COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS SAIPAN, TINIAN, ROTA and NORTHERN ISLANDS



COMMONWEALTH REGISTER

VOLUME 46 NUMBER 05 MAY 15, 2024

COMMONWEALTH REGISTER

VOLUME 46 NUMBER 05 May 15, 2024

ADOPTED

Public Notice of Certification and Adoption Of Regulations of CDBG-DR Program Northern Marianas Housing Corporation								
Public Notice of Certification and Adoption Of Regulations of the Customs Service Division Department of Finance								
PROPOSED								
Public Notice of Pro	posed Amendments to the							
Rules and Regulation								
Rota Casino Gami	ng Commission	051081						
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NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Tel. (670) 234-6866/234-9447/234-7689/234-7670 • Fax. (670) 234-9021 / 234-6890
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: http://www.nmhcgov.net

PUBLIC NOTICE OF CERTIFICATION AND ADOPTION OF REGULATIONS OF

The Northern Marianas Housing Corporation

PRIOR PUBLICATION IN THE COMMONWEALTH REGISTER AS PROPOSED REGULATIONS

Volume 46, Number 4, pp. 050914 to 051032 of April, 2024

Regulations, which are the Northern Marianas Housing Corporations' Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Program's Homebuyer Activities and Homeowner Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Policies and Procedures.

ACTION TO ADOPT PROPOSED REGULATIONS: The Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) HEREBY ADOPTS AS PERMANENT the Proposed Regulations which were published in the Commonwealth Register at the above-referenced pages, pursuant to the procedures of the Administrative Procedure Act (APA), 1 CMC § 9104(a). The NMHC announced that they intended to adopt these regulations as permanent, and now do so.

I also certify by signature below that: as published, Adopted Regulations are a true, complete, and correct copy of the referenced Proposed Amendments to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation's Homebuyer Activities Program's & Homeowner Rehabilitation and Reconstruction's Policies and Procedures under the Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Program, and they are being adopted without any modifications.

PRIOR PUBLICATION: The prior publication was as stated above.

MODIFICATIONS FROM PROPOSED REGULATIONS, IF ANY: None.

AUTHORITY: The Northern Marianas Housing Corporation is empowered by the Legislature with the authority to adopt and modify rules and regulations for the administration and enforcement of its housing programs. 2 CMC § 4433(t).

THE TERMS AND SUBSTANCE: The Adopted Regulations represent a substantial revision to the NMHC's Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Homeowner Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Program and Homebuyer Activities Program Policies and Procedures relating to the addition of § 100-100.3-710 and § 100-100.4-202.

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"NMHC is an equal employment and fair housing public agency"

Rota Field Office Tel: (670) 532-9410 • Fax: (670) 532-9441 **CDBG-DR Office** Tel: (670)233-9447/9448/9449

Tinian Field OfficeTel: (670) 433-9213 • Fax: (670) 433-3690

DIRECTIONS FOR FILING AND PUBLICATION: These Regulations shall be published in the Commonwealth Register in the section on proposed and newly adopted regulations, 1 CMC § 9102(a)(1), and posted in convenient places in the civic center and in local government offices in each senatorial district, both in English and in the principal vernacular. 1 CMC § 9104(a)(1).

EFFECTIVE DATE: Pursuant to the APA, 1 CMC § 9105(b), these Adopted Regulations are effective 10 days after compliance with the APA, 1 CMC §§ 9102 and 9104(a) or (b), which, in this instance, is 10 days after this publication in the Commonwealth Register.

COMMENTS AND AGENCY CONCISE STATEMENT: Pursuant to the APA, 1 CMC § 9104(a)(2), the agency shall consider all written submissions respecting the Proposed Regulations. No oral or written comments were submitted to NMHC during the 30-day comment period.

ATTORNEY GENERAL APPROVAL: The Adopted Regulations were approved for promulgation by the Attorney General in the above-cited pages of the Commonwealth Register, pursuant to 1 CMC § 2153(e) (to review and approve, as to form and legal sufficiency, all rules and regulations to be promulgated by any department, agency or instrumentality of the Commonwealth government, including public corporations, except as otherwise provided by law). As such, no further approval is required.

