ATTENTION!

With the town of Gallup on lockdown beginning this evening, I strongly urge you and family members to stay home and avoid any travel west, especially to Grants. The reason being the likelihood of many members of the Navajo Nation and other outlier towns and communities who will not have access to shop in Gallup, may make their way eastward to Grants. This means that “Hot Spot” (McKinley County) residents, especially those who are asymptomatic, will be shopping in various stores in Grants and potentially exposing others to the virus.

As projected, New Mexico is realizing a greater number of positive cases statewide, in the northwest region, and unfortunately, we also have a total of 12 positive Acoma cases, 9 of which are on the reservation. The Tribal Administration is grateful for the strong turnout at yesterday’s curbside testing. If you did not have an opportunity to get tested, please visit ACL’s curbside testing site. The Pueblo’s Health and Human Services Department is working with NM Department of Health to coordinate additional testing in the coming week.

Corn planting will take place on Saturday, May 2nd and participation is limited to the immediate family members of the Field Chiefs and Cooks who reside on Acoma lands. Field Chiefs share the concern about the potential spread of the virus and wish to ensure the safety of all tribal members. We can all help by offering our prayers for a successful and safe planting and, a successful harvest this fall.

Thank you for your continued cooperation with the Executive Order. Please remain patient, safe, and practice all precautions to ensure the safety of your family and our community. Our very best wishes to all of you.

Tribal Administration
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 1, 2020

Governor authorizes Gallup lockdown

SANTA FE – In response to an emergency request from the mayor of Gallup, Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham at 12 p.m. on Friday will invoke the state’s Riot Control Act, authorizing her to enact further temporary restrictions to mitigate the uninhibited spread of COVID-19 in that city.

Effective at 12 p.m., May 1st, all roads into Gallup are closed. Businesses in the city of Gallup will close from 5 p.m. through 8 a.m. Vehicles may only have a maximum of two individuals. Residents of the city should remain at home except for emergency outings and those essential for health, safety and welfare.

Gallup city police and McKinley County sheriff’s department will partner with New Mexico State Police and Department of Transportation to enforce the emergency order and road closures. The New Mexico National Guard will also provide support to this effort in a non-law enforcement capacity.

Both outgoing Gallup Mayor Jackie McKinney and new Mayor Louis Bonaguidi, who was sworn into office 2:30 p.m., April 30, requested the governor declare a state of emergency under the Riot Control Act, 12-10-16 to 12-10-21 NMSA 1978. Those mayoral letters are attached.

Any state of emergency proclaimed under the Riot Control Act, along with any restrictions imposed for control of that emergency, terminates automatically at noon on the third day after it becomes effective unless sooner terminated by proclamation of the governor. The Gallup emergency is effective immediately and will expire at noon on Monday, May 4.

The Riot Control Act authorizes the governor to, for the temporary existence of a state of emergency, prohibit persons being on public streets and the use of certain streets and highways, among other broad emergency restrictions.

Because of the extreme heightened risk of transmission in the northwestern region of the state, McKinley County – along with neighboring San Juan and Cibola counties – remain subject to the Secretary of Health’s public health order of April 11. Moderate easings incorporated in the modified public health order effective Friday, May 1, do not apply in those counties.

“I recognize this request is unusual and constitutes a drastic measure, and the emergency powers set out under the Riot Control Act should be invoked sparingly,” said Mayor
Bonaguidi. “However, the COVID-19 outbreak in the city of Gallup is a crisis of the highest order. Immediate action is necessary.”

“We fully support the proactive measures implemented by Governor Lujan Grisham, at the request of the City of Gallup,” said Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez. “We have many members of the Navajo Nation that reside in Gallup and many that travel in the area and their health and safety is always our top priority. Thank you to the Governor for her leadership and decisive actions. We urge everyone to stay home, stay safe, and save lives!”

“In order to maintain our freedoms as the people of the greatest country, we need to work together to get back to normalcy in McKinley County,” said Sen. George Muñoz of Gallup. “Thus, we are restricting travel in and out of the county, establishing a quarantine, for the next three days. We will assess each day afterwards until the spread of the virus is reducing. There’s nothing more important than the health and welfare of every American person, but the reopening of the economy and places of worship is paramount to continuing our way of life that our founding fathers dreamed of and fought for.”

“The needs of McKinley County are the most important in the state,” said Rep. Patricia Lundstrom of Gallup. “The escalating numbers and deaths indicate that we must take immediate action. Everyone should take this seriously and stay home. These measures are aggressive but necessary.”

“The state is doing everything in their power to stop the spread of this virus,” said Sen. Shannon Pinto. “It has taken too many of our loved ones to not take every measure we can. I support these steps and ask our community to abide by the directives. It is now in our hands. Only we can make the difference. Love is having the courage to do what is right for them, and not just for you.”

McKinley County Commissioner Bill Lee, who wrote, in part, “You and your team have worked diligently with the leadership from the Navajo Nation, Zuni Pueblo, City of Gallup, our local Representatives, Senators and, McKinley County seeking solutions and taking the best steps possible. I want you to know that I personally support these coordinated efforts and the request made by our Mayor. Over the past three days difficult discussions in trying times have led us to take these steps. The days ahead will not be easy and, I keep those who will be on the front lines protecting us in my prayers. I pray not only for their safety but that the citizens will extend grace, courtesy and respect for the job they will be performing.”

“The urgency of the situation in McKinley County calls for urgent action,” said Rep. Wonda Johnson of Church Rock. “That is what this is. For the sake of our elders and at risk members of our community we must treat this situation with the seriousness that it requires. I urge everyone to stay home and help our community recover from this pandemic.”

Under the Riot Control Act, anyone who fails to comply with restrictions imposed under the act is guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction of a second or subsequent offense is guilty of a fourth-degree felony.
“The spread of this virus in McKinley County is frightful,” said Gov. Lujan Grisham, “and it shows that physical distancing has not occurred and is not occurring. The virus is running amok there. It must be stopped, and stricter measures are necessary. A problem in one part of our state, with a virus this dangerous and this contagious, is a problem for our entire state.

“The imperative for all of us to remain home and physically distant has not changed. It is even more crucial for New Mexicans in the northwestern region. But what is happening in the northwest could happen in any part of our state. We must remain vigilant.”

McKinley County as of Thursday had reported 1,027 positive cases of COVID-19, more than 30 percent of the state’s total positive COVID-19 cases and the most positive cases in the entire state, outstripping even far more populous counties. Its infection trend has shown no sign of flattening. The county has reported an additional 207 positive cases in the last two days alone, more than every other county in the state has reported total over the length of the pandemic save three.