DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS

ANNUAL PLAN

FY 2027

Vision Statement: A ready and resilient Montana

Mission Statement: Department of Military Affairs strengthens Montana through our collective readiness to defend against threats, increasing resilience, and engaged citizenship.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Department of Military Affairs (DMA) is a very diverse organization that serves the citizens of Montana. DMA is comprised of the Directors Office, Department of Emergency Services, Montana Veterans Affairs Division, Montana Youth Challenge Academy, STARBASE, and both the Montana Air and Army National Guard.

DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

The Director's Office provides departmental administration through the Office of the Adjutant General and department-wide support for accounting and budget management, information technology, human resources, payroll, labor relations, and purchasing and property management oversight. Additionally, there are two major programs in DMA, the Montana Youth Challenge Academy and STARBASE. The Director of the Department of Military Affairs also serves as The Adjutant General (TAG) and Commander of the Montana National Guard.

MONTANA YOUTH CHALLENGE ACADEMY

The Montana National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Academy (MYCA) is a volunteer program for youth ages 16 to 18 who are not on track to graduate high school. ChalleNGe is a 17-month, voluntary, three-phased military educational intervention program. The program provides an opportunity for "at risk" youth to enhance their life skills, increase their educational levels and employment potential. Phase I of the program is a 2-week acclimation phase conducted at the Dillon Readiness Center followed by a 20-week residential stay on the campus of Western Montana College of the University of Montana in Dillon. The residential phase focuses on the eight core components to include physical fitness, academic excellence, life coping skills, service to community, health and hygiene, responsible citizenship, job skills and leadership/followership. Phase II is a year-long mentoring relationship with a specially trained member of the community where the youth reside to provide a positive role model and to assist the student in gaining employment or enrolling in post-secondary schooling.

STARBASE PROGRAM

STARBASE is the 100% federally funded premier youth outreach program of the Department of Defense. Currently, STARBASE has classrooms at Fort Harrison in Helena and the 120th Airlift Wing in Great Falls, providing 25 hours of hands-on science, technology, engineering, art, and math (STEAM) instruction to all fifth-grade classes within the Helena and Great Falls school districts, as well as afterschool programs and summer camps to students in grades 3- 12 across Montana. STARBASE locations provide students the opportunity to interact with military personnel, foster familiarity with local military installations, nurture interest in STEAM careers, and empower Montana's youth for future success.

DISASTER AND EMERGENCY SERVICES DIVISION

The Disaster and Emergency Services Division (DES) duties and responsibilities are provided for under Title 10, Chapter 3, MCA. The division is responsible for the coordination, development and implementation of emergency management planning, mitigation, response, and recovery statewide. This responsibility includes the administration and disbursement of federal Homeland Security and Emergency Management funds to eligible political subdivisions and tribal nations across the state. The division maintains a 24 hour a day point of contact to coordinate the volunteer, state, and federal response for assistance to political subdivisions and tribal nations in the event of an incident, emergency, or disaster.

MONTANA VETERANS AFFAIRS DIVISION

The Montana Veterans Affairs Division (MVAD) assist discharged veterans and their families, cooperates with state and federal agencies, promotes the general welfare of veterans and provides information on the veterans' benefits. The division also administers the Montana state-run veteran's cemeteries located in Miles City, Fort Harrison in Helena, and Missoula. The division reports to the Board of Veterans Affairs and operates under a state mandate provided in Title 10, Chapter 2, MCA.

MONTANA AIR NATIONAL GUARD

The Montana Air National Guard's (MTANG) federal mission is to maintain well-trained, well-equipped units available for mobilization during war and provide assistance during national emergencies (such as natural disasters or civil disturbances). During peacetime, the combat-ready and support units are assigned to Air Force major commands to carry out missions compatible with training, mobilization readiness, humanitarian and contingency operations. Air National Guard units may be activated as prescribed by public law. Most laws may be found in Title 10 of the U.S. Code. When Air National Guard units are not mobilized or under federal control, the units report to the governor and are supervised by TAG. Under state law, the Air National Guard provides protection of life, property and preserves peace, order and public safety. These missions are accomplished through emergency relief support during natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes, and forest fires; support to civil defense authorities; maintenance of vital public services and counterdrug operations. This program is mandated by the U.S. and Montana Constitutions and Title 10, Chapters 1-3, MCA.

MONTANA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

The Montana Army National Guard (MTARNG) is a component of the United States military's total force, ready to respond in a time of need. The MTARNG mission is dual and fulfills both federal and state missions. The federal mission is to provide trained and ready soldiers who are equipped to respond under presidential authority. The state mission is to provide trained and ready soldiers who are equipped to aid in the protection of life and property, uphold the preservation of peace, order, and public safety for the citizens of Montana, under the leadership and control of the governor. The MTARNG is composed primarily of traditional guardsmen — civilians who serve their country, state, and community on a part-time basis (usually an average of one weekend each month and an extended collective training event over a two-week period). The governor can call the Army National Guard into state active duty in accordance with the Montana Constitution during local or statewide emergencies, such as storms, fires, earthquakes, search and rescue, or civil disturbances. In addition, the president of the United States can activate the MTARNG for participation in federal missions such as national emergencies, humanitarian crisis, and contingency operations in response to national interests on the homeland or overseas. This program is mandated by the U.S. and Montana Constitutions and Title 10, Chapters 1-3, MCA.

