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[CORONAVIRUS INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS](#) March 31, 2020

Tohono O'odham Nation rules aim to slow the spread of COVID-19

An executive order issued Monday issues a stay-at-home order, a curfew and restrictions who can enter the Nation.

by [Emma Gibson](#)

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Tohono O'odham curfew

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The Tohono O'odham Nation announced several ways it hopes to slow the spread of the coronavirus, including a stay-at-home order, a curfew and a partial ban of those wanting to enter the Nation.

Tohono O'odham Nation Chairman Ned Norris Jr. signed an [executive order](#), Monday, March 30 that requires residents in the Nation to stay at home unless the person performs an essential role for the districts, the tribal government, or a branch of the Nation. People can leave their homes to seek safety, food or health care, and to go outside. The order does require everyone to enforce a 6-foot boundary with others no matter the activity.

The tribal government also issued a 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. curfew for its residents that will start Tuesday, March 31.

The government has announced one confirmed positive case of COVID-19 among its tribal members. The government spokesman Matt Smith said that person lives in Tucson, and Pima County performed the test.

“The Nation has been preparing for our first COVID-19 case, and there will likely be more to come,” said Chairman Norris in [a press release](#) reporting the first case. “Tribal citizens should continue practicing the social distancing and hygiene measures that will help us slow the spread of this virus. Together, we can protect our elders, those with health conditions and ourselves. The Nation continues to coordinate with local, state and federal health agencies on our response to the pandemic.”

Most individuals and businesses cannot enter the Nation at this time unless they are considered essential workers by the tribal government or by Monday’s order. The executive order will allow a few other categories of people to enter the Nation, like those delivering food or working in health care or maintenance.

The order also placed restrictions on funerals and wakes, allowing family members from outside tribal boundaries to attend. However, according to the order, those living in places with confirmed cases of COVID-19 should not come to the event.

The order also closed all playgrounds, and sports fields and courts.

Residents without symptoms are advised not to get tested for the new coronavirus. According to the order, public health nursing will follow up with anyone who is sick or has had contact with a symptomatic person.

If people don’t comply with these rules, the order states that the Nation’s law enforcement officers will send them home and record the incident.

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