

OCTOBER 19, 2020

PRESIDENT JONATHAN NEZ
VICE PRESIDENT MYRON LIZER



STATE OF THE NAVAJO NATION ADDRESS

2020 FALL NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL SESSION





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President
Jonathan Nez
and
Vice President
Myron Lizer



Yá'át'ééh to the honorable members of the 24th Navajo Nation Council, Speaker Seth Damon, Chief Justice JoAnn B. Jayne, as well as chapter, county, state, and federal leaders, and most importantly our Diné Citizens. On behalf of the Nez-Lizer Administration, we are pleased to present to you the State of the Navajo Nation Address for the 2020 Fall Council Session.

Since the first confirmed case of COVID-19 was reported on the Navajo Nation on March 17, 2020, our Nation has faced and overcome many unprecedented challenges and adversities. We acknowledge that there is still much to learn about the novel coronavirus and many challenges ahead. The reality is that we do not know how much longer will we face this pandemic, but we can do our best to minimize the impacts on our communities and our Navajo people by working together, relying on data, and listening to our public health experts.

We are pleased that the 24th Navajo Nation Council and Office of the President and Vice President have allocated all of the CARES Act funds, totaling a little over \$714 million, for infrastructure projects, hardship assistance, and other aid to help address the COVID-19 pandemic. Now, we have the responsibility of expending the funds while also providing for transparency, accountability, and compliance with federal guidelines including deadlines set forth by the Department of the Treasury and Council resolutions. In accordance with the resolutions passed by the Council, a large part of this responsibility rests with the Office of the Controller as we move forward.

The Navajo People are watching us closely and they are holding us accountable, and rightfully so. Although we continue to advocate and lobby for an extension for the CARES Act funding, we must put politics aside, move forward, and work together to use these funds for the benefit of our communities, first responders, and all of our Navajo People.

On September 8, 2020, the Navajo people reached a milestone as our public health experts reported zero new cases of COVID-19 for the Navajo Nation. Since then, we have had a rise in reported cluster cases resulting from travel off the Navajo Nation and due to family gatherings where face masks, social distancing, and other critical protocols were not enforced. Through the great work of contact tracers and health care professionals, we are gradually containing the virus once again.

In closing, we offer our thoughts and prayers for all of the families who have lost loved ones and those who are fighting this virus. Words are not enough to express our appreciation to all of the health care workers, law enforcement officers, detention officers, EMS personnel, fire fighters, social workers, the Health Command Operations Center officials, and many others who are on the frontlines fighting for our Navajo people. May God bless each of you and may God bless the Great Navajo Nation.

CARES Act Hardship Fund and Chapter Funding

On Oct. 9, 2020, the Nez-Lizer Administration approved two separate resolutions, adopting the hardship assistance expenditure plan to provide over \$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.

In accordance with the hardship assistance expenditure plan approved by the 24th Navajo Nation Council, 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 \$500 per person for individuals who were under the age of 18-years-old as of March 1, 2020.

The Council's Health, Education, and Human Services Committee and Budget and Finance Committee have since approved the application process and now the Office of the Controller is responsible for overseeing and monitoring the expenditure of the funds.

Our Administration also approved \$90 million for the Division of Community Development, to administer the chapter distribution expenditure plan to provide additional COVID-19 relief at the local level using the chapter 50/50 formula. The approved resolution also includes over \$20 million to provide additional support for the Office of the Controller to administer CARES Act funds and to provide oversight and compliance with guidelines.

We previously proposed hardship relief funds through a different distribution mechanism that prioritized elders, students, and those most in need, but we understand that there is a great need for financial relief due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The \$49 million expenditure plan development and approved by the Navajo Nation Council is not enough to help every enrolled member of the Navajo Nation, so these funds should be directed to elders and those most in need, but there will be an opportunity to increase funding for hardship relief for enrolled members if chapters do not use the \$90 million allocation by the end of November. All Navajo Nation CARES Act funds have now been allocated and the Office of the Controller now has the financial support to ensure accountability, compliance, and distribution of a majority of the Nation's CARES Act dollars.

