
Verlon M. Jose
CHAIRMAN



Carla L. Johnson
VICE CHAIRWOMAN

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, Nov. 13, 2025

**TOHONO O'ODHAM NATION DECLARES STATE OF EMERGENCY;
COUNCIL APPROVES \$1,000 PAYOUT TO TOHONO O'ODHAM NATION ADULTS**
Must be an Enrolled Member Ages 18 or Older as of October 31, 2025 to be Eligible

SELLS, Ariz. – Tohono O'odham Nation Chairman Verlon M. Jose declared a state of emergency on the Nation due to the ongoing impacts of the federal government shut down, including the cutting of SNAP benefits and other vital programs. This declaration will make additional resources available to the Nation to help address the issue.

In addition, the Executive Branch has worked with the Tohono O'odham Nation Legislative Council on an emergency financial relief plan to help O'odham members and families make ends meet during this difficult time. Under the plan, which was approved by Council on Nov. 13, 2025, enrolled tribal members ages 18 or older as of Oct. 31, 2025 will be eligible for a \$1,000 relief payment.

Emergency Financial Relief applications will be accepted beginning November 14 and must be submitted no later than November 30. Please submit your paperwork as early as possible. Application forms are attached to this PSA and may also be downloaded from the Nation's website at <https://www.tonation-nsn.gov/emergency-financial-relief/>. For questions or additional guidance, please visit the website or contact 1-888-852-1322.

Tohono O'odham Nation Chairman Verlon M. Jose said *"The decision to shut down the federal government and the current Administration's decision to cut off important programs like SNAP, WIC, and Head Start has caused great hardship for many O'odham families. The Nation has taken action to protect our people, declaring an emergency and approving a payout to help tribal members weather this difficult time."*

Chairman Jose went on to say, *"Our federal administration has shown a willingness to use people in need as bargaining chips for political gain, with little regard for the impact this has on their lives. The Nation is concerned that this will continue to be their approach for the next three years and we will continue to remain vigilant during these uncertain times."*

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Attachments:

- Emergency Financial Relief Application
- Emergency Financial Relief Program Description and Guidelines
- FAQs
- Emergency Financial Relief Informational Flyer
- Office of the Treasurer Hour of Operation

Together We Are Stronger



Tohono O'odham Nation Enrolled Member Emergency Financial Relief Program Application

This application is for the *Tohono O'odham Nation Enrolled Member Emergency Financial Relief Program*. All eligible members who meet the qualifications for the program will receive a \$1,000.00 financial assistance, to provide support during these challenging economic conditions due to the high costs of the economy, federal shutdown and the disruption of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. This application is not complete without providing a copy of a member's tribal ID or certification of enrollment. Additionally, a complete application is **required** to receive the \$1,000.00 financial assistance.

Please fill in the following information: **APPLICATION DEADLINE IS NOVEMBER 30, 2025**

TRIBAL MEMBER (APPLICANT) INFORMATION:**PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY**

NAME: FIRST: LAST: SUFFIX: MI:

MAILING ADDRESS:

CITY: STATE: ZIP:

PHONE: EMAIL ADDRESS:

TRIBAL ID NO.

SOCIAL SECURITY: DATE OF BIRTH:

By my signature below, I certify that the information provided above is, to the best of my knowledge, true and accurate. In addition, I attest that I am an enrolled Tohono O'odham member; 18 years of age by or on October 31, 2025 and am being impacted by the current economic conditions that is placing additional financial burden during these uncertain times. I hereby acknowledge that intentionally falsifying information or documentation is considered an act of fraud. Any suspicious tribal ID cards or certificate of enrollment will be reported for further investigation.

Signature: Date:

Check Distribution Selection:

- ☐ Mailing (By selecting this option, my check will be mailed to the mailing address provided above.)
☐ Pickup (By selecting this option, my check will be picked up at a distribution site.)

OFFICE USE ONLY*TON Office Verification*

TRIBAL ID NO: DATE:

APPROVED BY:

SIGNATURE:

COMMENTS:



GENERAL WELFARE EMERGENCY FINANCIAL RELIEF PROGRAM

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND GUIDELINES

1. Tribal Program

This Program Description and Guideline is intended to memorialize the General Welfare –Emergency Financial Relief Program (the “Program”) of the Tohono O’odham Nation (the “Nation”), a federally recognized Indian tribe. The Program is intended to provide Indian general welfare assistance benefits in accordance with the general welfare doctrine, Internal Revenue Code Section 139E and the Nation’s General Welfare Law, 22 T.O.C. Chapter 3 (“GWL”).

