



# SOUTHERN UTE INDIAN TRIBE

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## FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 20, 2020 – 11:00 A.M.**

## **Tribe to cease non-essential tribal government operations due to outbreak of the novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)**

Southern Ute Indian Reservation – The Southern Ute Indian Tribal Council and the Southern Ute Indian Tribe Incident Management Team (IMT) continue to work on the organizational response to the recent outbreak of the novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) as stated in the Southern Ute Indian Tribal Council release dated Wednesday, March 18, 2020.

In response to the rapidly developing events surrounding COVID-19 the Southern Ute Indian Tribe's Permanent Fund government will modify the programs and services to ensure the protection and safety of tribal members, tribal employees, and our community. This decision was not made hastily, rather through dialogue with the Southern Ute Indian Tribe's IMT, local, state, and federal healthcare agencies. Key Permanent Fund staff have been delegated the responsibility of identifying critical government operations. The identified operations will be modified in accordance with the recommendations made by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) which includes social distancing and congregated groups no larger than 10 people and at least 6 feet apart. Social distancing includes limits on person-to-person contact, group meetings, and other social activities.

The Southern Ute Permanent Fund non-essential functions have also been identified. If staff have not already been identified by the IMT or delegated by the tribal administration to carry out specific business, will be directed to remain home and safe until further notice is given. A list of specific service modifications will be forthcoming.

The Southern Ute Growth Fund is also operating via a modified business continuity plan. On Tuesday, March 17, 2020 all non-essential staff were identified and began working remotely.

The Sky Ute Casino Resort has temporarily closed the gaming operations, Rolling Thunder Grill, Rolling Thunder Lanes, Seven Rivers Bingo Hall, Seven Rivers Steak Seafood Spirits and Shining Mountain Café. The hotel and restaurant, Willows Café Bistro, will remain open until further notice. Willows Café Bistro will operate from 6:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m., 7 days a week. The hotel fitness center and pool will be closed.

The three priorities of the IMT remain the task at hand. The Southern Ute Indian Tribal Council continues to prioritize communication with the tribal membership as the details of the COVID-19 progresses.

The Southern Ute COVID-19 Call Center will remain live through the duration of the modified government services being provided. The call center hours of operation are 6:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m., 7 days a week until further direction is mandated by the Incident Management Team (IMT). In addition to fielding calls, the call center will be making proactive calls to Tribal Elders, the disabled, and high-risk tribal membership.

If you are a tribal member and concerned about your symptoms, please contact your primary care provider or call the Southern Ute Health Center at 970.563.4581 to speak with a health care professional.

\*\* This information is being released in conjunction with the Southern Ute Indian Tribe Incident Management Team Public Information Officer (PIO), Ms. Amy Barry.

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