We continue to request that the Council allow time for divisions, departments, and programs to focus on implementing CARES Act expenditure plans in coordination with the Office of the Controller, rather than spending long hours presenting multiple reports requested by the Council and its Standing Committees.

We recommended to the Office of the Controller to develop the criteria and application process so that elders and those living in remote areas without internet access are able to apply and that those in the most need of financial assistance be prioritized. This should not be a free-for-all distribution of funds. At the end of the day, all leaders along with the Office of the Controller will be held accountable for the use and expenditure of the CARES Act funds.

The resolution also approved \$15 million to provide more broadband initiatives to expand internet access on the Navajo Nation and \$2 million for the Division of Community Development to help administer the chapter relief funds. With the approval of the two resolutions, the Navajo Nation has now allocated all of the \$714 million in CARES Act funds received from the federal government.

Navajo Nation Fund Expenditures & Balance

Res. CJN-47-20	Amount Approved	Amount Vetoed	Final Approval
Water & Basics	\$10,000,000.00		\$10,000,000.00
Computer Hardware	\$2,000,000.00		\$2,000,000.00
Bathroom Additions	\$3,500,000.00		\$3,500,000.00
Burnout Assistance	\$7,000,000.00	\$7,000,000.00	
Healthcare Assistance	\$3,000,000.00		\$3,000,000.00
Help to NN Financial Office	\$2,559,530.10		\$2,559,530.10
Chapter Allocation	\$55,000,000.00	\$55,000,000.00	
Judicial Allocation	\$10,000,000.00	\$10,000,000.00	
Subtotal/Balance	\$93,059,530.10	\$72,000,000.00	\$21,059,530.10

Res. CJN-46-20	Amount Approved	Amount Vetoed	Final Approval
Special Duty Pay	\$21,000,000.00		\$21,000,000.00
PPE	\$10,000,000.00		\$10,000,000.00
Safety Assurance - Facility	\$10,000,000.00		\$10,000,000.00
DHA	\$1,000,000.00	\$1,000,000.00	
Subtotal/Balance	\$42,000,000.00	\$1,000,000.00	\$41,000,000.00

Res. CJN-67-20	Amount Approved	Amount Vetoed	Final Approval
Water Projects	\$130,005,095.00		\$130,005,095.00
Powerline Projects	\$44,220,832.00		\$44,220,832.00
Telecomm/Broadband	\$68,224,989.00	\$15,000,000.00	\$53,224,989.00
Solid Waste-to EPA	\$23,973,000.00	\$23,973,000.00	
Solar Projects	\$69,295,910.00	\$34,103,910.00	\$35,192,000.00
Hardship Assistance	\$1,000.00		\$1,000.00
Help for Vendors, Parks/Rec	\$828,637.00		\$828,637.00
Payroll Support Pay	\$90,928,047.00	\$48,804,287.00	\$42,123,760.00
NNGE Business Assistance	\$24,600,000.00		\$24,600,000.00
Housing (approx. \$1.3 per CD District)	\$33,432,914.00	\$33,423,914.00	
Judicial Branch Request	\$9,633,863.00		\$9,633,863.00
Controller Exp. Plan	\$20,008,798.00	\$20,008,798.00	
DED Business Assist.	\$60,000,000.00		\$60,000,000.00
NDOH Request	\$75,836,016.00		\$75,836,016.00
Subtotal/Balance	\$650,980,101.00	\$175,313,909.00	\$475,666,192.00

Res. CS-73-20	Amount Approved	Amount Vetoed	Final Approval
Navajo Chapters (LGA/non LGA)	\$90,000,000.00		\$90,000,000.00
DCD (to Administer)	\$2,000,000.00		\$2,000,000.00
Non-tribal owned Telecomm for Broadband	\$15,000,000.00		\$15,000,000.00
OOC CARES Fund Implementation	\$20,008,798.00		\$20,008,798.00
Subtotal/Balance	\$127,008,798.00		\$127,008,798.00

