

Veterans of Team Rubicon Assist the MHA Nation



The Rubicon is a famous river in Italy. More famous is the phrase "to cross the Rubicon" which dates all the way back to Julius Caesar. These days it has nothing to do with the river. What it means is to make a decision or take a step that commits one to a specific course of action from which there is no turning back.

The MHA Nation recently had the honor of hosting a three-member Medical Strike Team. The team was sent to support the MHA Nation and the Task Force with developing operating procedures for and reviewing the set up of an Alternate Care Facility at the Vet Center.

Team Rubicon members come with experience. They have operated mobile and field medical facilities in disaster zones all over the world and assisted in the operation of COVID-19 Medical Screening and Testing facilities across the United States.

The Team Rubicon website describes their

organization. "Team Rubicon mobilizes veterans to continue their service, leveraging their skills and experience to help people prepare, respond, and recover from disasters and humanitarian crises."

Of course, COVID-19 represents the largest humanitarian crisis in recent history and Team Rubicon is responding.

Given the MHA Nation's historic respect for veterans it is not surprising that upon completion of their mission, Chairman Fox honored them with blankets.

During the honoring Fox said, "The MHA Nation would like to thank the veterans of Team Rubicon for making the decision to come to the reservation and lend their expertise. We honor you for your service to our Nation during this challenging time."

If you are a veteran who is interested in learning more about Team Rubicon please visit their website: teamrubiconusa.org



Photos submitted



The Many Faces of Essential Workers

Public Information officer and Team
MHA Nation

At this point, you've probably heard the phrase essential workers or critical positions or essential employees on the news. But have you stopped to think about what that really means? Everybody considers themselves essential and of course in some ways they are but the term essential worker has a very specific meaning when it comes to an emergency or crisis. The standard definition of an essential worker is someone that performs work involving the safety of human life and the protection of property, according to the 2013 Essential Services Act.

This is actually a longer list than you would think. Certain categories instantly jump to mind. Firefighters, doctors, police, nurses, paramedics. These are the people that we frequently think of when we think of the word emergency. This is only the first layer of essential workers, however. These might be the first people to respond to a crisis but the infrastructure that supports them has to be kept running too. For example, our heroes in a hospital are, of course, the doctors and the nurses. They are also, however, the technicians and environmental engineers. The people who keep the hospital clean and keep the machines running. And of course, the people in the hospital couldn't carry out their work unless they could eat so we move into food services. And the people in food services couldn't do their work unless

they had food so a whole chain of delivery people, salespeople, food processors all the way back to farmers are considered essential personnel. And of course, the pandemic has its own list.

Scientists are considered essential personnel as they do everything from look for a cure or vaccine to map the spread of the disease and likely hot spots. Really anyone conducting COVID-19 research and/or testing is an essential worker.

Day-to-day life has to continue so people who work in pharmacies and grocery stores at all levels, as well as those who keep utilities running, are essential workers. These days utilities include the internet.

A little closer to home, people who work in the energy sector are essential because power is required for everything. This also includes gas station workers.

Although we often don't like to think about it those who work in the funeral industry are essential during a crisis.

People working in banking, payroll and insurance and who prepare the taxes are considered essential. Presently some of these workers can work from home, but they're still essential workers.

And of course, we require hardware stores and those stores that supply farmers with essential services. Mechanics who keep all of the vehicles moving.

There is also the news media because during any emergency people need to be

informed. They need to know what to do.

Then there are the Amazon workers and the people who make toilet paper and the people who take care of the children of the Amazon workers and the children of the people who make toilet paper.

The safety of human life and property involves an enormous chain of people each performing their job and supporting others. During this time, it is possible the world will finally understand that we are all related and we need to take care of one another.

Closer to home we would include the MHA Nation COVID-19 Task Force as well as police fire emergency, etc. Each of the segments includes essential personnel that helps deliver services to those living in the segments. Tribal Council members are considered essential workers because they're expected to be available to make decisions with little or no notice.

Overall about 50% of workers are considered essential workers.

Who is considered a non-essential worker? One of the broadest categories is entertainment. The most extensive impact here is on Four Bears Casino. Four Bears is considered an entertainment venue and entertainment is not an essential function. However, all of those who maintain and secure the facility are considered essential workers. And the definition of essential worker can change depending on the circumstance. If there were a need to use

the hotel then those who manage, clean and maintain it would be considered essential workers.

Also of course, almost everyone serving in the military is considered an essential worker.

