



NEW MEXICO FIRST

People. Ideas. Progress.

New Mexico First and Project SHARE NM Newsletter

Stay Informed and Engaged

January 25, 2021



*“For there is always light if only we’re brave enough to see it, if only we’re brave enough to be it.” - Amanda Gorman, National Youth Poet Laureate, January 20, 2021. [Read](#) or [listen](#) to Ms. Gorman’s poem, *The Hill We Climb*.*

NM Legislative Session is Open. The 2021 Legislative Session opened on January 19th for a 30-day session ending on March 20th. [See key dates](#). This session will obviously be conducted very differently from the past. The public is not allowed inside the Roundhouse for this session because of coronavirus health concerns. Still, legislators are [encouraging people](#) to stay in touch and participate remotely. The Governor has postponed her State of the State address to let lawmakers to get settled in first. The Governor will likely give that speech from a remote location.

[New Mexico First](#) will be supporting legislation that furthers the recommendations endorsed by public consensus during Town Hall gatherings. You can follow legislation that is important to you by signing on at [NMLegis.gov](#). Better yet, sign onto [MyRoundhouse](#) to create your own customized legislative tracking system. [Watch this video](#) to learn how. New Mexico First will also be sharing weekly legislative updates and ways to get involved starting this week on:

- Food, Hunger, and Ag
- Health
- Education
- Economic and Community Development
- Good Governance
- Natural Resources and the Environment

In Washington, D.C. In his few days in office, President Biden signed 30 executive orders on a number of issues. Half of the orders pertain to a national response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Here are some highlights:

- **COVID-19.** 100 Day Masking Challenge. President Biden has asked Americans to wear masks for 100 days. “Just 100 days to mask,” he said. “Not forever. 100 days. And I think we’ll see a significant reduction.”
 - **Food.** The President asked the U.S. Department of Agriculture to allow states to increase Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits by 15%, which would mean that an additional 12 million people get enhanced benefits. The order would also ask USDA to increase Pandemic-EBT benefits by 15%. This electronic debit card program provides for students who would have qualified for free or reduced-price meals at school. According to the White House, this could provide a family with three children an additional \$100 in support per month.
 - **Economy.** The President has asked federal agencies to extend a moratorium on foreclosures on federally guaranteed mortgages through at least the end of March. The President is also moving to continue a pause on federal student loan interest and principal payments through the end of September.
 - **Equity.** The President directs all federal agencies to review and report on equity in their ranks within 200 days, including a plan on how to remove barriers to opportunities in policies and programs.
 - [See the list.](#)
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Help Get the Word Out. The NM Dept. of Health is looking to partner with individuals, in all areas of our state, to speak to fellow residents about the importance of taking the COVID-19 vaccine and maintaining COVID Safe Practices. DOH is reaching out to organizations around NM to ask for their help in identifying New Mexicans who are trusted community voices and are interested in

stepping up to the mic anytime between now and through the end of the pandemic. If you are interested in participating in this grassroots effort, please contact Audrey at Audrey@MomentumSantaFe.com or 505-670-0115. Momentum Santa Fe is coordinating this effort. [Visit the Together New Mexico webpage](#) to learn more.

How to Safely Wear Your Mask



Step 1: Wash or sanitize your hands.



Step 2: Make sure the top of the mask is over your nose and the bottom is under your chin.



Step 3: Place the mask over your nose and mouth before you use the ear straps or tie it behind your head.



Step 4: Move the mask around so it covers nose, mouth, and chin completely.



Step 5: The tops of some masks can bend. Press your fingers on the top of the mask to make them fit tight around your nose.



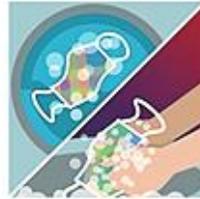
Step 6: Do not touch the mask while wearing it. Use the mask ear straps or ties if you need to make it fit better.



Step 7: Use the mask ear straps or ties to take it off. Do not touch the front.



Step 8: Throw away if mask is disposable.



Step 9: Wash your mask by machine or by hand before you use it again.



Step 10: Wash or sanitize your hands again.

BUILD New Mexico Youth Leadership. [New Mexico First](#) is partnering with [New Mexico Tech Upward Bound](#) and [Northern New Mexico College Upward Bound](#) in Bernalillo, Rio Arriba, and Socorro counties to launch BUILD, a youth civic engagement and leadership development program beginning next week. A cohort

of high school students will participate in a hands-on experiential learning program from January through May of 2021 and apply the lessons learned to issues that matter most to them in their communities. This morning our top 12 applicants were selected. However, an additional \$12,000 would allow more qualified, talented, and passionate students to join this leadership cohort. **You can help us say yes to more students!** [Please consider donating today.](#)

COVID-19

Information, Resources & Updates

Moving in the Right Direction. New COVID-19 cases in NM are [on the way down](#), from a high of 3,664 new cases on November 19th to 635 new cases on January 24rd. Still, Harding County is the only county currently in the green tier for fewest restrictions on businesses. [Track your county's status.](#) [Find more information](#) about how to help continue this downward trend by [getting tested](#) and [signing up for the vaccine](#) so you'll be ready when your turn comes around.

Tribal Resource: Chamiza Foundation Covid-19 Emergency Relief Fund is accepting applications from Pueblo Indian organizations and organizations serving Pueblo communities in New Mexico that are responding to direct threats from COVID-19. The grant awards will range from \$3,000 to \$12,000. Specific areas of interest include food, medical supplies, and personal items; water; community relief and recovery needs; and internet access and connectivity.

Deadlines: February 12 and May 7. [Learn More.](#)

Addressing Loss and Grief. The [Children's Grief Center of New Mexico](#) (CGC) offers free support groups for bereaved children (ages 5 – 25) and their adult caregivers. Other adult support groups are offered to those experiencing partner loss, miscarriage or early infant loss, and parents who have lost children with special healthcare needs or disabilities. More adult groups are being added as the need continues to rise. Visit the [website](#) or call for an intake interview: 505-323-0478.

The Provider Relief Fund has allocated \$175 billion to be distributed through the Provider Relief Fund (PRF) to providers of health care, services and support. for healthcare-related expenses or lost revenue due to COVID-19. Separately, the COVID-19 Uninsured Program reimburses providers for testing and treating uninsured individuals with COVID-19. These distributions do not need to be repaid to the US government, assuming providers comply with the terms and conditions. [Learn More.](#)

Save Our Stages. [NM Economic Development Department](#) and the [Department of Cultural Affairs, NM Arts](#) are hosting a webinar on January 26th on the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant (SVOG), also known as the Save Our Stages (SOS) Act. This is a federal economic assistance program for arts organizations administered through the Small Business Administration. If you are a theatrical producer, talent rep, venue promoter, operate a live venue, live performing arts organization, movie house, or cultural institution you may be eligible to apply. [Sign up](#) for the Webinar, January 26th, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm. [Learn More.](#)

NM Safe Certified Training Programs. NM businesses in all sectors are encouraged to receive training and become certified in COVID-safe practices to

help ensure everyone's safety as New Mexico reopens for business and recreation. [Learn More](#).

Tip for Civic Engagement

On Friday, January 22nd, Lilly Irvin Vitela, NM First's President and Executive Director, and Melanie Sanchez Eastwood, NM First's Deputy Director, joined State Auditor Brian Colón on Cafecito Con Colón. The discussion focused on the importance of bipartisanship, which is a fundamental premise of New Mexico First's work on a range of issues, including redistricting. [Listen in](#) to the conversation.

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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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