The Construction and Facilities Management Office (CFMO) reports to the Adjutant General. The CFMO mission is to provide state-of-the-art, community based, installations and training sites that, by virtue of their geographical dispersion, can be leveraged by the Army and the State; and that facilitate communications, operations, training, and equipment sustainment to support the deployment of required forces and other assigned State and Federal missions. The operation, organization, process and procedures for CFMO are outlined in National Guard Regulation (NGR) 420-10. Montana House Bill 5 provides State funding and authority for approved projects.

Purpose

This State Annual Plan provides a Department of Military Affairs (DMA) framework for FY 2027. It translates the Adjutant General's 2027–2031 Strategic Plan into state priorities, work plans, measurable outcomes, and quarterly review requirements. It applies to DMA divisions, programs, administrators, and staff. The five Lines of Effort (LOEs) below retain the exact titles used in the 2027–2031 Strategic Plan, while all actions and measures are written for DMA's state government functions.

This FY 2027 Priorities at a Glance

Line of Effort	FY 2027 Intended Outcome
LOE 1: Force Transformation & Modernization	DMA modernizes state services, infrastructure, technology, facilities, and business capabilities to meet current and emerging public needs.
LOE 2: Expertise	DMA strengthens technical expertise, leadership capacity, program knowledge, and service delivery across the department.
LOE 3: Strategic Partnerships	DMA builds coordinated, productive partnerships that improve public safety, resilience, veteran services, youth development, education, and community outcomes.
LOE 4: People	DMA attracts, develops, retains, and supports a healthy, skilled, purpose-driven state workforce.
LOE 5: Organizational Effectiveness	DMA improves decision-making, accountability, processes, service quality, and learning across all divisions.

LOE 1: Force Transformation & Modernization

Strategic objective: Modernize DMA's state programs, systems, facilities, and service-delivery capabilities to respond effectively to current responsibilities and emerging opportunities.

FY 2027 Objective	Key Actions and Milestones	Measures of Success
1.1 Enhance Current Units	Each division completes a baseline review of its core programs, statutory responsibilities, workforce, facilities, technology, and service demands; identify the highest-priority capability and sustainability gaps.	Division baseline assessments completed by Q2; department priority list approved by Q3; top actions tracked quarterly.
1.2 Home-Station Based Operational Readiness	Ensure each DMA location and program maintains continuity-of-operations, emergency communications, records-access, facility-safety, and essential-service procedures.	Division continuity and emergency procedures reviewed by Q3; at least one department-wide validation exercise completed by Q4; corrective actions tracked to closure.
1.3 New Frontiers	Identify emerging technologies, funding opportunities, public-service needs, and innovative delivery models that can improve DMA programs. Develop decision-ready proposals for viable opportunities.	Innovation and opportunity portfolio established by Q3; at least three decision-ready proposals submitted by Q4; approved projects assigned owners and milestones.
1.4 Big Sky—Big Opportunities/Threats	Maintain a shared assessment of Montana-specific opportunities and risks affecting public safety, emergency management, veterans, youth, education, facilities, workforce, and service access.	Department risk-and-opportunity update completed in Q3 and Q4; high-priority risks have owners and mitigation plans; findings inform FY 2028 planning.

LOE 2: Expertise

Strategic objective: Develop the technical knowledge, leadership ability, and program-management proficiency required to deliver high-quality state services.

FY 2027 Objective	Key Actions and Milestones	Measures of Success
2.1 Master the Basics at Every Level	Establish and reinforce baseline expectations for customer service, fiscal stewardship, records management, procurement, data protection, workplace safety, compliance, supervision, and program administration.	Baseline standards published by Q2; annual required training and compliance completion tracked quarterly; corrective actions monitored to closure.
2.2 Build Leaders Who Can Lead and Run the Organization	Deliver a DMA leader-development program for supervisors and emerging leaders focused on state government operations, budget stewardship, performance management, coaching, communication, ethics, and change leadership.	FY 2027 development calendar published by Q2; participation and completion tracked quarterly; participant feedback and supervisor application reviewed in Q4.
2.3 Optimize Training Focus and Relevancy for State Mission Proficiency	Align staff development to each division's state program requirements, certifications, statutory duties, service standards, and mission-essential responsibilities.	Division training plans completed by Q2; quarterly review of required training and certification status; remediation plans documented for gaps.

LOE 3: Strategic Partnerships

Strategic objective: Strengthen the partnerships that expand DMA capacity and improve outcomes for Montana communities, veterans, youth, students, and disaster-affected populations.

