



The Navajo Nation
Office of the President and Vice President

CONTACTS:
Jared Touchin, Communications Director
(928) 274-4275

Crystalyne Curley, Sr. Public Information Officer
(928) 274-2758

nnopvp.communications@gmail.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 18, 2020

**Third member of the Navajo Nation tests positive for
COVID-19 coronavirus, Public Health Emergency Order issued**



PHOTO: A billboard displays COVID-19 prevention messages from the Navajo Nation COVID-19 Preparedness Team in Chinle, Ariz. on March 18, 2020.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer were informed on Wednesday evening by the Navajo Department of Health that a third member of the Navajo Nation tested positive for the COVID-19 coronavirus. The third individual is a 62-year-old male from the same region as the first two confirmed cases within the Kayenta IHS Service Area.

The third individual reported his symptoms to the Kayenta Health Center and was transported to a hospital in Phoenix where he remains as of Wednesday. Health and emergency officials are taking the proper precautions to screen and isolate the person's family members. Officials are in the process of determining the extent of the relation of the cases.

The first two cases reported on Tuesday, involved a 46-year-old woman and a 40-year-old man who were also transported to hospitals in the Phoenix area.

“The responsibility is upon all of us as individuals to help keep each other safe and healthy by practicing social distancing and self-isolation – staying home is key to preventing the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus. The Navajo Nation COVID-19 Preparedness Team is making progress in securing resources and funding from various entities to help our people – we are working hard each day to help our people. Please continue to pray for these individuals, their families, and all of the people of our Nation,” said President Nez.

The Navajo Health Command Operations Center is considering issuing a shelter-in-place order for the community of Chilchinbeto, which would require residents to remain in their home due to the spread of the virus.

On Wednesday, President Nez and Vice President Lizer issued notice of enhanced travel restrictions, encouraging all citizens not to travel unless travel is necessary to obtain essential items such as groceries, medication, emergencies, medical appointments, and livestock care. The notice also urges all citizens to stay home for a period of at least 15-days.

A Public Health Emergency Order was also issued requiring restaurants to operate at no greater than 50 percent of maximum occupancy and no greater than 50 percent of seating capacity. In addition, tables and booths may not seat more than six people, and all occupied tables and booths must be separated by at least six-feet, limiting employees to “essential staff,” and displaying prevention and awareness signage for patrons.

The notice also limits fast-food businesses to drive-thru services, suspends all flea markets and indoor/outdoor markets, and prohibits gatherings of 10 or more with exemptions for retail or grocery stores, and hospitals, among others. They also initiated efforts to minimize travel to and from the Navajo Nation. Billboards on the Navajo Nation also began displaying information encouraging the public to self-isolate.

“We are not closing off roads, but we are asking all visitors to respect the sovereignty of the Navajo Nation and adhere to the travel restrictions to protect the health of all people,” stated President Nez.

President Nez and Vice President Lizer continue to advocate to members of Congress to secure more federal funding and to gain support for efforts of our emergency operations and the health care professionals. They spoke with U.S. Rep. Tom O’Halloran (D-AZ) and U.S. Sen. Martin Heinrich (D-N.M.) to push for funding to help fight the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus.

“If you look at the overall numbers, we also have a large amount of people who are recovering around the world from this virus. We have to remember that we are resilient and that we will overcome and get through this pandemic,” added Vice President Lizer.

“We are truly grateful to all of the men and women who are on the frontlines – the Health Command Operations Center officials, health care workers, emergency personnel, doctors, nurses, and all first responders for working hard to protect the Navajo people. Please pray for all of these individuals as well,” added President Nez.

Questions from the public may be directed to the Navajo Health Command Operations Center at (928) 871-7014. If a person has symptoms related to the COVID-19 coronavirus, please contact your local health care center prior to your arrival to a hospital facility:

Chinle Comprehensive Health Care Facility
(928) 674-7001/7688

Crownpoint Health Care Facility
(505) 786-5291/6381

Fort Defiance Indian Hospital Board, INC
(928) 729-8000

Gallup Indian Medical Center
(505) 722-1000

Sage Memorial
(928) 755-4500

Kayenta Health Center
(928) 697-4000

Northern Navajo Medical Center
(505) 368-6001

Tuba City Regional Health Care
(866) 976-5941

Utah Navajo Health System
(866) 976-5941

Winslow Indian Health Care Center
(928) 289-4646

Arizona Poison and Drug Information Center
(844) 542-8201

New Mexico Coronavirus Hotline
(855) 600-3453

###

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.