

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN
THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, WAGE AND HOUR DIVISION
AND
THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS (CNMI)
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

The United States Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division (hereinafter referred to as “USDOL/WHD”), and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Department of Finance (hereinafter referred to as CNMI Dept of Finance) (collectively referred to as “the agencies” or “the parties”) recognize the value of establishing a collaborative relationship to promote compliance with laws of common concern among the regulated community in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands .

The agencies are forming this partnership to more effectively and efficiently communicate and cooperate on areas of common interest, including sharing training materials, conducting joint investigations, and sharing information as appropriate.

THEREFORE, IT IS MUTUALLY AGREED THAT:

This memorandum of understanding (MOU) agreement is intended to memorialize this understanding between USDOL/WHD and CNMI Dept of Finance. This MOU is a voluntary agreement that expresses the good-faith intentions of USDOL/WHD and CNMI Dept of Finance; it is not intended to be legally binding, does not create any contractual obligations, and it is not enforceable by any party. This MOU agreement does not obligate and will not result in an exchange of funds, personnel, property, services, or any kind of financial commitment. This MOU agreement outlines procedures to be followed by both USDOL/WHD and CNMI Dept of Finance in working together to address the need for information sharing, collaboration in enforcement efforts, cross training of staff, and having outreach between USDOL/WHD and CNMI Dept of Finance.

Agency Responsibilities

USDOL/WHD enforces the federal minimum wage, overtime pay, recordkeeping, and child labor requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act. USDOL/WHD also enforces the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act, the Employee Polygraph Protection Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act, wage garnishment provisions of the Consumer Credit Protection Act, and a number of employment standards and worker protections as provided in several immigration related statutes. Additionally, USDOL/WHD administers and enforces the prevailing wage requirements of the Davis Bacon Act and the Service Contract Act and other statutes applicable to Federal contracts for construction and for the provision of goods and services.

CNMI Dept of Finance is responsible for information sharing and collaboration in enforcement efforts.

I. Purpose

The purpose of the MOU is to maximize and improve the enforcement of the laws administered by USDOL/WHd and by CNMI Dept of Finance. This agreement will also encourage enhanced law enforcement and greater coordination between the agencies.

II. Authority

The substantive authority under which the parties will be carrying out the activities contemplated in the MOU is found under 29 U.S.C. § 211(b).

III. Outreach and Education

- The agencies agree to coordinate, conduct joint outreach presentations, and prepare and distribute publications, when appropriate, for the regulated community of common concern.
- The agencies agree to work with each other to provide a side-by-side comparison of laws with overlapping provisions and jurisdiction.
- The agencies agree to provide a hyperlink on each agency's website linking users directly to the outreach materials in areas of mutual jurisdiction and concern.
- The agencies agree to jointly disseminate outreach materials to the regulated community, when appropriate.
- All materials bearing the USDOL or USDOL/WHd name, logo, or seal must be approved in advance by USDOL.
- All materials bearing the CNMI Dept of Finance name, logo, or seal must be approved in advance by CNMI Dept of Finance.

IV. Points of Contact (POCs)

- The agencies designate the following POCs responsible for coordinating the partnership activities and meeting annually to review terms and conditions and areas of mutual concern. The agencies will notify each other in the event of the separation or long-term absence of their contact persons.
- POC designees:

Formal Contacts:

USDOL/WHd: Patrick Candoleta, Assistant District Director

Phone: (671) 473-9177 or (671) 686-0611
Email: Candoleta.Patrick@dol.gov
Address: U.S. Department of Labor,
Saipan Field Office
AAA-4035 Box 1001
Saipan, MP 96950-8901

USDOL/WHD: Terence Trotter, District Director
Phone: (808) 664-8460 or (808) 541-1361
Email: Trotter.Terence@dol.gov
Address: U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division
300 Ala Moana Blvd., Suite 7-225
Honolulu, HI 96850

Informal Contact:

USDOL/WHD: Herbert Lee, Community Outreach & Resource Planning Specialist
Phone: (808) 664-8465 or (808) 541-1361
Email: Lee.Herbert@dol.gov
Address: U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division
300 Ala Moana Blvd., Suite 7-225
Honolulu, HI 96850

Security Incident Contact:

DOL Computer Security Incident Response Capability (CSIRC)
Email: dolcsirc@dol.gov
Phone: 202-693-4417

Formal Contact: Tracy B. Norita, Secretary of Finance
CNMI Dept of Finance: Office of the Secretary
Phone: 670-664-1100
Email: t.norita@dof.gov.mp
Address: PO Box 5234 CHRB
Saipan, MP 96950

Informal Contact: Daniel Alvarez, Director, Revenue & Taxation
CNMI Dept of Finance: Division of Revenue & Taxation
Phone: 670-664-1000/1040
Email: danieldean.alvarez@dof.gov.mp
Address: PO Box 5234 CHRB
Saipan, MP 96950

V. Enforcement

Where appropriate and to the extent allowable under law,

- The agencies may conduct joint investigations annually with the local government of CNMI Dept of Finance if opportunity provides.
- The agencies may coordinate their respective enforcement activities and assist each other with enforcement.
- The agencies will make referrals of potential violations of each other's statutes.