2. Eligibility for General Welfare Exclusion

- a. General Rule: This Program reflects the Nation’s exercise of its inherent sovereign right to promote the general welfare of the Nation, its self-determination, culture, and tradition, by providing general welfare assistance, including Indian general welfare benefits within the meaning of Internal Revenue Code Section 139E. Certain benefits may also qualify for tax favored treatment under the IRS safe harbor guidance (Revenue Procedure 2014-35) and other statutory and common law doctrines. The Assistance provided under this Program is intended to fully qualify for tax-free treatment permitted by law.
- b. Code Section 139E Requirements: The Program is intended to provide benefits that qualify for tax exempt treatment under Internal Revenue Code (the “Code”) Section 139E. As such, each payment made to an employee pursuant to the Program and treated as non-taxable Assistance under the general welfare exclusion shall be subject to the following restrictions as required for compliance with Code Section 139E:
 - (1) Program benefits must be administered under the guidelines specified in this Program and may not discriminate in favor of the members of the governing body of the Nation or the District.
 - (2) Program benefits shall be made available to any tribal Member who meets such guidelines.
 - (3) Program benefits must be for the promotion of the general welfare of the Nation.
 - (4) Program benefits may not be lavish or extravagant; and
 - (5) Program benefits may not consist of compensation for services.

3. Program Purpose and Findings

- a. Promotion of the General Welfare: The Program is intended to promote the general welfare of the Nation. The Nation recognizes that the current economic conditions have placed additional financial burdens on the Tohono O'odham Nation's members. With the continued rise in costs i.e. inflation of goods and services, cost of living concerns, job security and political uncertainty Nation's members are struggling to maintain financial stability and causing severe financial stress in already fragile communities.
- b. Specific Findings of Need: To provide support during these challenging economic conditions including but not limited to the financial impacts related to the fluctuations and uncertainty of the economic conditions, federal government-wide shutdown and disruption of federal assistance program i.e. SNAP benefits. The Nation is aware that Nation's members of the millions impacted living on and off the reservation are seeking limited alternative opportunities to reduce the financial burdens they are experiencing. An emergency financial relief program will help to relieve Nation's members financial instability.

4. Eligibility:

To qualify for the Emergency Financial Relief Assistance Program, the enrolled member must be:

- an enrolled Tohono O'odham Nation member;
 - 18 years of age on or before October 31, 2025
- a. Procedure:
 - Applicant must submit a completed application;
 - Proof of enrolled Tohono O'odham member i.e. copy of Tribal ID or certificate of enrollment
 - Applications must be received by November 30, 2025
(In person applications can be dropped off at Nation's Office of the Treasurer or at any distribution site. Mail in application must be post-marked by November 30, 2025)

5. An applicant shall only be denied assistance for one or more of the following:

- a. Funding approved by the Tohono O'odham Legislative Council has been fully exhausted;
- b. TON membership is relinquished

6. Severability

If any part of any provision of these guidelines shall be invalid or unenforceable under applicable law, such part shall be ineffective to the extent of such invalidity only, without in any way affecting the remaining parts of such provision or the remaining provisions of these guidelines.

7. No Tax Advice

The Nation cannot provide individual tax advice to Members. The Nation cannot guaranty particular tax treatment. There are currently no regulations under Code Section 139E. All Members are encouraged to consult with their personal tax advisor before taking any reporting position based on Code Section 139E. Tribal Members remain solely responsible for the timely and accurate filing of their individual tax returns and maintaining records showing compliance.

8. General Welfare Law

This Program is subject to all additional restrictions and limitations set forth in the Nation's General Welfare Law, 22 T.O.C. Chapter 3, including, without limitation, restrictions on budget availability and governing law. General Welfare assistance is a privilege and not a tribal member's right or entitlement.

All terms and definitions used herein shall be construed consistently with the Constitution of the Tohono O'odham Nation, the laws of the Nation, and Internal Revenue Code Section 139E. Nothing in this Program Description and Guidelines shall be construed as a waiver of the Nations sovereign immunity.