The Adopted Regulations were approved by the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation through the approval of the Board of Directors during its meeting on **February 16, 2024** and the Board of Directors was authorized to promulgate these regulations on behalf of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation.

I DECLARE under the penalty	of perjury	that the	foregoing	is true	and	correct	and	that	this
declaration was executed on	day of N	May, 2024	l, at Saipan	, Comn	nonw	ealth of	the	North	nern
Mariana Islands.									

Certified and ordered by:

MERCED "MARCIE" M. TOMOKANE

Chairperson

Board of Directors

Filed and Recorded by:

ESTHER R.M. SAN NICOLAS

Commonwealth Registrar

05.14.2024

Date

Pursuant to 1 CMC § 2153(e) (Attorney General approval of regulations to be promulgated as to form) and 1 CMC § 9104(a)(3) (obtain Attorney General approval), the proposed regulations attached hereto have been reviewed and approved as to form and legal sufficiency by the CNMI Attorney General and shall be published, pursuant to 1 CCM § 2153(f)(publication of rules and regulations).

Dated this ______ of May, 2024.

EDWARD MANIBUSAN

Attorney General



Office of the Secretary Department of Finance



P.O. Box 5234 CHRB, Saipan MP 96950

TEL: (670) 664-1100 FAX: (670) 664-1115

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PUBLIC NOTICE OF CERTIFICATION AND ADOPTION OF REGULATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE – DIVISION OF CUSTOMS SERVICE

Prior Publication in the Commonwealth Register as Proposed Regulations Volume 46 Number 04 pp 051033 – 051060, April 15, 2024

Regulations of the Department of Finance: Chapter 70·10 Customs Service Division

ACTION TO ADOPT PROPOSED REGULATIONS: The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Department of Finance ("DOF"), HEREBY ADOPTS AS PERMANENT the Proposed Regulations which were published in the Commonwealth Register at the above-referenced pages, pursuant to the procedures of the Administrative Procedure Act,1 CMC § 9104(a). The DOF announced that it intended to adopt them as permanent, and now does so. (Id.)

I also certify by signature below that as published, such adopted regulations are a true, complete and correct copy of the referenced Proposed Regulations, and that they are being adopted without modification or amendment.

PRIOR PUBLICATION: The prior publication was as stated above.

MODIFICATIONS FROM PROPOSED REGULATIONS, IF ANY: None

AUTHORITY: These regulations are promulgated under the authority set forth in the Commonwealth Code including, but not limited to, 1 CMC 2553, 1 CMC 2557, 1 CMC § 25201, 4 CMC § 1104, 4 CMC § 1402, 4 CMC § 1425 and 4 CMC § 1820.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Pursuant to the APA, 1 CMC sec. 9105(b), these adopted regulations are effective 10 days after compliance with the APA, 1 CMC §§ 9102 and 9104(a) or (b), which, in this instance, is 10 days after this publication in the Commonwealth Register.

COMMENTS AND AGENCY CONCISE STATEMENT: Pursuant to the APA, 1 CMC sec. 9104(a)(2), the agency has considered fully all written and oral submissions respecting the proposed regulations. Upon this adoption of the regulations, the agency, if requested to do so by an interested person, either prior to adoption or within 30 days thereafter, will issue a concise statement of the principal reasons for and against its adoption, incorporating therein its reasons for overruling the considerations urged against its adoption. Please see the following pages for this agency's concise statement, if there are any, in response to filed comments.

ATTORNEY GENERAL APPROVAL FOR NON-MODIFIED REGULATIONS: The adopted regulations were approved for promulgation by the Attorney General in the above-cited pages of the Commonwealth Register, pursuant to 1 CMC § 2153(e) (To review and approve, as to form and legal sufficiency, all rules and regulations to be promulgated by any department, agency or instrumentality of the Commonwealth government, including public corporations, except as otherwise provided by law.). As such, further approval is not required.

