



Tohono O'odham Nation  
Office of the  
Chairman and Vice Chairwoman

Ned Norris Jr. Wavalene M. Saunders  
Chairman Vice Chairwoman



## PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### MEMBER OF THE TOHONO O'ODHAM NATION TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS

On March 28, 2020, Tohono O'odham Nation Health Care was notified of a positive test result for COVID-19 in a tribal member who lives in Tucson. Pima County's first case was reported on March 9, and to date, over 770 cases have been reported across the state.

Tohono O'odham Nation Chairman Ned Norris, Jr. said *"The Nation has been preparing for our first COVID-19 case, and there will likely be more to come. Tribal citizens should continue practicing the social distancing and hygiene measures that will help us slow the spread of this virus. Together, we can protect our elders, those with health conditions, and ourselves. The Nation continues to coordinate with local, state, and federal health agencies on our response to the pandemic."*

Chairman Norris went on to say, *"Please keep this individual in your thoughts and hearts, as well as all others around the world that have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. We are all in this together, and we will get through it together."*

The Tohono O'odham Nation COVID-19 Unified Command is coordinating operations and response to the COVID-19 outbreak. Information can be found at <http://www.tonhc.org/coronavirus/> or <https://www.facebook.com/TON.Emergency.Management/>. Further information on the virus is attached.

For more information the state of Arizona has set up a website on the COVID-19 response at [www.azhealth.gov/COVID19](http://www.azhealth.gov/COVID19) or residents can call the Arizona COVID Hotline 24-hours a day at 844-542-8201.

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## BACKGROUND ON COVID-19

The COVID-19 outbreak in the United States started early this year and is now in all 50 states, including Arizona. COVID-19 spreads through the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes. People with mild illness should stay at home, drink plenty of fluids, and get rest. People with more severe symptoms, especially difficulty breathing, should call their healthcare provider BEFORE going in. There is no specific treatment or vaccine yet, but we can help prevent COVID-19 with frequent handwashing, staying 6 feet from others, and not gathering in groups.

After being exposed to coronavirus, most people will develop symptoms between 2 and 14 days when they can be most contagious. Currently, testing is not recommended for other people in contact if they do not have the symptoms of cough, fever, sore throat, or difficulty breathing. In cases like this, Public Health Nursing will help follow the sick person and anyone who might have come into close contact with this person.

Health officials recommend to help stop the spread of COVID-19, that the public stay home except for essential needs, minimize close contact with other people, and avoid unnecessary travel.

Recommendations for persons who have, or are being checked for COVID-19:

- DO NOT:
  - go to work, school, or public areas, like family gatherings, church, or offices.
  - use public transportation, rideshare, or taxis.
  - share household items like dishes, cups, eating utensils, and bedding.
- DO:
  - stay at home, except to get essential medical care.
  - separate yourself from others in the home, as much as possible. Stay in a separate room and use a separate bathroom, if possible.
  - cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your elbow.
  - wash your hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.
  - avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands. Cancel all non-essential medical appointments and call ahead to your provider before you attend essential medical appointments.
  - monitor your symptoms and seek medical care if your illness is worsening.
  - before going to your medical appointment, call your healthcare provider and tell them that you have, or are being evaluated for, COVID-19.

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