



The Navajo Nation Office of the Controller

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Office of the Controller presents three scenarios to add funds to CARES Act Hardship Assistance Program

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — The Navajo Nation Office of the Controller realizes there is public confusion about the Hardship Assistance Program and the Chapter Distribution Program, which are two separate programs with allocated CARES Act funds. The Hardship Assistance Program is currently funded for \$49,454,416 and the Chapter Distribution Program is funded for \$90 million.

There is an opportunity for the Hardship Assistance Program fund to grow but additional funds would need to be reverted from other CARES Act distributions first. Resolution No. CJY-67-20 included a provision that provides a review of all expenditure plan-funded projects by October 2020 by the Budget and Finance and the Naabik'íyáti' Committees of the Navajo Nation Council.

As of Oct. 19, there are only 72 days left until Dec. 30 when the Navajo Nation CARES Act funds need to be spent and time is running out quickly.

“There are many projects funded by CARES Act funds but there is no time to complete them and the compliance reporting is extensive,” said Pearline Kirk, Controller of the Navajo Nation. “We need to spend the funds quickly and we need to sweep our efforts into expending Hardship Assistance Project funds and provide much-needed funds to the Navajo people.”

There is widespread support from enrolled members of the Navajo Nation, the Office of the Controller created three funding scenarios to add additional funds to the Hardship Assistance Program based on actions of the Navajo Nation Council.

The Hardship Assistance Program currently has \$49,454,416. The three scenarios are based on the assumption of total membership of 327,726, which includes 232,674 or 71% members being 18-years and over and 95,052 or 29% minors.

Scenario 1 includes a budget of \$49,454,416, the current balance, with an assumption of a 75% application rate with adults receiving \$249 and minors \$83 each.

Scenario 2 includes a budget of \$297,500,000, with some fund reversion and with an assumption of a 75% application rate with adults receiving \$1,500 and minors \$500 each.

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Scenario 3 includes a budget of \$396,500,000, with more fund reversion and with an assumption that 100% of members apply for Hardship Assistance, adults would receive \$1,500 and minors \$500 each.

Another possible source is funds in the amount of \$90 million allocated to Navajo Nation Chapters, both LGA-certified and non-certified, through Resolution No. CS-73-20, termed the Chapter Distribution Program. This fund was allocated to chapters using a 50/50 formula which means 50% equal distribution and 50% based on chapter votership. If these funds are not expended by Nov. 30, the funds will be reverted to the Hardship Assistance Program as well.

It is also important to note that the Office of the Controller is ultimately responsible for ensuring compliance of all these funds. Since the funds are received from the U.S. Treasury, they are considered federal financial assistance and are subject to the requirements outlined by the Treasury, Uniform Guidance and applicable Navajo Nation laws.

The Office of the Controller must ensure expenditures meet the three broad requirements outlined in the CARES Act: 1. Necessary expenditures incurred due to COVID-19; 2. Not accounted for in the Navajo Nation's most recently approved budget as of March 27, 2020; and 3. Must have been incurred between March 1 and Dec. 30.

These funds will be subject to audit by the Department of the Treasury's Office of Inspector General, it will also be part of the Navajo Nation's annual financial statement and compliance audit that is performed by an independent accounting firm.

Hardcopy applications for the Hardship Assistance Program will be available to members 65-years and older and members with special needs beginning Oct. 26. An online portal for online applications will be available to everyone beginning Nov. 2.

The Office of the Controller urges family members, chapters and senior citizens center staff to help the elders apply for the Hardship Assistance Program.

For more information about the Hardship Assistance Program or the Chapter Distribution Program, visit www.nnooc.org/CARESHelp.html or email NNCaresHelp@nnooc.org.

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THE NAVAJO NATION

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CARES Fund Hardship Assistance Program Frequently Asked Questions

Overview and Application Process updated October 19, 2020

1. Who is eligible for this program?

This program is open to all enrolled members of the Navajo Nation who have experienced a financial hardship resulting from circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. A financial hardship is the inability to pay for essential needs for yourself or your family (ex. food, rent, utilities, medicine, child care, etc.) that can be attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic and would include a loss or reduction of income or increased expenses. Funding awarded under this program must be spent on essential needs such as the ones previously mentioned.

