FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 2, 2020

47 new cases, 7,568 recoveries, and three more deaths related to COVID-19 as Nation issues new public health order for election day

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – On Monday, the Navajo Department of Health, in coordination with the Navajo Epidemiology Center and the Navajo Area Indian Health Service, reported 47 new COVID-19 positive cases for the Navajo Nation and three more deaths. The total number of deaths remains 584 as of Monday. Reports indicate that 7,568 individuals have recovered from COVID-19, and 126,331 COVID-19 tests have been administered. The total number of positive COVID-19 cases is now 11,875.

Navajo Nation COVID-19 positive cases by Service Unit:

- Chinle Service Unit: 2,644
- Crownpoint Service Unit: 1,217
- Ft. Defiance Service Unit: 1,245
- Gallup Service Unit: 1,814
- Kayenta Service Unit: 1,408
- Shiprock Service Unit: 1,804
- Tuba City Service Unit: 1,137
- Winslow Service Unit: 597
* Nine residences with COVID-19 positive cases are not specific enough to place them accurately in a Service Unit.

On Monday, the Navajo Department of Health issued Public Health Emergency Order No. 2020-027, which outlines requirements and guidelines for the general public and poll workers to help reduce the risk and spread of COVID-19 on election day. The latest public health order requires the general public and poll workers to adhere to mask requirements, social distancing, and other protocols at all polling sites on the Navajo Nation. Polling sites will be open on Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2020 from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. (MST) to allow for in-person voting. Early ballots can also be dropped off in-person at polling sites on election day.

The Navajo Election Administration will provide masks, gloves, hand sanitizers, and disinfectants to sanitize poll booths, poll worker stations, election equipment, and general work areas at all voting sites. In addition, the Public Health Emergency Order prohibits candidates and vendors from setting up food stands and distributing food or campaign items to reduce the risk of COVID-19. The order also prohibits gatherings at polling sites.

On Monday, the state of New Mexico reported 877 new cases of COVID-19, the state of Arizona reported 666 new cases, and Utah reported 1,196.

“We strongly urge all voters to wear a mask, practice social distancing, wash your hands often, avoid crowds, and use your best judgment as you go to vote on Tuesday. Please adhere to the protocols that will be in place and enforced at chapter houses and polling sites, cast your ballot, and return home safely. The numbers of new COVID-19 cases continues to increase here on the Navajo Nation and in the states of New Mexico, Arizona, and Utah, so please be safe and continue to pray for your families and our communities,” said Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez.

The Nez-Lizer Administration will host an online town hall on Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. (MST) on the Nez-Lizer Facebook page to provide additional updates on COVID-19.

“If you haven’t already voted, we strongly encourage you to vote on Tuesday and please keep yourselves safe by wearing a mask at all times, maintaining distance between you and others, and please carry hand sanitizer and use frequently. Our first responders will be working to protect us as well, so please think of them and let’s do our part. Please pray for yourselves and our Nation,” said Vice President Myron Lizer.


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PUBLIC HEALTH ORDER
NAVAJO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
NAVAJO OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & PROTECTION PROGRAM

November 2, 2020

Public Health Emergency Order No. 2020-027

Public Health Emergency Order Regarding Voting on Election Day on the Navajo Nation During the Current Public Health State of Emergency

I. Paragraphs I – IX from Public Health Emergency Order No. 2020-004 (March 29, 2020) are included with this Public Health Order, addressing the various Navajo Nation (Nation) authorities related to the current COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.

II. Pursuant to Public Health Emergency Order No. 2020-09 (May 14, 2020), voting is an essential activity and, consistent with the current Public Health Emergency Orders, State, County, and Tribal officials should:
   a. Ensure that adequate social distancing is practiced during in-person voting.
   b. Ensure that high-touch surfaces in and around the in-person voting area are regularly disinfected.
   c. Require in-person voters and voting officials to wear masks.
   d. Make efforts to ensure that voters have on-site access to handwashing stations, sanitizer, or gloves.
   e. Limit the number of in-person voters in any enclosed area.

III. During this election year, in-person voting for the 2020 Chapter Election and the 2020 General Election will occur simultaneously at Chapters and other polling sites across the Navajo Nation.

IV. According to Public Health Emergency Order No. 2020-026 (October 22, 2020), Voters are advised to vote in person only if necessary, and to take all preventative precautions before, during, and after voting, including leaving behind anyone not voting. Disabled voters, elders, and voters whose first language is Navajo may bring another person to assist the voter.

