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Counter Drug Task Force

The Corfu Connection: Mexican national sentenced to 14 years for cocaine conspiracy

The Batavian, Dec. 20, 2025 ::

Note: This item mentions the NYNG Counter Drug Task Force

A Mexican national was sentenced to 14 years in federal prison for his role in a multi-state cocaine distribution conspiracy that included a controlled delivery at a Corfu motel.

Gilberto Alarcon-Holguin, also known as Beto, 57, was convicted of conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute five kilograms or more of cocaine and conspiracy to commit money laundering. U.S. District Judge John L. Sinatra Jr. sentenced Alarcon-Holguin to serve 168 months in prison.

The investigation began when Homeland Security Investigations seized 10 kilograms of cocaine from an identified co-conspirator on Oct. 14, 2017. HSI obtained a phone number as a point of contact for the delivery of the cocaine, which was linked to co-conspirators of Alarcon-Holguin.

On Oct. 19, 2017, HSI conducted a controlled delivery of 10 bricks of "sham" cocaine to a motel parking lot in Corfu. The fake cocaine had been wrapped in the same manner as the seized kilograms.

The bag was given to co-conspirator Eduardo Valdez, who was on the phone with Alarcon-Holguin during the delivery. Following the controlled delivery, the New York State Police conducted a traffic stop of the vehicle Valdez was riding in. HSI seized \$259,960 in cash as a result of the controlled delivery.

Subsequent investigation determined that Alarcon-Holguin had multiple communications with another co-conspirator, Edgar Pavia. Alarcon-Holguin provided instructions to Pavia about shipments of cocaine, packaging of money and more, all of which was passed along to drug distributors supplied by Alarcon-Holguin in cities including Buffalo and Louisville, Kentucky.

Alarcon-Holguin also passed information to Pavia that was separately conveyed to other co-conspirators, including those involved in the transportation of drugs.

On June 21, 2018, co-conspirator Adrian Goudelock received 40 kilograms of cocaine in Buffalo. Over the course of the conspiracy, Goudelock received multiple shipments of 10 kilograms of cocaine or more brokered by Pavia and supplied by Alarcon-Holguin. Alarcon-Holguin also provided instructions to Pavia on how Goudelock should wrap and mark money being sent back to Mexico. Specifically, Alarcon-Holguin told Pavia that Goudelock should wrap the money into 52 packages of \$10,000 each.

Other deliveries organized by Alarcon-Holguin during the investigation included 17 kilograms of cocaine seized from a co-conspirator in West Seneca and shipments of 10, 15, 20 and 40 kilograms of cocaine to a co-conspirator in Kentucky. In addition, approximately \$1,144,735 in cash was seized from a commercial truck driver in Chicago. During the course of the investigation, investigators seized approximately \$2.6 million.

The sentencing is the result of an investigation by Homeland Security Investigations under the direction of Special Agent-in-Charge Erin Keegan; the Federal Bureau of Investigation under the direction of Special Agent-in-Charge Philip Tejera; the New York State Police under the direction of Major Amie Feroletto; the Erie County Sheriff's Department under the direction of Sheriff John Garcia; and Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine Operations under the direction of Director Christopher Romosz.

Additional assistance was provided by the New York National Guard and Homeland Security Investigations, El Paso, Texas. The Justice Department's Office of International Affairs worked with law enforcement partners in Mexico to secure the arrest and extradition of Alarcon-Holguin.

<https://www.thebatavian.com/staff/the-corfu-connection-mexican-national-sentenced-to-14-years-for-cocaine-conspiracy/645929>

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DMNA

New York's new laws on New Year's Day

WETM, Dec. 23, 2025 ::

Note: this story includes a mention of DMNA.

ALBANY, N.Y. (NEXSTAR) — New Yorkers have several new laws taking effect on January 1, 2026. The 14 updates below offer a wide range of effects and goals, including affordability, wages, businesses transparency, and insurance coverage for cancer and allergy treatments.

Dating back to the 2023/2024 legislative session, S995B/A3484A, became law in late 2024. But some elements of this LLC Transparency Act only take effect on New Year's Day. It makes private businesses known as limited liability companies list their real owners in a state database so the state can accurately track who actually runs the business and who profits. The Secretary of State can grant waivers to the public database requirements over significant privacy interests like being in a victim protection programs, for example.

Local and foreign businesses alike have to file reports that name anyone with significant control over the company, including their president, chief executive officer, chief financial officer, chief operating officer, and general counsel. The requirements also extend to anyone with the power to appoint or remove senior officers or a majority of the board of directors, and anyone with with at least a 25% share of the company.

NYS minimum wage set to increase in the new year

Also from 2024, S2465C/A1696C requires medical insurers to cover extra breast cancer screenings when doctors recommend them. It guarantees at least one mammogram at any age for those with a history or family risk of cancer that “shall not be subject to annual deductibles or coinsurance.

Besides cancer tests, S774/A430 requires large group health plans to cover scalp-cooling treatment, which are supposed to help patients keep their hair during chemotherapy.

Meanwhile, S2676/A443 says insurers can't require patients to try cheaper drugs that don't work before paying for the more expensive medicine that was actually prescribed by the doctor. Now, they also have to automatically and immediately accept a doctor's written statement about a drug's effectiveness to justify and approve coverage for a particular prescription.

S760/A2443 mandates that health policies cover medically necessary epinephrine auto-injector devices—epi-pens—and caps the annual out-of-pocket costs at \$100.

Similarly, S7807A/A5392B expands the definition of emergency devices to include epinephrine nasal sprays, so any FDA-approved epinephrine delivery product qualifies for coverage. These two laws are supposed to help families manage severe allergies without severe pharmacy bills.

S7287A/A7906A makes major medical insurance policies provide a clear section on their sign-up forms for organ donor registration through the donate life registry. And if a New Yorker dies without an organ donation plan, S3360/A1395 lets a close friend—someone over 18 who maintained enough regular contact with the patient to understand their health and religious or moral beliefs—authorize the “anatomical gift” by providing a signed, sworn statement.

S1889/A29 designates New York as an official Purple Heart State to honor veteran New Yorkers wounded or killed in combat.

Other laws that kick in on January 1 were part of larger budget bills negotiated with governor rather than individual pieces of legislation that moved through the legislature.

S3006C/A3006C makes employers pay airport workers at rates set by the commissioner of the Department of Labor. The bill doesn’t outline a fixed dollar amount, but DOL’s website says a base wage of \$21.25 starts January 1 for workers in cleaning, catering, and security.

S3005C/A3005C creates a new, 25-year retirement plan for firefighters working for the State Division of Military and Naval Affairs, aligning their benefits with other professional firefighters in New York.

And as of January 1, S3009C/A3009C simplifies property taxes, helping homeowners who have already qualified for three consecutive STAR exemptions by allowing them not to file new annual income forms.

And to help owners save on repairs on historic buildings, the budget also extends tax credits for rehabilitation work. It includes a \$5 million cap on credits for major projects and lets some projects qualify for a 30% credit rate. That cap drops to \$100,000 starting in 2030, but smaller initiatives could still qualify for a higher 150% credit rate thereafter.

Last, it also expands the farm employer overtime credit to 118% of extra labor costs. That means that when owners of farmland pay their staff overtime, they get more than just reimbursed by the state. Taxes and workers compensation insurance increase as payroll does, and that additional 18% is supposed to cover those fees.

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<https://local.newsbreak.com/wetm-18-news-1589973/4410900682227-new-york-s-new-laws-on-new-year-s-day>

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Federal Government

Supreme Court Refuses to Allow National Guard Deployment in Chicago

New York Times, Dec. 23, 2025 ::

Note: This item is provided for your situational awareness.

The Supreme Court on Tuesday refused to allow President Trump to deploy hundreds of National Guard troops in the Chicago area over the objection of Illinois officials, casting doubt on the viability of similar deployments in other American cities.

The justices' order is preliminary, but it blocks the Trump administration for now from ordering the state-based military force to the Chicago area, where an immigration crackdown led to thousands of arrests and confrontations between residents and federal agents.

In its three-page unsigned ruling against the administration, the court refused to grant the president broad discretion to deploy the military in U.S. cities, citing an 1878 law, which bans the use of the military for domestic policing. It represented a rare departure from recent cases, in which the conservative majority has overwhelmingly sided with Mr. Trump in preliminary tests of presidential power.

At this stage in the litigation, the court said the Trump administration had not shown that the statute at issue "permits the president to federalize the Guard in the exercise of inherent authority to protect federal personnel and property in Illinois."

Three conservative justices — Clarence Thomas, Samuel A. Alito Jr. and Neil M. Gorsuch — noted their objections in lengthy dissents, with Justice Alito writing that "the protection of federal officers from potentially lethal attacks should not be thwarted."

In response to the ruling, Abigail Jackson, a White House spokeswoman, said the president had promised to "work tirelessly to enforce our immigration laws and protect federal personnel from violent rioters."

She added: "He activated the National Guard to protect federal law enforcement officers, and to ensure rioters did not destroy federal buildings and property. Nothing in today's ruling detracts from that core agenda."

Gov. JB Pritzker of Illinois called the ruling a victory for democracy.

“This is an important step in curbing the Trump administration’s consistent abuse of power and slowing Trump’s march toward authoritarianism,” Mr. Pritzker, a Democrat, said in a statement. “The brave men and women of our National Guard should never be used for political theater and deserve to be with their families and communities, especially during the holidays.”

Mayor Brandon Johnson of Chicago said he hoped the Supreme Court’s ruling would shield other cities from unwanted National Guard deployments.

Mr. Trump had also in recent months ordered the National Guard to Portland, Ore.; Los Angeles; and Washington, D.C., also over the objections of state and local leaders. The president’s efforts to use troops for domestic policing prompted legal challenges accusing the Trump administration of exceeding its authority and infringing on traditional state powers over policing. The state-based troops are typically deployed at the request of governors to respond to emergencies in their own states such as natural disasters.

Federal law allows the president to federalize members of the National Guard without the permission of state officials in certain circumstances, notably when there is a “rebellion or danger of a rebellion” against the government or when law enforcement is overwhelmed and cannot execute U.S. law.