Res. CS-74-20	Amount Approved	Amount Vetoed	Final Approval
Add to Harship Assistance in Res. CJY-67-20	\$49,454,416.00		\$49,454,416.00
Subtotal/Balance	\$49,454,416.00		\$49,454,416.00

Running Balance of NN CARES FUND - Description	Amount Recieved	Amount Approved	CARES Fund Balance
1st Allocation (5/6/20)	\$600,559,530.10		\$600,559,530.10
2nd Allocation (6/16/20)	\$86,358,877.04		\$686,918,407.14
3rd Allocation (6/18/20)	\$27,271,224.33		\$714,189,631.47
Res. CJN-47-20		\$21,059,530.10	\$693,130,101.37
Res. CJN-46-20		\$41,000,000.00	\$652,130,101.37
Res. CJY-67-20		\$475,666,192.00	\$176,463,909.37
Interest Income (as of 10/5/20)	\$465,000.00		\$176,928,909.37
Res. CS-73-20		\$127,008,798.00	\$49,920,111.37
Res. CS-74-20		\$49,454,416.00	\$465,695.37
TOTAL/BALANCE	\$714,654,631.47	\$714,188,936.10	\$465,695.37

FY2021 Comprehensive Budget

Prior to the approval of the continuing resolution passed by the Navajo Nation Council, we issued letters to Council members urging them to approve a new comprehensive budget. Unfortunately, we are now operating on one-fourth of the previous fiscal year's budget, which continues to lead to mountain confusion and complexities that risk the employment of our Navajo Nation employees. We need the 24th Navajo Nation Council to move forward and pass a comprehensive budget to ensure the financial stability of our government and its ability to provide direct services for the Navajo people.

In the next two months, the Executive Branch has an enormous responsibility to complete hundreds of projects with CARES Act funds to protect our people and to prepare for the potential second wave of the deadly virus. Our directors and managers should not be distracted by keeping their programs running on partial funding, preparing budgets for a new round of committee hearings, and reporting to committees for funds that should have been in place.

More importantly, directors and managers are facing increased workloads with time slipping away, so we urge Council Standing Committees to allow them to concentrate on this important work while not patiently waiting for hours to report to committees on CARES Act funded projects. We have to work together to make progress on expending CARES Act dollars and approving a Comprehensive Budget as quickly as possible.

Vote in the November 3rd General Election

We encourage all of our Navajo people to vote and let your voices be heard in the upcoming Nov. 3rd General Election at the tribal, county, state, and federal levels. Our Navajo people, and all Indigenous peoples throughout the country, have a strong voice and influence when we vote. The Nez-Lizer Administration has provided many opportunities to register during our food and care package distribution events as well.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created so many unprecedented challenges for our Navajo people, including being able to register to vote. Please take the initiative to vote and please encourage your family members and friends to do the same. Let our voices be heard.

Unfortunately, despite attempts by several groups to extend the state of Arizona's voter registration deadline, a court ruling shortened the timeline that ultimately led to an Oct. 15th deadline.

For the state of New Mexico, you can still register to vote or update your voter registration information in-person at your county clerk's office until Saturday, Oct. 31.

In Utah, the last day to register to vote online at <https://secure.utah.gov/voterreg/index.html> is 5:00 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 23, 2020, and mail-in registration forms must be received by Oct. 23. You can still register to vote at any early voting location or at a polling location on election day.

For more information about voter registration, early voting, and other information:

U.S. Election Assistance Commission
Website: <https://www.eac.gov>
Phone: (866) 747-1471

State of Arizona
Website: <https://azsos.gov>
Phone: (602) 542-4285

State of Utah
Website: <https://vote.utah.gov>

State of New Mexico
Website: <https://www.sos.state.nm.us>
Phone: 1-800-477-3632

279 families connected to electric grid using CARES Act Funds

Navajo Tribal Utility Authority has connected 279 homes to the electric grid, and hundreds more are in progress to receive solar power, as NTUA continues to make progress on telecommunications, water, and other projects using CARES Act funds.

