

COVID-19 Emergency Disaster Relief Payment Program Policy

- A.** Similar to many other governments across the world, the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians has declared a Tribal State of Emergency during the COVID -19 Emergency Disaster on March 17, 2020.
- B.** As a result of the impact of the global COVID-19 Emergency Disaster, LTBB Citizens have experienced unanticipated losses or reduction of income from employment, business interruption or other revenue sources, in the form of reduced or shorter work hours, cut in salary or pay, furlough, reduced capacity, limited hours of operations, infected with COVID-19, quarantined or assisted an immediate family member who has been infected with COVID-19 or quarantined, stay at home orders, and unable to work due to having to take care of children that were required to stay at home from school as a result of school closures since March 16, 2020 to date. This was especially difficult for older Tribal Citizens and Tribal Citizens that live on or near the poverty rate, “Based on the data from the 2018 U.S Census cited by Poverty USA, Native Americans have the highest poverty rate among all minority groups. The national poverty rate for Native Americans was at 25.4%, while Black or African American poverty rate was 20.8%. Among Hispanics, the national poverty rate was 17.6%. The White population had an 8.1% national poverty rate during the same period”.
- C.** All places of business in Michigan were ordered closed except for essential workers from March 23, until May 22, 2020, the first day restaurants and bars were allowed to resume operations at 50% capacity in Northern Michigan, while other business such as hair salons, massage shops, movie theaters and gyms remained closed until June 15, 2020 and may close again. During the first 60 days of the stay at home order, Tribal Citizens and other Michiganders could only leave their homes to perform essential jobs or go to the grocery store or hospital. According the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Michigan’s unemployment rates were for April of 2020 – 24.0%, May – 21.3% and June – 14.8%. The Michigan Unemployment Insurance Agency has disbursed \$11.4 billion to 2 million people since the coronavirus pandemic reached the state, but about 140,000 Michigan unemployment benefits claims remain on hold while officials await further identification or other information, and others waited weeks to receive assistance getting further behind in paying their bills, putting food on their table, paying their car loans, rent, mortgages and other essential expenses. Even with some Tribal Citizens being eligible for unemployment, the COVID-19 Emergency Disaster imperiled LTBB Citizens’ ability to meet basic living expenses.

D. As a result of the impact of the global COVID-19 Emergency Disaster, LTBB Citizens have experienced unanticipated additional expenditures included sanitizing supplies, personal protection equipment, increased food costs, increased utility costs, increased health-care or medical expenses, cost related to online education, distance learning, teleworking, funerals and other general health and welfare expenses related to the COVID-19 Emergency Disaster. The increase in food costs alone are significant, according to the USDA “The CPI for meats, poultry, and fish increased 4.2 percent from April 2020 to May 2020 and is up 9.8 percent since May 2019.”

E. This program will provide a one-time Emergency Disaster Relief Payments to LTBB adult Tribal Citizens up to \$700.00, plus up to \$700 for each minor LTBB Citizen dependent in their household, or to a parent/Guardian of a minor dependent LTBB Citizen, to help meet their needs created by the COVID-19 Emergency Disaster, by one of the following or both:

- 1.** Unanticipated losses or reduction of income from employment, employment, business interruption or other revenue sources, in the form of reduced or shorter work hours, cut in salary or pay, furlough, reduce capacity, limited hours of operations, infected with COVID-19, quarantined or assisted an immediate family member who has been infected with COVID-19 or quarantined, stay at home orders, and unable to work due to having to take care of children that were required to stay at home from school as a result of school closures.

- 2.** Unanticipated additional expenditures including sanitizing supplies, personal protection equipment, increased food costs, increased utility costs, increased health-care or medical expenses, cost related to online education, distance learning, teleworking, funerals and other general health and welfare expenses related to the COVID-19 Emergency Disaster.

F. Applications will be available to each adult Tribal Citizen and processed by the Department of Human Services.

G. Application must be received by December 1, 2020 in order to qualify for the program.

H. Records and Documentation. Tribal Citizens are to maintain one or more of the following for potential auditing purposes:

