



The Navajo Nation
Office of the President and Vice President

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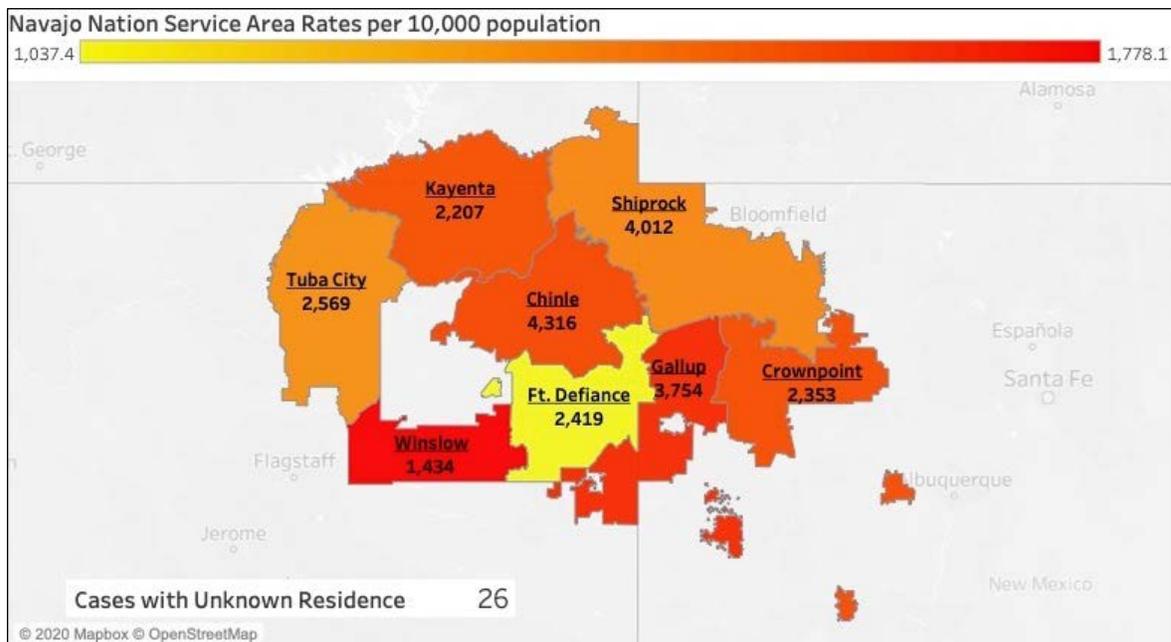
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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287 new cases, 11,741 recoveries, and 23 more deaths related to COVID-19, large increases likely due to delayed reporting caused by the Christmas holiday



WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – On Thursday, the Navajo Department of Health, in coordination with the Navajo Epidemiology Center and the Navajo Area Indian Health Service, reported 287 new COVID-19 positive cases for the Navajo Nation and 23 more deaths. The total number of deaths is now 806 as of Thursday. Reports indicate that 11,741 individuals have recovered from COVID-19, and 203,948 COVID-19 tests have been administered. The total number of positive COVID-19 cases is now 23,090, including 27 delayed reported cases.

Navajo Nation COVID-19 positive cases by Service Unit:

- Chinle Service Unit: 4,316
- Crownpoint Service Unit: 2,353
- Ft. Defiance Service Unit: 2,419
- Gallup Service Unit: 3,754
- Kayenta Service Unit: 2,207
- Shiprock Service Unit: 4,012
- Tuba City Service Unit: 2,569

· Winslow Service Unit: 1,434

* 26 residences with COVID-19 positive cases are not specific enough to place them accurately in a Service Unit. Health care officials believe the high number of new cases and deaths reported for the Navajo Nation on Thursday, is due to the delay in reporting cases due to the recent Christmas holiday. COVID-19 testing schedules are available online at the Navajo Health Command Operations Center website: <https://www.ndoh.navajo-nsn.gov/COVID-19/COVID-19-Testing>.

On Thursday, the state of Arizona reported 7,718 new cases, Utah reported 4,672, and New Mexico reported 1,684 new cases.

“We offer our condolences and prayers for all of the families that have lost loved ones due to COVID-19. We are informed that the very high numbers of new cases and deaths reported yesterday and today are largely due to delays in reporting due to the recent Christmas holiday. However, we understand that we are still in a dire situation just like the rest of this country. We all have to remember that the resilience of our ancestors is still within each of us to this day. Through their strength and their teachings, we will overcome this pandemic. With the New Year upon us, we look forward to having a stronger and healthier year ahead. There are many lessons to be learned from the pandemic we are facing and it’s up to us to use those teachings to help make us even stronger in the future. Please celebrate the New Year safely at home with your immediate household members only,” said Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez.

On Thursday, President Nez, Speaker Seth Damon, several members of the 24th Navajo Nation Council, and Navajo Area IHS Chief Medical Officer Dr. Loretta Christensen received the first dose of the Pfizer vaccine during a live online town hall to help boost public confidence in the vaccines.

“The vaccines are another weapon in this fight against COVID-19. We have lost many of our family, friends, and relatives to this invisible monster, but soon all of our people will have the opportunity to receive a vaccine. Many of our health experts, health care workers, leaders, and others across the country have taken the first dose of the vaccines. We want to show our people that the vaccine is safe and that it will help to prevent the coronavirus once we receive the second dose,” added President Nez.

“We wish all of our Navajo people a safe, healthy, and Happy New Year and we ask you all to celebrate safely at home with only those that you live with. Today, we join everyone in prayer as we ask our Creator to bless us in the new year and to comfort those who are struggling, especially those who are grieving for the loss of loved ones. Please be safe and continue to be strong,” said Vice President Myron Lizer.

For more information, including helpful prevention tips, and resources to help stop the spread of COVID-19, visit the Navajo Department of Health's COVID-19 website: <http://www.ndoh.navajo-nsn.gov/COVID-19>. For COVID-19 related questions and information, call [\(928\) 871-7014](tel:9288717014).

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