



The Navajo Nation  
Office of the President and Vice President

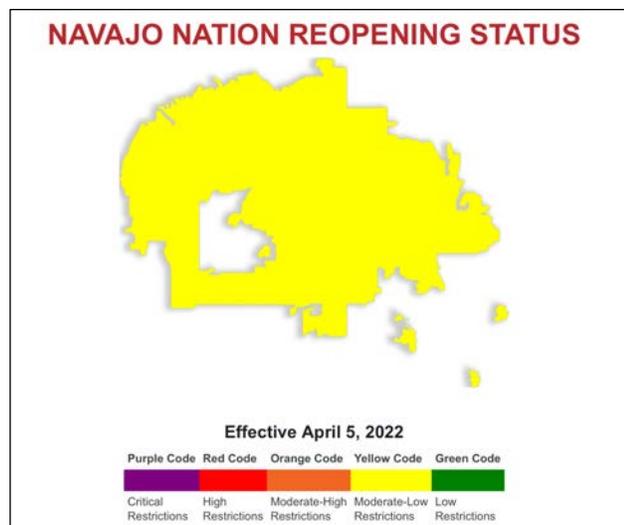
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
April 5, 2022

## Navajo Department of Health implements “yellow status” for schools and increases capacity to 75% for businesses, mask mandate remains in effect

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** – On Tuesday, the Navajo Department of Health issued three new public health emergency orders transitioning the Navajo Nation from “orange status” to “yellow status,” consisting of moderate-low restrictions including increasing gathering and capacity limits, re-emphasizing the safer at home order, and continuing the face mask mandate in all public places. The new guidelines are based on the consistent decline in new COVID-19 infections within the past several weeks on the Navajo Nation. The new public health emergency orders are available online at: <https://www.ndoh.navajo-nsn.gov/COVID-19>.



“We are seeing consistent low numbers of daily COVID-19 cases on the Navajo Nation thanks to our Navajo people and our frontline warriors. Capacity limits will increase for businesses and most gatherings, but we will keep the face mask mandate in place in all public places and this applies to all visitors and tourists that come to the Navajo Nation. We are taking careful steps to reopen and we will continue to rely on the public health experts to guide us along the way. Please continue to be very cautious, wear a mask in public, and please get vaccinated if you haven’t already,” said Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez.

**Public Health Emergency Order No. 2022-004** declares “yellow status” for all businesses and increases the maximum occupancy allowed to 75-percent, which includes restaurants, casinos, hotels including campgrounds and RV parks, museums and zoos, marinas and parks, movie theaters, and personal care and services. The order also allows gyms, wellness centers, and recreation facilities to operate at 25-percent maximum capacity, or less depending on six-foot physical distancing. All businesses must submit a COVID-19 reopening plan to the Division of

Economic Development before reopening in yellow status. Reopening plans can be e-mailed to [navajoeconomy@navajo-nsn.gov](mailto:navajoeconomy@navajo-nsn.gov).

**Public Health Emergency Order No. 2022-005** re-emphasizes the “safer at home” order and increases in-person gathering limits from 15 to 25 persons for social gatherings, traditional ceremonies, churches, youth programs, holiday gatherings, and in-person meetings and trainings. For outdoor recreational events such as walks, runs, bike rides, motorcycle events and similar events, gatherings of up to 50 people are permitted. Drive-in gatherings of up to 100 vehicles are permitted where people from the same vehicle remain in their vehicles. Masks must be worn at all in-person events and gatherings.

The order also provides guidelines for graduation events, limiting outdoor in-person events to 75-percent maximum occupancy and 50-percent maximum occupancy for in-door graduation events.

**Public Health Emergency Order No. 2022-006** declares “yellow status” for all schools and requires face masks to be worn by all students, teachers, and employees. The order also limits gatherings to 25 or fewer persons for non-classroom instruction events such as back-to-school, orientations, and other community gatherings. In-door sports events are limited to 50-percent capacity and 75-percent for outdoor events. All schools are required to comply with the Navajo Nation COVID-19 Safe Schools Framework and the Navajo Nation School Reopening Plan available online at: <https://www.navajoreopening.navajo-nsn.gov/COVID-19-Safe-Schools-Framework>.

“As we move forward in this pandemic, we continue to offer our appreciation and prayers for all frontline workers and those who are fighting COVID-19 at this moment. We ask our people to carefully read the new public health emergency orders and help to inform your elders and loved ones. Please be safe, be very cautious especially in public places, and keep praying for our people,” 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.

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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.