Federal courts around the country have generally said the conditions do not exist to allow Mr. Trump to federalize Guard troops. Judges overseeing cases from Los Angeles and Portland halted troop mobilizations. With legal uncertainty hanging over the deployments, the Pentagon decided in November to withdraw hundreds of out-of-state soldiers from Illinois and Oregon, while keeping hundreds of other local troops activated. An appeals court in Washington has separately allowed troops to remain in the nation’s capital while litigation continues, citing the city’s unique status as a federal district.

The court battles came amid street protests against the Guard and violence in Washington, where a targeted attack on two National Guard members on Nov. 26 left one dead and another seriously injured.

At issue in the case in Chicago and a similar matter in Portland are competing accounts of the protests set off by the enforcement sweeps, which the administration characterized as violent and coordinated and which local officials — and some lower court judges — said did not amount to a rebellion.

The court took more than two months to rule on the emergency application. Before issuing its order, the justices took the unusual step in October of asking the parties to address the meaning of a specific key section of the statute. To federalize the National Guard, the president must determine that he is “unable with the regular

forces” to execute U.S. laws. The justices asked whether “regular forces” meant the military or civilian law enforcement.

The Trump administration responded that “regular forces” referred to civilian law enforcement such as federal immigration agents. As a result, the administration said it should be permitted to unilaterally deploy the National Guard because federal agents were overwhelmed.

The office of Attorney General Kwame Raoul of Illinois, a Democrat, countered that the term referred to the full-time professional military and said the justices should deny the president’s request on that basis, because he had not tried to use the standing military, nor could he under the law.

In its order on Tuesday, the majority agreed with Illinois officials that the term “regular forces” most likely referred to the U.S. military. To call in the Guard, the president must first determine that he is “unable” with the help of the military to execute U.S. laws — and for that reason, the court said he could likely take such a step only in the rare situations where he would be legally allowed to call in the military in the first place to execute the law.

“Such circumstances are exceptional,” the majority said, because of the Posse Comitatus Act of 1878, which makes it illegal to use federal troops for domestic policing under normal circumstances.

“At this preliminary stage, the Government has failed to identify a source of authority that would allow the military to execute the laws in Illinois,” the majority wrote in the unsigned order.

Justice Brett M. Kavanaugh wrote separately to say he agreed with the majority’s decision to deny the administration’s request, but on narrower grounds. The majority, he wrote, was too quick to cut off options for the president by suggesting that he could not federalize the National Guard even if he found he was struggling to protect federal personnel and property.

In a 16-page dissent, Justice Alito criticized his colleagues for resolving an issue the parties had not initially explored in their filings.

“There is no basis for rejecting the president’s determination that he was unable to execute the federal immigration laws,” Justice Alito wrote, joined by Justice Thomas.

Justice Gorsuch wrote a separate dissent saying he that would have sided with the administration based on the statements from federal law enforcement officials and that such “weighty questions” deserved a full airing and should not be decided on an emergency basis.

The administration sought to station National Guard troops from Texas and Illinois outside an Immigration and Customs Enforcement processing center in Broadview, Ill., a Chicago suburb where protesters have gathered.

A district court judge and an ideologically diverse appeals court panel in the Chicago litigation blocked the deployment, finding insufficient evidence that the demonstrations had significantly impeded the ability of federal officers to execute immigration laws. They noted that federal facilities had remained open and that immigration arrests and deportations had continued at a rapid clip.

The Trump administration appealed to the Supreme Court and asserted that its decision to federalize and deploy the Guard was not subject to court review. Even if it were, Justice Department lawyers said, the “prolonged, coordinated, violent resistance” by protesters interfered with law enforcement’s ability to do its job and justified the deployment.

D. John Sauer, the solicitor general, told the justices in a court filing that agents could engage in even greater enforcement of immigration laws were they not operating under threat and that the protests posed “unacceptable risks” to their safety.

Lawyers for Illinois told the justices in their brief that an “unnecessary deployment” of troops would “escalate tensions and undermine the ordinary law enforcement activities of state and local entities.”

“No protest activity in Illinois has rendered the president unable to execute federal law,” Mr. Raoul and lawyers for the City of Chicago said in their filing. They noted that the crackdown on immigration has continued with nearly 3,000 people arrested since the end of October.

State and local officials were bolstered by a bipartisan group of more than two dozen former governors and a group of former high-ranking U.S. military leaders, who expressed deep concerns in separate filings to the justices about the president’s actions.

<https://www.nytimes.com/live/2025/12/23/us/trump-news#supreme-court-national-guard-chicago>

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Golden fleet: President unveils 'Trump-class' battleships and new bigger aircraft carrier

Forces News, Dec. 22,20::

Note: this item is provided for your information.

US president Donald Trump has announced plans for a new Trump class of battleships, as he seeks to expand the US Navy in his own image.

He also said Washington is going to build a new class of aircraft carrier, which will allegedly be bigger than the current Gerald R Ford class.

Mr Trump said that the new warships would be larger, faster and "100 times more powerful" than any previously built, creating the centrepiece of what he called an expanded "Golden Fleet".

Mr Trump also piled more pressure on Washington's defence contractors over production delays and overspends.

The Golden Fleet will start off as just two warships, but it is likely to increase to between 20 and 25, Mr Trump said, with the first ship slated to be named USS Defiant.

The former Apprentice businessman said that he would like to be personally involved in the designs after he criticised the appearance of previous US warships.

The ships will weigh more than 30,000 tonnes and will be armed with the latest technology, such as artificial intelligence and directed energy lasers.

"We haven't built a battleship since 1994. These cutting-edge vessels will be some of the most lethal surface warfare ships... other than our submarines," Mr Trump said.

These new warships will also have nuclear-armed, sea-launched cruise missiles, according to US Navy secretary John Phelan.

The US president dismissed suggestions that these ships were being built to combat the Chinese threat as he said the boost in the navy was "a counter to everybody".

Overspends and delays

Alongside the announcement on warships, Mr Trump said he would put pressure on defence contractors to make production quicker and reduce costs.

He added that he will meet US major defence firms next week to look at the delays as he condemned executives' high pay for contributing to missed procurement targets.

"We don't want executives making \$50m a year, issuing big dividends to everybody, and also doing buybacks," Mr Trump said.

The White House is reportedly planning an executive order to limit dividends, buybacks and executive pay for defence companies if their project goes over budget and is delayed.

Alongside the new 'Trump class' of warships, Mr Trump said he hoped for the introduction of a new, smaller class of frigates previously announced by the navy.

<https://www.forcesnews.com/usa/golden-fleet-trump-unveils-trump-class-battleships-and-new-bigger-aircraft-carrier>

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New York Air National Guard

The Local Connection to Tracking Santa's Journey This Christmas Eve WKTV, Dec. 22, 2025 :

WKTV, Dec. 22, 2025 ::

ROME, N.Y. -- The Eastern Air Defense Sector in Rome will support NORAD's annual Santa tracking operation on Dec. 24.

The North American Aerospace Defense Command, which includes the New York Air Guardsman of the Eastern Air Defense Sector, will track Santa Claus on his global journey.

Col. Joseph F. Roos, EADS Commander, said, "EADS is always happy to support NORAD's Santa tracking operation."

The Santa tracking tradition began in 1955 when a child accidentally called NORAD's predecessor, leading to the annual event.

Families can follow Santa's journey on the NORAD Tracks Santa website, or call 1-877-HI-NORAD on Dec. 24 to speak with a staff member about Santa's location.

https://www.wktv.com/news/entertainment/the-local-connection-to-tracking-santas-journey-this-christmas-eve/article_65e07291-6fd2-4070-8180-ea76ff90c228.html

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New York Air Guard Supports NORAD's Annual Santa Tracking Operation on Christmas Eve

Nationalguard.mil, Dec. 22,2025 ::

ROME, N.Y. – The North American Aerospace Defense Command defends the North American airspace 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, and includes the New York Air Guard members of the Eastern Air Defense Sector in Rome, New York.

On Dec. 24, NORAD will add one more element to its mission list as it tracks Santa Claus on his around-the-world flight.

The American and Canadian NORAD personnel at the Eastern Air Defense Sector, or EADS, a unit of the Continental U.S. NORAD Region, are standing by to support this effort.

"EADS is always happy to support NORAD's Santa tracking operation," said Col. Joseph F. Roos, EADS commander. "Our highly trained Airmen defend the homeland day and night, and they are prepared and ready to track Santa this Dec. 24."

A bi-national Canadian and American command, NORAD defends North America through aerospace warning, aerospace control and maritime warning. Aerospace warning includes the monitoring of man-made objects in space, and the detection, validation and warning of attacks against North America, whether by aircraft, missiles or space vehicles, through mutual support arrangements with other commands.

Responsible for the air defense of the eastern U.S., EADS is composed of the New York Air National Guard's 224th Air Defense Group, a Canadian Armed Forces detachment, U.S. Army and Navy liaison officers, and federal civilians and contractors. EADS also has a squadron and a detachment in the National Capital Region.

The Santa tracking tradition is 70 years old. It began in 1955 when a young child accidentally dialed the unlisted phone number of NORAD's predecessor, the Continental Air Defense Command operations center. The Director of Operations, Col. Harry Shoup, answered the phone and instructed his staff to check the radar for indications of Santa making his way south from the North Pole.

A tradition was born and continued when NORAD was formed in 1958. Each year since, NORAD has dutifully reported Santa's location on Dec. 24 to millions of children and families across the globe.

The NORAD Tracks Santa Operations Center will become fully operational at 4 a.m. Mountain Standard Time on Dec. 24. Children and parents can call 1-877-HI-NORAD (1-877-446-6723) to talk directly to a NORAD staff member who will be able to tell you Santa's exact location. Operators are available until midnight.

Children, families and fans also keep track of Santa's location on the NORAD Tracks Santa website and several social media platforms.