NTUA utility crews are working 10-hour days, weekends, and holidays to complete projects. NTUA is planning to extend electricity to 510 families, which includes over 350 families that were identified during the 2020 LIGHT UP NAVAJO II application process. In addition, NTUA continues to accept applications from residents for its residential solar program, which was allocated \$35.1 million in CARES Act funds. For more information about eligibility for the solar program, please visit www.ntua.com under CARES Act-NTUA Projects.

NTUA is doing a great job in partnering with the Navajo Nation to expedite the right-of-way processes and other requirements to connect many homes to the electric grid. We are very grateful to all of the NTUA crews and management for moving quickly to move forward with projects that will provide more electrical power, water resources, and internet access for our communities. We are hopeful that our people will have access to electricity and water to help minimize the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are optimistic that NTUA will be able to connect electricity for well over 500 families by the end of the year.

NTUA was approved to receive \$13.8 million for power line projects, \$24.7 million to increase overall electric grid capacity, \$20.9 million for cisterns systems, \$18.6 million for wastewater systems, and \$32.8 million for wireless and broadband expansion from the CARES Act funds.

We commend NTUA for putting together a plan that leverages all of the available resources and CARES Act dollars for the benefit of the Navajo people. Their utility crews are spending many hours away from their families to help other families – that’s what we need more of, people helping other people during this pandemic to help us overcome the challenges. We look forward to seeing more progress in the weeks and months ahead.

Among numerous water projects, NTUA utility crews are in the process of replacing motors and pumps for up to 45 targeted

water wells, and working with Navajo Engineering and Construction Authority to install 150 water cistern systems where there is no water available for household drinking water, and bathroom and kitchen usage. Other projects include renovations and upgrades of regional water stations, construction of several new watering points, converting off-line-wells to watering loading stations for livestock, water well renovations, replacement of exposed water lines, and more.

NTUA has also established 32 free wifi hotspots in various communities across the Navajo Nation to help students, parents, and teachers with online learning. NTUA and NTUA Choice Wireless are assessing the possibility of installing additional wifi hotspots due to increased demand and usage. NTUA is also awaiting the arrival of new materials and equipment to construct new towers in several communities.



Nearly \$7.7 million in CARES Act relief funds distributed to artisans and businesses

We are pleased to report that the Navajo Nation Division of Economic Development, under the leadership of Executive Director JT Willie, has awarded nearly \$7.7 million in CARES Act funds from the Navajo Nation Business and Artisans Economic Relief Grant Program as of Oct. 16, to assist Navajo businesses, entrepreneurs, and Navajo artisans facing financial hardship and/or business interruption due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

With the 24th Navajo Nation Council, we approved \$60 million in CARES Act funds for the Business and Artisans Economic Relief Grant Program. The Division of Economic Development held online seminars and is currently scheduling appointments

to provide guidance and assistance with the application process. With the approaching deadline to expend CARES Act dollars, we are opening to discussing the possibility of amending the resolution to allow more businesses to apply for relief funds.

In the meantime, we commend the Division of Economic Development for moving quickly to provide much-needed financial relief opportunities for our Navajo entrepreneurs. They've done a great job in getting the information out to the public and providing assistance with the application process, including hosting webinars to guide applicants. We know that many businesses and artisans have dealt with the economic downturn due to the pandemic and it is not just here on the Navajo Nation, it is across the country. We encourage all business owners and artisans to take the initiative to apply for the relief funds.

Navajo artisans who meet the eligibility requirements can receive up to \$5,000 for financial emergencies defined as the lack or imminent endangerment of essentials such as housing, medicine, childcare, and food. Eligible businesses can receive as much as \$10,000 to \$60,000.

The Division of Economic Development website includes two separate applications – one for businesses and one for Navajo artisans. There is a two-step process, part one is the Navajo Business Certification Application and step two is the relief grant application. Applicants are required to complete their source list number in part one in order to apply for part two. All information is located at www.navajoeconomy.org. Additional information is available on the Division of Economic Development's Facebook page, along with live webinars regarding the application process.

