



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

## **New Mexico First and Project SHARE NM Newsletter**

Stay Informed and Engaged

February 8, 2021

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**Our Roots**  
**Our Accomplishments**  
**BLACK HISTORY**

*“A people who lack the knowledge of their past history, culture and origin are like a tree without roots.”* Marcus Garvey

February is Black History month across the nation. But in New Mexico, 2021 is also the 10th year anniversary of the New Mexico Black History Festival, and the [New Mexico Black Leadership Council](#) is launching a months-long celebration of [DECADES: Past, Present, Future](#). Mark your calendars for a schedule of films, concerts, and lectures from February through July.

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**2021 Session New Mexico First Legislative Priorities.** In the 2021 Legislative Session, New Mexico First will be supporting legislation that received cross partisan consensus through our town halls, community conversations and collaborations. [This list](#) will be updated as the session progresses.

For tips on how you can participate in this virtual legislative session, visit the [NM Advocacy Alliance](#) website.

### **Highlight on Equity**

New Mexico First would like to acknowledge that Representatives Dow, Figueroa,

and Fajardo for Co-sponsoring [HB 211](#) which advances recommendations made by the NMF Redistricting Task Force. 37 House Members and counting have signed on to support this bi partisan reform to strengthen openness, transparency, fairness, and equity in the electoral process through the Redistricting Act. HB 211 mirrors [SB 199](#) introduced by Senators Mark Moores and Ortiz y Pino. There was a bi-partisan do pass in House State Government, Elections, and Indian Affairs today.

[House Bill 207](#), the Food, Hunger, and Farm Bill of 2021 reflects the work of a broad coalition of over 400 individuals and organizations from across New Mexico. Thoughtful, representative, and inclusive systems change to address hunger and strengthen local food systems is at the heart of this Bill. Co-sponsored by Representatives Stansbury and Ferrary, this legislation if passes would create decision making infrastructure to fight hunger and fight for local food systems. Mark your calendars. This is on the agenda for 2/13/20 at 1pm in the House Water and Agricultural Resources Committee.

[House Bill 252](#), COVID-19 Vaccine Outreach, Sponsored by Representative Serrato allocates resources for local vaccine education, information, and outreach. Local voices are often the most trusted voices and can create access to public health options for communities that might otherwise we underserved. This has been assigned to House Health and Human Services.

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With the arrival of the coronavirus vaccine, New Mexicans are beginning to speak of the “light at the end of the tunnel.” **A reminder: we are still in the tunnel!** Our recovery as a state depends on ensuring that we all have access to the latest information about COVID-19 vaccinations and that all of us commit to COVID-19 safe practices. Community outreach, education and information sharing is critical to stopping COVID-19 in NM.

We can all help. Get the facts. Share what you know with others.

**Trusted Voices.** 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. Or nominate yourself. [Visit the Together New Mexico webpage](#) to learn more.

**Ruidoso First Responders Ask Us to "Wear a Mask."** The Village of Ruidoso has released a PSA featuring local first responders who are asking people to wear masks to help stop the spread of the virus and protect the folks who are protecting us. "Our first responders are on the front line of this battle, and they have been since day one. They are our local heroes, and they are asking us to do one simple thing to help protect them," said Ruidoso Mayor Lynn Crawford. "It is crucial that our residents and anyone that comes to our Village take this simple step of wearing a face covering to protect themselves and our community. We have to stop the spread of this virus, and we can do it together." [Watch the PSA.](#)

**Stoodis New Mexico – Let's Do This.** To raise awareness about the current public health crisis in tribal communities, NM's Behavioral Health Collaborative has launched a COVID-19 outreach campaign featuring the work of renowned Native American cartoonist Ricardo Caté. His cartoon, "Without Reservation," is published daily in the Santa Fe New Mexican and The Taos News. The campaign will also use public service announcements on Native American radio stations, banners and flyers distributed at each Native pueblos, tribe or nation, and a social media campaign tapping trusted Native voices. [Learn more.](#)

**An Open Letter from NM Health Care Professionals.** *We are your doctors, nurses, health care practitioners, providers, and professionals. We have worked tirelessly throughout this crisis to help keep you safe. We've seen COVID-19 illnesses and deaths firsthand. And right now we need your help ... Please make the commitment to protect yourselves, your families, and your communities. Please be cautious and smart. Please help health care professionals help you. Help us protect you. Help us ensure that we have the resources to treat the sick*

*and care for the dying. Together, we can keep New Mexicans healthy.* Read and sign on to [the letter](#).