CERTIFICATION OF ADOPTION

The foregoing program description and guidelines were duly adopted by the Tohono O'odham Nation Chairman as of the date written below.



Verlon M. Jose, Chairman

11/12/2025

Date



Frequently Asked Questions

If you were approved for an MEIP II distribution check in 2024, your information is already on file. You are still required to fill out an Emergency Financial Relief application and can drop off your application at the distribution site of your choice to pick up your check.

1. When will the membership receive their Emergency Financial Relief payment?

Members can pick up checks on the following dates and locations.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| • November 21, 2025 – 9am-8pm | Sells - Livestock Complex |
| • November 22, 2025 - 9am-8pm | Casa Grande - Soda Stop Grounds |
| • November 23, 2025 - 9am-8pm | San Lucy - Feast House |
| • November 24, 2025 – 9am-8pm | Why - TONDHHS Modular across from Casino |
| • November 25, 2025 - 9am-8pm | Sif Oidak District – Kakaichu Ki |
| • November 26, 2025 - 9am-8pm | San Xavier District - Community Building |
| • November 29, 2025 - 9am-4pm | OIM-Lukeville POE |

Remaining checks will be mailed out after November 30, 2025.

2. **Where do I submit my application for Emergency Financial Relief?** Applications can be submitted at any distribution site or at the Office of The Treasurer.
3. **When is the last day to apply for Emergency Financial Relief?** Last day to apply for Emergency Financial Relief is Sunday, November 30, 2025, by 5:00pm Arizona time.
4. **What if my check is cashed without my consent or stolen?** Contact Tohono O'odham Nation Police Department/ Financial Crimes (520) 383-3275.
5. **What if I did not receive a check at the distribution site?** Applications will be available on site to fill out and submit, or you can submit by November 30, 2025, by 5pm (Arizona time) at the Office of the Treasurer. A copy of your tribal ID must be included.

6. **What if I need to make a change to my check or lose my check?** Original check or notice of lost check will need to be provided to the Office of the Treasurer by November 30, 2025. Check will be mailed out within 7 -10 business days.
7. **What if I am unable to pick up my check?** Your check will be mailed out.
8. **Can someone pick up my check?** No, members must be present to pick up their check with a valid tribal ID.
9. **Can I pick up my check prior to distribution date?** No, checks will not be distributed prior to the November 21, 2025, distribution date.
10. **What address should I provide on my application?** Provide your most current mailing address, ensure you are listed to receive mail at the address you have provided.
11. **How will I be contacted should there be questions regarding my application?** You will be contacted by phone, please ensure a working phone number is provided on your application.
12. **Where can I get an application?** Applications can be downloaded and printed from <https://www.tonation-nsn.gov/emergency-financial-relief>, copies will also be available at any district office, any distribution site or suite 211 at Tohono Plaza. *The Office of the Treasurer is the only authorized application drop off site other than the distribution sites.*
13. **What if a family member passes away but has submitted their application?** Checks for deceased members must be returned to the Office of The Treasurer and will be voided. The Emergency Financial Relief payout is not subject to probate or beneficiary payments. Any attempt to cash a check issued to a deceased individual is considered fraud and may result in prosecution.
14. **What is the contact number should I have additional questions?** You may contact the call center at 1-888-852-1322.
15. **Am I eligible if I am incarcerated?** Yes, incarcerated members are eligible for payout. Application must be received or postmarked by November 30, 2025, by 5pm (Arizona time); checks will be mailed to their facility, please ensure the proper mailing address is provided.
16. **How can I receive my check if I live in Mexico?** There will be a distribution site held at the Lukeville Port of Entry on November 29, 2025. If you are unable to pick up your check it will be mailed to the address provided on the application.



TOHONO O'ODHAM NATION EMERGENCY FINANCIAL RELIEF

The Federal Government shutdown continues to have devastating impacts on the economy placing additional financial hardship for Tohono O'odham Nation's membership. With the uncertainty of SNAP benefits, inflation of goods and services, it has impacted families struggling to maintain financial stability.

Emergency Financial Relief (EFR) Check Disbursement

Under the Emergency Financial Relief, enrolled membership will receive a **\$1,000 one-time payment** to help alleviate some of the financial burden during these uncertain times.

