

COVID-19 numbers rise on the Navajo Nation, more curfews to come

Written by gallupsun
Friday, 01 May 2020 10:38

The Navajo Nation has surpassed 2,000 active cases on the reservation. After the numbers were released April 30, the total stands at 2,141 following an additional 164 positive cases.

To date, a total of 12,023 tests have been performed with 8,639 tests coming back negative. These figures are according to the Navajo Department of Health and Navajo Area Indian Health Service, in coordination with the Navajo Epidemiology Center.

The 2,189 cases include the following counties:

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McKinley County (N.M.): 539

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Apache County (Ariz.): 515

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Navajo County (Ariz.): 502

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Coconino County (Ariz.): 283

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San Juan County (N.M.): 213

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San Juan County (Utah): 32

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Socorro County (N.M.): 21

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Sandoval County (N.M.): 19

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Cibola County (N.M.): 17

There are 71 confirmed deaths from COVID-19 as of April 30 with another nine being confirmed earlier that day.

“We have to remain strong and remember that we will get through this pandemic. We will continue praying for all of the families that have lost their loved ones,” President Jonathan Nez said. “There’s a big spike in positive cases today, but the upside is that there is a lot more testing being conducted and that’s why we’re seeing high numbers.”

Nez said people who test positive will soon be able to isolate at one of the Alternative Care Sites, which will help to flatten the curve.

Nez also said the concentration of the virus has shifted from the western portion of the Navajo Nation to the eastern and northern regions, which includes hotspots in Gallup and Farmington,

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N.M.

Outgoing City of Gallup Mayor Jackie McKinney issued a letter April 30 requesting New Mexico Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham to declare a state of emergency for Gallup, and to assist with implementing restrictions to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Nez supports the move and hopes it will reduce travel to border towns.

The next weekend curfew runs from 8 pm on May 1 to 5 am on May 4. Residents on the Navajo Nation are being told to stay home and not travel anywhere.

Navajo Police will strictly enforce the curfew order by issuing citations to violators that may include a fine up to \$1,000 and/or 30 days in jail.

The daily curfew implemented on March 30 remains in effect from 8 pm to 5 am.

May 1 also marks the second “Operation First of the Month,” where additional safety measures are put into place at numerous Bashas’ stores across the reservation. Staff from the Office of the President and Vice President and various Navajo department directors will be distributing essential items to high-risk residents as well.

Both Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer continue to urge residents to stay home as much as possible.

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“Please think of others, think of the families who have lost their sons, daughters, parents, and grandparents to COVID-19. Some people wonder when a cure or vaccine will be developed, but I believe we are the cure and the vaccine because we have the ability to rid our communities of the virus simply by staying home, practicing social distancing, and adhering to the advice of the health care experts,” said Lizer.

TIMELINE OF THE VIRUS ON THE NAVAJO NATION

April 24: Health officials announce 180 new cases to bring the total to 1,548 while another six deaths bring the total to 58. Nez appears on CNN Cuomo Primetime to shed light on the effect the pandemic is having on the reservation.

April 25: Another 97 cases brings the total to 1,637 while one death brings the total to 59. The next 57-hour weekend curfew remains in effect.

April 26: The case total rises to 1,716 after another 79 cases are confirmed. The death tally remains the same at 59.

April 27: The positive case tally rises to 1,759 after 43 new cases are confirmed. Death count stays the same at 59. The Navajo Nation and 10 other tribes who filed a lawsuit against the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury regarding coronavirus federal funding.

April 28: Another 104 positive cases raises the total to 1,873 while an additional death brings the total to 60. Nez announces another 57-hour weekend curfew for May 1 - 4.

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For more information on the Navajo Nation efforts in fighting COVID-19, visit <http://www.ndoh.navajo-nsn.gov/COVID-19>