The following general eligibility requirements apply to all businesses applying for financial assistance under this Navajo Business Economic Relief Grant:

- Business is facing a financial hardship due to the COVID-19 public health emergency
- Business is organized for profit and at least 51% owned by an enrolled member of
- the Navajo Nation
- Business was in operation prior to January 1, 2020
- Business has less than 300 employees as of March 1, 2020 (for the purpose of this requirement, each individual employee, regardless of typical number of hours worked, and each owner, is considered one employee)
- Business is certified or to be certified or re-certified under the Navajo Nation Business Source List as published by the Navajo Business Regulatory Department (BRD). Website: www.navajoeconomy.org

The following general eligibility requirements apply to all artists and artisans applying for financial assistance under this Navajo Artisan Relief Grant:

- Business is certified or to be certified or re-certified under the Navajo Nation Business Source List as published by the Navajo Business Regulatory Department (BRD). Website: www.navajoeconomy.org
- Organized as an artist in a medium or discipline in art or performance
- Artist or artisan is at least 18 years of age
- Artist or artisan must be an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation
- Artist or artisan must be able to demonstrate a sustained commitment to their work, careers, and public audience for their work
- Artist or artisan is facing a financial hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic
- Independently owned and operated with annual gross sales revenue of \$100,000 or less (artists or artisans who typically earn over this amount each year should look into the Navajo Business Economic Relief Grant)

For more information regarding the Navajo Nation Business and Artisans Economic Relief Grant Program, please contact the Division of Economic Development at (928) 871-6544 or send an email to navajoeconomy@navajo-nsn.gov.



The Navajo Nation
Division of Economic Development

The Navajo Nation Division of Economic Development now has Technicians stationed at each Regional Business Development Office to assist with the Navajo CARES Act Business & Artisan Grant application process.

Contact your local Navajo Business and Artisan CARES Act Team Representative

Central Office

- (982) 871-6544
- (928) 871-6841
- (928) 871-7376

Chinle RBDO

- (928) 674-2240

Shiprock RBDO

- (505) 368-1315
- Wednesday/Thursday

Eastern RBDO

- (505) 905-6400

Aneth, UT Office

- (435) 651-3566
- Monday/Tuesday

Western RBDO

- (928) 283-3011

Call to schedule an appointment!

Or email navajoconomy@navjo-nsn.gov



The Navajo Nation
Division of Economic Development

Navajo CARES Act Business & Artisan Relief Grant

PART 1.

Certify your business with the Navajo Business Regulatory Department



- Visit www.NavajoEconomy.org for certification application.
- A copy of Certificate of Indian Blood is required. Submit to navajoconomy@navajo-nsn.gov
- PART 1 must be completed before moving on to PART 2.

PART 2.



Apply for the Navajo CARES Act Business or Artisan Relief Grant.

- Application available online at www.NavajoEconomy.org
- Must have Business Certification number to complete application.
- IRS W-9 FORM is required upon submission
- Deadline to submit all necessary documents **October 30, 2020**

For more information about the Business and Artisan Relief Grants, please contact the Division of Economic Development by phone at (928) 871-6544, (928) 871-6841, (928) 871-7376 or email NavajoEconomy@navajo-nsn.gov.

Increasing Internet and Cell Phone Connectivity

On Oct. 16, we joined with Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie, Navajo Nation Telecommunications Regulatory Commission Office Executive Director Christopher Becenti, NTUA Choice Wireless Deputy Director Velen Tsosie, and Pinedale Chapter officials and community members celebrated the completion and installation of a new NTUA Choice Wireless tower in the community of Pinedale, N.M., which will provide much-needed cell phone and internet access to Navajo families, students, and first responders using CARES Act funds.



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The new tower was funded with a \$32 million CARES Act allocation approved by the 24th Navajo Nation Council and signed into law by President Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer on Aug. 16, which will also fund several more towers on the Navajo Nation. Once funds became available in late August, NTUA and other partners expedited the construction of the new tower to meet the federal CARES Act deadline.

