



MESCALERO *Apache* TRIBE

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June 11, 2020

Dear Tribal Members:

I write to update you on the coronavirus (COVID-19) on the Mescalero Apache Reservation. As of today, there have been zero new positive cases since June 4th. This is great news! Working together, we were able to stop the virus from spreading. Thank you for your cooperation during the lockdown.

Because we were so successful, the Tribal Council and the Administration are confident that we can begin to re-open the Tribe. However, we must continue to protect our community. The Tribe has been watching the reopening of the State of New Mexico and other tribes very carefully. We have also reviewed Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH) guidelines. We considered the Tribe's needs and designed this plan specifically for the Tribe. The Tribe believes that the below actions allow for a slow transition that keeps the community safe:

- Executive Order 20-06, which goes into effect on Monday, June 15th at 6:00 A.M., lifts some restrictions but keeps others in place. For example: churches may reopen but with limited occupancy. Another example: the curfew is no longer in place, but facemasks are still required in all public places. I have included a copy of the Executive Order. I also included a summary of the Executive Order for your convenience. Please review both documents very carefully. You could be cited for violating Executive Order 20-06.
- Tribal Offices will remain closed to the public and furloughs will continue for the time being. Essential employees will continue to follow safety precautions.
- The Tribal Store will open to the public (not just Tribal members) but safety restrictions will continue.
- The Tribe must raise revenue for governmental operations and to meet its debt obligations. We are lobbying the United States Congress for coronavirus relief to recover lost revenue due to the closure of Inn of the Mountain Gods Resort & Casino.

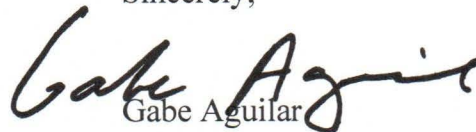
Other tribes across the country have done the same. Currently, none of the money set aside by Congress to address the coronavirus can be used to recover lost revenue from gaming operations. Also, we are lobbying the Governor's office for help. The Governor has not offered any relief in this regard. Right now, the Tribe does not have any options other than to reopen, at least partially. However, the Tribe believes that it can implement strict rules to effectively prevent the spread of the coronavirus. With these circumstances in mind, the Tribe decided to open the Casino Apache Travel Center ("Travel Center"), on a limited basis, on Monday, June 15th. The Travel Center will follow strict cleaning policies and safety precautions. In addition, the Inn of the Mountain Gods (including outdoor recreational activities) will be open to Tribal Members and Affiliates only on June 21st. This will allow you the opportunity to see how we have changed operations to keep the community safe. Then, the Inn of the Mountain Gods will open to the public on a limited basis beginning on June 22, 2020. Again, strict cleaning and safety rules will be followed. We will continue to fight for funding at the federal and state level.

- This year's July 4th Ceremonial and Rodeo is cancelled. The Tribal Council considered this matter at length. We saw that tribes across New Mexico cancelled their annual ceremonials. We believe that this is because the risks associated with such a large public event cannot be avoided. We discussed various ways to try to keep the event safe. Unfortunately, we did not think any of these possibilities. The decision to cancel the event was difficult. But we must keep public safety in mind.

The Tribe plans to reassess the situation every week to determine if there is a need to impose restrictions again or if we can continue to re-open. We will keep you informed.

Again, thank you for everything you have done to help stop the spread of COVID-19. Stay safe!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gabe Aguilar". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gabe Aguilar
President

