



Narragansett Indian Tribe

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Chief Sachem's Office

April 21, 2020

Greetings Tribal Community

Per my correspondence dated March 31, 2020, I am providing an update as to what has transpired pertaining to COVID-19 since then.

The staff along with Tribal Government have been extremely busy not only handling the normal day to day business, but also trying to meet the growing needs of the Tribal Members directly affected by COVID-19. Due to the proximity of both national hotspots (Boston and New York City), the virus has spread rapidly across the state of Rhode Island, touching every community within its borders. It is relentless, and unforgiving, infecting all ages. We must always attempt to keep one step ahead whenever possible.

As you know, the State of Rhode Island has implemented safety measures to keep the population from congregating in public spaces. Beaches, non-essential stores, parks, etc. have all been closed to help curb the spread of COVID-19. Gatherings of more than 5 people have been banned. It's not an ideal scenario, but it has helped exponentially in efforts to flatten the curve of infection. To that end we too must tighten the belt. Since the closure of state and local parks, non-essential stores etc., there has been an influx of traffic on Tribal lands, both Tribal and non-tribal. The greater majority of the time said traffic on Tribal lands is in excess of parties of more than 5. It is because of this, and with the utmost safety and well-being of Tribal Members in mind, that we must for the time being restrict access to reservation lands including the Tribal Beach until further notice. Should you have a specific need that would require access to reservation lands, (ex. Prayer) please call Tribal Police for access, at 401-409-2054. This was not an easy decision to come to in the least; however, it is done out of the absolute interest of Tribal public safety in combatting the spread of COVID-19.

Per Governor Raimondo, the expectation of a major surge in cases and peak transmission of COVID-19 will be within the next two weeks. I strongly encourage all to use careful judgement and follow all of the necessary safety precautions now, and for the duration of this Pandemic.

The Tribe is in receipt of COVID-19 funds from various federal funding agencies. I cannot emphasize enough that this is not "free money" that the Tribe can do whatever it wants with. We must follow all federal guidelines and regulations in the most rigid of formats. The first funding received was AOA Title 6 COVID-19 funds. The Tribal government and staff have assembled a COVID-19 relief team that will

work jointly on the potential expenditures of funds received. The COVID-19 relief team worked tirelessly to assemble food baskets for the oldest 100 people in the tribe. This was an arduous task but an ultimate labor of love as the team tried to service the oldest people within our Tribe. In the future more notice will be provided through both USPS mail and the Tribe's website. We will be servicing more senior citizens within the next two weeks, and more Tribal members affected by COVID-19 shortly thereafter. Please note, if you have moved, or need to update your mailing address, please contact one of the Tribal secretaries immediately to update your address. This is crucial as certain services may be distributed via USPS.

Services will be maintained on a steady basis. Bear in mind that along with servicing Tribal Communities COVID-19 needs, we also must maintain daily duties. We are looking towards delivering services not only short term, but also mid term and long term as there has not been a definitive timeline as to just how long the Pandemic is going to last. As departments receive COVID-19 funds, they will be updated on the Tribe's website, along with the stipulations and guidelines that govern how the funds are to be utilized.

This is a whole new world that we are living in. Information pertaining to COVID-19 evolves on a daily basis. By now, many of us either know someone who has contracted the virus, or know someone who has passed from the virus. I cannot stress enough the importance of observing all of the safety precautions that have been laid out for the overall safety and well being of everyone. As always, please visit <http://narragansettindiannation.org/nit-covid-19coronavirus-updates/> for all Tribal COVID-19 updates, along with <https://health.ri.gov/covid/#alerts> for all alerts from the state of Rhode Island pertaining to COVID-19.

In closing I would like to reiterate...please keep yourself and your families safe. Practice social distancing. Wash your hands multiple times a day. If you are sick, PLEASE stay home. If you are in need or have any questions pertaining to the Tribe's response to COVID-19, please feel free to contact me directly, at 401-364-1100, x 203, or 401-284-6735.

If we all do our part, we will come out of this trying time stronger than ever.

Be well, and take care.



Chief Sachem Anthony Dean Stanton