



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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U.S. DOJ announces guidance for Radiation Exposure and Compensation Act claimants

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – The U.S. Department of Justice has published guidance for claimants that plan to seek compensation through the federal Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) program, which will benefit thousands of former Navajo uranium miners, downwinders, and others. RECA was included in the reconciliation bill passed by Congress in July. The 25th Navajo Nation Council advocated to congressional members to support the RECA extension.

RECA, which was originally enacted in 1990, is designed to provide compensation to individuals who became ill due to radiation exposure from the federal government's nuclear weapons production and testing. Many Navajo miners and mill workers helped source the uranium to fuel this program. The program expired in June 2024 until the recent bill was passed. The latest RECA bill includes the following provisions:

- Expands eligibility for miners through December 31, 1990.
- Expands eligibility to core drillers and remediation workers for the first time.
- Increases compensation from \$50,000 to \$100,000.
- Covers additional kidney diseases for miners.
- Allows for combined work histories for miners who worked at multiple sites.

"The passage of RECA was meaningful step forward, but we still need a long-term extension that reflects the lived experiences of Navajo families impacted by decades of uranium mining," said Council Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty. "We encourage impacted individuals to submit claims before the deadline."

Speaker Crystalyne Curley also encourages claimants to work through the Navajo Uranium Workers' Program (NUWP), under the Navajo Department of Health, to submit claims. The program provides technical assistance to claimants to allow them to submit claims.

According to the Department of Justice, all claims must be filed by December 31, 2027. For more information related to the provisions and guidance, please visit the U.S. Department of Justice's website: <https://www.justice.gov/civil/reca#Mail>.

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