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

**April 5, 2022**

**Public Health Emergency Order No. 2022-004**

**Public Health Emergency Order Declaring “Yellow Status” for Businesses**

- I. Paragraphs I – IX from Public Health Emergency Order No. 2020-004 are incorporated herein, addressing the various Navajo Nation (Nation) authorities related to the current COVID-19 Public Health Emergency as well as escalating incidents and community spread of COVID-19 on the Nation.
- II. In response to COVID-19, the Navajo Nation has established the “Navajo Nation Reopening Plan,” to declare the Nation’s “status” according thereto, and to guide businesses in proper compliance with the plan. 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.
- III. The Navajo Nation is experiencing a downward trajectory (decreasing) of cases.; therefore, the Nation is continuing declaring “Yellow” status for businesses. The Navajo Nation remains vigilant as neighboring states are lifting mitigation strategies to reduce the spread of COVID-19. The Navajo Nation has documented new cases of COVID-19 Omicron sublineages (BA.1.1, B.1.1.529 and BA.2) and Delta within the Navajo Nation. According to the CDC, the Omicron variant seem to spread more easily and quickly than the other previous variants, including Delta. CDC continues to identify Omicron and Delta as variants of concern. Breakthrough infections are expected and some treatments are not as effective against infection with Omicron. As coronavirus vaccines continue to be made available on the Navajo Nation, all preventative precautions should continue to be adhered to after receiving the vaccine.
  - I. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, **“delay travel until you are up to date with your vaccines” and “Getting vaccinated is still the best way to protect yourself from severe disease, slow the spread of COVID-19, and reduce the number of new variants.”**
- IV. Pursuant to Navajo Nation Resolution No. CJN-36-21, signed into law on July 6, 2021, the Nation’s roads are reopened to Visitors and Tourists, all Navajo Nation enterprises and Navajo businesses are open to Navajo citizens and non-Navajo tourists and visitors, in compliance with COVID-19 safety protocols and applicable Public Health Orders.

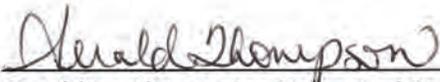
**THEREFORE, NOTICE IS GIVEN** that pursuant to the power and authority set forth in the NDOH enabling legislation (NNC Resolution No. CO-50-14) and in conjunction with the Navajo Nation Public Health State of Emergency Declaration (CEM Resolution No. 20-03-11):

- A. The Navajo Nation Reopening Plan (updated August 12, 2021) is declared binding on all businesses on the Navajo Nation. Available at <https://www.navajoreopening.navajo-nsn.gov/>.
- B. Per the Plan's "reopening status schedule," the Navajo Health Command and Operations Center ("NHCOC"), having evaluated the current state of the Navajo Nation per the gating criteria and public health considerations provided in the Plan, declares the Nation to be **Yellow status**. All businesses shall be bound to the conditions and requirements of Yellow status. The NHCOC will announce any future status changes by Public Health Emergency Order.
- C. Yellow status is defined as: 75% of maximum occupancy allowed for all businesses to be open, including:
  - Restaurants.
  - Navajo casinos.
  - Lodging and hotels including campgrounds and RV parks.
  - Museums and zoos.
  - Marinas and parks. Tour businesses must follow the HCOC Reopening Guidelines for Tour Businesses.
  - Movie theaters.
  - Personal Care and Services.
- D. Flea markets and roadside markets are allowed in accordance with guidelines issued by the HCOC.
- E. Gathering of 25 or fewer people are permitted for youth programs, consistent with guideline from the Health Command Operations Center. Per guideline, report all COVID-19 cases to local health care facility, and to the HCOC COVID-19 Report Exposure Portal. For questions about reporting cases, call the Health Command Operations Center at (928) 871-7014.
- F. Gyms, wellness centers, and recreation facilities will be allowed at 25% of maximum occupancy or less dependent on 6 feet physical distancing, consistent with Navajo Health Command Operations Center guidelines.
- G. All businesses are required to submit a COVID-19 Reopening Plan to the Navajo Nation Division of Economic Development before reopening in Yellow Status. Reopening plans can be emailed to: [navajoeconomy@navajo-nsn.gov](mailto:navajoeconomy@navajo-nsn.gov)

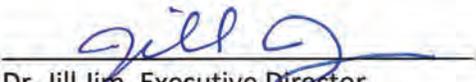
**NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN** that this Order shall not abrogate any disease-reporting requirements (consistent with HIPAA privacy standards).

**NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN** that this Order shall take effect Tuesday, April 5, 2022 at 5:00 A.M. MDT, and shall remain in effect until amended or rescinded by the Health Command Operations Center.