<https://www.nationalguard.mil/News/News-Features/Article/4366596/new-york-air-guard-supports-norads-annual-santa-tracking-operation-on-christmas/>

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West Haven National Guard Airman Receives New Rank

West Haven Patch.com, Dec. 23, 2025 ::

The promotion, which includes a new rank and new responsibilities, was recently announced.

WEST HAVEN, CT — (Contributed): Air Force Major General Michael Bank, the commander of the New York Air National Guard, announces the recent promotion of members of the New York Air National Guard in recognition of their capability for additional responsibility and leadership.

Carmona Berretta, from West Haven, and assigned to the 105th Airlift Wing, received a promotion Nov. 1 to the rank of senior airman.

Air National Guard promotions are based on a Airman's overall performance, demonstrated leadership abilities, professionalism and future development potential.

"The New York Air National Guard is built on a foundation of talented and motivated Airmen, and this month's promotions are a shining example of that excellence," Bank said. "I am honored to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of our Airmen, and I look forward to seeing their continued growth and contributions to our organization."

These promotions recognize the best qualified Airmen for a career in the New York Air National Guard.

<https://patch.com/connecticut/westhaven/west-haven-national-guard-airman-receives-new-rank>

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He'll be coming down the chimney when?

Adirondack Daily Enterprise, Dec. 24, 2025 ::

ROME, N.Y. — Wondering when Santa is about to leave presents under the tree? The Santa Tracker has your answer.

The cherished annual operation is undertaken by the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), providing millions of children with answers to the question that's likely at the top of their minds throughout the late hours of Christmas Eve: where is Santa Claus?

To leave presents all across the globe in just one magical night, Santa and his reindeer undoubtedly have to travel at blazing fast speeds. Fortunately, NORAD is able to account for that in its tracking abilities. Afterall, the command — a bi-national partnership between the U.S. and Canadian militaries — keeps watch over the North American airspace 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

NORAD's Santa tracking began in 1955 when a young child accidentally dialed the unlisted phone number of NORAD's predecessor, the Continental Air Defense Command operations center. The operations director at the time, Col. Harry Shoup, answered the phone. Upon hearing the child's question, Shoup instructed his staff to check the radar for indications of Santa making his way south from the North Pole.

A tradition was born and continued when NORAD was formed in 1958. Each year since, NORAD has dutifully reported Santa's location on Christmas Eve. With the rise of the internet, NORAD has been able to expand its display to include a live map on its website for families to follow along. That is expected to go live at 4 a.m. today. It can be viewed at www.noradsanta.org.

As was the case in 1955, Kids and families can still call the NORAD Tracks Santa Operations Center at 1-877-HI-NORAD (1-877-446-6723) from 4 a.m. today until midnight. They will be able to speak directly to a NORAD staff member who will be able to pass along Santa's exact location throughout the day.

About NORAD

NORAD is broken up into three regions: Alaska, Canada and the continental U.S. The continental U.S. region is further split into two sectors: the Eastern Air Defense Sector and the Western Air Defense Sector. The eastern sector's operations center is in the Griffiss Business and Technology Park in Rome, formerly the site of the Griffiss Air Force Base.

Though the base closed in 1995, the airport — in addition to its civilian functions — continues to play a military role through NORAD and the electronics research at the Rome Laboratory.

NORAD's Santa Tracker is a team effort. Its regions and sectors will transfer tracking command between themselves as Santa makes his rounds between the various air spaces. When Santa makes his way through the Tri-Lakes region, he'll be covered by the Rome-based New York National Air Guard.

"(The Eastern Air Defense Sector) is always happy to support NORAD's Santa tracking operation," said Col. Joseph F. Roos, the sector's commander. "Our highly trained Airmen defend the homeland day and night, and they are prepared and ready to track Santa this Dec. 24."

NORAD defends North America through aerospace warning, aerospace control and maritime warning. Aerospace warning includes the monitoring of man-made objects in space, and the detection, validation and warning of attack against North America, whether by aircraft, missiles or space vehicles, through mutual support arrangements with other commands.

NORAD uses a combination of ground-based and airborne radar systems, satellites and visual observations from fighter jets to accomplish its strategic objectives.

Responsible for the air defense of the eastern U.S., EADS is composed of the New York Air National Guard's 224th Air Defense Group, a Canadian Armed Forces detachment, U.S. Army and Navy liaison officers and federal civilians and contractors. EADS also has a squadron and a detachment in the National Capital Region — Washington, D.C. and the surrounding counties in Maryland and Virginia.

<https://www.adirondackdailyenterprise.com/news/local-news/2025/12/hell-be-coming-down-the-chimney-when/>

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Christmas tradition: NORAD will track Santa Claus on Dec. 24

ROME — The North American Aerospace Defense Command will add an additional element to its mission list Wednesday as it tracks Santa Claus on his around-the-world flight.

American and Canadian NORAD personnel at the Eastern Air Defense Sector are standing by to support this effort.

"EADS is always happy to support NORAD's Santa tracking operation," said Col. Joseph F. Roos, EADS Commander in a news release. "Our highly trained airmen defend the homeland day and night, and they are prepared and ready to track Santa this Dec. 24."

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Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/noradsanta>

YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/NORADTracksSanta>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/noradtrackssanta_official

NORAD Tracks Santa web site: <https://www.noradsanta.org>

NORAD Tracks Santa Newsroom: <https://noradsantanews.com/newsroom>

NTS App available on mobile devices

Updates via Amazon Alexa, SiriusXM and OnStar

https://www.thelcn.com/news/christmas-tradition-norad-will-track-santa-claus-on-dec-24/article_489eeb87-7812-585a-a60e-6e2d01164d73.html

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Tracking Santa: NORAD keeps tradition alive

The Press-Republican, Dec. 24, 2025 ::

The North American Aerospace Defense Command defends the North American airspace 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

Today, NORAD will add one more element to its mission list as it tracks Santa Claus on his around-the-world flight.

The American and Canadian NORAD personnel at the Eastern Air Defense Sector are standing by to support this effort.

“EADS (Eastern Air Defense Sector) is always happy to support NORAD’s Santa tracking operation,” said Col. Joseph F. Roos, EADS commander. “Our highly trained Airmen defend the homeland day and night, and they are prepared and ready to track Santa this Dec. 24.”

A bi-national Canadian and American command, NORAD defends North America through aerospace warning, aerospace control and maritime warning. Aerospace warning includes the monitoring of man-made objects in space, and the detection, validation and warning of attacks against North America, whether by aircraft, missiles or space vehicles, through mutual support arrangements with other commands.

Responsible for the air defense of the eastern U.S., EADS is composed of the New York Air National Guard’s 224th Air Defense Group, a Canadian Armed Forces detachment, U.S. Army and Navy liaison officers, and federal civilians and contractors. EADS also has a squadron and a detachment in the National Capital Region.

The Santa tracking tradition is 70 years old. It began in 1955 when a young child accidentally dialed the unlisted phone number of NORAD’s predecessor, the Continental Air Defense Command operations center. The Director of Operations, Col. Harry Shoup, answered the phone and instructed his staff to check the radar for indications of Santa making his way south from the North Pole.

A tradition was born and continued when NORAD was formed in 1958. Each year since, NORAD has dutifully reported Santa’s location on Christmas Eve to millions of children and families across the globe.

The NORAD Tracks Santa Operations Center became fully operational at 4 a.m. Mountain Standard Time today. Children and parents can call 1-877-HI-NORAD (1-

877-446-6723) to talk directly to a NORAD staff member who will be able to tell you Santa's exact location. Operators are available until midnight.

Children, families and fans also keep track of Santa's location on the NORAD Tracks Santa website and several social media platforms.

https://www.yahoo.com/news/articles/tracking-santa-norad-keeps-tradition-123200361.html?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xlLmNvbS8&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAAHorkFR81KY6GgEsCWxlknG5Y1VcZeWUmnkeKkpCOLumW9s JSniJ6Z3glMt1AdQfrgHx1-7vV44nSOxpCBq3 YuTR2iyMwApEmrGQNRy2VX7slzp3FNxhSKB2nROjQbdA9YFY8mGed-MIAs2QBSkZ4j5Qhc-JPZYS30abAs3Fb2

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HOLIDAY HELPERS: Who's tracking Santa tonight?

Rome Sentinel, Dec. 24, 2025 ::

ROME — Every year, Santa delivers toys to billions of children — but he can't do it alone.

The Eastern Air Defense Sector (EADS) at Griffiss Business and Technology Park in Rome defends the North American airspace 24/7 as part of the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD).

On Christmas Eve, the men and women serving at NORAD will add one more element to their mission list: tracking Santa Claus on his one-night around-the-world flight. American and Canadian NORAD personnel at EADS will be standing by to support this effort.

"Our highly trained airmen defend the homeland day and night," Col. Joseph F. Roos, EADS commander, said. "They are prepared and ready to track Santa this Dec. 24."

The Santa tracking tradition started 70 years ago when a young child accidentally dialed the unlisted phone number of NORAD's predecessor, the Continental Air Defense Command operation center. The Director of Operations, Col. Harry Shoup answered and instructed his staff to check the radar for any indication of Santa making his way south from the North Pole. From there the tradition was born and carried on when NORAD was formed in 1958.

At EADS, Director of Staff Tim Jones and his team look forward to the tracking initiative every year.

“It’s just one of those things that gets everyone in the mood for Christmas,” Jones said. “And it’s one of the ways we can have some fun at our job.”

Jones recalls watching his young children go crazy over the Santa tracker, whether seeing an F-16 jet tracking Santa or spotting him on radar. “The children’s reaction to the Santa tracking operation is a big part of it,” Jones said.

NORAD defends North America through aerospace warning, aerospace control and maritime warning. EADS is responsible for the air defense of the eastern U.S., composed of the New York Air National Guard’s 224th Air Defense Group, a Canadian Armed Forces detachment, U.S. Army and Navy liaison officers, and federal civilians and contractors.

The NORAD Tracks Santa Operations Center will become fully operational at 6 a.m. on Christmas Eve. Children and parents can call 1-877-HI-NORAD (1-877-446-6723) to speak directly with a NORAD staff member, who can tell them Santa’s exact location. Operators are available until midnight.

