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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**JUDICIAL BRANCH ALLOWING CERTAIN EMPLOYEES TO WORK FROM HOME
OR TAKE ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE**

Chief Justice JoAnn Jayne issued an administrative order today allowing certain Judicial Branch employees to telecommute, or work from home, and for others to take administrative leave if they cannot work from home.

The administrative order was needed due to the declaration of a public health state of emergency for the Navajo Nation and the states of emergency declared by surrounding states and the federal government regarding the coronavirus and covid-19.

The administrative order covers employees who have no childcare options in light of the closure of child care centers and schools on and near the Navajo Nation. It also covers employees who are 60 years and older and those who have compromised immune systems.

The administrative order notes that national health experts recommend employees 60 years and older or who have compromised immune systems telecommute or refrain from working. "Doing so will provide greater health protections to these at-risk populations against the spread of the coronavirus," the administrative order states.

The employees who will be telecommuting or on administrative leave due to the administrative order are encouraged to stay home and avoid travel and public and crowded spaces. The administrative order is effective March 18 through April 3, 2020.

The Judicial Branch is working on a continuity of operations plan that would allow the courts and programs to provide necessary services on a limited basis with essential staff.

In the meantime, people who are sick and need to go to the court are asked to first call and get directions on how to proceed. Parties are also asked to limit the amount of people going to the court for services. The public should be mindful that Navajo Nation Judicial Branch courts and programs may not be operating at full capacity at this time.

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