**ADDITIONAL ADVISORIES AND ORDERS WILL FOLLOW AS CONDITIONS WARRANT. SO ORDERED THIS 5<sup>th</sup> Day of April, 2022.**



Geraldine Thompson, Delegated Program Supervisor III  
Navajo Office of Environmental Health &  
Protection Program  
Navajo Department of Health



Dr. Jill Jim, Executive Director  
Navajo Department of Health  
Health Command Operations Center

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

**April 5, 2022**

**Public Health Emergency Order No. 2022-005  
Public Health Emergency Order Reemphasizing “Safer at Home” Order and Updating  
Gathering Limits**

- I. Paragraphs I – IX from Public Health Emergency Order No. 2020-004 are included with this Public Health Order, addressing the various Navajo Nation (Nation) authorities related to the current COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.
- II. The intent and purpose of this Public Health Emergency Order No. 2022-005 is to reemphasize the “Safer-at-Home” requirements and updating gathering limits. The requirements of this Order may be extended or changed in a future order. These measures are intended to further ensure an effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic by restricting movement of individuals on the Nation to limit contact to prevent the spread of the virus and minimize the strain on medical response capabilities. 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.
- III. Wearing a mask in public continues to be mandatory (Public Health Emergency Order No. 2021-015, August 4, 2021).
- IV. The Navajo Nation is experiencing a downward trajectory (decreasing) of cases. The Navajo Nation remains vigilant as neighboring states are lifting mitigation strategies to reduce the spread of COVID-19. The Navajo Nation has documented new cases of COVID-19 Omicron sublineages (BA.1.1, B.1.1.529 and BA.2) and Delta within the Navajo Nation. According to the CDC, the Omicron variant seem to spread more easily and quickly than the other previous variants, including Delta. CDC continues to identify Omicron and Delta as variants of concern. Breakthrough infections are expected and some treatments are not as effective against infection with Omicron. As coronavirus vaccines continue to be made available on the Navajo Nation, all preventative precautions should continue to be adhered to after receiving the vaccine.
- V. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, **“delay travel until you are up to date with your vaccines” and “Getting vaccinated is still the best way to protect yourself from severe disease, slow the spread of COVID-19, and reduce the number of new variants.”**

**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.** The Navajo Nation’s Safer at Home Public Health Emergency Order is still in effect and has not been rescinded. Under this **Safer at Home Order, individuals are required to exercise personal responsibility to remain safe, but are not ordered to stay home.**
  - 1. Individuals must continue to exercise caution when engaging in public activities and practice everyday preventive actions, which include: wearing a mask in public, practicing social (physical) distancing, disinfecting high-touch surfaces, avoiding unnecessary travel, avoiding unnecessary public gatherings, and washing hands for 20 seconds.
  - 2. Individuals with COVID-19, or who have symptoms consistent with COVID-19, or who have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, are required to stay home and away from other people.
- B.** Gathering limits of 25 or fewer persons for the following:
  - 1. Social gatherings.
  - 2. Traditional ceremonies, consistent with Navajo Health Command Operations Center guidelines.
  - 3. Churches and other houses of worship, consistent with Navajo Health Command Operations Center guidelines. Bible study group meetings of 25 or fewer people are permitted, consistent with the in-person training and meeting guideline.
  - 4. Youth programs, consistent with Navajo Health Command Operations Center guidelines (Public Health Emergency Order No. 2022-04, March 31, 2022).
  - 5. Holiday gatherings, consistent with Navajo Health Command Operations Center Guidelines.
- C.** Gathering limit of 25 or fewer persons remain in effect for in-person meeting and training, consistent with Navajo Health Command Operations Center guidelines.
- D.** Gathering limit of 50 or fewer persons for outdoor recreational events, consistent with Navajo Health Command Operations Center’s guidelines. This includes walks, runs, bike rides, motorcycle events and similar events. HCOC encourages COVID vaccine verification of participants by event administrators.
- E.** “Drive-in” gatherings up to 100 vehicles are permitted if the organizers and participants adhere to the requirements herein. Such gatherings include parking lot gatherings for internet access, religious services, funeral services, graduations (consistent with Health Command Operation’s guideline), and similar events. Organizers must ensure the following are in place:
  - 1. Outdoor “drive-in” gatherings only where people from the same vehicle remain in their vehicles.
  - 2. Vehicles are parked at least six (6) feet from other vehicles, in all four directions.

