



Navajo Nation reports no new cases of coronavirus for the first time since March

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WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — The Navajo Department of Health together with the Navajo Health Command Operations Center (HCOC), the Indian Health Service and the Navajo Epidemiology Center reported to Navajo leaders that no new cases of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) were reported across the Navajo Nation’s 13 healthcare facilities on Tuesday.

“This is a milestone for the Navajo Nation,” said Speaker Seth Damon (Baahaali, Chilchiltah, Manuelito, Red Rock, Rock Springs, Tsayatoh). “But it’s going to take the continuing efforts of our Navajo People to continue the reduction in numbers until a viable COVID-19 vaccine is available.”

The report also included a total of 9,903 confirmed positive cases since March, and four additional mortalities related to COVID-19 for a total of 527. A total 7,157 recovered cases were noted and a total of 97,644 tests have been administered across the Navajo Nation.

“We are most thankful to our health care professionals and all the healthcare community for their recommendations and leadership to chart a path through the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Council Delegate, Daniel E. Tso (Baca/Prewitt, Casmero Lake, Counselor, Littlewater, Ojo Encinlo, Pueblo Pintado, Torreón, Whitehorse Lake), chairman of the Health, Education and Human Services Committee. “We must be most reasonable that we are in a long journey to recover from the coronavirus on an individual basis, as well as a family, as a community and as a Navajo Nation.”

Vice Chairman of the Health, Education and Human Services Committee and Council Delegate Carl Roessel Slater (Round Rock, Rock Point, Tséché'izí, Lukachugai, Tsaille-Wheatfields) added, "We must thank our healthcare professionals and leaders for their ongoing efforts throughout the coronavirus pandemic. Every Navajo person becomes a leader by adhering to and demonstrating social distancing and mask wearing. Together, we are leading the Nation to recovery."

Navajo epidemiologists, who track and study the spread of outbreaks, said the latest spike prior to Tuesday's report stems from a family gathering that took place a few weeks ago. This last weekend's Labor Day holiday is expected to produce another outbreak as families moved and gathered following the 32-hour weekend lockdown.

The HCOC also provided updates relating to the Division of Social Services, which continues to receive and process burial assistance requests alongside regular duties as the Executive Branch reopens.

Relating to isolation and alternate care sites, the HCOC shared that sites in Chinle continue to have capacity in addition to holding patients currently undergoing isolation. Personal protective equipment (PPE) has been made available to Community Health Representatives, with more PPE being transferred between facilities today with the help of the National Guard.

The HCOC's humanitarian aid section continued Tuesday with food box deliveries in and around the Crystal Chapter for Navajo families. The section also teamed with the 2020 Census office to promote the completion of 2020 Census questionnaires.

The humanitarian aid section will be in Alamo Chapter and the surrounding areas today to continue food box deliveries.

"The Navajo Nation needs to be vigilant in keeping our COVID-19 numbers down," said Council Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty (Cove, Toadlena/Two Grey Hills, Red Valley Tse'alnaozt'i'i, Sheepsprings, Beclabito, Gadiiahi/To'Koi). "But even more than that, the Council will continue to press Navajo Nation programs to ensure the monies and resources approved to-date are delivered to every Navajo community in a coordinated manner. The amount of resources that needs to reach our People needs to dramatically increase or else we will miss the deadline for CARES Act funds."

More information about the Navajo Nation's response to the novel coronavirus can be found at the Navajo Nation Department of Health's COVID-19 website: <https://www.ndoh.navajo-nsn.gov/COVID-19>.

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