

Chilchinbeto community to 'shelter-in-place'

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer were informed by the Navajo Department of Health and Navajo Area IHS March 19, that the total number of positive cases of the COVID-19 coronavirus for members of the Navajo Nation has reached 14.

The majority of the 14 cases involve individuals who initially reported their symptoms to the Kayenta IHS Service Unit, and others who either reported to or were transported to or were treated at Chinle Health Care Facility, and Northern Navajo Medical Center. Health and emergency officials are taking every precaution to screen and isolate their family members and others. The Navajo Health Command Operations Center and Navajo Area IHS are in the process of determining if and how the cases relate.

"We are awaiting more details on the cases, Nez said. "We understand that the public has many questions and we ask that the public be patient until the facts are gathered – we do not want to report any misinformation. I assure everyone that the Navajo Health Command Operations Center, Navajo Area IHS, and 638 Tribal Health Organizations are working proactively to investigate each case to prevent the spread of the virus. Everyone must remain home at this point and let the health care and emergency experts do their jobs. Please be respectful and adhere to their directions as they are doing their best to protect our communities."

Lizer emphasized, that "this is not a time for panic." While there is an increase in positive tests for COVID-19, Lizer asserts there are also a large number of people who have tested negative and some who are recovering.

"Please remain watchful over family members and follow official instructions so as not to create panic and please respect our first responders, health care workers, Health Command Operations Center and many other experts as they handle the situation," Lizer added.

The Navajo Health Command Operations Center issued a Public Health Emergency Order March 19 requiring closure of the Chilchinbeto community, which is 24 southeast of Kayenta,

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