Families can also track Santa on Facebook (facebook.com/noradsanta), YouTube (youtube.com/NORADTracksSanta) and Instagram (@noradtrackssanta_official).

https://www.romesentinel.com/news/newsnorad-tracks-santa-2025-griffiss/article_7adcd390-60cf-4b88-b2d8-af90d16d6e8e.html

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New York Air Guard Supports NORAD's Annual Santa Tracking Operation on Christmas Eve

ANG. mil, Dec. 22, 2025 ::

ROME, N.Y. – The North American Aerospace Defense Command defends the North American airspace 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, and includes the New York Air Guard members of the Eastern Air Defense Sector in Rome, New York.

On Dec. 24, NORAD will add one more element to its mission list as it tracks Santa Claus on his around-the-world flight.

The American and Canadian NORAD personnel at the Eastern Air Defense Sector,

or EADS, a unit of the Continental U.S. NORAD Region, are standing by to support this effort.

"EADS is always happy to support NORAD's Santa tracking operation," said Col. Joseph F. Roos, EADS commander. "Our highly trained Airmen defend the homeland day and night, and they are prepared and ready to track Santa this Dec. 24."

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Children, families and fans also keep track of Santa's location on the [NORAD Tracks Santa website](#) and several social media platforms.

<https://www.ang.af.mil/Media/Article-Display/Article/4366919/new-york-air-guard-supports-norads-annual-santa-tracking-operation-on-christmas/>

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Christmas tradition: NORAD will track Santa Claus on Dec. 24

The Daily News, Dec. 23, 2025 ::

ROME, N.Y. — The North American Aerospace Defense Command will add an additional element to its mission list Wednesday as it tracks Santa Claus on his around-the-world flight.

American and Canadian NORAD personnel at the Eastern Air Defense Sector are standing by to support this effort.

"EADS is always happy to support NORAD's Santa tracking operation," said Col. Joseph F. Roos, EADS Commander in a news release. "Our highly trained airmen defend the homeland day and night, and they are prepared and ready to track Santa this Dec. 24."

Responsible for the air defense of the eastern U.S., EADS is composed of the New York Air National Guard's 224th Air Defense Group, a Canadian Armed Forces detachment, U.S. Army and Navy liaison officers, and federal civilians and contractors.

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Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/noradsanta>

YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/NORADTracksSanta>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/noradtrackssanta_official

NORAD Tracks Santa web site: <https://www.noradsanta.org>

NORAD Tracks Santa Newsroom: <https://noradsantanews.com/newsroom>

NTS App available on mobile devices

Updates via Amazon Alexa, SiriusXM and OnStar

https://www.thedailynewsonline.com/news/christmas-tradition-norad-will-track-santa-claus-on-dec-24/article_fc1b8b9c-c0e0-4f4b-9f46-789c18f0ebd0.html

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Wallingford National Guard Airman Receives New Rank

Patch.com, Dec. 23, 2025 ::

WALLINGFORD, CT — (Contributed): Air Force Major General Michael Bank, the commander of the New York Air National Guard, announces the recent promotion of members of the New York Air National Guard in recognition of their capability for additional responsibility and leadership.

Mohammad Gavin, from Wallingford, and assigned to the 106th Rescue Wing, received a promotion Nov. 16 to the rank of lieutenant colonel.

Air National Guard promotions are based on a Airman's overall performance, demonstrated leadership abilities, professionalism and future development potential.

"The New York Air National Guard is built on a foundation of talented and motivated Airmen, and this month's promotions are a shining example of that excellence," Bank said. "I am honored to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of our Airmen, and I look forward to seeing their continued growth and contributions to our organization."

These promotions recognize the best qualified Airmen for a career in the New York Air National Guard.

<https://patch.com/connecticut/wallingford/wallingford-national-guard-airman-receives-new-rank>

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Guard Supports NORAD's Annual Santa Tracking

MilitarySpot.com, Dec. 24, 2025 :

DECEMBER 24, 2025 – The North American Aerospace Defense Command defends the North American airspace 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, and includes the New York Air Guard members of the Eastern Air Defense Sector in Rome, New York.

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“EADS is always happy to support NORAD's Santa tracking operation,” said Col. Joseph F. Roos, EADS commander. “Our highly trained Airmen defend the homeland day and night, and they are prepared and ready to track Santa this Dec. 24.”

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<https://www.militaryspot.com/news/guard-supports-norads-annual-santa-tracking>

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Remembering Hustler 6, ten years later

Air Force Office of Special Investigations, Dec. 18, 2025 ::

Note: This article mentions two members of the 105th AW who were KIA in Afghanistan.

QUANTICO, Va. -- On December 21, 2015, thirteen members of the Air Force Office of Special Investigations-led Task Force Crimson were conducting a dismounted patrol near Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, when tragedy struck in what was later described by then-AFOSI Commander Brig. Gen. Keith Givens as, "our command's darkest day.

Task Force Crimson was a combined AFOSI and U.S. Air Force Security Forces operation whose focus in Afghanistan was to provide counterintelligence support to force protection at Bagram Air Base. The joint multinational force protection effort also included activities off installation in sometimes hostile or unsecured areas near the airfield.

On that fateful day, the patrol was conducting a mission to meet with a key host nation leader outside the perimeter of the airfield, when it was approached by a motorcycle that was carrying a hidden explosive device. Upon reaching the patrol, the motorcyclist detonated the explosive which was contained inside the internal components of the vehicle instantly killing six members of the patrol and severely wounding three others. The patrol consisted of five Special Agents, six Security Forces Defenders and two civilian linguists.

Killed in the attack were:

Special Agent Adrianna Vorderbruggen, 36, assigned to the 9th Field Investigations Squadron at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida.

Special Agent Michael Cinco, 28, assigned to the 11th Field Investigations Squadron at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, Texas.

Special Agent Peter Taub, 30, assigned to Detachment 816 at Ellsworth Air Force Base, South Dakota.

Special Agent Chester McBride, 30, assigned to Det. 405 at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama.

Tech. Sgt. Joseph Lemm, 45, assigned to the 105th Security Forces Squadron at Stewart Air National Guard Base, New York.

Staff Sgt. Louis Bonacasa, 31, assigned to the 105th Security Forces Squadron at Stewart Air National Guard Base, New York.

Wounded in the attack were Special Agent Johnathan Jackson, Tech. Sgt. Bryan Nelson, and civilian linguist Wazma Popal.

Reporting the loss to the command the next day, Givens wrote: "It is with a heavy heart that I must inform you of the deadliest day in our command's history. We lost four brave Special Agents and two patriotic Security Forces members on a joint patrol outside of Bagram Airfield in Afghanistan. The AFOSI family will undoubtedly rise to the occasion yet again and honor these great Americans, but for now, I ask for your thoughts and prayers to go out to the loved ones of the fallen."

Memorial efforts for remembering the fallen, who would subsequently become forever known as the "Hustler 6," began immediately when Givens authorized the wearing of the mourning band across AFOSI Special Agent badges and all individual building access identification badges for 30 days.

Two days after the attack, over 200 service members representing multiple armed forces branches from nearly every unit on Bagram Air Base gathered inside a large tent there and took a brief pause to honor the fallen.

"Today's a day we remember and honor the sacrifices our fellow Airmen made for us, our country and our freedoms," said Special Agent Heather Garver, a fellow member of Task Force Crimson and currently AFOSI's 12th Field Investigations Squadron commander. "While we mourn the loss of our family members, and care for our injured, we must remain united. Our fallen heroes would want us to bounce back and press on with the mission we are here to carry out. We may be wounded, but we're not broken."

Task Force Crimson's mission would indeed carry on. During the early stages of U.S. military operations in Afghanistan, the first AFOSI personnel arrived at the airfield at Bagram in Feb. 2002, to what was then designated simply as a forward operating location. It would later grow into the largest U.S. military base in Afghanistan. Expeditionary Det. 2405 was established at Bagram on March 15, 2004, assuming the Task Force Crimson moniker when Air Force Security Forces later joined the AFOSI-led team. The last AFOSI presence at Bagram Air Base left June

23, 2021, after nearly 20 years of overall operations and more than 5 and a half years after the Hustler 6 attack.

The first leg of the dignified transfer of the remains of the fallen back to the United States occurred Dec. 23 when a ramp ceremony was conducted at Bagram Air Base in front of a C-17 Globemaster III transport aircraft. The tarmac was filled with Airmen, Marines, Soldiers and Sailors, all standing in formation in front of the aircraft, joined by general officers from all the services who had traveled there from all over the country.

When the transport vehicles carrying the remains of the fallen arrived the entire cadre of military personnel came to attention. Each of the flag-draped caskets was solemnly carried to the C-17 while TAPS was played, each formation offering salutes as they passed. On board the aircraft, a procession of AFOSI and Security Forces comrades in arms knelt and touched the tops of the caskets as they passed by, many leaving unit coins as a symbol of appreciation and gratitude for their service and sacrifice.

The C-17 departed Afghanistan and landed at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, in the early evening hours later that same day. The aircraft was met on the tarmac there by the command team from AFOSI Region 5. Before departing for the United States, an additional dignified transfer ceremony was conducted. This ceremony was attended by over 200 AFOSI Special Agents and Security Forces Defenders from locations across Europe, each individually paying their respects and saluting the caskets of the fallen.

“Our Fallen Warriors are on home soil,” AFOSI headquarters informed the command on Dec. 24, shortly after the aircraft carrying their remains arrived at New Castle Air National Guard Base, Delaware, diverted from Dover Air Force Base due to weather. The Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Secretary of the Air Force and the Chief of Staff of the Air Force joined AFOSI headquarters leadership and the families of the fallen to greet the C-17 when it landed. Despite pouring rain, they were joined by over 100 AFOSI Special Agents and other personnel from units across the country who were on hand to pay their respects and offer salutes during the conclusion of the final leg of the journey home.