FY 2027 Objective	Key Actions and Milestones	Measures of Success
3.1 Advance the State Partnership Program (SPP) and International Partnerships	Identify and coordinate appropriate state-level international, interstate, and professional partnerships that support emergency management, education, veterans services, workforce development, and public-sector learning.	Partnership inventory updated by Q3; annual engagement plan developed for approved opportunities; outcomes documented in Q4.

3.2 Deepen Total Joint Force Integration	Improve coordination among DMA divisions and with related public entities to share information, synchronize services, and reduce duplication.	Cross-division coordination priorities approved by Q2; quarterly coordination sessions held; agreed improvements tracked to completion.
3.3 Synchronize Interagency and Critical Infrastructure Partnerships	Strengthen working relationships with local, tribal, state, federal, nonprofit, and private-sector partners supporting emergency management, continuity, infrastructure resilience, and community preparedness.	Partner engagement map updated by Q3; at least one interagency planning or exercise activity completed by Q4; significant gaps assigned owners.
3.4 Cultivate Civilian Employer, Industry, and Academic Coalitions	Develop partnerships with employers, industry, and academic institutions to support state workforce development, veteran employment, youth education, STEAM learning, and community resilience.	Engagement plan complete by Q3; coalition activities and outcomes tracked; at least two actionable initiatives established by Q4.
3.5 Implement Rotational Strategic Tour Program	Develop a state employee rotational-development program that provides cross-division, interagency, or community partner experience.	Program design approved by Q3; pilot participants identified by Q4; pilot assessment and recommendation carried into FY 2028.
3.6 Cultivate and Amplify Strategic Media and Marketing Relationship	Establish a coordinated communications calendar that explains DMA services, public value, program opportunities, emergency preparedness, veteran support, youth programs, and community impact.	Annual communications calendar approved by Q2; campaign results reviewed quarterly; strategic communications integrated into priority initiatives.

LOE 4: People

Strategic objective: Ensure DMA has the right people in the right roles and provides the workplace, development, support, and sense of purpose necessary for employees to thrive.

FY 2027 Objective	Key Actions and Milestones	Measures of Success
4.1 Right People, Right Job	Improve workforce planning, recruitment, position management, onboarding, succession planning, employee development, and retention for critical state positions.	Critical-position and succession plans completed by Q3; vacancy, time-to-fill, and retention trends reviewed quarterly; development plans established for identified successors.
4.2 Ready Body & Mind	Promote employee wellbeing through safety, ergonomics, resilience, employee assistance resources, mental-health support, work-life balance, and supervisor awareness.	Annual employee wellbeing campaign delivered; supervisor resource training completed by Q4; workforce feedback and safety indicators reviewed quarterly.
4.3 Taking Care of the Home Front	Improve employee access to benefits, leave, flexible-work information where appropriate, professional resources, and support during life events, emergencies, and periods of high operational demand.	Employee resource guide reviewed by Q2; annual outreach schedule implemented; barriers to access identified and addressed quarterly.
4.4 Purpose-Driven Organizational Climate	Build a workplace culture centered on public service, trust, accountability, inclusion, respect, communication, and mission purpose.	Division climate/action plans completed following surveys or assessments; leadership reviews trends quarterly; actions and outcomes documented.
4.5 Family Programs Reform	Review and improve DMA programs that serve employees, veterans, families, youth, students, and communities; prioritize simple access, clear communications, continuity of service, and measurable outcomes.	Service-delivery assessment completed by Q3; improvement plan approved by Q4; priority implementation begins in FY 2028.

4.6 Recruiting to "The Montana Way"	Align state employee recruitment and retention communications with DMA's public-service mission, Montana values, meaningful career opportunities, and community impact.	Recruitment and retention communications plan approved by Q2; applicant, hiring, retention, and campaign metrics reviewed quarterly; corrective actions applied as needed.

LOE 5: Organizational Effectiveness

Strategic objective: Make DMA a high-performing, adaptive state organization that uses clear authority, disciplined execution, continuous improvement, and learning to deliver reliable public services.

FY 2027 Objective	Key Actions and Milestones	Measures of Success
5.1 Institutionalize Mission Command, Decentralized Execution, and Operational Self-Reliance	Clarify decision rights, delegation authorities, supervisor responsibilities, escalation paths, and performance expectations so divisions can act decisively within policy and law.	Decision-rights framework published by Q3; division implementation validated by Q4; employee and supervisor feedback indicates improved clarity and decision speed.
5.2 Drive Continuous Process Improvement and Optimization	Select and improve high-impact processes affecting employe efficiencies, public access, grants, procurement, hiring, financial operations, records, communications, and program delivery.	Improvement portfolio approved by Q2; at least five priority processes mapped and improved by Q4; each effort reports a baseline and measurable result.
5.3 Cultivate a Culture of Rapid Adaptation and Learning	Establish regular after-action reviews, lessons-learned processes, knowledge-sharing, and recognition for employees and teams that improve public service delivery.	Quarterly learning forum conducted; priority lessons assigned and tracked; FY 2027 learning report informs the FY 2028 Annual Plan.