



The Navajo Nation
Office of the President and Vice President

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 23, 2022

**Office of the Controller continues processing over
16,000 change of address requests for Hardship Assistance**

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – The Navajo Nation Office of the Controller continues to process over 16,000 changes of address forms that have been received in the last two weeks, since the approval of CARES Act Hardship Assistance for Navajo elders and American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Hardship Assistance for adults and minors. The number of documents and requests submitted to the Office of the Controller continues to grow each day.

The high number of requests for changes of address, in addition to setbacks in the availability of personnel due to the spike in COVID-19 cases has delayed the processing of Hardship Assistance relief. However, the Office of the Controller is beginning to issue CARES Act Hardship Assistance relief checks for the 48,000 elderly recipients in the amount of approximately \$342 each. Elderly recipients can expect them in the mail this week.

Once all CARES Act Hardship Assistance checks for elders are processed and mailed, employees will focus on issuing the ARPA Hardship Assistance in February, which allows enrolled adults to receive \$2,000 each and \$600 per minor. Previous recipients do not need to re-apply.

“Personnel with the Office of the Controller are working long hours to process the change of address requests as quickly as possible. More requests for address changes continue to be received. The process of issuing checks is a challenging task that requires a great amount of time to ensure accountability and compliance with federal guidelines and due to the high volume of recipients,” said Navajo Nation Controller Elizabeth Begay.

“The surge in COVID-19 cases across the country and here on the Navajo Nation has impacted everyone, including Navajo Nation employees across all branches of government. We have employees who are required to quarantine, isolate, and work from home due to infections and exposures. We understand that our elders need relief now and our employees are working hard, but we have to take safety precautions as well,” said Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez.

In late December, President Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer approved the reallocation of \$16 million in CARES Act funds for Hardship Assistance for enrolled members of the Navajo Nation

who are 60 years old and over, and who previously demonstrated need for assistance to mitigate the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Checks are being issued and mailed. We strongly encourage our people to use the funds for essential items, supplies, bills, and other expenses to provide the much-needed relief. We strongly encourage our people to ‘Buy Navajo, Buy Local’ to support Navajo businesses and entrepreneurs,” stated Vice President Lizer.

A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ’s) sheet is available online at: <https://www.opvp.navajo-nsn.gov/News-Media/Latest-News> to provide answers regarding updates to mailing addresses, contact information to obtain a Certificate of Indian Blood (CIB), and more.

The Navajo Nation successfully obligated its entire \$714 million CARES Act allocation by the Dec. 31, 2021 federal deadline to incur costs. The processing of the 16,000 plus requests for changes of address will help to ensure that all CARES Act Hardship Assistance checks are successfully delivered to recipients and ensure that all funds are expended.

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