I DECLARE under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct and that this declaration was executed on _____ day of May 2024, at Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Certified and o	ordered by:
-----------------	-------------

15/07/24

TRACY B. NORITA Secretary of Finance Department of Finance Date

Filed and Recorded by:

ESTHER SAN NICHOLAS Commonwealth Registrar

05.13.2024 Date

Pursuant to I CMC § 2153(e) (AG approval of regulations to be promulgated as to form) and I CMC §9104(a)(3) (obtain AG approval) the proposed regulations attached hereto have been reviewed and approved as to form and legal sufficiency by the CNMI Attorney General and shall be published. I CMC § 2153(f) publication of rules and regulations).

Dated the 14th day of May, 2024.

ofu welcu

Attorney General



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PUBLIC NOTICE OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR THE ROTA CASINO GAMING COMMISSION

INTENDED ACTION TO ADOPT THESE PROPOSED RULES AND REGULATION:

The Rota Casino Gaming Commission ("the Commission") intends to adopt as permanent regulations the attached Proposed Regulations, pursuant to the procedures of the Administrative Procedure Act, 1 CMC § 9104(a). The Regulations would become effective 10 days after adoption and publication in the Commonwealth Register. (1 CMC § 9105(b))

AUTHORITY: The Commission has the authority to adopt rules and regulations in furtherance of its duties and responsibilities pursuant to Rota Local Initiative 1, The Rota Casino Act of 2007 (10 CMC §§ 12101-12163).

THE TERMS AND SUBSTANCE: The attached Rules and Regulations supplement the current regulations which govern and regulate the casino industry in the First Senatorial District (Rota). The amendments provide regulation of internet casino activities.

THE SUBJECTS AND ISSUES INVOLVED: These rules and regulations:

- 1. Add § 160-20.1-1327 Website Requirement
- 2. Amend § 160-20.1-015 Definitions (z)
- 3. Amend § 160-20.1-910 Prohibition On Play (a)
- 4. Add § 160-20.1-1235 Fees and Taxes (1)
- 5. Amend § 160-20.1-1301 Definitions (b)

DIRECTIONS FOR FILING AND PUBLICATION: These Proposed Regulations shall be published in the Commonwealth Register in the section on proposed and newly adopted regulations (1 CMG § 9102(a)(1)) and posted in convenient places in the civic center and in local government offices in the First Senatorial District; the notice shall be both in English and in the principal vernacular. (1 CMG§ 9104(a)(1)).

TO PROVIDE COMMENTS: Send or deliver your comments to Rota Casino Gaming Commission, Attn: New Casino Gaming Commission Rules and Regulations, at the above address, or email address, with the subject line "New Casino Gaming Commission Rules and Regulations". Comments are due within 30 days from the date of publication of this notice. Please submit your data, views or arguments. (1 CMG § 9104(a)(2))



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rcoc96951@omail.com

The Rota Casino Gaming Commission approved the attached Regulations on the _______ day

of <u>April</u> , 2024.	
I DECLARE under penalty of perjury that the above foreg Declaration was executed on the above date stated on Rot Mariana Islands.	
Certified and Ordered by:	
Malix	04/17/2024 Date
Viola Jeanne M. Hocog-Atalig, Chairperson Rota Casino Gaming Commission	Date
Received by:	
QX	4/27/24
Oscar M. Babauta Governor's Special Assistant for Administration	Date
Filed and Recorded by:	
Quistos	05.03 · 2024 Date
Esther M. San Nicolas Commonwealth Registrar	Date
Pursuant to 1 CMG§ 2153(e) (AG approval of regulations CMC § 9104(a)(3) (obtain AG approval) the proposed regreviewed and approved as to form and legal sufficiency by be published, 1 CMC § 2153(f) (publication of rules and regretations).	gulations attached hereto have been y the CNMI Attorney General and shall
Dated the	, 2024.

