



The Navajo Nation  
Office of the President and Vice President

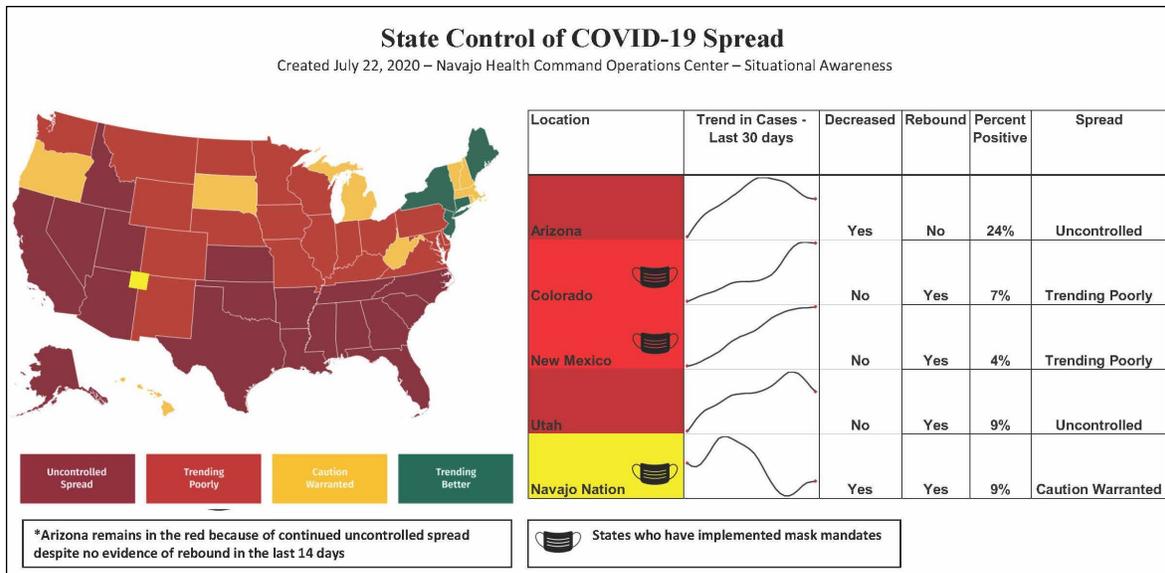
CONTACTS:  
Jared Touchin, Communications Director  
(928) 274-4275  
Crystalyne Curley, Sr. Public Information Officer  
(928) 274-2758

[nnopvp.communications@gmail.com](mailto:nnopvp.communications@gmail.com)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

July 22, 2020

**Navajo Nation extends emergency declaration and government closure to August 16<sup>th</sup> due to rise in COVID-19 cases in nearby towns and cities**



**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** — Based on the recommendations of health care experts and data from the states of Utah, New Mexico, and Arizona and nearby cities that show increases in COVID-19 cases, Navajo Nation President Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer signed Executive Order No. 008-20 on Wednesday, extending the Navajo Nation’s declaration of a state of emergency and the closure of Navajo Nation government offices and entities from July 27, 2020 to Aug. 16, 2020.

“The data shows that the Navajo people are doing a good job in bringing the number of COVID-19 cases to a steady decrease on the Navajo Nation, but nearby border towns and cities such as Phoenix and Albuquerque continue to show increases in new cases. We cannot play politics with this potential deadly virus, instead we have to listen to our health care experts and analyze the data. Currently, we have approximately 3,620 Navajo Nation employees that are working to perform essential duties and keep the government in operation – this is well over half of the total workforce. We have to keep fighting COVID-19 together,” said President Nez.

The Nez-Lizer Administration and the Navajo Health Command Operations Center continue to urge all Navajo Nation residents to wearing protective masks in public, stay home as much as

possible, practice social distancing, wash your hands often, and avoid large gatherings. The Department of Health and the Health Command Operations Center is also preparing for the upcoming winter flu season, which will present more challenges, as well as a vaccination plan once a COVID-19 vaccine is proven to be safe and made available.

“There is no vaccine yet, but the Nation is preparing for it once a vaccine is made available and is proven to be safe. We are seeing some good indications in our recent daily numbers, but the risk is still very high and we still have many people who are recovering and many that are hospitalized. We’ve had 26 consecutive days of less than 100 cases. Let’s keep the momentum up and let’s keep fighting this virus together. Our first responders are not giving up, so let’s not lose hope. Keep praying and keep listening to the health care experts,” said Vice President Lizer.

