



**NEW MEXICO FIRST**  
*People. Ideas. Progress.*

## New Mexico First and Project SHARE NM Newsletter

Stay Informed and Engaged

June 1, 2020

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### New Mexico is a State Rich in History and Culture

“New Mexico is a state rich in history and culture. Our greatest assets are our people and when we harness the best of tradition, language and culture and use them, we are reminded why New Mexico is the Land of Enchantment. What we’re learning from the pandemic is that our leadership is laser focused on the best and highest for our citizens. We’ve got this New Mexico, let’s show ‘em!”

**Yolanda Cordova, Deputy Director, NM Dept of Workforce Solutions.**

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- Be Responsible. Wear a face covering when you are around other people. Stay 6 feet away from anyone not in your own household. Wash your hands – a lot. Cover your cough or sneeze.
- Be Patient. Access to your favorite businesses and recreation will be limited. It may take you longer than usual to get an appointment with your doctor, salon and other service providers.
- Be Prepared. Plan and call ahead. Don't leave the house without your face covering and hand sanitizer.
- Be Educated. Know what it takes to keep you and others safe. Visit [cv.nmhealth.org](http://cv.nmhealth.org) expert guidance.
- STAY HOME. If you do not need to go out, don't. Every outing creates risk for your family and your community.

## COVID Exit Strategy



## Concrete Supports in Times of Need are Still Important

As we move forward into the summer, we need to continue to ensure that New Mexicans have access to nutritious food, safe shelter, health and behavioral health care, and sufficient income to carry us through this crisis all together.

### Access to Healthy Food

SNAP participants can now use their EBT cards to purchase groceries online for free home delivery from Amazon and Walmart. Work requirements for all SNAP participants have been waived for the foreseeable future.

The Pandemic EBT allows for additional funds for families with any children who participate in the school lunch program. The funds retroactively cover mid-March through mid-June. TANF and SNAP participants with eligible children will receive the benefits automatically. Other families with eligible children will need to contact their school's administrative offices to apply for the program. Children were still eligible to receive "grab and go" breakfasts and lunches in addition to those benefits.

Summer "grab and go" meal programs for K-12 students continue, though locations may have changed. In some cases, local government is taking over these programs from schools. For information, check the New Mexico Out-of-School Time Network (NMOST) COVID-19 [Resource Page](#). The page also has links to Roadrunner Food Bank [special distribution sites](#) and to [Presbyterian Free Healthy Meals for Kids](#).

Senior Food Hotline, operated by the New Mexico Aging and Long-Term Services Department (ALTSD) helps seniors and disabled adults who need help accessing groceries. Call the hotline at 800-432-2080. Or use the live chat function on their [homepage](#) that allows you to get your questions answered quickly.

Senior Food Distribution Sites. Many senior centers that offered meals are transitioning into food distribution centers where individuals can pick up to-go lunches and food. In some cases, those with physical, emotional or other limitations can request meal deliveries to their front door. Seniors, family

members or friends/neighbors need to take the initiative and call their [local meal sites](#) to request these meals for our elders.

## Access to Healthy Food

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### Access To Shelter

Stay in Your Home. Keep the Lights On. here are new protections in place for those who have lost income and are having trouble paying the rent or a mortgage. The NM Center on Law and Poverty has handouts that explain your rights to [stay in your home](#) and to [keep your utilities](#) on during this time.

Needing Shelter? For those who are currently experiencing homelessness, the pandemic is much more threatening. With most homeless shelters closed to new residents, communities have begun to offer housing in hotel and motel rooms. This is expensive, and these are usually reserved for those who are vulnerable or with COVID-19 symptoms. [To find homeless services in your community, add your location to this search.](#)

When Home Isn't Safe. For some New Mexicans, unfortunately, home is not a safe place to shelter. Domestic violence cases have spiked during the COVID-19 emergency. A recent check of NM's domestic violence shelters confirms that they are open throughout the state, although some are cutting capacity to allow for physical distancing. For a [list of domestic violence services and shelters near you, enter your location in this search.](#)

## Know your Rights



*Mural Credit: HomegrowNM Trading Post, Albuquerque, NM*

## Support for Workers and Businesses

Unemployment Insurance applications have mushroomed since March, with the 11.4% unemployment rate double that of a year ago. A number of modifications to the system are intended to support workers in this unprecedented emergency. Work requirements have been waived. The waiting week has been waived. A supplement of \$600 per month will continue through July 31, 2020. [The Dept. of Workforce Solutions website](#) has much more information, including a [flow-chart](#) in English and Spanish and instructions on how to apply.

Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) is a new temporary federal program under the CARES Act that provides benefits to individuals who are not otherwise eligible for Unemployment Insurance including self-employed, independent contractors and gig economy workers. The application is a two-step process. [Find information here.](#)

Sick Leave and Family Leave. As of April 1, workers at establishments with fewer than 500 employees are entitled to up to 2 weeks of paid sick leave to care for themselves or a family member if affected by COVID-19. Workers are also entitled to potentially paid family leave up to 12 weeks if they must stop work to care for a child due to COVID-19 reasons. The Center for Law & Poverty [outlines these rights.](#)

Paycheck Protection Program has awarded over \$1 billion to New Mexico's private businesses and nonprofit organizations. On Friday, May 22, the Small Business Administration issued guidance on how to calculate forgiveness on these loans. The [Loan Forgiveness Interim Final Rule](#) is effective immediately, but still subject to public review and comment. The National Council of Nonprofits has a [helpful summary and analysis.](#)

Small Business Stories. In their series, "Small Business, Big Mission," Business First and 42 American City Business Journals around the country selected local businesses to profile, tracking week by week how they coped with the impact of the Covid-19 virus. "Small companies are the business core of America. That's especially true in New Mexico, where more than 90% of businesses had fewer than 20 employees in 2016, according to the Small Business Administration." [Read the stories of the five small New Mexico businesses profiled here.](#)

## Department of Workforce Solutions



## COVID-19 Emergency Funds

The All Together NM Fund has been established by the Governor's office in conjunction with the New Mexico Coalition of Community Foundations to help New Mexico respond to and eventually recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. The Fund will be used to address immediate needs and offer long-term support for the recovery work that lies ahead. Coalition members include: Albuquerque Community Foundation, Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico, Santa Fe Community Foundation and Taos Community Foundation. These organizations will work with the broader philanthropic community across New

Mexico and consult with the State of New Mexico to determine the most urgent needs to be addressed through grantmaking from the All Together NM Fund.

[Apply here.](#)

[Native American Relief Fund.](#) The New Mexico Foundation, in collaboration with the Santa Fe Community Foundation, Thornburg Foundation, Navajo-Hopi Families COVID-19 Relief Fund, have launched The Native American Relief Fund. This fund provides emergency grants to tribal communities and organizations to bring food, water, and other emergency supplies to some of the hardest-hit families and communities impacted by COVID-19 across the Navajo, Apache, and Pueblos of New Mexico and beyond. [Click here to donate.](#) Checks can also be mailed to New Mexico Foundation, 8 Calle Medico, Santa Fe, 87505 (care of Native American Relief Fund)

[Empty Pantry Program, Santa Fe](#) Overwhelming numbers of employees at Santa Fe businesses have recently lost their jobs due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These include workers at restaurants, retail stores, hotels and other businesses. The Program, sponsored by Governor Bill Richardson, with The Santa Fe New Mexican and the Santa Fe Community Foundation, provides much needed assistance for laid-off employees and their families. [Find donation information](#) and an [application for assistance](#).

[New Mexico First COVID-19 Food Resources](#)

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## Tip for Civility: Relationship Building in Coalitions

Not only is it important for members of a coalition to build strong working alliances with the coalition convener/organizer, it is important to build strong working relationships with each other. By finding shared values, common ground, and complementary assets the benefit of engaging in a coalition can extend well beyond a time-specific agenda. By consistently creating opportunities for coalition members to communicate and engage around values-driven priorities and coordinated action, deeper understanding and trust are built. The Tip for Civility section is authored by Lilly Irvin-Vitela, President and Executive Director of New Mexico First. She invites you to connect! Email her using the button below.

[E-mail Lilly](#)



## Census

What if English is not my First Language? The online form and telephone line will be available in 13 languages. Language guides will be available in 59 languages other than English. [Download the fliers](#)

[I Count New Mexico](#) has produced a flier with basic [information in Navajo](#), [available here](#).

[I Count NM](#)

[Click Here to Download Previous Newsletters](#)

## 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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