

April 16, 2020

Guidance on Burials, Community Cemeteries, Family Plot Burials and Related Services

EMERGENCY NAVAJO NATION CHAPTER PLAN

Public Health State of Emergency for the entire Navajo Nation: Commission on Emergency Management, President Jonathan Nez, and Vice-President Myron Lizer – CEM-20-03-11.

Public Health Emergency Orders: Navajo Department of Health, Navajo Office of Environmental Health & Protection Program – Public Health Emergency Order Nos. 2020-001, 2020-003, 2020-004.

Navajo Nation Laws, Regulations, and Policies: Burials, 13 N.N.C. §1901-§1906. Cemeteries, 13 N.N.C. §1951-§1953; Navajo Nation Council Resources and Development Committee Resolution No. RDCO-74-16; Navajo Nation Council Advisory Council Resolution No. ACMA-39-86.

Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Guidelines and Guidance for Tribal Communities on Burial Services at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/tribal/faq-burial-practice.html>

I. Guidance to the Grieving Family

To the extent that Chapters administer community cemeteries, the following is a guide for Chapters and their membership to follow during the Covid-19 pandemic.

- A. Chapters are currently closed to the public but may be providing essential governmental services. Requests for chapter services shall be made to the Chapter's email address. Please visit the Chapter website to obtain the Chapter's email address. Even if you are able to contact a Chapter Official or Chapter employee by phone or any other means, the request for services shall be followed-up through the official Chapter email address.
- B. It is highly recommended, to perform all funeral planning over the phone, instead of in-person. The Navajo Nation has requested local funeral homes to plan event details by phone. Such funeral homes can email their price lists and packages, as well as any paperwork that needs to be signed (see list of approved Mortuaries).
- C. No more than ten (10) individuals may attend funeral services. Any concerns should be reported to HCOC/Safety Operations at (928) 871-7889.
- D. Family members shall instruct certain family members to stay at home:
 - 1. At-Risk members such as: a) individuals over the age of 65; b) those who have chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma; c) anyone with a serious heart conditions; d) those who are immunocompromised; e) those who are obese with a body mass index of 40 or higher; f) diabetics individuals; g) chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis; and h) those with liver disease.

2. Members who are displaying any symptoms of Covid-19 should not attend any of the funeral services. Symptoms include fever, cough, or shortness of breath.

E. Personal Protective Equipment and Social Distancing is Required.

1. PPE: Whether services are indoors or outdoors, all attendees must wear a mask even if all attendees are healthy and not displaying any symptoms. Families shall help clean and disinfect any facilities used. Soap and water and/or hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol should be used.
2. Social Distancing: All attendees must maintain social distancing by staying at least six (6) feet apart from the next person.

F. The Navajo Nation highly recommends that families schedule in-person memorial services and celebrations of life ceremonies at a later date.

G. Family Burial Plots:

1. All “family plots” shall follow the Land Withdrawal Designation Regulations by applying for a lease of any burial plot on Navajo Nation Trust Lands. Further information can be provided by the Navajo Land Department at <http://dinehbikeyah.org/>.
2. Failure to obtain an approved lease will subject organizers, including the Funeral Home Directors, to be subject to civil trespass penalties under 16 N.N.C. §2253 and 2254.
3. Approved burial plots shall be at least nine (09) feet long by four (04) feet wide for adults and at least six (06) feet long by three (03) feet wide for children.
3. A passageway of three (03) feet between the next site shall be made for pedestrian travel.
4. Graves sites shall be clearly and permanently marked.

H. For Loved Ones Lost Due To Covid-19

The Navajo Nation COVID-19 Burial Assistance was designed to help Navajo families with financial assistance for family members lost as a result of Covid-19. This fund is from the Navajo Nation General Funds and there are no income requirements. This fund is administered by the Navajo Nation Division of Social Services (NNDSS) and more details can be obtained from the Navajo Family Assistance Services at (866) 347-2403. However, the following information is being provided as part of the guidance provided herein.