2. Do I have to submit an application to get funding from this program?

Yes, you must submit an application by the application deadline, which is currently set for November 30, 2020. Paper applications will be available for the elderly and disabled the week of October 26 and the online portal and paper application will be open for the general public the week of November 2.

3. How much money am I eligible for?

The Navajo Nation Council has established a maximum payment of up to \$1,500 per qualifying adult (18 years and older as of March 1, 2020) and \$500 per qualifying minor (under the age of 18 as of March 1, 2020), based on demonstrated need. The actual payment you will receive, if eligible, will be based on the total number of applicants, the amount of assistance requested, and budget allocated to the program by the Navajo Nation Council. **Submission of an application does not guarantee that a qualifying adult will receive \$1,500 nor that a qualifying minor will receive \$500.**

4. How is the application structured?

There is one application per household. You will need to know full name, Navajo Nation census numbers, dates of birth, and the last four (4) digits of social security numbers.

5. How do I apply?

You may (1) apply online through the portal **OR** (2) apply by filling out a paper application at local community center or Chapter house. Please only apply once as any duplicate applications may result in delays in processing.

Additional information on the application process will be provided in the near future, along with other important program information.

6. When and how will I get my money?

One check per qualifying person will be sent to the mailing address provided on your application or there is a will-call option. The date of check distribution is still being finalized by OOC and communication will be forthcoming.

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CARES Fund Chapter Support Program Frequently Asked Questions

Updated October 20, 2020

1. What is this program?

Legislation No. CS-73-20 allocates \$90 million to all LGA certified and non-certified chapters to allow them to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic in their local communities. Individual chapter allocations are defined in the legislation. Individual chapters will not receive a direct distribution and will not be considered subrecipients as all expenditures will be executed by the Navajo Nation with goods and services procured on behalf of the chapters.

2. How does this program work?

In general, chapter leadership will work with Division of Community Development (DCD) and Office of the Controller (OOC) to complete a community needs assessment, develop an expenditure plan, and procure goods and services per the approved expenditure plan. The expenditure plan and supporting documentation will be uploaded to an online portal for review by OOC.

3. How does the portal work?

An online portal has been created to facilitate the upload of each chapter's expenditure plan and required supporting documentation. Certain information will be prepopulated but each chapter should delegate one individual to handle access to the portal. Additional information and training will be provided to the individual(s) at each chapter responsible for handling the portal on October 22, 2020.

4. What can we spend the money on?

The funding can be spent on a number of essential goods and services (for example, Personal Protective Equipment, Essential food items and essential sanitation items) that will be outlined to chapter leadership. The expenditures must be necessary to prevent, prepare for, or respond to COVID-19 and be expended by November 30, 2020 based on Legislation No. CS-73-20. There is also the option for each chapter to move their funding to the Hardship Assistance Program from Legislation No. CS-74-20 to benefit the broader community.

5. When do we get our money?

Chapters will not be provided custody of funds allocated by this program unless used to reimburse qualifying expenditures that have been previously incurred.

6. How is procurement going to work?

Chapters will need to work with DCD and OOC in order to procure goods and services in their expenditure plan. Some items will be ordered in bulk for all chapters and some procurements may happen at a local level depending on the expenditure type and circumstances.

7. What happens if we do not submit an expenditure plan?

Chapters will not be able to make any expenditures until they have an approved expenditure plan.

8. What happens if we do not expend all of our expenditures by November 30, 2020?

Any leftover funding as of November 30, 2020 will be reallocated to the Hardship Assistance Program from Legislation No. CS-74-20.

9. Where can I get more information?

Each chapter will be assigned a direct contact at OOC or they should reach out to their service area's Senior Program & Projects Specialist (SPPS). This program will take coordination between the chapters, OOC, and DCD to be successful so please reach out with any questions to NNCaresHelp@nnooc.org.