



Kiowa Tribe

P.O. Box 369 · Carnegie, Oklahoma · 73015
Phone: (580) 654-6356 · Email: ntsoodle@kiowatribe.org
Public Relations

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

KIOWA TRIBE TAKES STANCE ON PANDEMIC

March 12, 2020

CARNEGIE, Okla. – As the deadly Coronavirus (COVID-19) entered Oklahoma with its first victim to test positive, the Kiowa Tribe is developing its contingency plan to respond quickly.

A task force is being created involving tribal leaders and staff, Indian health service, local schools, and community leaders to help weigh in the needs to provide adequate health care and prevention.

Kiowa Tribal Vice Chairwoman Rhonda Ahhaitty is leading up the task force. “We cannot take this lightly. It’s very scary for everyone.” Ahhaitty said much of the efforts are for the tribal elders. More than one-hundred elders are active in the Administration on Aging (AOA) program. Careful precautions are in place to see that the seniors are taking care of such as delivering meals instead of physically coming in. Home visits are tentatively being scheduled. Ahhaitty cannot stress enough ‘to go and check on your loved ones’.

The Kiowa Tribe is the largest employer in Carnegie, so community awareness and partnership is key. Ahhaitty said the school district is made up of 48% Native American students. “We are working with the schools to help safeguard all students and looking at the possibility of any closures of any large public gatherings.”

The tribe is offering COVID-19 training to its employers and has restricted any work-related travel or attending any large gatherings. All tribal programs that work closely with clients have been asked to provide an emergency plan to safeguard themselves as well as the client and public.

The task force is in its early stages but is persistently gathering information to help minimize any exposure. The group will meet weekly until further notice.

The Kiowa Tribe and health officials will be **offering COVID-19 training for the public and tribal members.**

Tribal employee training is Tuesday, March 17, at 1 p.m. Training for the public is Thursday, March 19, at 9 a.m. Both training sites are at the Red Buffalo Hall, Carnegie.

###