3. Organizers and participants wear masks.
  4. Gathering is conducted in a no-contact manner and maintaining social distancing standards.
- F.** Graduation events are allowed per risk event levels and consistent with Navajo Health Command Operations Center guidelines. Mask requirements and other safety precautions remain in effect. Below are allowances by risk categories for graduation events.
- 1. Lower risk graduation events (Preferred)**

Virtual, Live Streaming, Drive Through, or Car Parade are allowed, such as:

    - Virtual/Live Streaming
    - Drive Thru/Car Parades with support from local law enforcement
    - Drive-in gatherings with no physical contact (limit of 100 vehicles)
  - 2. Moderate risk graduation events**

Outdoor in-person events are allowed at 75% of maximum occupancy for outdoor seating areas.
  - 3. Higher risk graduation events**

Indoor in-person events are allowed at 50% of maximum occupancy for indoor seating areas and conducted in two (2) hours or less.
- G.** Fair events are allowed at 50% of maximum occupancy for indoor seating areas and 75% of maximum occupancy for outdoor seating areas, consistent with Navajo Health Command Operations Center’s guidelines. HCOC encourages COVID vaccine verification of attendees by event administrators.
- H. All Businesses** must continue to comply with the requirements of Public Health Emergency Order No. 2022-004 Implementing “Yellow Status” for Businesses or subsequent Order. Businesses must continue to address safety measures through policy and procedures of the following:
1. Ensure physical distance between personnel, customers, and any member of the public at the place of business is maximized, and that keeping six-feet between persons is possible at all times.
  2. Wearing a mask in public continues to be mandatory (Public Health Emergency Order No. 2021-015, August 4, 2021).
  3. Encourage COVID vaccine awareness.
  4. Provide standards for how to respond to suspected and confirmed cases of COVID-19 among employees. The policies and procedures shall further provide contact information for the nearest healthcare facility, and such information posted conspicuously at the place of business (e.g., informational poster). The place of business shall contact the healthcare facility immediately in the event of a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 to consult about next steps. Places of business shall

report suspected or confirmed cases to the Navajo Health Command Operation Center by calling (928) 871-7014 or the HCOC portal (available at <https://www.ndoh.navajo-nsn.gov/COVID-19>).

- I. There is no daily curfew in effect; however, the Nation's curfew for children pursuant to Title 17 of the Navajo Nation Code remains in full force and effect.

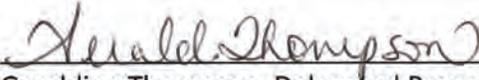
**NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN** that this Order shall not abrogate any disease-reporting requirements (consistent with HIPAA privacy standards).

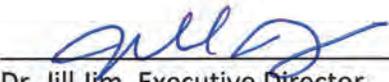
**NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN** that it is greatly advised that the public take the following preventive precautions against COVID-19:

1. Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
2. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing, or having been in a public place. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
3. To the extent possible, avoid touching high-touch surfaces in public places – elevator buttons, door handles, handrails, handshaking with people, etc. Use a tissue or your sleeve to cover your hands or finger if you must touch something.
4. Wear a mask and avoid touching your face, nose, eyes, etc.
5. Clean and disinfect your home to remove germs: practice routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces (for example: tables, doorknobs, light switches, handles, desks, toilets, faucets, sinks, and cell phones).
6. Refrain from gathering with individuals outside your household who are not yet fully vaccinated or received a booster vaccine dose (if eligible).
7. Limit unnecessary travel.
8. Get an influenza (flu) vaccination as soon as possible and when safe to do so, and in accordance with the above requirements.
9. All persons are highly encouraged to become fully vaccinated or receive a booster vaccine dose (if eligible) as soon as possible and when safe to do so, and in accordance with the above requirements.

**NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN** that this Order shall take effect on Tuesday, April 5, 2022 at 5:00 A.M. MDT and shall remain in effect until otherwise rescinded or modified by a subsequent Order.

**ADDITIONAL ADVISORIES AND ORDERS WILL FOLLOW AS CONDITIONS WARRANT. SO ORDERED THIS 5<sup>th</sup> DAY OF April, 2022.**

  
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Geraldine Thompson, Delegated Program Supervisor III  
Navajo Office of Environmental Health & Protection Program  
Navajo Department of Health

  
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Dr. Jill Jim, Executive Director  
Navajo Department of Health  
Health Command Operations Center

