



The Navajo Nation Office of the Controller

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Recipients of duplicate checks heavily cautioned to not cash them, replacement checks expedited Jan. 26

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — The Navajo Nation Office of the Controller recently sent out 370 duplicate checks in error while processing more than 200,000 checks for the Navajo CARES Act Hardship Assistance Program. The duplicate checks and its original checks were immediately labeled for stop payment once alerted and they will not be accepted for payment. New replacement checks for the 370 impacted recipients were expedited and mailed Jan. 26, and all impacted recipients were contacted.

The Controller's Office has the listing of the 370 impacted individuals that received duplicate checks in error and are heavily cautioning recipients to not attempt the cashing of the checks until they receive their replacement checks. Local pawn shops and merchants have been notified of the 370 duplicate checks and are discouraged from cashing them.

Additionally, various fraudulent practices have occurred in the past and the Navajo Nation had cases surface when individuals attempted to present counterfeit checks or the same check for payment multiple times at different merchants, trading posts, check cashing centers, grocery stores and pawn shops.

Pearline Kirk, Navajo Nation Controller, explained when this fraudulent activity occurs, various parties including merchants are ultimately harmed due to the fact that the checks will not be paid if there is a stop payment or if the check is presented multiple times.

"A common occurrence is when an individual conducts a mobile deposit on their cellphone and then subsequently tries to cash the check elsewhere," said Kirk. "This is nothing new for the Navajo Nation but given the significant number of checks issued through the Navajo CARES Act Hardship Assistance Program, our office felt it was necessary to continue to remind the merchants and the general public that the Navajo Nation is aware of this practice and individuals that are caught trying to defraud the Navajo Nation will be reported to the appropriate authorities of the Navajo Nation."

Individuals engaging in such fraudulent activity will jeopardize any future payments by the Navajo Nation. As a reminder, when an individual signed the Navajo CARES Act Hardship Assistance Program application, they asserted to the following representations contained in Section 5 - Certification and Authorizations:

"By signing below, you make the following representations, authorizations and certifications:

1. I am, we are eligible to receive a Hardship Assistance Program payment under the laws, policy, and rules issued by the Navajo Nation in effect at the time this application is submitted.
2. All information in this Hardship Assistance Program application is true and does not contain any false or misleading information.
3. All statements in this Hardship Assistance Program application were made with the knowledge that a conviction of fraud, forgery, criminal, impersonation and/or deceptions, is punishable by restitution or nályééh AND imprisonment for a term not greater than one year per offense, under 17 N.N.C § 223;
4. Any Hardship Assistance Program payments received through forgery, as defined in 17 N.N.C. § 340, shall be subject to IMMEDIATE repayments to the Navajo Nation, and restitution or nályééh, as determined by a Navajo Court.
5. Any Hardship Assistance Program payments received through misrepresentation or fraud, as defined in 17 N.N.C. § 335, shall be subject to IMMEDIATE repayment to the Navajo Nation, and restitution or nályééh, as determined by a Navajo Nation Court.
6. Any Hardship Assistance Program payments received through criminal impersonation, as defined in 17 N.N.C. § 343, shall be subject to IMMEDIATE repayment to the Navajo Nation, and restitution or nályééh, as determined by a Navajo Nation Court.
7. Any Hardship Assistance Program payments received through deception, as defined in 17 N.N.C. § 342, shall be subject to IMMEDIATE repayment to the Navajo Nation, and restitution or nályééh, as determined by a Navajo Nation Court.

If anyone is aware of any type of fraudulent activity, they are encouraged to report such activity to the Fraud Hotline by emailing fraudline@nnooc.org or by calling 1-844-747-2767.

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LINK: Press Release dated January 26, 2021:

Hardship Assistance Program checks mailed out, 370 duplicate checks sent in error and will be voided

http://www.nnooc.org/Documents/CARES%20Act/210126_BT_NNOOC_Check_Update_Duplicates_FINAL.pdf