And the list goes on. There is, in fact, a branch of emergency management dedicated to determining who is an essential worker depending on the type of emergency event. Since we've never had an emergency event like this there has been a lot of scrambling and refining the definition of essential worker depending on the location, industry or community needs.

Let's show some appreciation for the essential workers who regardless of the virus are continuing on with their job and keeping the lights on and the internet going and the reservation secure and the clinic running.

We should include the elders in essential workers. They work daily to keep our languages alive and our culture vibrant. They represent the living memory of who we are as a people and are essential to who we will become. Fortunately, for the present, they can carry out their work from home.

Remember to say thank you to everyone you see who is on the job right now because those are the people who are not allowed to stay home because the rest of us depend on them. They are the essential workers.

MHA Nation Essential Workers Answer the Call

Lisa Lone Fight

According to MHA Nation Human Resources director Melissa Brady, 22 departments have been declared "essential". They range from sanitation to food distribution to senior administration. The departments that have to retain workers on-site are minimally staffed with workers that rotate in and out to minimize contact. Brady says over 400 staffers have been on the job since the beginning of the crisis.

As the crisis unfolded and the Tribal Business Council began contemplating a stay-at-home order, each department was asked to draw up emergency staffing plans. These were required to include those who they felt were essential to maintain minimal functioning. Those who were deemed essential but vulnerable because of age or medical condition were placed on administrative leave.

Those still working on site have been provided personal protective equipment and required to use it. Doors are secured to avoid any potential spread of infection, and a knock is required before entering. Social distancing is strictly enforced. To further protect on-site workers, all CDC safe workplace recommendations are being implemented including those for documents. Brady gives the Human Resources Office as an example. She says the decision was made to only accept electronic documents. Those who are not familiar with electronic documents are guided through the process of creating and submitting them.

Not all active essential workers are on-site. Many are working remotely, and departmental managers determine their workload and capacity. Those working from home



Sanitizing tribal offices. *Photo submitted*

have been required to sign an agreement that allows the tribe to provide them the necessary tools and supplies to accomplish their assigned tasks. They're required to check in daily with their workgroup and supervisor. Methods include group text, emails, zoom meetings, and conference calls.

Other departments were placed on administrative leave with the understanding that they are available to be activated as needed. Members of these departments are also required to check their email and check in daily.

When asked Chairman Fox expressed his deep appreciation for all tribal employees but acknowledged the exemplary commitment of essential workers. "All of our workers are heroes. They work in the service of the MHA people, but there are some who have gone above and beyond the call. They have remained at their posts throughout the crisis, put in long hours and sacrificed holidays and family time. These essential workers deserve the recognition and appreciation of the entire MHA Nation."



Resolution No. 20-052-FWF

**RESOLUTION OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE
THREE AFFILIATED TRIBES OF THE
FORT BERTHOLD INDIAN RESERVATION**

A Resolution Entitled, "Authorizing COVID-19 Mitigation Measures"

WHEREAS, The Mandan Hidatsa and Arikara Nation (MHA Nation), also known as the Three Affiliated Tribes, having accepted the Indian Reorganization Act of June 18, 1934, the authority under said Act, and having adopted a Constitution and By laws (the Constitution) under said Act, and

WHEREAS, Pursuant to Article III, Section I of the Constitution, the Tribal Business Council is the governing body of the MHA Nation; and

WHEREAS, The Constitution authorizes and empowers the Tribal Business Council to engage in activities on behalf of and in the interest of the welfare and benefit of the MHA Nation and of the enrolled members thereof; and

WHEREAS, Pursuant to Article VI, Section 5(1) of the Constitution, the Tribal Business Council has the power to adopt Resolutions regulating the procedures of the Tribal Business Council, its agencies and officials; and

WHEREAS, On March 18, 2020 the Tribal Business Council passed Resolution No. 20-049- FWF which declared that an emergency exists due to the Covid-19 pandemic and mandated that further steps must be taken to secure the safety of tribal members" and authorized the Chairman to take such action as necessary to carry out the terms and intent of the Resolution; and

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 20-049-FWF established the COVID-19 Outbreak Committee, which is also known as the COVID Task Force (the "COVID Task Force"); and

WHEREAS, The Tribal Business Council has consulted with the COVID Task Force and has determined that immediate mitigation measures should be taken in order to help prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus; and

