

Boyd I. Gourneau
Chairman

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Official Release Regarding Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES Act) Funding

Greetings,

As you may know, we have aggressively advocated for the equitable allocation of Cares Act funding to Tribes. As our Tribe has begun to receive allocations to support our response(s) to Coronavirus, there have been many questions and also many misconceptions about how this funding may be utilized. We realize and acknowledge that many families have been and may be adversely affected by the virus in direct and indirect ways. We also recognize that many of our members may be experiencing financial difficulty due to the impact of Coronavirus reaching our community. We have worked diligently to secure funding assistance as well as have offered and will continue to offer support in various ways to individuals who are impacted by the Coronavirus.

Tribal leaders, directors and employees within many of our programs have worked consistently to ensure that any departments that may be eligible to qualify for supplementation or support from the Cares Act funding are completing grant applications. While this funding is to be allocated for Tribes it isn't just given. As with all federal funding, we must apply for and compete with other tribes for a piece of this allocation, which we have come to realize is a considerable process. I commend and thank those who are working extensive hours in order to meet the strenuous deadlines within the grant application processes. All funding granted to support our response to the Coronavirus must be utilized within the scope of allowable costs. We have acquired a CPA to ensure effective, allowable use of Cares funding and we truly do not understand how larger tribes are able to legally issue payments to all of their members. The action of issuing mass payments to all enrolled members would serve as considerable misuse of the funding allocation we have been granted through various departments that are eligible for support through the Cares Act. This would also frankly not be equitable, considering the allocation is solely based on local (on reservation) numbers. We are however working on other various avenues for the possibility of issuing assistance for eligible expenditures for ALL households within our boundaries and we will keep you updated on how we hope to be able to accomplish that.

Our Tribe has been allocated a total of **\$4,891,668.13**. Since March 1st the total of funding that has been utilized is roughly **\$61,303.88** and is growing daily as we employ, enact and support response efforts. This funding allocation was based on 2010 NAHASDA (Native American Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act) figures from within the reservation boundaries. Our Tribe along with other Tribes had advocated strongly for the allocations to be based on actual enrollment numbers however the decision was made to base the CARES allocation to Tribes on 2010 housing figures. Had our allocation been allowed to be based on those figures, we feel it would have been larger, more equitable and more accurate.

This brings to mind the importance of responding to the 2020 Census. NAHASDA figures are directly linked to the response rates and population data that is provided by the decennial census. It has never been more important for the members within our community to be counted by responding to the Census survey that takes place every ten years. I encourage all individuals to respond to your Census Survey.

With funding that has been allocated we have covered obligations that are necessary expenditures incurred due to mitigation measures such as employment of checkpoint personnel, employment of specialized professionals who support justification and eligibility for funding, general counsel expenses, wage support for high risk employees who may be affected by their household, family or an individual under quarantine, the purchase of personal protective equipment such as sanitizer and masks, assistance for basic essentials for those who are under quarantine, and alterations to public buildings and facilities in order to provide a safe environment for members and employees. We will continue to provide information, clarity and transparency of this funding as it is utilized in response to the pandemic. Our Tribe and programs will continue to assist all members who have been or may be affected by the Coronavirus in an equitable and allowable manner. In closing, I would like to offer prayers for those who are being affected. I ask all community members who are willing and able to offer prayers and support to the individuals, families and households who are fighting this terrible virus. Let us lift them up in prayer for resilience and recovery from the Coronavirus. Thank you for your time and consideration of this message.

Sincerely, **Boyd I. Gourneau, Chairman**