On July 17, the Navajo Department of Health issued Public Health Emergency Order No. 2020-018, implementing two additional 57-hour weekend lockdowns from July 24, 2020 to July 27, 2020 and from July 31, 2020 to August 3, 2020, starting at 8:00 P.M. MDT on Friday and ending at 5:00 A.M. MDT on Monday. A separate order is being developed to require residents that travel to “hotspots” to quarantine for 14 days when they return to the Navajo Nation.

The Navajo Nation’s Stay at Home Order remains in effect requiring all individuals on the Navajo Nation to stay at home and strictly limit movement, and limit public contact with others. Individuals may leave their place of residence only for emergencies or to perform "Essential Activities." The daily curfew also remains in effect from 8:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. on weekdays.

To view Executive Order No. 008-20, please visit: <https://www.opvp.navajo-nsn.gov/From-the-Office/Executive-Orders>.

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 at <http://www.ndoh.navajo-nsn.gov/COVID-19>. For COVID-19 related questions and information, call [\(928\) 871-7014](tel:9288717014).

###

For the latest news from the Office of the President and Vice President, please visit <http://www.opvp.navajo-nsn.gov/> or find us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.



**EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 008-20**

**SIXTH EXECUTIVE ORDER RELATED TO  
EXTENDING THE DECLARATION OF A STATE OF EMERGENCY  
DUE TO THE COVID-19 VIRUS ON THE NAVAJO NATION;  
FURTHER EXTENDING THE CLOSURE OF NAVAJO NATION  
GOVERNMENT OFFICES AND RELATED ENTITIES**

**NAVAJO NATION OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT  
JULY 22, 2020**

---

**WHEREAS:**

1. The President of the Navajo Nation serves as the Chief Executive Officer for the Executive Branch of the Navajo Nation government with full authority to conduct, supervise, and coordinate personnel and program matters. 2.N.N.C. §1005 (A);
2. The President shall have the power to issue an executive order for the purpose of interpreting, implementing or giving administrative effect to statutes of the Navajo Nation in the manner set forth in such statutes. 2.N.N.C. §1005 (C)(14);
3. With the concurrence of the President of the Navajo Nation, the Emergency Management Commission shall have the power to declare a state of emergency affecting the Navajo Nation and to obtain, coordinate and oversee assistance, whether in the form of goods, services, equipment, motor vehicles, or personnel, from all Divisions, Departments and Enterprises of the Navajo Nation for use in addressing the requirements of the People in any declared emergency. 2 N.N.C. § 884(B)(1)(3);
4. The Emergency Management Commission declared an emergency due to the confirmation of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in regional areas surrounding the Navajo Nation. 2 N.N.C. § 884(B)(1), *See* Emergency Management Commission resolutions CEM 20-03-11;
5. The Navajo Department of Health, Navajo Epidemiology Center, along with federal partners, provide data on COVID-19 impact on the Navajo Nation which indicates a rise in positive cases in areas surrounding the Navajo Nation with hospitals and health care systems drastically impacted; these factors threaten the Navajo People's health and well-being and have the potential to overwhelm the Navajo Nation health care system;

6. An Executive Order shall have the force of law upon the recipient. 2 N.N.C. § 1005(C)(14).

**THEREFORE:**

I, Jonathan Nez, President of the Navajo Nation and I, Myron Lizer, Vice President of the Navajo Nation, by the authority vested in us, hereby issue the following order:

