

# New Mexico governor declares state of emergency, deploys National Guard to back Albuquerque police crackdown

**Eddie Haywood**  
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New Mexico Democratic governor Michelle Lujan Grisham on Tuesday signed an executive order authorizing the deployment of the National Guard to Albuquerque after declaring a state of emergency, claiming the purpose of the deployment is “to address the significant increase in crime” in the state’s largest city.

City officials stated that the troops, numbering approximately 60-70, will undergo a period of training and deploy to the Central Avenue Corridor area by mid-May. The thoroughfare is part of the historic Route 66 highway running through the downtown business district, but the corridor is home mainly to working class residents afflicted by high levels of poverty and deprivation.

In a public statement on the governor’s official web site, Lujan Grisham declared, “The safety of New Mexicans is my top priority. By deploying our National Guard to support APD with essential duties, we’re ensuring that trained police officers can focus on what they do best—keeping our communities safe. This partnership represents our commitment to addressing the fentanyl crisis and juvenile crime with every resource at our disposal.”

The governor stated that her decision to order the troop deployment was based on a request by Albuquerque Police Department (APB) chief Harold Medina, who claimed in a five-page memorandum addressed to the governor that the police department lacked resources and sufficient personnel.

Speaking to local NBC affiliate KOB-TV, Chief Medina attempted to give a rationale to the deployment: “Our officers spend a lot of time on scenes that they don’t need to. We have officers parked

guarding violent crime scenes for up to 6, 8, 12 hours. We have officers guarding fatal traffic accidents 6, 8, 12 hours. If I can start taking 6 hours off these on-scene clears it’s going to make a huge difference, and it’s going to start swaying and getting officers back in service, and getting resources back into the community at even a faster pace.”

In a report by the Associated Press, APB officials attempted to minimize the National Guard’s role in the city, stating, “The National Guard will not be engaging with the public, but rather taking on duties that drain the time of sworn officers, like directing traffic. The troops can help secure crime scenes, distribute food and supplies to the homeless population throughout the corridor, transport prisoners, provide courthouse security and run drone operations used for locating suspects or assessing incidents.”

Notably, while the governor and law enforcement personnel claim the National Guard is needed to address a surge in crime, the APD’s crime statistics contradict this.

APD’s figures showed assaults in the city dropped 11 percent in 2024 over 2023 and homicides declined 3 percent. Over the same period, shootings dropped 14 percent.

The governor’s decision to deploy National Guard troops to the streets of Albuquerque has not faced any significant opposition from either Democrats or Republicans.

Speaking to KOB-TV, Democratic State Senator Antoinette Sedillo Lopez approved of the governor’s decision: “I think there are a lot of residents in my district who are very concerned about crime and I’m glad the National Guard is coming in a supportive role

to help a troubled police department do its job effectively.”

Daniel Williams, a policy advocate for the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) in New Mexico, told the Associated Press, “New Mexico already has one of the highest per capita rates of people killed by police in the nation. History has shown that military collaboration with local law enforcement often leads to increased civil rights violations, racial profiling, and criminalization of vulnerable populations, particularly those experiencing homelessness and poverty.”

New Mexico has one of the highest rates of officer-involved shootings in the nation relative to its population of 2.1 million. According to the World Population Review website, 238 people were killed by New Mexico state and local police in the years between 2013 and 2023. Some 28 more were killed in 2024.

The Democratic Party controls both the New Mexico state government and the city of Albuquerque. The deployment of troops by a Democratic governor is another part of the alignment of the national Democratic party with Trump since his election, and makes clear that the Democrats will not conduct a fight against Trump and his plans for dictatorship.

The deployment must also be seen in the context of the current global rise in class struggle, in which the international working class comes into conflict with the capitalist system as it enters the fight against brutal austerity and the attacks on democratic rights.

The deployment of troops to the streets of an American city, taken within the context of the Trump Administration’s current efforts to establish a presidential dictatorship, is a warning to workers and youth that the ruling class is preparing for a violent crackdown on any opposition to its rule.



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