Hon. EDWARD MANIBUSAN

Attorney General



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Appendix I

Subchapter 160-20.1 ("ROTA CASINO GAMING COMMISSION RULES AND REGULATIONS") is amended by adding the following language: Website requirement

§ 160-20.1-1327 Website Requirement

Casino Operators must provide to the Commission for approval of its website or internet accessible software application requirements.

- (a) Domain name of individual website, ie. "example.com", or name of internet accessible software application
- (b) Country where physical servers are located
- (c) Name and license number of Casino Gaming Service Provider maintaining servers
- (d) Name of hosting or cloud provider company
- (e) Software platform manufacturer
- (f) Software platform documentation
- (g) Software platform testing certification
- (h) List of games offered on website or internet accessible software application
- (i) For each game:
 - (a) Game percentage payout
 - (b) Game specification
 - (c) Jackpot limits
 - (d) Linked jackpot arrangements

Section 160-20.1-015(z) (Definitions) is amended by deleting this section in its entirety and replacing with the following: Clarification

(z) "Gaming Equipment" means any mechanical, electrical, or electronic contrivance or machine used in connection with gaming or any game and includes, without limitation, roulette wheels, roulette tables, big six wheels, craps tables, tables for card games, layouts, slot machines, cards, dice, chips, plaques, card dealing shoes, drop boxes, websites, internet-accessible software applications, and other devices, machines, equipment, items, or articles determined by the Commission to be so utilized in gaming as to require licensing of the manufacturers, distributors, or services or as to require Commission approval in order to contribute to the integrity of the gaming industry.

Section 160-20.1-910(a) (Prohibition On Play) is amended by deleting this section in its entirety and replacing with the following: Clarification of prohibitions specific to websites

(a) The Commission finds it necessary to pass this prohibition to protect the welfare of individuals, promote the welfare of the community, minimize social ills and criminality, and promote fiscal responsibility. It is also necessary to maintain the perception and



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integrity of the casino industry. Accordingly, the casino operator, shall implement systematic rules and procedures, approved by the commission, to ensure that the following individuals are prohibited from playing in the casino:

- (1) Individuals under 18 years of age;
- (2) Individuals who appear to be intoxicated;
- (3) Individuals who appear to be addicted to gambling, and the casino operator shall implement policies and procedures designed to identify individuals exhibiting behavior evidencing a problem with gambling;
- (4) Members or employees of the Commission, except in casino games where game wins are not treated as gross gaming revenue by the commission, in a jurisdiction where taxes are collected by the commission.
- (5) Officers, directors, or partners of the casino operator and the casino management company, except in casino games where game wins are not treated as gross gaming revenue by the commission.
- (6) Gaming assistants, casino key employees, casino employees or casino clerks of the casino operator, except in casino games where game wins are not treated as gross gaming revenue by the commission.
- (7) Any person who is a current recipient of any welfare federal or local assistance based on low-income such as food stamp recipients.
- (8) In the case of websites or internet-accessible software applications:
 - (i) Individuals whose location is determined to be in a state or territory of the United States of America other than the Commonwealth;
 - (ii) Individuals who are playing from a location where the Commission has determined that play shall not be allowed

Section 160-20.1-1235 ("Fees and Taxes") is amended by adding the following language: Website license fees and virtual currency authorization

- (I) Website License Fees
 - (1) Website license fees shall be assessed annually on all websites or internetaccessible software applications containing games available for play by patrons of the casino.
 - (2) License fees for each website or internet-accessible software applications shall be two thousand five hundred dollars per year, per website or internet-accessible software application operated by the casino. This fee must be remitted to the Commission by October 1st of each fiscal year
 - (3) In the case of a website or internet-accessible software application, the Rota Gaming Tax, pursuant to subsection (h) shall be paid on each individual player deposit, at the time of deposit, in a manner prescribed by the Commission



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Section 160-20.1-1301(b) (Definitions) is amended by deleting this section in its entirety and replacing with the following: Clarification

(b) "Gaming equipment" means any mechanical, electrical, or electronic contrivance or machine used in connection with gaming or any game and includes, without limitation, roulette wheels, roulette tables, big six wheels, craps tables, tables for card games, layouts, slot machines, cards, dice, chips, plaques, card dealing shoes, drop boxes, websites, internet-accessible software applications, and other devices, machines, equipment, items, or articles determined by the Commission to be so utilized in gaming as to require licensing of the manufacturers, distributors, or services or as to require Commission approval in order to contribute to the integrity of the gaming industry.