EFR Qualifications

- Must be an enrolled Member of the Tohono O'odham Nation- 18 years of age or older
- Must be 18 years of age on or by **October 31, 2025**

Timeframe

- **Begins: Friday, November 14, 2025** **Ends: Sunday, November 30, 2025**
8:00 am (Arizona Time) - 5:00 pm (Arizona Time)

How to Apply:

- Submit a **completed** application to the Office of the Treasurer or any check disbursement site
- Submit a copy of Tribal Enrollment ID or Certificate of Final Approval

Applications Accepted:

- **At Office of the Treasurer** - Sells Business Loop
- **Locations, Dates & Times (Please see Page 2)** Applications can be downloaded and printed on the Nation's website, copies will also be available at any district office or Suite 211, Tohono Plaza.

Mail - Applications may be submitted to the following address:

Tohono O'odham Nation (**must be post marked by November 30, 2025**)
Office of the Treasurer
P.O. Box 837
Sells, AZ 85634

Check Pick-Up

- In-Person Distribution: **See page 2**
- Unclaimed checks after all distribution sites take place will be mailed out.

For questions regarding the TON Emergency Financial Relief disbursement please see visit the Nations website, program FAQs, PSA or contact the call center.

Questions

Website: <https://www.tonation-nsn.gov/emergency-financial-relief>

Call Center: 1-888-852-1322



TOHONO O'ODHAM NATION EMERGENCY FINANCIAL RELIEF

Check Disbursement Dates & Locations

- **Friday, November 21, 2025 9:00 am - 8:00 pm**
Sells - Livestock Complex
- **Saturday, November 22, 2025 9:00 am - 8:00 pm**
Casa Grande - Soda Stop Grounds
- **Sunday, November 23, 2025 9:00 am - 8:00pm**
San Lucy - Feast House
- **Monday, November 24, 2025 9:00 am - 8 :00 pm**
Why, AZ -TODHHS Building Across from Desert
Diamond Casino Why
- **Tuesday, November 25, 2025 9:00 am - 8:00 pm**
Sif Oidak - Kakaichu Ki
- **Wednesday, November 26, 2025 9:00 am - 8:00 pm**
San Xavier - Community Center
- **Saturday, November 29, 2025 9:00 am - 3:00 pm**
Lukeville, Arizona OIM - Lukeville POE 29

OFFICE OF THE TREASURER



Tohono O'odham Nation Enrolled Member Emergency Financial Relief Program

This schedule outlines the special and extended hours offered by the Tohono O'odham Nation's Treasury Office for in-person application drop-off during the Emergency Relief Program period.

(Applications can be dropped off at the Treasury Office in Sells or at any of the scheduled distribution sites. Deadline to submit in-person applications is Sunday November 30, 2025, by 5:00 pm. Mailed-in applications MUST be post-marked by November 30, 2025)

Date	Treasury Office Hours of Operation	On-Site Distribution Hours of Operation
November 14	8:00 am – 8:00 pm	
November 15	9:00 am – 5:00 pm	
November 16	9:00 am – 5:00 pm	
November 17	8:00 am – 8:00 pm	
November 18	8:00 am – 8:00 pm	
November 19	8:00 am – 8:00 pm	
November 20	8:00 am – 8:00 pm	
November 21	8:00 am – 5:00 pm	9:00 am – 8:00 pm <i>Sells Distribution Site</i>
November 22	Closed	9:00 am – 8:00 pm <i>Casa Grande Distribution Site</i>
November 23	Closed	9:00 am – 8:00 pm <i>San Lucy Distribution Site</i>
November 24	8:00 am – 5:00 pm	9:00 am – 8:00 pm <i>Why Distribution Site</i>
November 25	8:00 am – 5:00 pm	9:00 am – 8:00 pm <i>Sif Oidak Distribution Site</i>
November 26	8:00 am – 5:00 pm	9:00 am – 8:00 pm <i>San Xavier Distribution Site</i>
November 27	Thanksgiving Day Closed	
November 28	Closed	
November 29	9:00 am – 5:00 pm	9:00 am – 4:00 pm <i>Lukeville Port of Entry Distribution Site</i>
November 30	9:00 am – 5:00 pm	

Tip: If you were approved for an MEIP II distribution check in 2024, your information is already on file. You are still required to fill out an Emergency Financial Relief application and can drop off your application at the distribution site of your choice to pick up your check.