



Albuquerque Area Southwest Tribal Epidemiology Center

Press Release

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For Immediate Release

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Supporting Local Tribal Efforts in the Albuquerque Area During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Albuquerque, NM – The Native American population in our area is significantly impacted by the current COVID-19 outbreak and there is a significant need to strengthen tribal preparedness and response capabilities in response to COVID-19. The Albuquerque Area Indian Health Board, Inc. (AAIHB), and its Albuquerque Area Southwest Tribal Epidemiology Center (AASTEC) are dedicated to providing tribal communities in the Albuquerque Area with resources and technical support to assist their local COVID-19 emergency response efforts.

AASTEC recently was awarded supplemental emergency funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to support the efforts of all 27 Native American Tribes, Pueblos, Bands and Nations in the Albuquerque Area to prevent, prepare for and respond to COVID-19. We have now received this emergency supplement and are distributing the majority of the funding to all 27 Area tribal communities in equal measure. The funding can be utilized to support a wide variety of emergency/crisis response activities in tribal communities.

Although our team is working remotely, AASTEC is open and diligently working to continue to provide technical support to all 27 Tribes in the Indian Health Service Area. Our team consists of multidisciplinary public health professionals devoted to serving tribal communities. Many of our team members are from the tribes we serve. We are available to assist with tribal COVID-19 response activities by providing:

- Weekly COVID-19 update teleconference calls
- Daily situational reports with the latest COVID-19 data and information available
- Printed/electronic copies of COVID-19 educational materials/fact sheets
- Assistance with review and cultural tailoring of materials
- Technical support with webinars and videoconferencing
- Assistance with developing and implementing local surveillance tools
- Assistance with case investigations and/or contact tracing (*Contact tracing is the process of identifying persons who may have come into contact with an infected person and subsequent collection of further information about these contacts*)
- Assistance with conducting community surveys
- Technical support with grant writing for tribal communities applying for COVID-19 funding opportunities

Members of our team are available to participate in local community response meetings to learn how we can best serve local efforts and provide technical support. For more information and to sign up for our Public Health Alert listserv please visit our website at www.aastec.net.

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About the Albuquerque Area Southwest Tribal Epidemiology Center:

Established in September 2006, AASTEC's mission is to collaborate with the 27 American Indian Tribes in the Albuquerque Area to provide high quality health research, surveillance and training to improve the quality of life of American Indians. AASTEC's health priority areas were established in cooperation with our Executive Council and include: Behavioral Health, Healthy Aging, Injury Prevention, Chronic Disease Prevention and Management. AASTEC is one of 12 Tribal Epidemiology Centers serving American Indians and Alaska Natives throughout the country.