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ARONGORONGOL TOULAP REEL PPWOMMWOL LIIWEL NGÁLI ALLÉGH ME MWÓGHUTUGHUT NGÁLI ROTA CASINO GAMING COMMISSION

MÁNGEMÁNGIL MWÓGHUT REEL REBWE ADÓPTÁÁLI PPWOMMWOL LIIWEL ME MWÓGHUTUGHUT: Rota Casino Gaming Commission ("Commission we") re mángemángil rebwe adóptááli bwe ebwe lléghló mwóghutughut ikka e appasch bwe Ppwommwol Mwóghutughut, sángi Administrative Procedure Act, 1 CMC § 9104(a). Ebwe bwunguló Mwóghutughut kkaal seigh ráál mwiril aar adóptááli me akkatééwowul me llól Commonwealth Register. (1 CMC § 9105(b))

BWÁNGIL: Eyoor bwángil Commission rebwe adóptááli allégh me mwóghutughut llól lemelemil sángi Rota Local Initiative 1, Rota Casino Act-il 2007 (10 CMC §§ 12101-12163).

KKAPASAL ME AWEEWEEL: Allégh me Mwóghutughut ikka e appasch nge sóbweeylól mwóghutughut imwu e lo iye e ayoorai lemelem me mwóghut ngáli casino industry llól Ghommwal Senatorial District (Luuta). Liiwel kkaal e ayoorai mwóghutughut ngáli internet casino.

KKAPASAL ME AUTOL: Allégh me mwóghutughut kkaal:

- 1. Aschuulong § 160-20.1-1327 Website Requirement
- 2. Liiweli § 160-20.1-015 Weeweel (z)
- 3. Liiweli § 160-20.1-910 Prohibition On Play (a)
- 4. Aschuulong § 160-20.1-1235 Fees and Taxes (l)
- 5. Liiweli § 160-20.1-1301 Weeweel (b)

AFAL REEL AMMWELIL ME AKKATÉÉWOWUL: Ebwe akkatééwow Ppwommwol Mwóghutughut kkaal me llól Commonwealth Register llól tálil ppwommwol me ffél mwóghutughut ikka ra adóptááli (1 CMC § 9102(a)(1)) me ebwe appaschetá llól civic center me bwal llól bwulasiyol gobetnameento llól Ghommwal Senatorial District; ebwe lo arongorong llól English fengál me loll mwáliyaasch. (1 CMC§ 9104(A)(1)).

REEL ISIISILONGOL KKAPAS: Afanga ngare bwughiló yóómw ischil kkapas ngáli Rota Casino Gaming Commission, Attn: New Casino Gaming Commission Rules and Regulations, reel féléfél iye e lo weiláng, ngare email address, ebwe lo wóól subject line bwe "New Casino Gaming Commission Rules and Regulations". Ebwe toolong ischil kkapas llól eliigh ráál mwiril aal akkatééwow arongorong yeel.siisilong yóómw data, views ngare angiingii. (1 CMC § 9104(a)(2))

