



The Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Jared Touchin, Communications Director
Crystalayne Curley, Sr. Public Information Officer

(928) 871-7000

nnopvp.communications@gmail.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 12, 2021

FEMA's COVID-19 Funeral Assistance application now open to general public

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – On Monday, the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) COVID-19 Funeral Assistance application opened to the general public to provide financial assistance for COVID-19 related funeral expenses incurred after Jan. 20, 2020. The program was funded under the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

“Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have lost more than 1,262 of our people to COVID-19 on the Navajo Nation. The pandemic has brought grief and financial burden for many of our Navajo families, but it has also made us stronger and resilient. With the assistance of FEMA, we strongly encourage families who incurred expenses for COVID-19 related funeral expenses to apply through FEMA for financial assistance. We are also in the process of working with FEMA to establish a system where our Navajo people can apply in-person if they are unable to apply by phone. We will provide more information,” said Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez.

“FEMA is committed to help ease the financial pressure the pandemic has inflicted on families and communities,” said FEMA Region 9 Acting Administrator Tammy Littrell. “Many lost loved ones over the past year, and we are providing applicants with as much time as they need to apply for assistance in an easy and efficient way.”

To apply, please call FEMA's COVID-19 Funeral Assistance Line Number at 844-684-6333, Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. (MDT). For individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, deafblind, or have speech disabilities, please call 800-462-7585.

To be eligible for funeral assistance through FEMA, you must meet these conditions:

- The death must have occurred in the United States, including the U.S. territories, and the District of Columbia.
- The death certificate must indicate the death was attributed to COVID-19.
- The applicant must be a U.S. citizen, non-citizen national, or qualified alien who incurred funeral expenses after January 20, 2020.
- There is no requirement for the deceased person to have been a U.S. citizen, non-citizen national, or qualified alien.

If you had COVID-19 funeral expenses, we encourage you to keep and gather documentation. Types of information should include:

- **An official death certificate** that attributes the death directly or indirectly to COVID-19 and shows that the death occurred in the United States, including the U.S. territories, and the District of Columbia.
- **Funeral expenses documents** (receipts, funeral home contract, etc.) that includes the applicant's name, the deceased person's name, the amount of funeral expenses, and the dates the funeral expenses happened.
- **Proof of funds received from other sources** specifically for use toward funeral costs. We are not able to duplicate benefits received from burial or funeral insurance, financial assistance received from voluntary agencies, government agencies, or other sources.

No online applications will be accepted. According to the FEMA website, it should take about 20 minutes to apply. It is important to gather all necessary information and documentation before applying for assistance. This will help FEMA to process the application in a timely manner. Once you have applied over the phone and are given an application number, you may provide supporting documentation to FEMA by uploading to your [DisasterAssistance.gov](https://www.fema.gov/disaster-assistance) account, faxing documents, or mailing the documents.

For more information about eligibility, expenses covered, and other criteria, please visit FEMA's FAQ website at: <https://www.fema.gov/disasters/coronavirus/economic/funeral-assistance/faq>

"We are very thankful to FEMA for administering this program for people across the country. We have many families who are in need of this type of support here on the Navajo Nation. We encourage everyone to carefully read about the eligibility and requirements, to gather their documentation, and submit in accordance with the FEMA guidelines," said Vice President Lizer.

For questions or to apply, please call FEMA's COVID-19 Funeral Assistance Line Number at 844-684-6333, Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. (MDT). For individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, deafblind, or have speech disabilities, please call 800-462-7585. More information about the Funeral Assistance program is available on FEMA's website at: <https://www.fema.gov/disasters/coronavirus/economic/funeral-assistance#apply>.

###

For the latest news from the Office of the President and Vice President, please visit <http://www.opvp.navajo-nsn.gov/> or find us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.