



24th Navajo Nation Council

Office of the Speaker

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MEDIA CONTACT

Carl Slater, Director of Communications and Government Affairs
Bronson Peshlakai, Sr. Public Information Officer
(928) 871-6815
nnlb.communications@gmail.com

HEHSC Clarifies Intoxicant Use Consumption, Possession Prohibition for Navajo Nation Employees While on Official Travel

CHURCHROCK, N.M. — The 24th Navajo Nation Council Health, Education, and Human Services Committee passed legislation clarifying the prohibition on the possession and use of alcohol and other intoxicating substances for employees and political at-will appointees on official travel for the Nation at a meeting in Church Rock, N.M. June 3.

HEHSC consented unanimously to pass Legislation 0115-19, which amends the Navajo Nation Personnel Policies Manual to prohibit the consumption and possession of alcohol while on official travel. It was sponsored by Delegate Edmund Yazzie (Churchrock, Iyanbito, Mariano Lake, Pinedale, Smith Lake, Thoreau).

The committee passed two amendments to the original legislation, adding “possession” in addition to the consumption provision and adding “political-at-will appointees” to clarify that the policy applies to all employees of the Nation.

As part of the legislation’s findings, the committee cites the Navajo Nation Personnel Policies Manual to reaffirm that “employees must ‘uphold, with integrity, the trust and confidence placed in the employee pursuant to his/her employment.’”

“Working for the Navajo Nation Government, and service to the Navajo people, is an honor and a privilege,” stated Delegate Yazzie. “All employees must carry forth their duties with unimpeachable respect for the faith placed in them by the Navajo people.”

The current policy stipulates that the use of alcohol during working hours or the lunch period is prohibited. This legislation adds to “Section XVI. Conduct of Employees” in the *Navajo Nation Personnel Policies Manual*, subsection “E. Drugs and alcohol in the workplace,” Item 1. Disciplinary action is consistent with the Table of Penalties offense #40. Employees violating this policy may be disciplined, accordingly.

According to the Table of Penalties Offense #40, a first offense calls for a mandatory evaluation by employee assistance and suspension up to 30 days, or removal. A second offense imposes suspension up to 30 days or removal, and a third offense calls for removal of the employee.

As an example, when a Navajo Nation employee attends a conference, the entire duration of travel, to and from the employee's worksite to the conference location, is considered official travel, and the consumption and possession of alcohol during that period is prohibited.

"This particular legislation is not taking a holier than thou perspective, it's a rule that will cover and protect the assets of the Navajo Nation," said HEHSC Chair Daniel Tso (Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Counselor, Littlewater, Ojo Encino, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake).

The committee is final authority for the legislation, and the policy will go into effect as soon as the Dept. of Personnel Management updates and publishes the Personnel Policies Manual.

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