Funerals for the fallen began Dec. 30, 2015, with the interment of Joseph Lemm at a cemetery in his home state of New York. Louis Bonacasa was interred the next day, Dec. 31, in New York. Chester McBride was interred Jan. 6, 2016, in Georgia. Michael Cinco was interred Jan. 6, 2016, in Texas. Peter Taub was interred Jan. 8, 2016, in Pennsylvania. The final funeral for the fallen from Hustler 6 occurred Jan. 19, 2016, when Adrianna Vorderbruggen was laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery, Virginia.

On Jan. 7, 2016, more than 650 people attended the U.S. Marine Corps Memorial Chapel on Marine Corps Base Quantico, Virginia, as AFOSI headquarters conducted a memorial ceremony honoring the lives and mourning the loss of the Hustler 6.

"I truly believe we remain a free nation because of the valor, selflessness, and strength of men and women like Adrianna, Michael, Peter, Chester, Joseph, and Louis," Givens said. "They understood the risks inherent to their mission but were still prepared to give their lives in defense of our country. They were focused on protecting the base's inhabitants so no one else had to experience a similar tragedy. Their service and sacrifices were not made in vain. Instead, they set the standard and issued us the charge to continue their mission with the same vigor, precision and determination."

The ceremony at Quantico, Virginia, was also attended by Special Agent Johnathan Jackson, one of the three Task Force Crimson members wounded during the attack, who received a standing ovation from all in attendance. Jackson would later receive a Bronze Star award for his efforts by extracting the wounded linguist to a position of cover and administering life-saving measures following the attack.

Also, during the ceremony at Quantico, Givens conferred Honorary Special Agent Status upon Lemm and Bonacasa, marking the first time any Security Forces Defenders had been bestowed this title.

"Each of these Fallen Heroes lived a life that mattered," Givens said, concluding the ceremony. "Many warriors have said over time what is done in life, echoes in eternity. Their service will echo in eternity."

Four months later, AFOSI headquarters conducted a Portrait Unveiling Ceremony, May 16, at the Little Hall Auditorium on Marine Corps Base Quantico. The ceremony was held to reveal the completed painted portraits of the Hustler 6 fallen that would be displayed within the AFOSI Hall of Heroes, that were located on the second floor of AFOSI headquarters at the Russell-Knox Building on Marine Corps Base Quantico.

Following the ceremony, the paintings were transferred to the AFOSI Hall of Heroes where each was hung on the wall and every Fallen Hero family was given a private opportunity to reflect privately with the portrait of their loved one.

"We have created for ourselves, an altar of freedom and from time to time we lay sacrifices upon this altar," said Rev. Christopher Vorderbruggen, brother of Adrianna Vorderbruggen, at that ceremony. "Bless now these works of art that they may be tokens of honor and tools of memory. Grant they assist us and future generations in remembering the sacrifices the six heroes here and their families and loved ones have made. The six heroes of AFOSI's darkest day were not doves, rather they were noble eagles."

Remembrance efforts for the Hustler 6 have not stopped as time has passed over the 10 years since Dec. 21, 2015. There are numerous facilities, structures and memorials across USAF installations which bear the names of the fallen. Examples of these include the Chester McBride Auditorium at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama; the Peter Taub Building at Ellsworth Air Force Base, South Dakota; and the Michael Cinco Facility at Beale Air Force Base, California. There is a memorial tablet placed in honor of Adriana Vorderbruggen at Hurlburt Field, Florida, in addition to a display case in her memory at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

The memorials to the Hustler 6 are not just limited to military installations. Louis Bonacasa has a bridge named after him on the Long Island Expressway in New York and Joseph Lemm has a statue dedicated to him at the Police Academy in Queens, New York. Further, all six names of the Hustler 6 fallen are also inscribed on the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington, D.C.

In addition, numerous activities are held each year across the command which mark the anniversary of the loss of the Hustler 6. As recently as Dec. 2025, one such event occurred at Arlington National Cemetery with the Annual AFOSI Security Forces Memorial Ruck Walk. This gathering was attended by AFOSI personnel from across the National Capital Region, to include Brig. Gen. Amy Bumgarner, AFOSI's current commander.

"This is part of our history and of our legacy, and even though it brings up sad memories, it is important for us to get together to remember and honor their sacrifice," Bumgarner said. "Thinking back 10 years, there were a lot of tears that happened that day. It was a very sad time for the command. AFOSI is a family, and these are our family members. Remembering them, not just on anniversaries but every day, is important because they were our teammates and our friends. They were a part of us. We've made a promise to them and we made a promise to their families that we will never forget them."

Ten years removed from speaking at the memorial at Bagram Air Base that was conducted just two days after the attack on the Hustler 6, Garver reflected: "Loss has a profound impact, and December 21st signifies the reminder of sacrifice, duty and honor that serving in the military carries. This is the day they gave their last full measure of devotion to our country, and I believe it's important to continue to honor and remember their selfless devotion. It's important to tell their stories, understand what serving means, and the impact they continue to have."

"They say you die twice: one time when you stop breathing and a second time, a bit later on, when somebody says your name for the last time," said Special Agent Meghan Hilton, AFOSI's 12th Field Investigations Squadron senior enlisted leader, who also served with members of Hustler 6. "While it may be 10 years since the loss of Hustler 6, the teammates we lost are still very much alive in our thoughts today as we pass our Fallen walls every day in the halls of AFOSI units and host Hustler 6

memorial walks, runs and rucks across the world. To some, these men and woman are strangers. Symbols. We remember them with respect and gratitude, while wondering if we will ever be called upon to face the same dangers and choices. To others, they were dear friends and teammates, remembered with a longing for and cherishing of warm memories that we shared together.”

Nearly every AFOSI field office across the world pays tribute to the Hustler 6 and all AFOSI’s Fallen Heroes with heritage displays at the headquarters, squadron, detachment and operating location levels. These displays serve as eternal monuments where the memories of the fallen are kept alive by the many people who pass by them every day and stop briefly to look at the portraits, who silently read the accompanying inscriptions, who sometimes say their names aloud, but most importantly who choose to simply take a few moments to pause and remember them.

“The sun never sets on the Hall of Heroes,” Givens said, in 2016. “We didn’t invent the legacy, but it’s our responsibility and duty to honor it.”

Special Agent Adrianna Vorderbruggen

“Adrianna was humble and took life as it came to her, accepting challenges as gifts and opportunities to grow. There was no task delegated to her that she feared.” – Chaplain Joseph Hoang, colleague, 2016.

Special Agent Michael Cinco

“He was such a great person. If anybody was mad or upset, he’d find a way to make them laugh.” – Angie Reyna, sister, 2016.

Special Agent Peter Taub

“He was a stand-up guy. He made me laugh. He made us all laugh.” – Special Agent Irney Parton, colleague, 2016.

Special Agent Chester McBride

“Chester was selfless, always looking out for whoever he was associated with.” – Travis McBride, cousin, 2016.

Tech. Sgt. Joseph Lemm

“He put people around him at ease. He could talk to anybody. He always had a hug for people. If people needed help, he was there.” – Cheryl Johnson, teacher, 2016.

Staff Sgt. Louis Bonacasa

“Thank you for showing me that true love is the greatest gift on earth. Through our love you have given me special memories that I will treasure forever.” – Deborah Bonacasa spouse, 2016.

<https://www.osi.af.mil/News/Features/Display/Article/4364130/remembering-hustler-6-ten-years-later/>

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9/11 Benefits Expanded For NY National Guard Responders

Rockland County Times, Dec. 22, 2025 :

Former members of the Army and Air National Guard, the Naval Militia and New York Guard who were part of the force which responded to 9/11 attacks in New York City have until Sept. 11, 2026 to file paperwork which would enable them to receive benefits if they develop a 9/11 related illness

This state-funded pension benefit is designed to compensate Guard members who developed a 9/11 related illness since the attacks that day on Sept. 11, 2001.

The extension of a pension benefit to 9/11 responders suffering from qualified health conditions was approved by the legislature and added to New York State Military Law in 2023.

Survivors of Guard personnel who die as a result of a 9/11-related condition may also be eligible for benefits.

These benefits also apply to members of the New York Naval Militia and the New York Guard –the state’s two state defense forces– who responded to the attacks.

Submitting the Application for World Trade Center Notice preserves the individual’s right to file a claim in the future and waives no legal rights

Registering preserves your right to file a claim in the future and waives no legal rights. A service member does not have to be sick to apply.

Instructions and documents required to file for this benefit, or to submit the application of notice, can be found online at <https://dmna.ny.gov/911/>.

More than 12,000 members of the New York Army and Air National Guard, the New York Naval Militia, and the New York Guard were part of the state response to the attacks between Sept. 11, 2001, and Sept. 11, 2002.

Service members who were on State Active Duty and involved in rescue, recovery or cleanup operations at the World Trade Center site, or in what is termed the New York City Exposure Zone, between those two dates, are eligible to apply to the program.

Current and former members of the National Guard, Naval Militia and New York Guard, who responded to the 9/11 attacks, who are ill, and have not been reimbursed by the federal September 11 Victim Compensation fund, are eligible for benefits.

The maximum benefit is three-quarters of the annual State Active Duty pay the individual is authorized to receive by law.

The 2023 law provides a presumption that, if an individual becomes permanently disabled due to certain conditions and unable to perform their job, they can claim the condition was the result of participation in the events of September 11 and after, unless it can be proven the condition was the result of other factors.

Qualifying conditions for this presumption include:

- Upper respiratory tract (rhinitis, sinusitis, pharyngitis, laryngitis, vocal cord disease, upper airway hyper-reactivity and tracheobronchitis, or a combination of such conditions).
- Lower respiratory tract (bronchitis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, asthma, reactive airway dysfunction syndrome and various forms of pneumonitis – hypersensitivity, granulomatous, or eosinophilic).
- Gastroesophageal tract (esophagitis and reflux disease).
- Psychological (post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression, or any combination of these conditions).
- Skin (conjunctivitis, contact dermatitis or burns, infectious, irritant, allergic, idiopathic or non-specific in nature, caused by exposure or aggravated by exposure); and
- New onset diseases (resulting from exposure as such diseases may occur in the future including cancer, asbestos-related diseases, heavy metal poisoning, musculoskeletal disease and chronic psychological diseases).

