



## The Navajo Nation Office of the Controller

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### **“Invalid login” issue with online application portal being addressed**

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** — The Navajo Nation Office of the Controller is aware of an issue with online applicants of the Navajo CARES Act Hardship Assistance Program receiving an invalid login.

This issue is due to the applicant’s Certificate of Indian Blood (CIB) and date of birth combinations not matching up or being verified with a database managed by the Navajo Nation Office of Vital Statistics. This is not a portal issue but an issue that is being resolved with the Office of Vital Statistics within the Navajo Division of Human Resources.

In order for the Navajo Nation to expedite the application and review process while maintaining compliance with the federal CARES Act guidance, a means test which includes an individual verification is required. To eliminate the requirement for an individual to upload various pieces of supporting documentation, the Office of the Controller is working closely with the Office of Vital Statistics to obtain an extract of the entire vital statistics database.

The portal searches that database for the CIB and date of birth combination to validate identity before logging in. If the information is not in the database, the user will receive a message stating, “Invalid login.” When this occurs, applicants are encouraged to call or email the support center to initiate research and follow-up of the issue, and to ensure the vital statistics database is properly updated. At this point, the applicant is allowed to resubmit their application. Both paper and online applications require a validation within the vital records database.

“The issue with a lack of available vital statistics data stems from a recent data loss at the Navajo Nation Office of Vital Statistics and a lack of consistent updating over the course of several years,” said Navajo Nation Controller Pearline Kirk. “By using this process for the Navajo Nation Hardship Assistance Program, the Navajo Nation will reap significant future dividends by having a more complete and accurate database.”

“This benefit will carry into other Navajo Nation divisions and operations as the verification of CIB and other personal information is critical,” she said.

With the application deadline quickly approaching Nov. 30, there is great need to find a remedy.

"Given the significant time crunch and effort required to validate the CIB and update the database, the Office of the Controller has offered additional resources to the Office of Vital Statistics," said Kirk. "The [Office of Vital Statistics] recently reported they are bombarded with new enrollment requests and they have a limited amount of staff available to be on-site due to social distancing requirements."

Despite challenges, the call center has been super busy since the official launch of the Navajo CARES Act Hardship Assistance Program Nov. 2. As of Nov. 4, the portal processed more than 52,000 applications for nearly 79,000 applicants. The call center is staffed with more than 50 full-time workers managing a significant influx of calls. On average, they field more than 2,500 calls and more than 2,000 emails per day.

Navajo people of all ages are applying for the Hardship Assistance Program and the use of technology is apparent. One staff member at the call center reported that he assisted a family of five that called in and successfully completed their application via speaker phone. Another reported an 89-year-old Navajo elderly woman who used an Apple iPad to file her application with the help of support center staff walking her through the steps. The elderly woman indicated she never used the internet before but successfully submitted her application.

As a reminder, the Hardship Assistance Program is not first come, first serve and every application will be provided equal consideration of receiving up to \$1,500 per adult and up to \$500 per minor. The application period is open from Nov. 2 to Nov. 30 and payments will begin in December.

Paper applications are still available at various locations including participating Navajo Nation Chapters and Navajo Nation Divisions for the elderly, individuals with special needs and for members unable to file an online application.

The online portal can be accessed on the Navajo Nation Office of the Controller's website, [www.nnooc.org](http://www.nnooc.org), and on the Navajo Nation's website, [www.navajo-nsn.gov](http://www.navajo-nsn.gov).

For specific questions relative to the Hardship Assistance Program, applicants may call the support center at 1-833-282-7248. The support center is open from Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sundays from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. If members are experiencing issues with the call-in number, they can send an email to [NNCaresHelp@nnooc.org](mailto:NNCaresHelp@nnooc.org) with their name, issue and a call back phone number.

For more information about the Hardship Assistance Program or the Chapter Distribution Program, visit [www.nnooc.org/CARESHelp.html](http://www.nnooc.org/CARESHelp.html) or email [NNCaresHelp@nnooc.org](mailto:NNCaresHelp@nnooc.org).

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