VI. Information

- The agencies agree to exchange information on laws and regulations of common concern to the agencies, to the extent practicable and allowable by law and policy.
- The agencies will establish a methodology for exchanging investigative leads, complaints, and referrals of possible violations, to the extent allowable by law or policy.
- The agencies will exchange information (statistical data) on incidence of violations in specific industries and geographic areas, if possible.

VII. Training

- The agencies agree to cross train investigators and other staff no less than once per calendar year, subject to agency resources and any applicable legal requirements. Joint training will be conducted to educate staff members of both agencies about the laws and regulations enforced by both, and to discuss issues of common concern.
- The agencies will exchange information related to policy or regulatory changes to State or Federal laws, to the extent permissible.

VIII. Previous Agreements

- This agreement replaces and supersedes any previous Partnership Agreement MOU between the parties.

IX. Effect of MOU Agreement

- This MOU agreement does not authorize the expenditure or reimbursement of any funds. Nothing in this agreement obligates the parties to expend appropriations or enter into any contract or other obligations.
- By entering into this partnership, the agencies do not imply an endorsement or promotion by either agency of the policies, programs, or services of the other.
- Nothing in this MOU agreement is intended to diminish or otherwise affect the authority of either agency to implement its respective statutory or regulatory functions.

- This MOU agreement is not intended to be legally binding and does not confer any rights on any private person.
- This MOU agreement is not intended to confer any rights against the United States, its agencies, or its officers upon any private person.
- Nothing in this MOU agreement will be interpreted as limiting, superseding, or otherwise affecting the agencies' normal operations or decisions in carrying out their statutory or regulatory duties, or duties under any Executive Order. This MOU agreement also does not limit or restrict the parties from participating in similar activities or arrangements with other entities.
- This agreement will be executed in full compliance with the Privacy Act of 1974, the Freedom of Information Act, the Federal Records Act, and any other applicable federal laws and local government laws of the CNMI Dept of Finance.
- This MOU agreement contains all the terms and conditions agreed upon by the agencies concerning the subject matter of the agreement. No other understandings, oral or otherwise, regarding the subject matter of this agreement shall be deemed to exist or be binding upon the agencies. This agreement is not intended to confer any right upon any private person or other third party.

X. Exchange of Information

To the extent permitted by law, the agencies understand that in order to effectuate the purposes and provisions of this MOU, it will be necessary, from time to time, to exchange information, some of which may be considered confidential. The agencies to this MOU agreement recognize the importance of being able to provide information to other law enforcement bodies without waiving the privilege of otherwise protected material or making a public disclosure.

It is the policy of USDOL/WHI and CNMI Dept of Finance to cooperate with other government agencies to the fullest extent possible under the law, subject to the general limitation that any such cooperation must be consistent with the USDOL/WHI's and CNMI Dept of Finance's own statutory obligations and enforcement efforts. It is USDOL/WHI's and CNMI Dept of Finance's view that an exchange of information in cases in which both entities are proceeding with a common legal interest is to our mutual benefit.

In consideration of these concerns, and subject to any applicable laws and regulations regarding the handling of such information, the agencies agree as follows:

1. The parties will be available to discuss and provide information to one another on topics of mutual interest, overlapping jurisdiction, or certain areas of expertise, when able.
2. Exchange of information to one another pursuant to this MOU is not considered a public disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C.552.

3. When confidential information is exchanged it will not be released to the public, or to any third party, without the express permission of the agency providing that information, except as required by law including, but not limited to, the Freedom of Information Act. Upon receipt of a public disclosure request, CNMI Dept of Finance agrees to provide USDOL/WHd with notice of the request and an opportunity to pursue legal action to prevent the release of information.
4. When confidential information is exchanged, it shall be used and accessed only for the limited purposes of carrying out activities pursuant to this agreement as described herein. The information shall not be duplicated or re-disclosed without the express written consent or authority of the agency providing the information (hereinafter the "donor agency"), a court order, or as required by law, including the Freedom of Information Act.
5. Confidential information means information that may be privileged or otherwise exempt from disclosure to the public or other unauthorized persons under federal and state laws. Confidential information may include: the identity of persons who have given information to the agencies in confidence or under circumstances in which confidentiality can be implied; any employee statements in enforcement files that were obtained under these conditions; internal opinions, policy statements, memoranda, and recommendations of federal or state employees, including (but not limited to) investigators and supervisors; any records that would otherwise not be subject to disclosure under law as non-final, intra- or inter-agency documents; information or records covered by the attorney-client privilege and the attorney work-product privilege; personal information protected by any relevant law or regulation; individually identifiable health information; and confidential business information and trade secrets.
6. Confidential Unemployment Compensation (UC) information, as defined in 20 CFR 603.2(b), means any unemployment compensation information, as defined in 20 CFR 603.2(j), required to be kept confidential under 20 CFR 603.4 or its successor law or regulation.
7. In the event there is a public proceeding, such as a trial, in which certain records, such as confidential information, may be used or testimony of USDOL/WHd's employees sought, USDOL/WHd requires that CNMI Dept of Finance notify USDOL/WHd.
8. In the event there is a public proceeding, such as a trial, in which certain records, such as confidential information, may be used or testimony of CNMI Dept of Finance employees sought, CNMI Dept of Finance requires that USDOL/WHd notify CNMI Dept of Finance.
9. Should either party receive a request or subpoena that would, fairly construed, seek production of privileged information that it received pursuant to this MOU agreement, the party receiving such a request or subpoena shall take reasonable measures, including but not limited to asserting the common interest privilege, to preclude or restrict the production of such information for ten (10) business days, and shall promptly notify the donor agency that such a request or subpoena has been received, so that the donor agency

