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MEDIA ALERT

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Arkansas National Guard's annual training modified *~ AT will occur at home stations vs at Fort Chaffee, Camp Robinson*

WHO: The Arkansas National Guard

WHAT: has modified its annual training plans to ensure Soldier, Airmen safety and well-being

WHEN: July 1, 2020,

WHERE: for the various upcoming annual training dates for units across the state.

WHY: Maj. Gen. Kendall Penn, Arkansas' adjutant general, in coordination with the National Guard Bureau and the Arkansas National Guard staff sought to secure COVID-19 testing for the upcoming eXportable Combat Training Capability (XCTC) exercise for participating Soldiers. Despite all parties' best efforts, those test kits couldn't be purchased for Guardsmen in a military status for annual training, due to federal law fiscal constraints. General Penn's No. 1 priority is the safety of the Guard's Soldiers and Airmen. General Penn cancelled the 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team's XCTC exercise because of the fiscal constraints to fund the test kits.

The Guard will still conduct the statutorily required annual training for its Guardsmen, just not at Fort Chaffee or Camp Robinson in a large-unit environment. The Arkansas National Guard staff is working through the details to finalize updated training plans for Guardsmen. Details will be provided to Guardsmen in the next 24-48 hours.

The situation with the COVID-19 pandemic is fluid and rapidly changing, and the Guard's plans are flexing to balance force health protection with readiness. Specifically for the Arkansas Army Guard, annual training will look a little differently from battalion to battalion across the force.

Guardsmen with questions about their annual training should address those through their respective chain of command.