



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Office of the Chairman

Timothy L. Nuvangyaoma

Office of the Vice Chairman

Clark W. Tenakhongva

HOPI CAUTIONS THE COMMUNITY ABOUT SCAMS AND FUNDRAISERS

The Hopi Tribe Warns the Public about Scams and Fundraisers

KYKOTSMOVI, AZ – April 15, 2020 — In the midst of the Coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic, cybercriminals, scammers and ill-advised individuals are hoping to capitalize on the current situation across the globe. Therefore, the Hopi Tribal leadership would like to warn the public and the Hopi community about recent cases of scams and fraudulent fundraisers over the phone or through online platforms.

The Hopi community has noticed a rise in calls about various scams and fundraisers including, but not limited to, charity scams, online fundraiser scams, social media scams, phishing scams, and robo-calls. Furthermore, there are some organizations and individuals, using the name or names of Hopi members in their fundraising campaigns, and it is imperative that the Hopi community be aware of this reality. The name Hopi or reference to the Hopi People is also utilized in some scams through the internet, or certain online platforms.

Hopi Tribal Chairman Timothy L. Nuvangyaoma clarified that contributions from the outside communities are welcomed, *“We understand there are some individuals who may have good intentions, or a good heart when it comes to their desire to help the Hopi community, however, unfortunately we are witnessing more and more of our Hopi people being adversely affected by the so called charity fundraising campaigns, and scams that are definitely not benefiting all of our Hopi citizens. To be effective in our approach to addressing our local needs, we have already created specific protocols to help our community.”*

A series of protocols have been put in place to help redirect any donations or contributions intended for the Hopi villages. In tandem with assistance from the Hopi Emergency Response Team (HERT) and The Hopi Foundation, specific measures exist to assist outside entities, organizations and individuals that want to help raise funds to support the Hopi villages. The Hopi Tribe and The Hopi Foundation will guide private and public contributors through appropriate channels to process donations.

“In these uncertain times, our Hopi people are facing many challenges, but we do not need additional stress or worries. We value the collective initiative the Hopi villages have taken to solicit donations for their village, but we all have to be mindful of how this directly affects the people,” added Hopi Vice Chairman Clark W. Tenakhongva. He continues, *“If you discover or come across a potential fraud or scam, please inform and educate our Hopisinom about the red flags, so they may be aware of the dangers and share this information with our elders. Be mindful of the calls and emails you receive to avoid falling prey to a scam.”*

With advice from federal authorities, the Federal Trade Commission, and coordination with county and local law enforcement, the recommendation is to continue to be aware of who one comes into contact with both online and in-person.

Types of Scams and Fraud Fundraising Campaigns

Cyber actors may send emails with malicious attachments or links to fraudulent websites to trick victims into revealing sensitive information or donating to fraudulent charities or causes. Exercise caution in handling any email with a COVID-19-related subject line, attachment, or hyperlink, and be wary of social media pleas, texts, or calls related to COVID-19.

Charity Scams: Individuals or Criminal Organizations posing as a charity organization might reach out to you in a number of various methods, and ask you directly to provide your credit card or debit card for donations to their charity. You may see charities that you don't recognize asking for donations in the wake of COVID-19. If you receive an email or a phone call please double check by doing some research to verify if the charity associated is valid. Verify all charities on the IRS Tax exemption site.

Crowdfunding Scams: Crowdfunding is one way to support a project you believe in and possibly get rewards for that support. A kind gesture goes a long way. But the project you're backing is only as good as the people behind it. Some dishonest people can take your money but produce nothing – no product, no project, and no reward. The recommendation is to do more thorough research on each fundraising campaign before donating.

Social Media Scams: Social media is a tool that cybercriminals use to distribute false information and capitalize on panic. If you're looking for information on social media, visit trusted profiles like the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the World Health Organization (WHO), the Federal Trade Commission and/ or the Better Business Bureau for instance. Do not reveal personal or financial information in an email, and do not respond to email solicitations for this information.

Fake COVID-19 Testing Sites: Officials across the U.S. are warning about a worrisome new fraud involving fake drive-through coronavirus testing sites in several states. There are also a handful of fake COVID-19 testing sites online. The recommendation is to use only approved testing sites affiliated with trusted hospitals and health care providers.

