

# The Star-Ledger

## **N.J. National Guard prepared for any ‘armed march’ in capital**

By Blake Nelson and Michael Mancuso

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New Jersey National Guard troops are ready to protect the state’s capital ahead of potential violence during the final days of Donald Trump’s presidency.

“We will have 100 Guard members prepared to support local and state law enforcement,” Lt. Col. Barbara Brown wrote in an email.

Soldiers were part of a “Quick Reaction Force,” she said, which can help “when requested by proper authorities.”

New Jersey’s top Homeland Security official has warned of a possible “armed march” in Trenton and other capitals in the coming days, although officials have stressed there are no “specific or credible” threats facing the state.

Local Second Amendment groups have also warned gun owners against rallying.

Nonetheless, Gov. Phil Murphy is closing state offices as a precaution Wednesday, the day of the presidential inauguration.

Fears stem from last week’s deadly riot, when a mob loyal to Trump stormed the U.S. Capitol.

Trenton’s federal courthouse was partially boarded up as of Friday, and sheets of wood were visible behind street-level windows and doors.

It was not immediately clear if other buildings are nailing up plywood. Calls to the U.S. Marshals Service, which oversees security at federal courthouses, were not immediately returned.

Protests involving ten or more people at New Jersey’s Statehouse require a permit.

The State Police said only two groups had been approved for the entire month of January: NJ Parents for In-Person Learning was given the green light to rally earlier this week, and NJ Right to Life is planning on bringing 400 people to the capital later this month.

No group has been approved to march in the coming days through Jan. 20, when President-elect Joe Biden is sworn in, according to Sgt. Lawrence Peele.

“Any gathering of 10 or more persons on State Capitol grounds without a permit will be asked to disperse,” Peele wrote in an email.

Residents have to apply at least 72 hours ahead of time, meaning somebody couldn't ask today to protest Sunday.

Many windows at the Statehouse are already boarded up amid ongoing renovation.

The State Police have previously declined to give details about what security precautions they're taking, but troopers on horseback could be seen patrolling the road Friday.