



The Navajo Nation  
Office of the President and Vice President

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Hardship Assistance Program application opens to elders and special needs individuals, online application will open to all enrolled members on Nov. 2<sup>nd</sup>**

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** – On Monday, the Navajo Nation Office of the Controller opened the application for the Hardship Assistance Program for enrolled members of the Navajo Nation who are 65-years or older and to special needs individuals. In a press release issued on Monday, the Office of the Controller stated that their office is aware of the shortage of hard copy applications provided to the Nation’s 110 chapters, and are working quickly to provide additional hard copies.

On Oct. 9, Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer approved the hardship assistance expenditure plan to provide \$49 million in CARES Act funds for emergency financial assistance for enrolled members of the Navajo Nation through an application and approval process administered by the Office of the Controller. Enrolled Navajo Nation members who were at least 18-years-old or older as of March 1, 2020 may receive up to \$1,500 based on eligibility criteria determined by the Office of the Controller, and up to \$500 per person for individuals who were under the age of 18-years-old as of March 1, 2020.

The application form and process were subject to review and approval by two of the Standing Committees under the 24<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council. The Health, Education, and Human Services Committee approved an amendment to prioritize elders and those with special needs during the first week of the application process. The application is not based on first come, first served.

The online application for hardship assistance will become available to all enrolled members of the Navajo Nation on Monday, Nov. 2, 2020, according to the Office of the Controller, which was tasked with overseeing and administering the hardship applications in accordance with legislation approved by the Council.

“We have provided Navajo Nation Chapters a work-around to print applications until more are made available tomorrow. Additional hardcopy applications are on their way—200,000 applications will be made available to chapters. This application process is not first come first served. No matter when you apply, your application will be given equal treatment. Thank you for your understanding and patience during this time,” said Controller Pearline Kirk.

Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer encourage all Navajo Nation citizens to take the time to learn about the application process on the Office of the Controller's website, which also includes a Frequently Asked Questions and Answers page: [http://www.nnooc.org/Documents/CARES%20Act/201020\\_OOC\\_FAQ\\_NN%20Hardship\\_Assistance\\_Program.pdf](http://www.nnooc.org/Documents/CARES%20Act/201020_OOC_FAQ_NN%20Hardship_Assistance_Program.pdf).

"The Office of the President and Vice President, working in collaboration with the Controller's Office, will be assisting with application outreach efforts once more application forms are available, to help ensure that our Navajo elders and special needs citizens are provided the opportunity to ask questions and apply for the hardship assistance. This is the first time that the Navajo Nation has had funds for this specific purpose. With any initiative of this magnitude, there will be minor issues that arise and we have to continue working together to resolve the issues and move forward. We ask everyone to be respectful of the Office of the Controller as they work hard to help our Navajo people," said President Nez.

The Office of the President and Vice President also reminds all Navajo Nation residents and officials to follow CDC guidelines when visiting chapters and interacting with chapter officials, to reduce any potential risks associated with COVID-19. Wear a mask in public at all times, practice social distancing, wash your hands often or use hand sanitizer frequently, and avoid gatherings of five or more people.

Navajo Nation Chapters that have questions relative to the Hardship Assistance Program, email [ncareshelp@nnooc.org](mailto:ncareshelp@nnooc.org) and do not contact the Navajo Division of Community Development. For more information about the Hardship Assistance Program or the Chapter Distribution Program, visit [www.nnooc.org/CARESHelp.html](http://www.nnooc.org/CARESHelp.html).

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# THE NAVAJO NATION

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JONATHAN NEZ | PRESIDENT MYRON LIZER | VICE PRESIDENT



## CARES Fund Hardship Assistance Program Frequently Asked Questions

*Overview and Application Process updated October 19, 2020*

### 1. Who is eligible for this program?

This program is open to all enrolled members of the Navajo Nation who have experienced a financial hardship resulting from circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. A financial hardship is the inability to pay for essential needs for yourself or your family (ex. food, rent, utilities, medicine, child care, etc.) that can be attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic and would include a loss or reduction of income or increased expenses. Funding awarded under this program must be spent on essential needs such as the ones previously mentioned.

### 2. Do I have to submit an application to get funding from this program?

Yes, you must submit an application by the application deadline, which is currently set for November 30, 2020. Paper applications will be available for the elderly and disabled the week of October 26 and the online portal and paper application will be open for the general public the week of November 2.

### 3. How much money am I eligible for?

The Navajo Nation Council has established a maximum payment of up to \$1,500 per qualifying adult (18 years and older as of March 1, 2020) and \$500 per qualifying minor (under the age of 18 as of March 1, 2020), based on demonstrated need. The actual payment you will receive, if eligible, will be based on the total number of applicants, the amount of assistance requested, and budget allocated to the program by the Navajo Nation Council. **Submission of an application does not guarantee that a qualifying adult will receive \$1,500 nor that a qualifying minor will receive \$500.**

### 4. How is the application structured?

There is one application per household. You will need to know full name, Navajo Nation census numbers, dates of birth, and the last four (4) digits of social security numbers.

### 5. How do I apply?

You may (1) apply online through the portal **OR** (2) apply by filling out a paper application at local community center or Chapter house. Please only apply once as any duplicate applications may result in delays in processing.

Additional information on the application process will be provided in the near future, along with other important program information.

### 6. When and how will I get my money?

One check per qualifying person will be sent to the mailing address provided on your application or there is a will-call option. The date of check distribution is still being finalized by OOC and communication will be forthcoming.



## CARES Fund Hardship Assistance Program

The Navajo Nation Office of the Controller realizes there is public confusion about the Hardship Assistance Program regarding the timing of the application process.

The early application period opens Monday, October 26, 2020 **for elderly and special needs individuals only**, to ensure they have a safe option to apply in person with a paper application in the event they cannot apply online.

The purpose of the early application period is to promote social distancing and prevent crowding for elderly applicants and those with special needs.

As such, there will be a **limited number** of paper applications available starting Monday, October 26 at select Chapter locations. **This is not a first-come, first-served program.** Applying early does **NOT** guarantee you a better chance of payment.

For the safety and convenience of yourself and others, it is recommended that anyone with internet access wait to apply online when the portal goes live on Monday, November 2. The application period will remain open to everyone (including elderly and special needs) through November 30, 2020.

We appreciate your patience and cooperation.