1. The public health state of emergency in place on the Navajo Nation, due to confirmation of the spread of COVID-19 in and surrounding the Navajo Nation, is extended from July 27, 2020 to August 16, 2020.
2. The Navajo Nation shall continue to follow the orders set in the Declaration of a State of Emergency by the Emergency Management Commission, CEM 20-03-11, and Public Health Emergency Orders No. 2020-003, No. 2020-004, No. 2020-005, No. 2020-006, No. 2020-007, No. 2020-008, No. 2020-09, No. 2020-10, No. 2020-11, No. 2020-12, No. 2020-13, No. 2020-14, No. 2020-15, No. 2020-16, No. 2020-17, and No. 2020-18 (*see* [www.ndoh.navajo-nsn.gov/COVID-19](http://www.ndoh.navajo-nsn.gov/COVID-19)), as such:
  - a. The Navajo Nation Health Command Operations Center shall continue to be staffed throughout the emergency condition under the direction of David Nez, Health Command Center Manager with support from Director, Dr. Jill Jim, Navajo Department of Health and the Unified Coordination Group that includes the Navajo Department of Health, Navajo Area Indian Health Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs – Navajo Region, and the Tribal Health Organizations; and,
  - b. The Navajo Department of Emergency Management Emergency Operation Center and the Unified Coordination Group shall continue to support the Navajo Health Command Operations Center; and,
  - c. All Navajo Nation Branches, Divisions, Departments, programs, offices, non-governance certified Chapters, Enterprises, and Navajo casinos shall comply with and adhere to directives, instructions, and/or policies coming from the Navajo Health Command Operations Center as related to addressing COVID-19.
3. The Navajo Nation issued travel restrictions due to COVID-19 which restricted or canceled all off-reservation travel, directing all Navajo Nation employees to return from current off-reservation travel; subsequently, closing government offices with only limited services that remain in effect. However, the COVID-19 virus continues to spread on the Navajo Nation and surrounding States at an alarming rate. The actions of the Navajo Nation - wearing masks, stay-at-home orders, daily and weekend curfews, restricting large gatherings and closure of government offices and Navajo enterprises - has had effect on the spread of COVID-19 but surrounding States show a rise in positive COVID cases that affect the Navajo People's health and well-being, as such:

- a. All Navajo Nation government offices and enterprises shall remain closed to minimize the spread of the coronavirus disease. This closure shall extend from **July 27, 2020 to August 16, 2020**; however, Essential Employees, as determined by respective Division Directors or enterprise management, shall report to their respective worksites.

Essential Employees means employees that are necessary to maintain basic, direct government or enterprise services either working in their office or telecommuting. Division Directors and enterprise management shall arrange daily work schedules for Essential Employees that ensure a safe work environment and shall supply necessary office equipment for telecommuting employees.

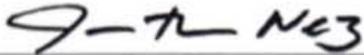
Essential Employees shall include those employees from, but not limited to, Navajo Public Safety, Navajo Fire Department, Navajo Emergency Medical Services, Department of Emergency Management, Navajo Division of Natural Resources, Navajo Division of Finance, Navajo Division of Social Services, Navajo Division of Human Resources, Navajo Division of Community Development, Department of Diné Education, Office of Management and Budget, Navajo Department of Justice, Navajo Department of Health, Navajo Division of General Services, Navajo Division of Transportation, Navajo Veterans Administration, Navajo Division of Economic Development, Navajo Environmental Protection Agency, Navajo-Hopi Land Commission Office, Navajo Nation Washington Office, Navajo Telecommunications Regulatory Commission Office, Navajo Enterprises, and those determined by the Branch Chiefs; and,

- b. All Non-Essential Navajo Nation government employees, as determined by the Division Director, affected by this Executive Order shall be granted Administrative Leave for the duration of the closure and are directed to refrain from events, gatherings, or other areas where they may contract COVID-19, and to observe and follow all Public Health Emergency Orders, including curfews and stay-at-home orders; and,
  - c. The closure of Navajo Nation government offices may be extended beyond **August 16, 2020** on the recommendation of the Navajo Health Command Operations Center, the Navajo Department of Emergency Management Operation Center, and the Navajo Epidemiology Center.
4. All Navajo Nation Divisions, Departments, Programs, Offices, non-governance certified Chapters, Enterprises, and Navajo casinos shall follow the direction of the Public Health Emergency Orders requiring all Navajo citizens to limit their movement which means staying at home and leaving for Essential Activities only; and comply with the curfew hours by staying home between the hours of 8:00 P.M. and 5:00 A.M. MDT and complying with weekend or other curfew hours.

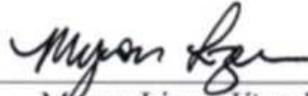
The Navajo Nation Divisions, Departments, Programs, Offices, non-governance certified Chapters, Enterprises, and Navajo casinos are responsible for implementing and ensuring compliance with this order.

The provisions of this order shall be implemented consistent with the laws of the Navajo Nation and in a manner that advances the highest welfare of the People.

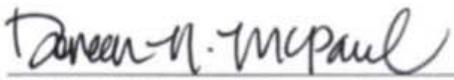
EXECUTED this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of July 2020



Jonathan Nez, *President*  
THE NAVAJO NATION



Myron Lizer, *Vice-President*  
THE NAVAJO NATION

ATTEST:   
Doreen N. McPaul, *Attorney General*  
Navajo Nation Department of Justice