<https://rocklandtimes.com/2025/12/22/9-11-benefits-expanded-for-ny-national-guard-responders/>

New York Army National Guard

NY Army National Guard announces promotions

Olean Times Herald, Dec. 19,2025 ::

NY Army National Guard announces promotions

Two area residents serving in the New York Army National Guard received promotions, as announced by New York Guard headquarters in Latham.

? Landon Arnold of Wellsville, assigned to Alpha Company, 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry Regiment, received a promotion to the rank of private 1st class.

? Wyatt Weaver of Randolph, assigned to Charlie Company, New York Army National Guard Recruiting & Retention Battalion, was advanced to the rank of private after completing basic training.

<https://www.oleantimesherald.com/2025/12/19/ny-army-national-guard-announces-promotions-20251219-1908-440912/>

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Duty Calls: Four Army National Guard aviation units have new leaders

Times Union, Dec. 22, 2025 ::

Captains from Niskayuna, Colonie, Ballston Lake and Poughkeepsie take on new commander roles

Four New York Army National Guard aviation companies now have new commanders.

Capt. John Anderton, of Niskayuna, assumed command of Alpha Company of the 3rd Battalion, 142nd Attack Helicopter Battalion during a ceremony at the Army Aviation Support Facility 3, near the Albany International Airport.

Capt. Alyssa Griffith, of Colonie, is the new commander of the Bravo Company of the 3rd Battalion, 142nd Assault Helicopter Battalion at the Army Aviation Support Facility 1 at Ronkonkoma in Long Island.

Captain David Mackey, of Ballston Lake, now leads Delta Company of the 3rd Battalion, 142nd Helicopter Assault Battalion at the Army Aviation Support Facility 3 in Latham.

Captain Kevin Walsh, of Poughkeepsie, took command of Echo Company of the 3rd Battalion, 142nd Helicopter Assault Battalion at Farmingdale. He leads what essentially is a vehicle maintenance company.

Anderton, who enlisted in the New York Army National Guard in 2016, originally joined the New York Army National Guard as a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter mechanic in Delta Company of the 3rd Battalion, 142nd Aviation.

After earning his officer commission through Officer Candidate School in 2018, he attended flight school at Fort Rucker, Ala., and qualified as a UH-60M Black Hawk pilot.

He served in the battalion's Delta Company as a platoon leader and took part in a 2021 rotation to the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif. In 2022, he took over a platoon in Alpha Company and deployed to the Middle East in Support of Operation Spartan. He served as the site leader in Erbil, Iraq.

He was most recently assigned as the assistant operations officer for the battalion's Headquarters Company.

Anderton is a 2008 graduate of Mohonasen High School in Rotterdam and earned a degree from Fordham University in 2012. In civilian life, he serves in the State Police's Aviation Division.

Griffith now commands aviators in a battalion that operates eight UH-60M Black Hawk helicopters. She is also the operations officer for the New York Army National Guard State Aviation Office in Latham.

Her military career began in 2013, when she enlisted in the Montana Army National Guard at 17 years old as an automated logistics specialist. She was initially assigned to Detachment 1, C Company of the 1st Battalion, and 112th Aviation Regiment in Helena, Mont.

In 2015, she transferred to the New York Army National Guard and was assigned to Delta Company.

The captain has a Bachelor of Arts in history from Albany State University. She was commissioned as an aviation officer upon completion of an Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps program. She graduated from UH-60 helicopter pilot training at Fort Rucker, Ala.

She was assigned to Bravo Company as a platoon leader and deployed to the Middle East as part of Operation Spartan Shield in 2022-2023. Following redeployment, she served as the Bravo Company's executive officer and in a full-time Active Guard and Reserve capacity.

Mackey's soldiers provide maintenance and logistics support for the battalion's units in Latham and Ronkonkoma.

He enlisted in the Army National Guard after obtaining his commission through an Army ROTC program at Potsdam University in 2020. He also earned a master's degree in mechanical engineering from Clarkson University.

He completed aviation officer training and flight school in August 2022 before taking command of Detachment 2, Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 224th Security and Support Battalion based in Latham.

In October 2023, Mackey deployed with the detachment to the southwest U.S. border in support of the security missions as the detachment commander. While at the border, he served as the officer in charge of the Edinburg, Texas, facility, overseeing daily flight operations and coordinating with joint agencies in support of Customs and Border Protection missions.

Mackey currently works full-time as the acting facility commander of the Latham flight facility. His most recent assignment was as an intelligence officer for the battalion.

Walsh joined the New York Army National Guard in 2016. He earned his commission as a transportation officer upon completion of an Army ROTC program in 2018.

He has served as a truck platoon leader, a medium truck company executive officer, and plans officer for the 369th Sustainment Brigade and operations officer for the 369th Special Troops Battalion.

In 2022 and 2023, he served as the rear detachment commander for the 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry Regiment while that unit was deployed in the Horn of Africa. From 2023 to 2025, he also served as a rear detachment officer in charge for the 1569th Medium Truck Company while that unit was deployed.

Walsh earned a Bachelor of Science in finance from SUNY Binghamton and a Master of Business Administration from Columbia University.

Wreaths Across America

"Well, you've done it again," said Bill Schaaf, a coordinator for the Wreaths Across America project at the Gerald B.H. Solomon Saratoga National Cemetery in Schuylerville and state captain of the Patriot Guard Riders.

The Wreaths Across America 2025 event at Saratoga National Cemetery was a huge success, he said.

“With more than 2,000 volunteers placing more than 17,000 wreaths on every grave in honor of our deceased veterans,” Schaaf said. “Thank you goes out to all those who came out to support this undertaking. It would not have been possible without your help.”

Next year’s project has already begun.

As in years past, Wreaths Across America is conducting a Wreath Matching program. From Dec. 15 to Dec. 31, Wreaths Across America will match every wreath order placed through a sponsorship group.

To sponsor wreaths at \$17 each through the Patriot Guard Riders of New York’s sponsorship program, visit wreathsacrossamerica.org/NY0057P and follow the sponsorship instructions. Wreaths Across America will track and automatically double the wreath count for all orders placed during this time frame.

This means that for every wreath purchased, WAA will add another wreath to your order and donate \$5 from each wreath to the PGR of NY to help them assist needy veterans.

There is also a mail-in form attached for those who wish to pay by check.

Veterans Christmas meal

The Albany County Veterans Service Bureau will host a Christmas meal for veterans at 12:30 p.m. Thursday, on Christmas Day, at the Elks Lodge at 25 South Allen St. in Albany.

The bureau’s director, Scott Leslie, said the meal will support “veterans who may not have any friends or family to celebrate the holiday.”

Veterans are welcome to bring a guest.

Visit albanycountyny.gov/veterans/events to make a reservation. Contact Leslie at 518-447-7710 or scott.leslie@albanycountyny.gov for more information.

News of your troops and units can be sent to Times Union, Duty Calls, Terry Brown, Box 15000, Albany, NY 12212 or brownt@timesunion.com.

<https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/duty-calls-army-national-guard-aviation-commanders-21254188.php>

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Lancaster County military news: Dec. 22, 2025

**Lancaster Online, Dec. 22, 2025 ::
Dec 29, 2025**

Promotions

Jasmine Rivera, of Lancaster, and a member of the New York Army National Guard, received a promotion Oct. 2 to the rank of master sergeant. Rivera is currently assigned to the Headquarters and Special Troops Battalion, 369th Combat Sustainment Brigade. Army National Guard promotions are based on a Soldier's overall performance, demonstrated leadership abilities, professionalism and future development potential.

https://lancasteronline.com/news/regional/lancaster-county-military-news-dec-22-2025/article_594ce486-618d-420f-b396-fd38750f3029.html

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US Army and Navy stretched the rules to misrepresent the academic qualifications of recruits, the inspector general says

says Business Insider, Dec. 22, 2025 ::

Note: This item is provided for your situational awareness.

A Pentagon report says the Army and Navy misrepresented the academic qualifications of some recruits.

The Army and Navy exceeded federal limits on low-scoring recruits using preparatory courses, the watchdog said.

The Pentagon disputes the findings as services face ongoing challenges in military recruiting.

A new Pentagon Inspector General report says that the Army and Navy misrepresented the academic qualifications of some recruits, allowing both services to exceed federal limits on low-scoring enlistees.

The report, released earlier this month, is based on a yearlong review of the services' Future Soldier and Future Sailor preparatory courses, which are new "pre-boot camps" created in recent years.

The programs have helped the Army and Navy enlist more recruits amid a national recruiting crisis by taking applicants with low entrance exam scores or fitness

shortfalls and aiming to prepare them for service — addressing the deficiencies — in a matter of weeks or months.

The Defense Department Inspector General found that the Army and Navy miscalculated the number of low-scoring recruits they enlisted by counting test scores earned after applicants completed the preparatory courses, rather than the scores they received before entering those programs.

That approach allowed both services to exceed federal limits on low-scoring recruits without notifying the Secretary of Defense, as required by the rule. The secretary has the authority to raise those limits, but must also inform Congress.

The Pentagon disputed the report's findings, arguing that the scores that should count are those earned at the end of the preparatory courses, not those taken beforehand.

"Improving a recruit's academic skills is a primary reason for creating the [Future Soldier and Future Sailor Preparatory Courses]," William Fitzhugh, the acting assistant secretary of defense for manpower and reserve affairs, wrote in a memo to the inspector general. "Improved academic skills, and the resulting AFQT scores, enable such recruits to pursue a broader range of occupations, which benefits them and the Military Services."

Federal law caps the number of recruits who score low on the Armed Forces Qualification Test, known as Category IV applicants, at 4% of the total number of recruits who ship to boot camp each year. Category IV applicants score between the 10th and 30th percentiles on the exam, which assesses subjects such as reading comprehension, math, and mechanics.

Such recruits "tend to exhibit below average trainability and on-the-job performance," the report said.

