



## Navajo Nation: Covid-19 positive cases increase by 191, Council continues vaccine oversight and tours chapter distribution facility

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** December 9, 2020



**PHOTO:** One-ton pallets of bottled water procured through CARES Act funding are being staged in temporary facilities as part of the Navajo Nation CARES Fund Chapter Distribution Expenditure Plan. The Navajo Nation Council will continue to monitor progress in distribution capacity to better enable delivery of goods to participating chapter communities.

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** — The Navajo Nation’s update to coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic situation report from the Health Command Operations Center (HCOC) for December 9, 2020 included data for testing, results, recoveries and mortalities related to Covid-19 in and around the Navajo Nation.

The increase of 191 new cases with 60 cases in delayed reporting brings the total confirmed positive cases on the Navajo Nation to 18,575. The total number of mortalities related to Covid-19 on the Navajo Nation increased by 5, totaling 693 reported deaths since March. The report included 10,192 recovered cases, an increase of 117 recoveries since yesterday. A total 176,602 Covid-19 tests have been administered with 146,029 tests that were returned with negative results.

“Protecting our precious children, parents, grandparents, relatives and friends from the spread of the virus that causes Covid-19 is something all of us can do day-in and day-out, especially heading into the holidays,” said Speaker Seth Damon. “The Navajo Nation Council has laid down policies and legislative responses that have enabled families and homes to receive help, and we’re committed to ensuring the Navajo Government continues to push for direct assistance for the Navajo People. We have seen some encouraging signs today that indicate we are making progress, as a Nation, in planning and preparing for potential vaccines. But, even with vaccines, the CDC guidelines for protecting against the virus must stay in place until we can be certain our most vulnerable are taken care of.”

Today, the Health, Education, and Human Services Committee (HEHSC) held a special meeting that included reports on vaccination plans and priorities from the Navajo Department of Health (NDOH). Executive Director Dr. Jill Jim continued to express the department’s support of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices’ guidelines on the groups of people contained in the various priority categories for receiving the Covid-19 vaccine as production ramps up. Dr. Jim also continued with reports on the federal Indian Health Service budget formulation process and contracting with the Chinle Navajoland Nursing Home.

Encouraging the Navajo public to adhere to CDC guidelines and the public health orders, HEHSC Vice Chairman Carl Roessel Slater said, “I’m now masking up around family, such as my parents, who are within my own pod. Bringing these practices within the home help in protecting them, our healthcare system and, ultimately, families everywhere across the Nation.”

Today, the Office of the Controller (OOC) also provided an overview to members of the Council on the Navajo Nation’s wide-scale direct assistance efforts through the Chapter Distribution Expenditure Plan program. The OOC, along with the Division of Community Development (DCD), facilitated the procurement of bulk goods requested by Navajo Nation chapters through Resolution No. CS-73-20.

In a tour of the staging facility for the procured goods, which are currently being delivered to the Navajo Nation directly from distributors and manufacturers, OOC provided recommendations to delegates in attendance regarding the logistics and scaling-up of distribution coordination activities that need to take place in the coming days and weeks.

Previously, the Navajo Nation Council approved \$10 million for care packages to Navajo citizens through Resolution No. CJN-47-20. Packages have been delivered through a limited group of Navajo Nation personnel and community members on a chapter-by-chapter basis for more than six months. However, the sheer scale of goods needing to be distributed to more than 100 Navajo Nation chapters requires Council’s coordination through legislation and oversight functions relating to the OOC, DCD and Navajo Nation chapters.

The Council is also beginning a two-day Naabik’iyáti’ Committee special meeting on Thursday to discuss furthering federal coordination on Covid-19 response efforts. Discussions will also take place on the Navajo Nation’s legislative priorities for the 2021 fiscal year for surrounding states and the federal government. The meeting will be streamed live on the Council’s Youtube, Vimeo and Facebook pages.

## **More Data**

### **Navajo Nation cases by Service Unit**

Chinle Service Unit:	3,663
Gallup Service Unit:	3,069
Shiprock Service Unit:	2,974
Crownpoint Service Unit:	2,006
Ft. Defiance Service Unit:	1,972
Kayenta Service Unit:	1,887
Tuba City Service Unit:	1,882
Winslow Service Unit:	1,101

56 chapters reported for positive cases with the communities of heightened concern being Aneth, Ganado, Chinle, Oljato, St. Michaels, Kayenta, Crownpoint, Nahatadzil, Thoreau and Tuba City.

The Office of Environmental Health and Protection, with the concurrence of the Navajo Department of Health (NDOH) and the HCOC, issued Public Health Emergency Order No. 2020-031. The order continues the Stay at Home (Shelter in Place) Lockdown Order for an additional three weeks, including full 57-hour weekend lockdowns.

The NDOH and the Navajo Epidemiology Center provided the updated Covid-19 figures in coordination with tribally-controlled 638 healthcare facilities and the Navajo Area Indian Health Service. More information, including Covid-19 testing locations, can be found on the Navajo Nation's Covid-19 website at: <https://www.ndoh.navajo-nsn.gov/COVID-19>.

The HCOC General Hotline can be reached at (928) 871-7014. Inquiries and requests may be sent to [NNHCOCPlans@navajo-nsn.gov](mailto:NNHCOCPlans@navajo-nsn.gov). The HCOC hours of operation are Monday-Friday from 8am to 5pm, Saturday from 8am to 12pm and Sunday on standby status.

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