings remaining high and federal agencies stretched thin, the Title 32 adjustment offers a lawful and effective tool to reinforce the nation's immigration system, protect communities, and uphold the rule of law.