V. The intent and purpose of this Public Health Emergency Order No. 2020-027 is provide requirements for safe voting on the Navajo Nation during the current public health state of emergency. All provisions of this Order are to be interpreted to effectuate this intent. Failure to comply with any provision of this Order constitutes an imminent threat and menace to public health.

VI. The number of new cases of COVID-19 have been on an upward trajectory during the past 2 (two) months within and surrounding the Navajo Nation, including record high numbers
for the United States reported on Sunday, November 1, 2020. The percent of COVID-19 tests which are positive continue to rise and clusters continue to emerge throughout the Navajo Nation. These cluster cases are a direct result of family gatherings and off-Reservation travel. They also have the potential to lead to an uncontrollable outbreak on the Navajo Nation, which may overwhelm the health care system on the Navajo Nation if not mitigated immediately.

VII. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “COVID-19 cases and deaths have been reported in all 50 states, and the situation is constantly changing. Because travel increases your chances of getting infected and spreading COVID-19, staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others from getting sick.”

VIII. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “Limiting face-to-face contact with others is the best way to reduce the spread of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)” and "the more closely you interact with others and the longer that interaction, the higher the risk of COVID-19 spread.”

IX. The Nation’s roads remain closed to Visitors for the duration of the declared public health emergency, and Visitors are advised to refrain from traveling to the Navajo Nation at this time. Tribal parks will not be accessible to Visitors and Tourists during this time. Visitors and Tourists will be informed by Public Health Emergency Order when the Navajo Nation can safely welcome Visitors back to the Nation.

THEREFORE, NOTICE IS GIVEN that, pursuant to the power and authority set forth in the NDOH enabling legislation (NNC Resolution No. CO-50-14), and in conjunction with the Navajo Nation Public Health State of Emergency Declaration (CEM Resolution No. 20-03-11):

A. All provisions of Public Health Emergency Order No. 2020-09 (May 14, 2020) remain in effect: Voting is an essential activity and, consistent with the current Public Health Emergency Orders, State, County, and Tribal officials should:
   1. Ensure that adequate social distancing is practiced during in-person voting.
   2. Ensure that high-touch surfaces in and around the in-person voting area are regularly disinfected.
   3. Require in-person voters and voting officials to wear masks.
   4. Make efforts to ensure that voters have on-site access to handwashing stations, sanitizer, or gloves.
   5. Limit the number of in-person voters in any enclosed area.

B. Voters are encouraged to rideshare or carpool with individuals from their immediate household only to reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19, and to remain in the vehicle to the maximum extent possible.

C. Gathering outside of polling sites is prohibited.
D. All vendors are prohibited from setting up food stands or other vending stands at or near polling sites (see also Public Service Announcement from the Navajo Election Administration dated October 28, 2020).

E. The public is encouraged not to pick up pamphlets or promotional voting merchandise to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

F. All partisan and non-partisan voting groups must coordinate their activities with the Navajo Nation Health Command Operation Center to ensure compliance with this Order.

G. The Nation's roads remain closed to Visitors for the duration of the declared public health emergency, and Visitors are advised to refrain from traveling to the Navajo Nation at this time. Tribal parks will not be accessible to Visitors and Tourists during this time. Visitor and Tourists will be informed by Public Health Emergency Order when the Navajo Nation can safely welcome Visitors back to the Nation.

H. Officials and individuals conducting voting activity, such as poll workers and observers, they must carry proper documentation issued by their supervising organization when traveling to and from polling sites. Voting activity includes setting up and taking down polling equipment.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that this Order shall take effect immediately and shall remain in effect throughout Election Day on November 3, 2020.

ADDITIONAL ADVISORIES AND ORDERS WILL FOLLOW AS CONDITIONS WARRANT. SO ORDERED THIS 2ND DAY OF NOVEMBER, 2020.

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Definitions

**Gathering**: means any grouping together of individuals in a single connected location. (From Public Health Emergency Order dated March 18, 2020).

**Social Distancing Requirements**: Physical distancing by limiting contact of people within 6 feet from each other. (From Public Health Emergency Order No. 2020-002, March 19, 2020).

**Social Distancing Standards**: Physical distancing by not shaking hands, standing several feet away from other people, avoiding crowds, etc.) (From Public Health Emergency Order No. 2020-003, March 20, 2020).