This project is a model for self-sufficiency and self-empowerment because this project began years ago at the grassroots level along with the support of Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie, NTUA Choice Wireless, and others who dedicated their resources, time, and efforts. For many years, the community of Pinedale has struggled with reliable access to cell phone coverage and internet access, but now our students, families, and first responders will have telecommunications access. Thank you to the Pinedale community, NTUA Choice Wireless, Mr. Becenti, Navajo Land Department, and the 24th Navajo Nation Council.

On Oct. 9, our Administration approved an additional \$15 million in CARES Act funds to provide more internet access, which was part of a legislation that also approved \$90 million for the Nation's 110 chapters to help respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

NTUA is doing a great job in expediting CARES Act projects. We are truly grateful to their employees on the ground and also their management team for moving quickly on projects. The new tower in Pinedale represents the long-term benefits that we wish to see for all of our communities. We look forward to seeing more progress as we move forward with expending CARES Act funds.

As of Oct. 9, the Navajo Nation has allocated the entire \$714 million in CARES Act funds for the Navajo Nation for hardship assistance, infrastructure development, first responders, direct relief, and many other resources and initiatives. The Pinedale community is located approximately 15-miles east of Gallup, N.M., and includes over 1,500 registered community members.

Navajo Nation and Indian Health Service making progress with water points and safe water storage projects using CARES Act funds

In July 2020, the Office of the President and Vice President along with the Indian Health Service finalized a Memorandum of Agreement to allocate over \$5 million from the IHS appropriated Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding to support the installation of up to 54 transitional water points, assistance with water fees, supply of up to 37,000 water storage containers, and up to 3.5 million doses of water disinfection tablets for residents living in homes with no piped water access for the duration of the Navajo Nation COVID-19 public health emergency. This large-scale effort is known as the Navajo Nation/IHS COVID-19 Water Access Mission.

Over 50 transitional water points have been open to the public, increasing access to approximately 12,117 people living in homes with no piped water on the Navajo Nation. There are an additional seven transitional water points remaining that will serve an estimated 3,737 people. When all 59 transitional water points are open, the average travel distance for residents in these communities will be 17 miles round trip. This is a decrease of 35 miles per round trip, with an average drive time savings of 38 minutes.

Getting water resources to our Navajo people is one of our top priorities, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Through this partnership between the Nation, Indian Health Service, Navajo Tribal Utility Authority, and Navajo Engineering and Construction Authority, thousands of Navajo families now have access to more water sources closer to home. The CARES Act funds are being used and we are seeing the benefits.

Additionally, Navajo Engineering Construction Authority is working with chapters to deliver an estimated 37,000, 5-gallon water storage containers for distribution by chapter at sites with existing permanent water points and newly installed transitional water points. Once delivered, IHS will provide training to chapter officials on the distribution of the water storage containers. Additional training will be provided as needed for distribution of water disinfection tablets.

The tremendous efforts being put forth each day contributes to more Navajo homes having access to clean water, which is a great need during this COVID-19 pandemic. We are hopeful that with increased access to water, families are not only able to increase domestic usage but also keep their families safer and healthy. We appreciate the hard work of all of the partners and we look forward to seeing more progress.

The partnership of these entities developed into a group called the Navajo Nation COVID-19 Water Access Coordination Group, co-led by IHS and the Navajo Nation Division of Community Development, comprised of 21 partners from the Navajo Nation, federal, state partners, public health universities, and non-profit organizations that have been meeting on a regular basis to collaborate on emergency water access response actions and to develop long-term solutions to address the lack of home water access.

We remain committed to working together with the Indian Health Service to complete these projects to provide water access for our Navajo people.



Navajo Nation Breast Cancer Awareness Month

On Oct. 1, the Navajo Nation proclaimed the month of October as “Navajo Nation Breast Cancer Awareness Month” to raise awareness and promote breast cancer prevention and screenings to help fight the disease, and to support those affected by breast cancer.