The cap is intended to ensure the services attract enough high-scoring recruits to fill technically demanding roles, such as cyber operations, intelligence, and special operations, as well as many logistics and administrative jobs that also require strong academic performance.

Had the services used applicants' original test scores, the Navy would have classified more than 11% of its 2025 enlistments as Category IV recruits, compared with just over 7% when counting scores earned after the preparatory course. The Army also exceeded 10% of Category IV recruits, though the report did not say by how much.

The findings come as the Army and Navy begin to emerge from a yearslong recruiting crisis that left both services thousands of recruits short in recent years. Nearly three-quarters of American youth do not meet either the military's fitness or its

academic requirements to qualify for service, and fewer than ever are likely to consider military careers, making innovative recruiting efforts critical.

A previous inspector general report raised concerns about "less restrictive testing standards" in the Army's preparatory course and found that some participants struggled with English as a second language. The Pentagon also disputed those findings.

<https://www.businessinsider.com/pentagon-ig-report-army-navy-misrepresented-recruit-qualifications-2025-12>

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Stratford National Guard Soldier Receives New Rank

Stratford Patch, Dec. 22, 2025 ::

STRATFORD, CT — (Contributed): Major General Ray Shields, the adjutant general for the state of New York, announces the recent promotion of members of the New York Army National Guard in recognition of their capability for additional responsibility and leadership.

Andrew Clark, from Stratford, and assigned to Alpha Company, 152nd Brigade Engineer Battalion, received a promotion Nov. 3 to the rank of sergeant 1st class.

Army National Guard promotions are based on a Soldier's overall performance, demonstrated leadership abilities, professionalism and future development potential.

These promotions recognize the best qualified Soldiers for a career in the New York Army National Guard.

Get more local news delivered straight to your inbox. Sign up for free Patch newsletters and alerts.

<https://patch.com/connecticut/stratford/stratford-national-guard-soldier-receives-new-rank-2>

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Boonville resident becomes top enlisted leader for Buffalo-based brigade

Boonville Herald, Dec. 23, 2025 :

BOONVILLE/BUFFALO — New York Army National Guard Command Sgt. Major Morgan Cady, a Boonville resident and Iraq war veteran, became the senior enlisted leader of the Guard's 153rd Troop Command Brigade during a ceremony in Buffalo's historic Connecticut Street Armory on Saturday, Dec. 13.

Cady took over from Command Sgt. Maj. Anthony Giamberdino, who has been the top enlisted soldier out of the brigade's more than 1,600 soldiers since May 2022. He took over the role of command sergeant major during the same ceremony at which Col. William Snyder, a Grand Island resident, became the brigade's new commander.

Cady began his Guard career in 2000 as a military police soldier. His leadership positions spanned from team level to battalion command, and he was most recently the Command Sergeant Major of New York's Regional Training Institute, where he oversaw leadership training, officer candidate school and general studies training for Army National Guard, United States Army Reserve, and active component Soldiers.

Cady is the brigade's first senior enlisted leader with a military police background in a long time and brings vast experience from his civilian career as a 21-year veteran of the Fort Drum Department of the Army Police.

"Thank you for the opportunity to lead what I have already seen is an excellent team," Cady said. "I look forward to truly getting to know this brigade and its soldiers."

During the ceremony, the 153rd's flag was handed off from Giamberdino to Cady, signifying the change in responsibility. Historically, the colors of an Army unit indicated the location of the commander on the battlefield. The tradition allowed soldiers to see who they should follow in battle.

Cady, who enlisted in the New York Army National Guard in 2000, attended Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. Upon graduation from AIT, he was assigned to the 107th Military Police Company in Utica, New York as a Combat Support Military Police Soldier.

His military assignments included the 107th Military Police Company, Utica, New York; Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 104th Military Police Battalion, Kingston, New York; 107th Military Police Company, Brooklyn, New York; 442nd Military Police Company, Jamaica, and the 106th Regional Training Institute, Camp Smith, NY.

Cady's leadership positions include Military Police Team Leader, Military Police Squad Leader, Battalion Law and Order NCO, Battalion Maneuver and Mobility

Support NCO, Platoon Sergeant, Company First Sergeant, Battalion Command Sergeant Major, Regional Training Institute Command Sergeant Major. Cady also spent four years as the Marksman/Observer Team Leader on the Fort Drum Special Reaction Team.

Cady's schools and credentials include Anti-Terrorism Level II course, Special Reaction Team Phase I (entry) and Phase II (Marksman/Observer), Military Police Firearms Instructor (LEWTAQ), New York State Firearms Instructor course, Police Defensive Tactics Instructor, New York State Less than Lethal Instructor, Police General Topics Instructor, Police Physical Fitness Instructor, and Law Enforcement Active Shooter Response Train-the-Trainer course. Cady received his bachelor's degree in public administration from Empire State University in May of 2019.

Cady's personal decorations include the Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal (2nd award), Iraq Campaign Medal with one campaign star, Army Commendation Medal (4th award), Army Achievement Medal, Army Good Conduct Medal, Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal (5th award), Humanitarian Service Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Global War On Terrorism Service Medal, Non-Commissioned Officer Professional Development Ribbon (3rd award), Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon, Armed Forces Reserve Medal with M Device, and the Army Reserve Component Overseas Training medal. Among his New York State awards are the New York State Soldier of the Year Medal and the Defense of Liberty medal with World Trade Center device.

Cady is a 21-year veteran of the Fort Drum Department of the Army Police and was promoted to the rank of Captain in 2019. He holds the position of Deputy Chief of Operations in Fort Drum's Law Enforcement division.

The 153rd Troop Command Brigade upholds a legacy of commitment to mission and state. The Brigade currently commands close to 1,600 soldiers in diverse units across New York State and plays a critical role in both state and federal missions. Serving as the command of Joint Task Force V in 18 Western New York Counties and as the FEMA Region II Homeland Response Force, the brigade stands ready to respond to emergencies.

The 153rd Troop Command Brigade has supported multiple civil support operations and relief efforts, including Snowstorm Stella in the Northeastern United States in 2017 and Hurricanes Irma and Maria in the Caribbean in 2017. The command's soldiers mobilized and moved millions of dollars of equipment to Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands in record time for the hurricane relief efforts. Hundreds of 153rd TCB soldiers deployed in support of the New York National Guard's COVID-19 response efforts in 2020. In February 2025, the brigade was called to state active duty to support the NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision.

https://www.romesentinel.com/boonville-herald/boonville-resident-becomes-top-enlisted-leader-for-buffalo-based-brigade/article_040b0606-70c9-402d-8b3e-76aa28a55506.html

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Local pair earn promotions in New York Army National Guard

Rome Sentinel, Dec. 267, 2025 :

LATHAM — Two area residents have received promotions in the New York Army National Guard in recognition of their capability for additional responsibility and leadership, according to an announcement by Major Gen. Ray Shields, adjutant general for New York.

They are:

Dylan Decuffa, of Sherill, assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry Regiment, promoted to specialist; and

Kelton Ramos, of Madison, assigned to Bravo Company, NY Army National Guard Recruiting & Retention Battalion, promoted to private.

Army National Guard promotions are based on a soldier's overall performance, demonstrated leadership abilities, professionalism and future development potential.

For more information about the New York Army National Guard, visit www.dmna.ny.gov or www.1800goguard.com.

https://www.romesentinel.com/entertainment-life/notices/advancements/local-pair-earn-promotions-in-new-york-army-national-guard/article_a736ff75-0e4e-433a-95bc-bf21d2077588.html

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Military news: Area residents in N.Y. Army National Guard, Air National Guard promoted

Kingston Daily Freeman, Dec. 27, 2025 :

Promoted

The following area residents serving in the New York Army National Guard were promoted:

- * Michael Murashowe of Port Ewen, assigned to Bravo Company, National Guard Recruiting & Retention Battalion, to the rank of sergeant on Nov. 13.

- * Raymond Guante of Rosendale, assigned to Bravo Company, Recruiting & Retention Battalion, to the rank of private on Nov. 19.

- * Tomas Swider of Wallkill, assigned to Delta Company, First Battalion, 69th Infantry Regiment, to the rank of specialist on Nov. 21.

- * Axel Vazquez of Wallkil, assigned to Bravo Company, Recruiting & Retention Battalion, to the rank of private 1st class on Nov. 5.

- * Jackeline Monroy Lemus of Saugerties, assigned to Bravo Company, Recruiting & Retention Battalion, to the rank of private on Nov. 21.

- * Matthew Montalvo of Hurley, assigned to Bravo Company, Recruiting & Retention Battalion, to the rank of private on Nov. 19.

The following members of the New York Air National Guard were promoted:

- * Anna Miller of Saugerties, assigned to the 105th Airlift Wing, o the rank of master sergeant on Nov. 1.

- * Robert Stanich of Gardiner, assigned to the 105th Airlift Wing, to the rank of master sergeant on Nov 1.

- * Isis Podgorskaya of Highland, assigned to the 105th Airlift Wing, to the rank of master sergeant on Nov. 13.

- * Zaruma Schmitt of Pine Bush, assigned to the 105th Airlift Wing, to the rank of staff sergeant on Nov. 1.

<https://www.dailyfreeman.com/2025/12/27/military-news-area-residents-in-n-y-army-national-guard-air-national-guard-promoted/>

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How the NY Air National Guard helps NORAD track Santa

WHAM, Dec. 24, 2025 :

Volunteers and staff for the North American Aerospace Defense Command are once again manning phone lines this Christmas Eve and updating the NORAD Santa Tracker as the Big Man in Red makes his journey across the globe.

"Luckily, we have over a thousand volunteers on the day, about a hundred per hour," explained Chief Master Sergeant John Storms, NORAD's command senior enlisted leader. "Then, we have the support of over 70 community partners that allow us the tools so we can field so many phone calls."

Members of the New York Air National Guard stationed at the Eastern Air Defense Sector in the town of Rome are among those taking calls for NORAD.

The mission started in 1955 through an advertisement mistake. A young girl called the number on the ad listed for Santa, but it ended up being the number for NORAD.