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

**April 5, 2022**

**Public Health Emergency Order No. 2022-006  
Public Health Emergency Order Declaring “Yellow” for Schools**

- I. Paragraphs I – IX from Public Health Emergency Order No. 2020-004 are incorporated herein, addressing the various Navajo Nation (Nation) authorities related to the current COVID-19 Public Health Emergency as well as escalating incidents and community spread of COVID-19 on the Nation.
- II. In response to COVID-19, the Navajo Nation has developed the “Navajo Nation COVID-19 Safe Schools Framework” to declare the Nation’s “status” according thereto and to guide the reopening of all schools, including Head Start, across the Navajo Nation in proper compliance with the Framework. 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.
- III. The Navajo Nation is experiencing a downward trajectory (decreasing) of cases. The Navajo Nation remains vigilant as neighboring states are lifting mitigation strategies to reduce the spread of COVID-19. The Navajo Nation has documented new cases of COVID-19 Omicron sublineages (BA.1.1, B.1.1.529 and BA.2) and Delta within the Navajo Nation. According to the CDC, the Omicron variant seem to spread more easily and quickly than the other previous variants, including Delta. CDC continues to identify Omicron and Delta as variants of concern. Breakthrough infections are expected and some treatments are not as effective against infection with Omicron. As coronavirus vaccines continue to be made available on the Navajo Nation, all preventative precautions should continue to be adhered to after receiving the vaccine.
- IV. Mask wearing is required in schools. All individuals on the Nation two (2) years of age and older shall wear masks while in public (any area outside your home where you could come within 6 feet of someone who is not from your household). (Public Health Emergency Order No. 2021-015, August 4, 2021)

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):

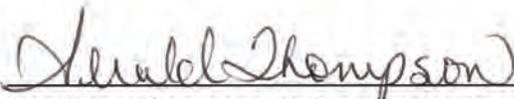
- A. The Navajo Nation COVID-19 Safe Schools Framework is declared binding on all schools, including Head Start, across the Navajo Nation. All schools are required to comply with the Navajo Nation COVID-19 Safe Schools Framework and the Navajo Nation School Reopening Plan. Available at <https://www.navajoreopening.navajo-nnsn.gov/COVID-19-Safe-Schools-Framework>
- B. Per the Safe Schools Framework, the Navajo Health Command and Operations Center (NHCOC), having evaluated the current state of the Navajo Nation per the gating criteria and public health considerations provided in the Framework, declares the Navajo Nation to be in “Yellow Status.” All schools shall be bound to the conditions and requirements of Yellow status. The NHCOC will announce any future status changes by Public Health Emergency Order.
- C. Yellow status is defined as: Moderate Transmission of COVID-19. Schools must implement the required core prevention strategies and conditional prevention strategies noted in the Framework: parent options, use of masks, physical distancing, hygiene, cleaning and ventilation, diagnostic testing, contact tracing, required reporting, and COVID-19 vaccinations.
- D. There is moderate transmission of cases, therefore, schools should maintain the frequency and HCOC also recommends implementation of the prevention strategies, consistent with the COVID-19 Safe Schools Framework. Accordingly, HCOC recommends to schools the following particularly with communities with **high transmission rates** (listing of health advisories can be found at <https://www.ndoh.navajo-nnsn.gov/COVID-19>):
- a. Limit gathering to 25 or fewer persons for non-classroom instruction events such as back-to-school, orientations and other community gatherings.
  - b. Limit sport event attendance to 50% of maximum occupancy for indoor seating areas and 75% of maximum occupancy for outdoor seating areas, and consistent with HCOC guideline for school sporting events.
  - c. Require students, staff and visitors to stay home if they are sick.
  - d. Promptly report exposures using the HCOC portal (available at <https://www.ndoh.navajo-nnsn.gov/COVID-19>) and notify the nearest local health facility (Indian Health Service or Tribal Health Organization). Exposures will be reported on the HCOC webpage of school exposures to notify the public.
- E. All schools are required to create, submit, implement, and update a School Reopening Plan and complete an accompanying Reopening Readiness Assessment Attestation form. School Reopening Plans and completed Reopening Readiness Assessment

Attestation forms should be submitted to the Department of Diné Education at:  
[schoolreopening@nndode.org](mailto:schoolreopening@nndode.org).

**NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN** that this Order shall not abrogate any disease-reporting requirements (consistent with HIPAA privacy standards).

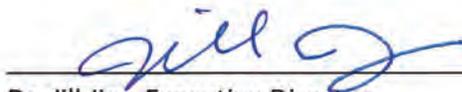
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**ADDITIONAL ADVISORIES AND ORDERS WILL FOLLOW AS CONDITIONS WARRANT. SO ORDERED THIS 5<sup>th</sup> DAY OF APRIL, 2022.**



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Geraldine Thompson, Delegated Program Supervisor III  
Navajo Office of Environmental Health & Protection Program  
Navajo Department of Health



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Dr. Jill Jim, Executive Director  
Navajo Department of Health  
Health Command Operations Center

## **Definitions**

**Drive-In:** means attending a gathering without leaving one's car.

**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).