Many of us have a loved one, a relative, or a friend who is battling breast cancer. Breast Cancer Awareness month, which is recognized across the country, presents an opportunity to learn more about this deadly disease that impacts so many lives. Please help us to spread awareness and to fight the disease. Help by learning and promoting a healthier lifestyle to your family, friends, and communities. The risks associated with breast cancer can be reduced through education, screenings, and prevention efforts.

The proclamation acknowledges that breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer among Navajo women and further states that risk factors that may increase a person’s chance of developing breast cancer include family history, age, alcohol consumption, and genetic history.

Breast Cancer Awareness Month is a reminder to us all, men and women, that cancer can affect any of us, and that’s why it’s important to take preventative measures, such as eating healthy, exercising regularly, and taking the time to get screened. We all want to live a long and healthy life for our loved ones.

Mammography screening funding is available for Native American women from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to the Navajo Breast and Cervical Cancer Prevention Program, which educates and provides cancer screenings to low income, uninsured, or underinsured age-eligible women across the Navajo Nation, while engaging the community and its partners to increase screening rates.

The Office of the President and Vice President encourages all Navajo citizens to wear the color pink during the month of October, to raise awareness and to promote healthy living among Navajo women, families, and communities.



President Nez and Vice President Lizer proclaim “Navajo Nation Domestic Violence Awareness Month”

On Oct. 1, 2020, we signed a proclamation to recognize the month of October as the “Navajo Nation Domestic Violence Awareness Month” to raise awareness and assert that Navajo families are entitled to a safe, healthy, stable, and loving environment.

The proclamation states that domestic violence is a wide-spread issue that affects many of our Navajo people, impacting our Diné way of life and culture and traditions. Domestic violence is a multi-generational family cycle, which disrupts many

Diné families leaving an impact of long-term emotional, spiritual, psychological, and physical harm.

Domestic violence was already an epidemic before the coronavirus, and it is alarming that the current health crisis has caused an increase in family violence and abuse across the country. On the other hand, we have also heard from many Navajo people who have reconciled with their loved ones during the pandemic. This month, our focus should be on providing help, comfort, and prayers for violence survivors and victims. Greater awareness, education, and intervention are greatly needed on the Nation. We ask our citizens to join us in sharing information and showing compassion that can help those who are experiencing violence during these uncertain times.

The proclamation also recognizes that “the Navajo Nation is taking a stand against domestic violence, family violence, dating violence, and sexual assaults through the Strengthening Families Program, Department of Family Services, and the Navajo Nation Division of Social Services.”

By signing this proclamation, we call to action to bring attention to domestic violence and remind each other that there are countless victims, survivors, children, families, and communities impacted by violence. We need to pray and stand together to stop all abuse and get on the road to recovery, healing, and restoration.

The Navajo Nation will provide prevention and crisis intervention services for victims of domestic violence, family violence, dating violence, and sexual assault in partnership with other federal, state, tribal, and non-profit agencies.

2020 Census on the Navajo Nation

We are very disappointed in the Supreme Court’s failure to acknowledge the federal government’s responsibility to accurately count the Navajo people and many other tribal nations, with its ruling on Oct. 13, 2020. It’s disheartening that the highest court of the land ignored the devastating impacts that COVID-19 has had on the Navajo Nation and the census count. The Navajo Nation fought to the very end and never let up. Despite this setback, we will continue to move forward with strength just as our ancestors did long ago. We commend our Nation’s attorneys and all of the co-plaintiffs for standing our ground all the way to the highest court in our country.

Unofficial results from the U.S. Census indicates that the overall response rate for the Navajo Nation was 22.5%. Agency response rates as of Oct. 15, 2020:

- Fort Defiance Agency: 26.1%
- Chinle Agency: 17.9%
- Western Agency: 22.4%
- Eastern Agency: 23.7%
- Northern Agency: 22.3%

Now we must continue to work together with the U.S. Census Bureau to utilize other available data to ensure the most accurate count for the Navajo Nation prior to the end of the year. We thank all of the Census workers and many others for their hard work to ensure we are counted!



STAY HOME
STAY SAFE
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