Rota

ROTA CASINO GAMING COMMISSION

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
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Rota Casino Gaming Commission ra átirowa Mwóghutughut ikk ráálil April , 2024.	ta e appasch wóól
I ARONGA faal penal mis bwe ikka weiláng e wel bwe ARONG imwu weiláng wóól Luuta, Commonwealth Téél Falúw kka Efár	
Átirow sángi:	
Male	04/17/2024 Ráál
Viola Jeanne M. Hocog-Atalig, Chairperson Rota Casino Gaming Commission	Ráál
Bwughiyal:	15/2 /20
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mola	05.03. 2024
Esther M. San Nicolas Commonwealth Register	Ráál
Sángi 1 CMG § 2153(e) (átirowal AG reel mwóghutughut bwe a CMC § 9104(a)(3) (sángi átirowal AG) reel ppwommwol mwóg takkal amwuri fischiiy me legal sufficiency sángi Soulemelemil ebwe akkatééwow, 1 CMC § 2153(f) (akkatééwowul allégh me ráálil	hutughut ikka e appasch bwe ra Allégh Lapalapal CNMI me

HON. EDWARD MANIBUSAN Soulemelemil Allégh Lapalap



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NUTISIAN PUPBLIKU PUT I MANMAPROPONI NA AMENDA SIHA GI AREKLAMENTU YAN REGULASIÓN PARA I LUTA KUMISIÓN HUEGUN SALÅPPI'

I MA'INTENSIONA NA AKSION NI PARA U MA'ADÅPTA ESTI SIHA I MANMAPROPONI NA AREKLAMENTU YAN REGULASION: I Luta Kumisión Huegun Salåppi' ha intensiona para u adåpta komu petmanienti na regulasion siha i mañechettun na Regulasión ayu I manmaproponi, sigun gi manera siha gi Åktun Administrative Procedures gi, 1 CMC § 9104(a). I regulasión siha umifektibu siempri gi halum 10 dihas dispues di adåptasión yan pupblikasión gi hålum i Rehistran Commonwealth. (1 CMC § 9105(b))

ÅTURIDÅT: I Kumisión gai åturidåt para u adåpta i areklamentu yan regulasión siha para u atbånsa i ubligasión yan responsibilidåt-ñiha sigun gi Rota Local Initiative 1, I Åktun Huegun Luta nu 2007 (10 CMC §§ 12101-12163).

I TEMA YAN SUSTÅNSIAN I PALÅBRA SIHA: I mañechettun na Areklamentu yan Regulasión siha sumuplimenta i prisenti na regulasión siha ni gumubietna yan maneha i industrian huegu gi halum i Primét na Distritun Senadot (Luta). I amenda siha prumubeni i regulasión nu aktibidåt huegun internet siha.

I SUHETU NI MASUMÅRIA YAN ASUNTU NI TINEKKA: Esti na areklamentu yan regulasión siha:

- 1. Na'hålum § 160-20.1-1327 Mamprisisu na Website
- 2. Amenda § 160-20.1-015 Sustånsian i palåbra siha (z)
- 3. Amenda § 160-20.1-910 Pruhibisión Gi Huega
- 4. Na'hålum § 160-20.1-1235 Åpas yan Taxes (1)
- 5. Amenda § 160-20.1-1301 Sustånsian i palåbra siha (b)

DIREKSION PARA U MAPO'LU YAN MAPUPBLIKA: Esti i manmaproponi na Regulasion siha debi na u mapupblika gi halum i Rehistran Commonwealth gi halum i seksiona ni maproponi yan ñuebu na ma'adåpta na regulasion siha (1 CMC § 9102(a)(1)) yan u mapega gi halum i kumbinienti na lugåt siha gi hålum i civic center yan i ufisinan gubietnamentu siha gi halum Primét na Distritun Senadot, parehu Inglis yan prinsipåt na lingguåhin natibu. (1 CMC § 9104(a)(1)).