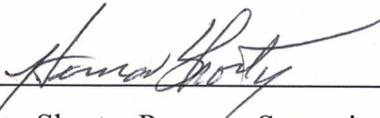
1. Decedent must be a member of the Navajo Nation with an enrolled census number.
2. Decedent must have expired from COVID-19 verified by an appropriate authority (i.e., Criminal Investigator, Coroner’s Office).
3. A family member of the Decedent will contact one of the Mortuaries listed below and request for one of the following Navajo Nation Covid-19 Burial Assistance:
 - a. Standard Burial Package which includes a casket and services;

- b. Native Traditional Burial which basically means no casket; or
 - c. Cremation.
4. The Mortuary will submit documents directly to the NNDSS Navajo Family Assistance Services.
 5. List of approved Mortuaries:
 - a. Alameda Mortuary, Albuquerque, NM (505) 898-3160
 - b. Compassion Mortuary, Grants, NM (866) 292-0086
 - c. Cope Memorial Chapel Gallup, Gallup, NM (505) 722-6671
 - d. Cope Memorial Chapel Kirtland, Kirtland, NM (505) 598-9636
 - e. Daniel's Family Funeral Services, Socorro, NM (575) 835-1530
 - f. Desert View Funeral Home, Shiprock, NM (505) 368-4607
 - g. Rollie Mortuary, Gallup, NM (505) 863-4452
 - h. Silver Creek Mortuary, Gallup, NM (505) 371-3690
 - i. Tse Bonito Mortuary, Tse Bonito, NM (505) 371-5565
 - j. Summit Funeral Home, Saint Michaels, AZ (928) 871-1120
 - k. Valley Ridge Mortuary, Tuba City, AZ (928) 640-7677
 6. Other important information;
 - a. People should consider not touching the body of someone who has died of COVID-19. There may be less of a chance of the virus spreading from certain types of touching, such as holding the hand or hugging after the body has been prepared for viewing. Other activities, such as kissing, washing, and shrouding should be avoided.

II. Guidance to Chapters

- A. Chapter buildings shall remain closed to the public. If Chapters are unable to provide limited non-contact services, it is recommended that Chapters utilize their Emergency Implementation Plans for safety precautions and CDC guidelines.
- B. If Chapters are able to provide limited contactless services, requests for services received by personal cell phone, personal email, and/or other means, the Chapter Official/Employee shall instruct the community member to follow-up their request through the official Chapter email. This will ensure proper documentation of services.
- C. Burial fees should be waived during this pandemic.
- D. Chapters shall report any violations to the Safety Section of the Health Command Operation Center.
- E. Burial Site Excavation & Backfill Policy
 1. Chapter provided excavation and backfill services by Public Employment Program (PEP) employees shall be obtain proper training and receive approval from the Division of Community Development before providing services.

2. All approved PEP heavy equipment operators (Operator) are to check-in at the Chapter house before assisting with the essential service, for accountability purposes. No self-deployment shall be allowable.
3. Operator must wear proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as masks and non-latex/nitrile gloves before leaving the Chapter compound to the burial site. PPE shall be provided by the Chapter or the Division of Community Development. If PPE is unavailable, services should not be provided.
4. Disinfect the transportation vehicle and heavy equipment (steering wheel, door knobs, grab bars, other knobs and controls) before and after use. Disinfectant supplies will be provided by the Chapter or the Division of Community Development. If such supplies are unavailable, services should not be provided.
5. Operator to complete excavation before burial site service begins.
6. After excavation is complete, park heavy equipment a safe distance away from burial site and remain in the heavy equipment cabin. If no cabin, Operator must stay in the transportation vehicle.
7. When the burial service is complete, Operator may begin the backfill.
8. Operator shall exercise social distancing requirements of six (6) feet between any person at all times.
9. Upon return of the heavy equipment, Operator will inform the Chapter via the Chapter email. To the extent feasible, the Operator will perform check-out with the designated Chapter Official, Chapter Manager, or Community Service Coordinator.



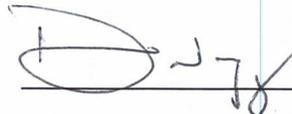
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