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**Sault Tribe government extends temporary closure; tribal Board ensures paid wages**

SAULT STE. MARIE, Mich. -- Sault Tribe's government has extended the temporary closure of all governmental offices, reopening April 13. All government employees are considered on call with many working from home. The closure started March 24.

Sault Tribe began emergency planning for COVID-19 pandemic in early March, with leadership and Health understanding the possibility of COVID-19 spreading into the US interior. This allowed the tribe to be ready for closures, health equipment and infrastructure, and membership needs for health, housing, necessities and other emergencies as they emerge.

The Sault Tribe Board of Directors has worked steadily to ensure tribal government and casino employees wages are covered during this period, in its resolution approved Tuesday night. At its March 24 meeting, the Board of Directors unanimously voted to access to the tribe's \$5.5 million in Contract Support Cost Settlement Funds to cover team member wages during the COVID-19 State of Emergency.

All but essential services will stay at home to help limit the spread of the coronavirus. Tribal Health Centers, Law Enforcement and the Detention Center, the Domestic Violence Shelter, USDA, ACFS essential employees, and any other needed essential services will remain in operation to provide members with needed services.

Tribal Administration is actively following all federal announcements and adapting to new federal regulations with as much flexibility as possible.

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