PARA U MAPRIBENIYI UPIÑON SIHA: Na'hanåo pat intrega hålum i upiñom-mu guatu gi Luta Kumisión Huegun Salåppi', Atensión: Nuebu na Areklamentu yan Regulasión siha gi Kumisión Huegun Salåppi', gi sanhilu' na address, osino email address, yan i suhetu na råya "Nuebu na Areklamentu yan Regulasión siha gi Kumisión Huegun Salåppi'". I upiñon siha debi di u fanhålum gi halum 30 dihas ginen i fetchan i pupblikasión esti na nutisia. Put fabot na'hålum iyom-mu data, views pat agumentu siha. (1 CMC § 9104(a)(2))

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i Luta Kumisión Huegun Salåppi' inaprueba i mañechettun na Regulasión siha gi diha 29

HU DIKLÅRA gi påpa' i penan nu dinagi na i mamensiona siha gi sanhilu' manmagåhit yan mandinanchi yan esti na Diklarasión ginen makåtga huyung gi ha'åni ni mamensiona gi sanhilu' gi Luta, giya Commonwealth gi Sangkattan na Islas Marianas.

Inaprueba yan Inotdin as: Viola Jeanne M. Hocog-Atalig, Kabesiyu Luta Kumisión Huegun Salappi' Rinisibi as: Oscar M. Babauta Ispisiåt Na Ayudånti Para Atministrasión Pine'lu yan Ninota as: ESTHER M. San Nicolas Rehistran Commonwealth

Sigun i 1 CMC § 2153(e) (I Abugådu Heneråt ha aprueba i regulasion siha na para u macho'gui kumu fotma) yan i 1 CMC § 9104 (a)(3) (hentan inaprueban Abugådu Heneråt) i manmaproponi na regulasion siha ni mañechettun guini ni manmaribisa yan manma'aprueba kumu fotma yan sufisienti ligåt ginin i CNMI Abugådu Heneråt yan debi na u mapupblika, 1 CMC § 2153(f) (pupblikasion areklamentu yan regulasion siha).

Mafetcha gi diha <u>26</u>, gi <u>April</u>, 2024. Hon. EDWARD MANIBUSAN

Abugådu Hiniråt

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CNMI DEPARTMENT OF LABOR A D M I N I S T R A T I V E

OFF

No. 21-0123

HEARING

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STORY.	-	-	-	

n Re Matter of:)	PUA Case
Milan Fargo,)	

Appellant,
v.

Appellee.

ORDER DENYING REQUEST TO REOPEN; FINAL AGENCY DECISION

ICE

CNMI Department of Labor,

I. INTRODUCTION

The undersigned issued an Administrative Order in this matter on February 28, 2024. On or around March 6, 2024, Appellant Milan Fargo ("Appellant") filed a request to reopen and reconsider (collectively, "Request to Reopen"). Appellee CNMI Department of Labor ("Appellee") acknowledged receipt of Appellant's Request to Reopen, but Appellee filed no opposition or other response to Appellant's Request to Reopen.

Pursuant to Hawaii Administrative Rules ("HAR") § 12-5-93(h), the administrative hearing officer may grant or deny the application for reopening without a hearing. For the reasons stated below, Appellant's Request to Reopen is **DENIED**. The undersigned affirms that Appellant is not eligible for benefits for the period of February 2, 2020 to September 4, 2021.

II. PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND & ISSUES

A request to reopen and reconsider should be supported by legal, factual, or evidentiary reasons to reopen the decision. Cases should not be reopened and reconsidered simply to relitigate issues that have already been decided after a hearing to which both parties had an opportunity to be heard—especially absent new a legal, factual, or evidentiary error demonstrating the unwarranted deprivation of benefits.

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As a preliminary matter, the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance ("PUA") and Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation ("FPUC") were intended to support workers and employees affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The undersigned recognizes that the COVID-19 pandemic posed exceptionally difficult challenges for everyone, especially financial ones. The undersigned also recognizes that for the many who were already unemployed pre-pandemic, such as the Appellant, finding gainful employment became even more challenging during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the undersigned must continue to uphold the applicable laws and apply them to the circumstances of this case as all other claims, and speculations about diminishing business opportunities and job prospects are not COVID-19 related qualifying reasons under the applicable laws.