WHEREAS, Immediate and decisive action is necessary to contain the COVID-19 outbreak and to minimize its harmful effects.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That the Tribal Business Council hereby authorizes the Chairman to immediately implement and enforce the following Mitigation Measures:

1. A curfew which requires all persons to remain in and around their homes and/or on their property from sundown until sunup, subject to authorized exceptions such as persons who have to work during curfew, trips for groceries or supplies, official meetings and other authorized purposes to be developed by the Chairman's office and the COVID Task Force;
2. A requirement that any persons congregating in groups of over 5 people must disband, subject to authorized work, business related or other exceptions to be developed by the Chairman's office and the COVID Task Force;
3. Develop and enforce Cooperative Agreements with Businesses on the Reservation designed to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus; and
4. Develop and enforce more adequate COVID-19 testing methods and procedures to help prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus, which may exceed current standards in place in North Dakota and with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The Mitigation Measures, including any new mitigation measures, may be updated and instituted periodically by the Chairman consistent with the intent of this Resolution after consultation with the COVID-19 Task Force, and shall be subject to continuing review by the Tribal Business Council.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, That the Tribal Business Council authorizes and directs all tribal law enforcement and other tribal agencies to enforce the Mitigation Measures.

CERTIFICATION

I, the undersigned, as Secretary of the Tribal Business Council of the Three Affiliated Tribes of the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation, hereby certify that the Tribal Business Council is composed of seven (7) members of whom five (5) constitute a quorum, 7 were present at a Special Meeting thereof duly called, noticed, convened and held on the 30th day of March, 2020, that the foregoing Resolution was duly adopted at such meeting by the affirmative vote of 7 members, 0 members opposed, 7 members abstained, 0 members not voting, and that said Resolution has not been rescinded or amended in any way.

Chairman [X] Voting. [] Not Voting.

Dated this 30th day of March, 2020.

ATTEST:

[sig. on file]
Tribal Secretary, Fred W. Fox
Tribal Business Council
Three Affiliated Tribes

[sig. on file]
Chairman, Mark N. Fox
Tribal Business Council
Three Affiliated Tribes

MANDAREE PUBLIC SCHOOL ELECTION NOTICE

Mandaree Public School District #36 will hold its annual school election on Tuesday, June 9th, 2020. The purpose of the election is to elect one person for a three-year term. Terry Beston, Elton Spotted Horse, RoseAnn Johnson and Vivian Lone Fight-Hall have filed to be on the ballot

This election will be held by absentee ballot only. Prior to April 30th, the Office of the Secretary of State will mail absentee ballot applications to all currently on record in the North Dakota central voter file. When completing this application be sure to select "School Election". Persons who do not receive an application, may obtain an application from the school's website or request for one by contacting the school business manager.

If mailing your absentee ballot, it must be postmarked no later than Monday, June 8th, 2020, which is the day BEFORE the election. Or, you may place your absentee ballot in the drop box that will be provided outside the Mandaree Public School Business Office, 1 Warrior Circle, Mandaree, ND 58757. Absentee Ballots must be put in the drop box by 5:00 pm on Monday, June 8th 2020, which is the day BEFORE the election.

If you have any questions, please contact Bee Obidinma. Phone number :701-759-3120. Fax: 701-759-3123, abiodun.obidinma@k12.nd.us.

4/23 - 6/3



Press Release

April 20th, 2020

RE: Mountrail County Health Center COVID-19 Drive Through Testing

Mountrail County Health Center is committed to providing our community the best care possible during the nationwide COVID-19 pandemic. We therefore are offering a complimentary "Drive Through" testing event at our facility on **Friday, April 24th from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM**. We are strongly encouraging residents of Mountrail County who have not previously had access to drive-through testing to be screened.

Details

COVID-19 testing will be conducted at door 13 at the back of our building. Please see the map for further instruction.

Please bring your Photo ID. MCHC employees will register patients while they wait in line. Please remain in your vehicle with your window rolled up unless instructed otherwise by MCHC staff.

Testing will be offered on a first come first serve basis. Please be advised that once you enter the driveway for testing, there **IS NOT** an area to turn around. You will need to wait until it is your turn to be tested in order to exit.

You will have a limited amount of time with the provider conducting this test. The drive through testing clinic is NOT the time to discuss symptoms or other medical conditions with a doctor. If you need 1:1 time with a provider, or are experiencing severe respiratory symptoms, please do not use the drive through clinic. Call the Rural Health Clinic at 701-628-2505 so our nurses can triage you individually and get you the care you need.

