



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

## 25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Navajo WIC program pauses benefits due to delay in budget processing**

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — On Tuesday, Navajo Nation Council Speaker Crystalyne Curley issued a memo to Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren urging his administration to take immediate action to expedite the processing and release of Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) benefits following reports that vendors across the Navajo Nation have been notified of a pause in WIC benefits that assist thousands of Navajo families.

According to information shared with the Council, the Navajo Nation WIC Office has indicated that benefits are being temporarily halted due to internal administrative delays within the Executive Branch. This interruption directly impacts approximately 4,200 recipients who depend on WIC assistance for infant formula, healthy food, and nutritional support.

“With the federal government shutdown already creating uncertainty for many programs, this setback due to internal delays is disappointing. It is the President’s duty to have the Executive Branch expedite the funding process,” said Speaker Crystalyne Curley. “Families should not suffer from bureaucratic slowdowns within our own government, especially when it comes to nourishing infants and children.”

The memo urges the Office of the President and Vice President (OPVP) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to prioritize and expedite all necessary reviews and fund releases to restore WIC operations without further delay.

According to the Navajo WIC Nutrition Program, the proposed budget was submitted to the OMB in July and encountered numerous setbacks that has led to a delay in funding availability.

On Tuesday, the program notified 42 vendors across the Navajo Nation that WIC transactions are “temporarily paused until further notice.”

“Prompt action by the administration is critical,” the memorandum states. “Families should not shoulder the burden of internal processing issues when it comes to essential nutrition and health services.”

The Council’s Budget and Finance Committee has requested a report from OMB outlining the steps being taken to resolve the issue and an estimated timeline for restoring full WIC benefit distribution. The Committee is scheduled to meet on Wednesday.

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