**Flyers and Posters to Share.** Organizations around the state are creating information resources for us to share with others. Forward these to your networks, download, print and post in community gathering spots. **Help get the word out.**

- The Dept. of Health, Infectious Disease Division has created a [flyer in English, Spanish and Vietnamese](#) to answer common questions about COVID-19 vaccinations in NM. These include questions about vaccine safety, possible side effects, eligibility (everyone), cost (free), and whether or not you will still need to wear a mask (Yes! Also continue to maintain social distancing and avoid large gatherings. Wash your hands).
- DOH also has [posters in English, Spanish and Vietnamese](#) with information, phone numbers and QR to make it easier to register for the vaccinations. Download [vaccination posters](#) in English, Spanish and Vietnamese.
- The [Santa Fe Indian School Leadership Institute](#) and partners have developed flyers in English and Spanish on [vaccination side effects](#). “Vaccinate with confidence!” These side effects mean that the vaccination is building your immune system to protect you from the COVID-19 virus.

**What’s your COVID-19 Experience?** UNM’s Health Sciences invite you to tell them about your experiences before and during the COVID-19 Public Health emergency. The info you provide could be used to inform state leaders and policymakers to better handle public health emergencies. Open to adults ages 18+. The survey is available online by mail, or over the phone. Online link: <https://redcap.link/4efbubiq>. For mail or phone option contact Dr. Carla Wilhite, 505-272-3324, or email [cwilhite@salud.unm.edu](mailto:cwilhite@salud.unm.edu). Participants will have the option

at the end of the survey to be entered into a drawing in February for a chance at one of two \$75 merchandise cards.

Do you have COVID-19 information resources? Let us know, and we will add to a collection to share with New Mexico.



**Quality of Life Grants.** The [Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation National Paralysis Resource Center](#) announces two grant funding opportunities. Direct Effect grants offer up to \$25,000 to nonprofit organizations for projects that clearly impact individuals living with paralysis, their families, and caregivers. COVID-19: Addressing Social Isolation grants fund projects with the goal of enhancing the connectedness of people living with paralysis and their caregivers to their communities. Grants will be awarded within the range of \$25,000-\$50,000.

A free Application Technical Assistance Webinar will be held on Tuesday, February 9th from 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm EST. [Register here](#). Visit the Reeve Foundation website for an [overview of the Quality of Life Grant Program](#) and the [grant application process](#). Proposals are due March 16th.

**COVID-19 Emergency Grants.** [The Grant Plant](#) has an extensive list of [COVID-19 emergency grants](#) available to New Mexican organizations. Timelines vary.

**Foreclosure Webinar.** On Wednesday, February 10th, noon-1:30, [Access to Justice Commission](#) and [United South Broadway Fair Lending Center](#) is hosting a webinar to provide information about the foreclosure process and options available to homeowners' facing foreclosure. The presenter, Mark Pustay is the Managing Attorney for the Fair Lending Center legal practice and represents income qualified homeowners who have been sued for foreclosure in the NM courts. [Register here.](#)

**COVID-19 Vaccinations.** Vaccinations are now available for New Mexicans in Phase IB (see below). **You must register** for a COVID-19 vaccination at [vaccinenm.org](#). When the vaccine is available to you, NMDOH will send you a notification and event code to schedule your appointment. You can register online or by phone. For more information on how to register and for vaccination sites, check the [NM COVID-19 Vaccine Dashboard](#).

**Moving to Green.** The New Mexico Department of Health on Wednesday announced the updated [statewide COVID-19 map](#) for the two-week period beginning Jan. 12th. Harding County remains on the Green list, and Colfax, Grant, Los Alamos, San Miguel, Sierra, Socorro and Union moved to the Yellow list, Twenty-eight of 33 counties saw improvements in their average daily per-capita rate of new cases in the last two weeks, and 29 counties saw improvements in their test positivity rate. In addition, the state's most populous counties – Bernalillo, Doña Ana, Sandoval, San Juan and Santa Fe – each improved dramatically in both of the two health gating criteria metrics. Next update will be on February 10th. [Track your county's progress](#) towards a safe opening.

**FREE At-Home COVID Test.** One way to move your county to green is to lower the positive test rate to below 5%. The more of us who test positive, the faster our county can open up to business. Also, many people with COVID-19 have no symptoms, yet these people can still infect others who may then develop severe or even fatal symptoms. To order a test, and for more information visit [learn.vaulthealth.com/nm/](https://learn.vaulthealth.com/nm/). Protect yourself and others. Move to Green!

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### **Tip for Civic Engagement**

Sometimes reaching a principled agreement requires a fearlessness in discussing differences and a strong dose of integrity and courage as well. Rather than shying away from conflicts, when they are approached with respect and good faith people are more able to build understanding and explore common ground. Questioning an idea or strategy is less likely to put others on the defense or offense than questioning another person's agenda or motives. Raising questions when difference arise rather than glossing over them is a profound act of trust in one's self and others.

This tip is authored by New Mexico First President and Executive Director, Lilly Irvin-Vitela. She can be reached at [lilly@nmifrst.org](mailto:lilly@nmifrst.org).

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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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