"A young child called and Colonel Harry Shoup answered the phone, and, thinking on his feet, wanted to help the child out and gave them updates on where Santa was at that particular time," explained General Gregory Guillot, a NORAD commander.

Tracking Santa took off from that moment, and the NORAD staff enjoyed it.

"We track Santa because we were all children once," said Lieutenant-General Iain Huddleston, a deputy commander for NORAD. "We're very much part of the magic of the moment, the magic of the tradition."

Many of you may wonder — what makes NORAD the best at tracking Santa?

"We have the best capability in the world to track anything that flies in and around the globe," Guillot explained. "We have satellites, we have ground-based radars, and we have fighter aircraft and fighter-based radars that can track all varieties of objects that fly, including Santa."

But the most important question for some — when will Santa stop by your home?

"Unfortunately, we don't know the exact time when Santa will show up at your house," Storms explained. "Historically, it's been between 9 p.m. and midnight, but the important part is all children must be asleep. Otherwise, Santa will go to a different home and revisit your house at a later time."

Tracking operations are available until midnight Christmas Day, but it's suggested you get in bed by 8 or 9 p.m.

<https://13wham.com/news/local/how-the-ny-air-national-guard-helps-norad-track-santa-claus-christmas-eve-christmas-day-presents>

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Christmas Eve road march steps off in Glens Falls

WTEN, Dec. 24, 2025 :

GLENS FALLS, N.Y. (NEWS10)– The annual four-mile Christmas Eve road march in Glens Falls will start at 9 a.m. at the Cooling Insuring Arena, 1 Civic Center Plaza. Members of the community are invited to join members of the New York Army National Guard and organizers to march in support for military members serving overseas and for Veterans who have passed away.

The road march began in 2004 by National Guard recruiter Sergeant first class Arthur Coon and his wife Julia. Ten soldiers participated in the first march and since then, it has attracted thousands into the area.

According to organizers, the march has become a tradition to recognize the sacrifices made by all service men and woman who are on-duty, away from their families during the Holidays. The event also encourages donations for care packages to be shipped overseas.

This year's walk will include four different contests, according to organizers. Contests will include Heaviest Male and Female Backpack, Furthest Traveler, Largest Group and Largest Care Package Donation.

Regardless of the weather, the walk will still happen, a Facebook post said. The Warren County Veteran's bus will also be driving along the route for anyone who wants to stay warm or for those who want to participate but cannot walk the route.

<https://www.news10.com/news/warren-county/christmas-eve-road-march-steps-off-in-glens-falls/>

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Camillus National Guard member promoted

**Eagle News Online, Dec. 26, 2025 :
Dec 29, 2025**

Air Force Major General Michael Bank, the commander of the New York Air National Guard, has announced the recent promotion of members of the New York Air National Guard in recognition of their capability for additional responsibility and leadership.

Tanner Latessa from Camillus and assigned to the 174th Attack Wing, received a promotion Nov. 20 to the rank of staff sergeant.

Air National Guard promotions are based on an Airman's overall performance, demonstrated leadership abilities, professionalism and future development potential.

"The New York Air National Guard is built on a foundation of talented and motivated Airmen, and this month's promotions are a shining example of that excellence," Bank said. "I am honored to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of our Airmen, and I look forward to seeing their continued growth and contributions to our organization."

These promotions recognize the best qualified Airmen for a career in the New York Air National Guard.

Air National Guard Citizen Airmen who serve our state and nation are eligible for monthly pay, educational benefits (from the state and federal government), travel across the globe, technical and leadership training, health and dental insurance and contributions towards retirement programs similar to a 401(k).

For more information about the New York Air National Guard or contact a recruiter, visit dmna.ny.gov/ang/.

The New York National Guard (New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs) is the state's executive agency responsible to the Governor for managing New York's Military Forces, which consists of nearly 20,000 members of the New York Army National Guard, the New York Air National Guard, the New York Naval Militia and the New York Guard.

<https://eaglenewsonline.com/new/achievers/2025/12/26/camillus-national-guard-member-promoted>

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National Guard Soldier from Norfolk receives new rank, new responsibilities

North Country Now, Dec. 26, 2025 :

A New York Army National Guard soldier from Norfolk was recently promoted.

Jonathan French, who is assigned to Bravo Company, NY Army National Guard Recruiting & Retention Battalion, received a promotion Nov. 14 to the rank of private 1st class.

Army National Guard promotions are based on a Soldier's overall performance, demonstrated leadership abilities, professionalism and future development potential.

<https://northcountrynow.com/stories/national-guard-soldier-from-norfolk-receives-new-rank-new-responsibilities,345184>

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New York National Guard

NY National Guard 9/11 responders eligible for disability

Plattsburgh Press Republican,, Dec. 15, 2025 ::

LATHAM — Members of the New York National Guard who served on State Active Duty in New York City following the destruction of the Twin Towers on Sept. 11, 2001, can now register for the New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs World Trade Center Benefits Program with information provided online.

This state-funded pension benefit is designed to compensate Guard members who developed a 9/11 related illness since the attacks.

The extension of a pension benefit to 9/11 responders suffering from qualified health conditions was approved by the legislature and added to New York State Military Law in 2023.

Survivors of Guard personnel who die as a result of a 9/11-related condition may also be eligible for benefits.

These benefits also apply to members of the New York Naval Militia and the New York Guard — the state's two state defense forces — who responded to the attacks.

Submitting the application for World Trade Center Notice preserves the individual's right to file a claim in the future and waives no legal rights. A service member does not have to be sick to apply.

The deadline for filing this application is Sept. 11, 2026.

Instructions and documents required to file for the benefit, or to submit the application of notice, can be found online at dmna.ny.gov/911/.

More than 12,000 members of the New York Army and Air National Guard, New York Naval Militia, and New York Guard were part of the state response to the attacks between Sept. 11, 2001, and Sept. 11, 2002.

Service members who were on State Active Duty and involved in rescue, recovery or cleanup operations at the World Trade Center site, or in what is termed the New York City Exposure Zone, between those two dates are eligible to apply to the program.

Current and former members of the National Guard, Naval Militia and New York Guard who responded to the 9/11 attacks, who are ill and have not been reimbursed by the federal September 11 Victim Compensation fund are eligible for benefits.

The maximum benefit is three-quarters of the annual state active duty pay the individual is authorized to receive by law.

The 2023 law provides a presumption that, if an individual becomes permanently disabled due to certain conditions and unable to perform their job, they can claim the condition was the result of participation in the events of Sept. 11 and after, unless it can be proven the condition was the result of other factors.

Qualifying conditions for this presumption include:

- Upper respiratory tract (rhinitis, sinusitis, pharyngitis, laryngitis, vocal cord disease, upper airway hyper-reactivity and tracheobronchitis or a combination of such conditions).
- Lower respiratory tract (bronchitis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, asthma, reactive airway dysfunction syndrome and various forms of pneumonitis — hypersensitivity, granulomatous or eosinophilic).
- Gastroesophageal tract (esophagitis and reflux disease).
- Psychological (post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression or any combination of these conditions).
- Skin (conjunctivitis, contact dermatitis or burns, infectious, irritant, allergic, idiopathic or non-specific in nature caused by exposure or aggravated by exposure).
- New onset diseases resulting from exposure. Diseases may occur in the future, including cancer, asbestos-related diseases, heavy metal poisoning, musculoskeletal disease and chronic psychological diseases.

https://www.yahoo.com/news/articles/ny-national-guard-9-11-045900684.html?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xlLmNvbS8&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAAM895sJ5J4OKbmtdBQGCXmjSH3-U2MmMtuZbdIDBXF6iOC_L3ExE8apYO6KHhhC0Mb7ejXtOuyiMWFVPEPJDPmKoLbLxzW6vLo2KmZ1GPPFklrMHctQD_ZpiT8T9Wv7qKpbo_j0LlpM4lChoZ-Lv9UXRI2oL7ReS0ekL2mys0QeV

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9/11 Benefits Expanded For NY National Guard Responders

Rockland County Times, Dec. 22,2025 ::

Former members of the Army and Air National Guard, the Naval Militia and New York Guard who were part of the force which responded to 9/11 attacks in New York City have until Sept. 11, 2026 to file paperwork which would enable them to receive benefits if they develop a 9/11 related illness

This state-funded pension benefit is designed to compensate Guard members who developed a 9/11 related illness since the attacks that day on Sept. 11, 2001.

The extension of a pension benefit to 9/11 responders suffering from qualified health conditions was approved by the legislature and added to New York State Military Law in 2023.

Survivors of Guard personnel who die as a result of a 9/11-related condition may also be eligible for benefits.

These benefits also apply to members of the New York Naval Militia and the New York Guard –the state’s two state defense forces– who responded to the attacks.

Submitting the Application for World Trade Center Notice preserves the individual’s right to file a claim in the future and waives no legal rights

Registering preserves your right to file a claim in the future and waives no legal rights. A service member does not have to be sick to apply.

Instructions and documents required to file for this benefit, or to submit the application of notice, can be found online at <https://dmna.ny.gov/911/>.

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The 2023 law provides a presumption that, if an individual becomes permanently disabled due to certain conditions and unable to perform their job, they can claim the condition was the result of participation in the events of September 11 and after, unless it can be proven the condition was the result of other factors.

Qualifying conditions for this presumption include:

- Upper respiratory tract (rhinitis, sinusitis, pharyngitis, laryngitis, vocal cord disease, upper airway hyper-reactivity and tracheobronchitis, or a combination of such conditions).
- Lower respiratory tract (bronchitis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, asthma, reactive airway dysfunction syndrome and various forms of pneumonitis – hypersensitivity, granulomatous, or eosinophilic).
- Gastroesophageal tract (esophagitis and reflux disease).
- Psychological (post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression, or any combination of these conditions).
- Skin (conjunctivitis, contact dermatitis or burns, infectious, irritant, allergic, idiopathic or non-specific in nature, caused by exposure or aggravated by exposure); and
- New onset diseases (resulting from exposure as such diseases may occur in the future including cancer, asbestos-related diseases, heavy metal poisoning, musculoskeletal disease and chronic psychological diseases).

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