Internet Phishing Scams: Emails impersonating the World Health Organization, the CDC, and other reputable sources may deliver emails to your inbox, and in some cases directly to your phone. Do not click on emails or links impersonating these organizations. For accurate info, go straight to the source. Visit the World Health Organization and the CDC's websites. Avoid clicking on links in unsolicited emails and be wary of email attachments. Do not reveal personal or financial information in email, and do not respond to email solicitations for this information.

COVID-19 Robocalls: Calls from cybercriminals pretending to be the Department of Health and Human Services, the IRS, the FBI, or even your bank, or credit card company are on the rise due to the coronavirus outbreak. You may receive calls from strangers pretending to be your friends or a family member in distress, and they will ask you for a credit card, bank account or your social security card to "verify" your identity. Robocalls are not as easy to detect as they used to be, the caller ID can be adjusted to make it look like the call is coming from your area code. This establishes a false sense of trust. Please ask to call your friend or family member back at the number you trust if you suspect fraud.

Donations

Under the Hopi Tribal leadership directive, the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was activated on March 18, 2020. Central operations for the EOC is headquartered at the Hopi Veterans Memorial Center

in Kykotsmovi, Arizona. Specific protocols for donations and contributions are specified in the HERT objectives which are to directly assist the communities. The address for donations are listed below:

In-Kind Donations or Contributions for Hopi COVID-19 Relief Aid – Hopi Tribe

Monetary donations can be mailed directly to The Hopi Tribe at;

The Hopi Tribe
Office of the Hopi Tribal Treasurer
P.O. Box 123
Kykotsmovi, AZ 86039

For questions and/or to gather more detailed information about monetary donations, please call the Hopi Tribal Government at (928) 734-3121 or visit the website at www.hopi-nsn.gov.

Tax Deductible Monetary Donations or Contributions for Hopi COVID-19 Relief Aid – Hopi Foundation

Organizations or individuals who wish to donate to the Hopi Tribe, but are only permitted to donate to a non-profit organization, please send those donations directly to;

The Hopi Foundation
P.O. Box 301
Kykotsmovi, AZ 86039

For questions or inquiries about tax deductible charitable contributions, please follow-up with The Hopi Foundation which is a tax-exempt organization at (928) 734-2380 and/or visiting their website for more information at www.hopifoundation.org

Physical Donations for Specific Villages

All physical donations for all villages, including shipments or parcels intended for The Hopi Tribe or The Hopi Foundation, which may include but are not limited to packaged goods, tools, supplies, and non-perishable food items, should be directed to the Hopi Emergency Response Team (HERT).

All ITEMS MUST:

- Be properly sanitized before sending to the Hopi Emergency Response Team (HERT) staging area for inspection and screening.
- Be unopened AND in their original packaging

At this time, the **HERT Incident Command Center WILL NOT ACCEPT:**

- Opened items that are not in their original packaging,
- Perishable Foods – (only packaged non-perishable items with a stable shelf life)
- Loose or used clothing, or unpackaged blankets

All items meant for Hopi-wide emergency response distribution shall be inspected and screened, prior to their acceptance or distribution, at the **HERT Incident Command Center** located at:

SHIPPING through FedEx, UPS, or USPS

The Hopi Tribe
Attn: Hopi Emergency Response Team – Edison Tu'tsi
123 Main Street
Kykotsmovi, AZ 86039

Physical Location for Drive-up Distribution Deliveries (please call EOC first):

Hopi Veterans Memorial Center (HVMC)
Highway 264 Milepost 375.5
Kykotsmovi, AZ 86039
Attn: Hopi Emergency Response Team – Edison Tu'tsi

Hopi Emergency Response Team and the Emergency Operations Center

KEY CONTACT INFORMATION:

Weekdays from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. MST	(928) 734-3661 and (928) 734-3663
After hours and Weekends – after 5:00 p.m. MST	(928) 205-7295
Indian Health Services Hotline	(928) 737-6188

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For questions of more information, please call the The Hopi Tribe;
Office of the Chairman at (928) 734-3102, OR Office of the Vice Chairman (928) 734-3113.