COVID-19 Core Decision Making Team Declaration
Suspension of all Non-Emergent Expenses & Stipends and Activity by Certain 
Boards, Committees and Commissions
March 19, 2020

The world is currently facing a pandemic of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The COVID-19 outbreak originated in Wuhan, China and has spread to many other countries throughout the world, including the United States. The World Health Organization has identified that the spread of COVID-19 is now a pandemic resulting in many countries experiencing the effects of illness and health issues related to COVID-19 and economic impacts.

On March 12, 2020, Chairman Tehassi Hill signed a “Declaration of Public Health State of Emergency” regarding COVID-19 which set into place the necessary authority should action need to be taken and allows the Nation to seek reimbursement of emergency management actions that may result in unexpected expenses.

On March 17, 2020, the Oneida Business Committee adopted emergency amendments to the Emergency Management and Homeland Security law to create and delegate authority to a COVID-19 Core Decision Making Team (COVID-19 Team). When a public health emergency has been declared, the COVID-19 Team has the authority to declare exceptions to the Nation’s laws, policies, procedures, regulations, or standard operating procedures during the emergency period which will be of immediate impact for the purposes of protecting the health safety, and general welfare of the Nation’s community, members, and employees.

The Boards, Committees and Commission Law identifies in section “105.13. Stipends, Reimbursement and Compensation” how Boards, Committees and Commissions will be compensated for their work. Specifically, the law states in section “105.13-2. The Oneida Business Committee shall set stipend amounts by resolution. The Oneida Business Committee shall periodically review the amounts provided for stipends and, based on the availability of funds, shall adjust those amounts accordingly by amending the resolution. Stipends are paid in the form of cash or cash equivalent, which may include, but is not limited to, gift cards.” Lastly, the law states all by-laws shall include Article V titles Stipends and Compensation.

Boards, Committees and Commissions activities can also create contact and spread of COVID-19 through meetings and gatherings. There has been a change in spread of the virus from person-to-person to community spread identified by the CDC and Public Health Officials. Community spread means that there are instances of positive tests for COVID-19 where no contact with an infected person has occurred. It is now necessary to discontinue meetings of Boards, Committees and Commissions.

Stipends. The Nation is immediately acting to preserve cash flow to provide funds for regular wages to employees throughout the emergency declaration period. The COVID-19 Team hereby declares a
suspension of all budget expenditures, and stipends shall cease for the following Boards, Committees and Commissions:

1. Oneida Community Library Board;
2. Oneida Environmental Resources Board;
3. Oneida Nation Arts Board;
4. Oneida Nation Veterans Affairs Committee;
5. Oneida Personnel Commission;
6. Oneida Pow Wow Committee;
7. Pardon and Forgiveness Screening Committee;
8. Southeast Wisconsin Oneida Tribal Social Services Advisory Board;
9. Finance Committee, Public Member;
10. Audit Committee, Public Member;
11. Oneida Land Claims Commission; and
12. Oneida Nation Commission on Aging.

Meetings. All meetings for the following Boards, Committees and Commissions shall be discontinued effective 4:30 p.m. on March 19, 2020.

1. Oneida Community Library Board;
2. Oneida Environmental Resources Board;
3. Oneida Nation Arts Board;
4. Oneida Nation Veterans Affairs Committee;
5. Oneida Personnel Commission;
6. Oneida Pow Wow Committee;
7. Pardon and Forgiveness Screening Committee;
8. Southeast Wisconsin Oneida Tribal Social Services Advisory Board;
9. Oneida Land Claims Commission; and
10. Oneida Nation Commission on Aging.

For Boards, Committees and Commissions not specifically identified in this order, it is recommended that meetings be discontinued effective 4:30 p.m. on March 19, 2020. Where meetings must be held, remote meeting processes is required.

This declaration shall be made effective immediately and shall remain in effect for the duration of the Nation’s public health emergency.

Tebani Hill
Oneida Nation Chairman