Arnold I. Palacios
Governor

David M. Apatang
Lieutenant Governor

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

DIRECTIVE 2024-001

Date: October 4, 2023

To: All Executive Branch Department, Office, and Activity Heads

From: Governor

Subject: Providing for Modified Government Hours of Executive Branch Departments and Agencies and Continued Cost Containment Measures for Fiscal Year 2024

In light of the recent passage of PL 23-09, FY 2024 Budget and Appropriations Act and to implement the appropriation levels provided, it is necessary to impose additional cost-cutting measures to Directive 2023-02. I am directing all departments, offices, and activities of the executive branch to continue cost containment measures set forth in Directive 2023-02, with the following updated information.

Section 1. Effective October 4, 2023, all executive branch departments and agencies of the CNMI Government shall continue to observe austerity measures in Fiscal Year 2024, with exemptions to federally funded programs, and shall make the necessary adjustments as it relates to work hours, pay, and leave of employees of the executive branch departments and agencies of the CNMI Government.

(a) Austerity Monday will continue to be observed every Monday following payday. Additionally, every Friday, government hours of operations for departments and agencies of the executive branch will be from 8:30am to 4:30pm. The executive branch will remain open during regular working hours, 7:30am - 4:30pm, on all other weekdays.

(b) A department or agency will not be required to implement reduced working hours as provided in Subsection (a) if the principal executive of a department or agency presents an expenditure plan for personnel that does not exceed the appropriation threshold established by Public Law 23-09. Such plans must be approved by the Governor after review by the Special Assistant for Management and Budget and the Secretary of Finance.

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(c) Executive branch departments and agencies may continue to modify operational schedules in order to remain open for reasons of public safety, health, and welfare of our community, provided expenditures stay within budgetary limits.

(d) Austerity that falls on a holiday will be observed on the next day following the paid holiday.

Section 2. Austerity measures will also be applied to law enforcement effectuating a 2-hour adjustment within the pay period not to exceed 84 hours per pay period for sworn police and corrections personnel and 104 hours for sworn firefighters.

Section 3. The Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall take such actions as may be necessary to implement Sections 1 and 2 of this directive.

Section 4. Use of Revolving Funds for Operations

As provided in Section 604 of Public Law 23-09, revolving account limitations and restrictions are suspended in FY 2024 and may be expended by the department or agency for the following operational uses: fuel, communications, office supplies, and inter-island travel for training purposes. All expenditures will be subject to funding availability.

Pursuant to Section 601(a) of Public Law 23-09, CUC monthly utility billings for all executive departments and agencies shall be applied to all revolving accounts until exhausted. General Fund utility budget allocations will be provided as necessary.

Section 5. General Provisions

(a) This Directive shall be implemented consistent with applicable law and subject to the availability of appropriations pursuant to Public Law 23-09.

(b) Nothing in this Directive shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect

(i) the authority granted by law to an executive department or agency, or the head thereof; or
(ii) the functions of the Department of Finance relating to collections of revenues.

(c) This Directive is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the Commonwealth, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

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Lt. Governor Apatang and I appreciate your cooperation and commitment to continuing to provide quality public programs and services despite these austerity measures. We are working to accelerate infrastructure projects, diversify our economy, move federal dollars through the economy, and strengthen tax collection efforts, among other positive economic developments, to limit the duration of these austerity measures and restore regular operations in the soonest possible time.

Arnold I. Palacios
Governor

Cc: Lt. Governor David M. Apatang
Edmund S. Villagomez, Speaker of the House
Edith E. DeLeon Guerrero, President of the Senate
Chief Justice Alexandro C. Castro
Presiding Judge Robert C. Naraja
Frances Torres-Salas, Director, Office of Personnel Management
Office of the Public Auditor
Edward Manibusan, Attorney General

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