If you have questions about this process, please call 701-628-2424 and ask for Rich Laksonen.

Mitigation Measures Working in the MHA Nation

Lisa Lone Fight

On March 27th, 2020, Chairman Mark Fox announced the first case of COVID-19 found on the Fort Berthold Reservation. Approximately three weeks later (5:00 PM 4/21/2020) the MHA Nation COVID-19 dashboard showed a total of 28 confirmed cases, 15 recovered, 0 deaths, and 599 individuals tested. This is remarkable because it represents an infection rate of just 4.6 percent of those tested. Even more remarkably the number of infected has remained essentially flat for the past two weeks. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for the state of North Dakota, whose positive case numbers have been skyrocketing. It's too early to determine the cause of the difference, but it is worth noting that North Dakota and the MHA Nation have pursued different responses to COVID-19.

Early on, the Chairman and MHA Tribal Council chose to issue a "stay-at-home," order and closed all tribal enterprises. Only, "limited," essential workers were told to keep working, meaning if one essential worker got COVID-19, another that had been working from home could come to work in their place if needed. Nobody was to leave their homes except for buying food or essentials, visiting the clinic and other necessary errands. New Town became unusually silent, except for the barking of the occasional dog. The normal hustle of Main Street was halted, as the streets and roads were quiet and empty. This is a sign that the reservation community responded promptly to the Tribal Council's resolution and was taking it very seriously. However, there is a small number of businesses that are still choosing to not follow mitigation measures, which remains a big concern for the COVID-19 Task Force and Tribal Leaders, as well as many community members.

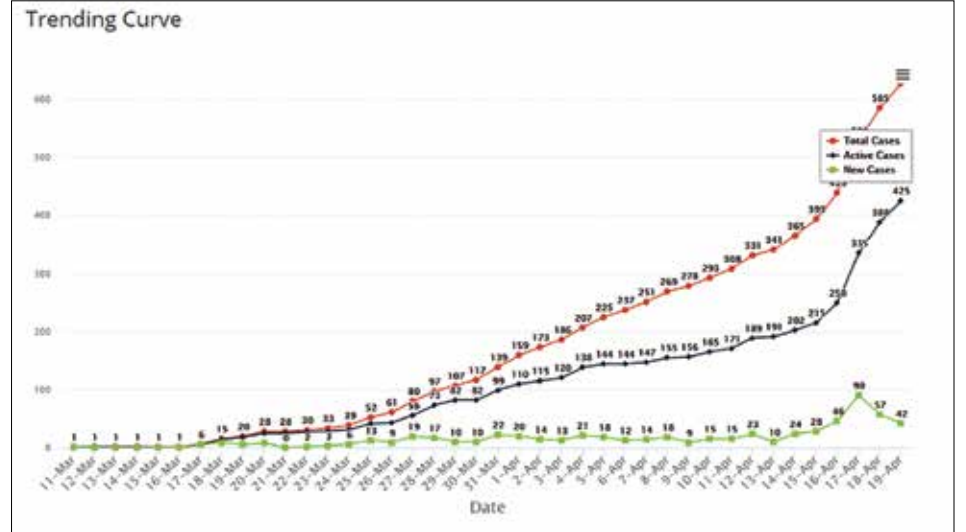
The numbers of positive cases are going in the opposite direction in the rest of North Dakota, where no, "stay-at-home," order was issued. One look at the North Dakota



Department of Health website reveals a curve that is not, in fact, very "curvy". It is moving more toward "straight-up" than "flattening" in terms of coronavirus cases. This indicates a large increase in confirmed positive cases in a short period of time. North Dakota was one of only five states in the country that did not issue a "stay-at-home," order. One of those five states include South Dakota, which has seen a similar increase in positive COVID-19 cases.

So, what does this mean for the reservation? Is it safe for people to come out again? The simple answer is no. Still, the only effective tool that we possess for fighting the COVID-19 virus is social distancing.

These days, Chairman Fox can be seen practicing social distancing. He either works alone in his office or works from home. When he absolutely has to meet with people, masks are worn and a distance of at least six feet between visitors is maintained. Chairman Fox says, "Remain vigilant and watchful. Now is not the time to become complacent. Our people have great fortitude. Together we've been able to achieve something few communities have. As of now, our curve is flattening. Let's keep it that way and show the world how it's done. Let's show them the MHA way."



Photos submitted

