New Mexico First and Project SHARE NM
Newsletter
Stay Informed and Engaged
May 25, 2020
Memorial Day
Memorial Day History

Memorial Day is an American holiday, observed on the last Monday of May, honoring the men and women who died while serving in the U.S. military. Originally known as Decoration Day, it originated in the years following the Civil War and became an official federal holiday in 1971. Some records show that one of the earliest Memorial Day commemoration was organized by a group of freed slaves in Charleston, South Carolina. By the late 1860s, Americans in various towns and cities had begun holding springtime tributes to these countless fallen soldiers, decorating their graves with flowers and reciting prayers. Did you know? Each year on Memorial Day a national moment of remembrance takes place at 3:00 p.m. local time. Read more about One of the Earliest Memorial Day Ceremonies Was Held by Freed Slaves. (Source: History.com Editors)
History of Memorial Day

Community Services for Veterans and Families

Our communities are also standing ready to serve our veterans. The SHARE Resource Directory lists 270 programs offering services to veterans and families across the state. To look for services in your area, add your location to this search. Many may be temporarily suspended because of the COVID-19 emergency, so call first.

If you know veterans who need immediate help with basic needs, there are several state-wide organizations poised to help.

The Veterans Crisis Line connects veterans of all ages and their families and friends with qualified, caring Department of Veterans Affairs responders through a confidential toll-free hotline, online chat, or text. Call 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1, chat online, or send a text message to 838255 to receive confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Support for deaf and hard of hearing individuals is available.
The American Red Cross offers confidential services to all veterans and their families to help them identify their needs and connect them to the most appropriate resources, including emergency needs for food, clothing, and shelter, referrals to counseling services, burial benefits, and other resources that meet the unique needs of local veterans and their families. **Phone: (505) 265-8514**  
**Tollfree: (800) 560-2302**

The Veterans Integration Centers (VIC) in Albuquerque and Alamogordo provide 1) information & Referral for veterans and their families; 2) transitional housing for homeless veterans (in all of New Mexico), 3) supportive Services for Veteran Families, 4) food Pantry for veterans only. Phone: (505) 296-0800. YOU can help the VIC continue to provide these essentially needed services through a [GoFundMeCharity campaign](https://www.gofundme.com/).
Home Town Heroes

New Mexico First honors those who have served and perished while serving in the military. In addition to our military heroes, New Mexico has heroes who serve our communities. Thanks to our “hometown heroes” who continue to serve us in this time of emergency. Who are your “hometown heroes?” Let us know, and we’ll feature them in future newsletter(s). (Picture information: Bataan Memorial Statue)

Email us Your Story

Grant Funding Opportunities
New Mexico funders have stepped up to the challenge with numerous emergency funding programs for organizations helping New Mexicans impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

WesternSky Community Care Grants are focused on social determinants of health in Dona Ana, Hidalgo, Luna, and Sierra Counties. Due mid-June. Apply through the Community Foundation’s online portal.

To find other emergency grant opportunities, visit the New Mexico Association of Grantmakers COVID-19 Grant Page.
Tip for Civility, Memorial Day

Memorial Day is always an important celebration. It is a time to step back and reflect on the people who made tremendous sacrifices serving in the US Armed Service. The inspiration and lessons our servicemen and women have taught us about service, self-sacrifice, and the willingness to stand up and step forward in the service of our nation are especially powerful reminders during challenging times. In New Mexico, where there is such a strong tradition of this form of service, the families and communities of servicemen and women also made sacrifices as our loved ones left, returned and some who were unable to return.

The impacts of a deployment cycle have ripples of impact. While learning and re-
learning how to live together during COVID-19 is not comparable to what it is to serve in the armed forces, there is wisdom that comes from people who have weathered incredible challenges and hardships. There is practical knowledge and perspective that can inform our current family, state, community, national, and world-wide challenges. Recognizing and inviting the insight and experiences of our heroes allows us is to find ways to be our best selves. Consider asking someone you know who has served what their experiences have taught them about living in our current times. Stories are powerful, especially when we respectfully ask others to share and then sincerely consider the lessons learned that they offer. Lilly Irvin-Vitela, President and Executive Director authors the tips for civility. To communicate with Lilly, email her at Lilly@nmfirst.org.

In the news: Request an absentee ballot in New Mexico

New Mexico’s Primary Election will take place on June 2, 2020. In response to the coronavirus in New Mexico, state and county officials are encouraging New Mexican voters to vote by absentee ballot. (Source: KRQE, New Mexico)

- Request and Absentee Ballot Online

Important Dates

- May 28, 2020 – Deadline to request an absentee ballot
- June 2, 2020 – New Mexico Primary
Did you know? Census often misses babies and young children. Help make them count!

The 2020 Census is underway. Babies and young children are often missed in the census. Not counting newborn babies and children impacts our share of federal investments in New Mexico for programs such as children’s health insurance, hospitals, child care, food assistance, schools, and early childhood development.

If you have not yet participated count everyone in your home on the 2020 Census. That includes babies, young children, foster children, and nonrelatives who live with you. The census will shape the future for communities across the nation by determining how resources are allocated.
Please share this message by forwarding it to friends, coworkers and family! Learn more at [2020CENSUS.GOV](https://2020CENSUS.GOV). (Source: CDC.gov)

**Respond to the Census Today**

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**Our Mission. Our Values.**

**Our Mission**
To be a catalyst for positive change by engaging citizens in policy and enabling action.

**Our Core Values**
- Meaningfully engaging New Mexicans in public policy;
- Striving for and respecting consensus;
- Pursuing and respecting diverse points of views;
- Ensuring inclusion and transparency;
- Rising above partisan politics;
- Changing policy to improve people's lives;
- Creating an informed citizenry that is powerfully motivated;
- Reaching out statewide including rural and tribal communities;
- Partnering with others;
- Promoting civility and Democracy at its best!

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