may file any appropriate objections or motions, or take any other appropriate steps, to preclude or condition the production of such information.

10. Neither party shall have authority to waive any applicable privilege or doctrine on behalf of the other party, nor shall any waiver of an applicable privilege or doctrine by the conduct of one party be construed to apply to the other party.
11. The agencies will notify one another, through the agency POC identified in this MOU, upon commencement of litigation, a hearing, or other proceeding that may involve the release, through subpoena, introduction of written evidence, or testimony, of information exchanged under this agreement.
12. In addition to the requirements above, Confidential Unemployment Compensation information may be exchanged only subject to the confidentiality requirements of 20 CFR 603.4 and any applicable state laws.
13. For information security purposes, information (including paper-based documents and electronic information such as emails and CDs) exchanged pursuant to this MOU agreement remains the responsibility of the donor agency while in transit. The agencies agree to establish a communication protocol for notifying each agency's designated POC when information is sent to or received from that agency, including information on the form of the transfer and the media type and quantity (when appropriate). An agency expecting to receive information will notify the donor agency if the information is not received as of the next business date following the agreed upon delivery date. Confidential data will be destroyed no later than thirty (30) days after its use and may be transmitted via secure File Transfer Protocol (FTP). Use includes the time period required for compliance with federal records retention periods. Confidential data will not be electronically mailed, unless encrypted using approved encryption standards.
14. For information security purposes, after an agency receives information from the donor agency, the donor agency retains no responsibility for any security incidents, inadvertent disclosure, or the physical and information technology safeguards in place for protecting that information by the agency that received it.
15. Technical staff will immediately notify their designated counterparts when a security incident(s) is suspected or verifiably detected, so the other party may take steps to determine whether its system has been compromised and to take appropriate security precautions. Technical staff will provide reasonable support to their counterparts in support of analysis and/or investigation into any security incidents. In the event the agency receiving the information experiences a security incident or disaster that results in the suspected or confirmed inadvertent disclosure of the data exchanged pursuant to this MOU agreement, the agency experiencing the incident or disaster will send formal written electronic notification to the donor agency's designated contact person immediately within three (3) days after detection of the incident or disaster. The written electronic notification will describe the security incident or disaster in detail including what data exchanged pursuant to this MOU agreement may have been inadvertently disclosed.

16. At the conclusion of an investigation and prosecution by either party, the receiving agency will return any and all confidential information to the donor agency, except as required by law, including the Federal Records Act.

17. Liability of the U.S. Government is governed by the Federal Tort Claims Act.

XI. Dissemination of Factual Information

- The agencies agree to jointly disseminate outreach materials to the regulated community when appropriate. Any such dissemination may not be undertaken without prior notice and approval of each party.
- All public materials bearing the United States Department of Labor ("USDOL") or USDOL/WHI name, logo, or seal must be approved in advance by USDOL. Any such materials that include the opinions, results, findings and/or interpretations of data arising from the results of activities carried out under the Agreement shall state that they are the responsibility of the party carrying out the activity and do not necessarily represent the opinions, interpretation, or policy of the other party.

XII. Resolution of Disagreements

- Disputes arising under this Agreement will be resolved informally by discussions between Agency Points of Contact, or other officials designated by each agency.

XIII. Period of Agreement

- This MOU agreement becomes effective upon the signing of both parties and will expire 5 years from the effective date. This agreement may be modified in writing by mutual consent of both agencies. The agreement may be cancelled by either party by giving thirty (30) days advance written notice prior to the date of termination. Renewal of the agreement may be accomplished by written agreement of the parties.

This agreement is effective as of the 26th day of March, 2024.

United States Department of Labor
Wage and Hour Division

CNMI Department of Finance

By:  3/26/2025
Terence J. Trotter Date
District Director
Honolulu District Office

By:  3/26/25
Tracy B. Norita Date
Secretary of Finance
CNMI Department of Finance