



## The Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Alternative Care and Isolation Sites help to slow the spread of COVID-19 across the Navajo Nation

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** – The Navajo Nation Health Command Operations Center with support and coordination from the Office of the President and Vice President, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Navajo Area Indian Health Service, and Tribal Health Organizations, began housing and isolating individuals who test positive for COVID-19 several weeks ago at three alternative care sites and several isolation sites to help slow the spread of the virus on the Navajo Nation.

“The curve is flattening on the Navajo Nation, even as we test our people aggressively. The Navajo Nation is testing our citizens at a higher rate per capita than any state in the country – nearly 15-percent of our people. Testing, contact tracing, and the public health orders are working and helping to bring the daily numbers to a steady pace and we are hopeful that with more people isolating in these facilities we will begin to see a consistent decline in new cases,” said Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez.

The alternative care sites provide stepdown alternatives for COVID-19 patients to support recovery. A portion of the alternative care sites are used for patients to safely isolate. By receiving and caring for less severe COVID-19 patients in the alternative care sites, local hospitals are able to focus on more critically ill patients and minimize the exposure of frontline health care workers and family members.

The isolation sites are provided for patients who do not have stable housing or are unable to self-isolate at home. Following a positive diagnosis for COVID-19, patients with no or minimal COVID-19 symptoms are requested to self-isolate for approximately 14-days, and will be provided an option to be placed in an isolation site to reduce exposure to family members.

“We are very thankful to the Army Corps of Engineers, Navajo Area IHS, Navajo Department of Health, and others for collaborating to establish these facilities to isolate individuals. It is making a great difference and saving lives. These facilities are places of healing and we want to see our people leaving the isolation sites well and free of the virus,” stated Vice President Myron Lizer.

Eligibility for alternative care site placement include the following:

- Have a lab-confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis
- Meet specific health criteria determined by your doctor and case manager

- Do not require extensive nursing care or assistance with activities of daily living
- Are unable to quarantine or receive care at home

Eligibility for isolation site placement include the following:

- Be able to conduct activities of everyday life independently
- Unable to be isolated at home
- Meet specific health criteria determined by your doctor and case manager
- Be over the age of 18, unless part of a family who is COVID-19 positive
- Not under the influence of alcohol or drugs or likely to experience withdrawal
- If you have transportation, patients will be asked to report to the facility. If transportation is needed, arrangements with the facility may be made

Alternative care and isolation sites are designed for short-term care, and patients are expected to checkout once after they have tested negative or have completed the recommended duration of medical care or isolation.

“As we navigate through the COVID-19 pandemic, we have to continue to test broadly, and have tracers immediately available. Equally important is to provide an isolation unit for COVID-19 positive patients. Isolation units are critical to support the spread for individuals that may otherwise not have a place to isolate,” stated Navajo Area IHS Director Roselyn Tso.

If an individual is showing symptoms of COVID-19, it is vital to get tested. Individuals should also be prepared for a possible hospital stay. Notify your emergency contact of your plans, lock your home and secure personal belongings, and arrange for the care of any pets or livestock. Patients should also bring a photo I.D., health insurance cards, prescribed medications, advanced health care directives, personal health records, emergency contacts, clothing and footwear, toiletries, hygiene products, and other items needed for short-term stay.

For more information including reports, helpful prevention tips, and more resources, please visit the Navajo Department of Health’s COVID-19 website at <http://www.ndoh.navajo-nsn.gov/COVID-19>. To contact the main Navajo Health Command Operations Center, please call [\(928\) 871-7014](tel:9288717014).

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