Here, the undersigned affirmed in the Administrative Order the Appellee's denial of PUA and FPUC benefits to the Appellant because Appellant was not considered a "covered individual" in accordance with the CARES Act and Continued Assistance Act. The evidence and testimony from the Administrative Hearing demonstrated that Appellant was unemployed well before the COVID-19 pandemic and Appellant's business and personal income were not affected by the COVID-19 pandemic because his business and individual income were already zero before the COVID-19 pandemic.

In support of his Request to Reopen, Appellant included more than 70 pages of type written statements, annotated copy of the Administrative Order in this case, print outs or screen shots of Appellant's PUA portal, and print outs of Appellant's Smart Seeker profile page. However, Appellant's Request to Reopen does not provide any new facts, cite to new law, or evidentiary error demonstrating that the case should be reopened and reconsidered. Appellant's most salient argument is that under subsection (kk) of the Section 2102(a)(3)(A)(ii)(I) of the CARES Act, "[s]elf-employed individuals...who experienced a significant diminution in customary or usual services because of the COVID-19 public health emergency, even absent a suspension of services, may self-certify under item (kk)." Appellant argues that he falls under this eligibility criteria because he had chances to earn money, but the disaster made this opportunity zero. The undersigned disagrees with Appellant's argument and affirms that Appellant is not eligible under (kk) or any other provision of the CARES Act because Appellant testified during the Administrative Hearing that he has not reported any income or filed any business gross revenue with CNMI Department of Finance, Division of Revenue and Taxation because he has not paid

himself any income or salary since starting his business because he has not had any success in raising any income with his business. Appellant provides no new evidence to contradict his own testimony and evidence presented at the Administrative Hearing. As such, the undersigned finds that there is no new evidence that Appellant "experienced a significant diminution in customary or usual services because of the COVID-19 public health emergency." Appellant's self-certification is insufficient. Therefore, the undersigned finds that Appellant is not a "covered individual" under the CARES Act and the Continued Assistance Act because his unemployment pre-dated the COVID-19 pandemic and was not a direct result of a COVID-19 qualifying reason.

The remainder of Appellant's Request to Reopen are Appellant's attempts to litigate Appellant's labor dispute claims within his appeal of the denial of his PUA and FPUC benefits. Appellant's labor dispute claims include claims against Northern Marianas College and the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs Office of Aging, which Appellant mentioned in some of his PUA appeal filings, including in his Pre-Hearing Statement. As the undersigned stated in the Administrative Hearing as well as in the Administrative Order in this case, the undersigned declines (and continues to decline) to hear these labor dispute claims because these claims are separate from this appeal and the undersigned's authority, designation, and jurisdiction to hear only appeals relating to the denial or eligibility under PUA and FPUC programs.

Accordingly, based on the foregoing, upon review of Appellant's Request to Reopen and supporting documents filed herein, the Administrative Order, testimony and admitted evidence, the undersigned finds that there is insufficient evidence to support reopening this case and reconsidering the decision that Appellant does not qualify for PUA and FPUC benefits.

III. FINAL AGENCY DECISION

A decision can only be reopened once by a particular party. HAR § 12-5-93(j). In the event that an application to reopen is denied or parties have further objections to a subsequent decision, the parties may obtain judicial review with the CNMI Superior Court under the local Administrative Procedures Act. See 1 CMC § 9112. All forms, filings fees, and filing deadlines for judicial review will be as established by the applicable law and court rule.

So ordered this 17th day of April, 2024.

ATHERINE J. CACHERO

Pro Tem Administrative Hearing Officer

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CNMI DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

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In Re Matter of:) PUA Case No. 23-0236
Shopun Mozunder,)
Appellant,) ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION
ν.	
CNMI Department of Labor,	
Appellee.	

I. INTRODUCTION

This matter came before the undersigned for an Administrative Hearing on April 11, 2024 at approximately 1:30 p.m. at the Administrative Hearing Office, Saipan. Appellant Shopun Mozunder ("Appellant") was present and self-represented. Appellee CNMI Department of Labor ("Appellee" or "Department") was present and represented by PUA Program Coordinator Ellen Tebuteb and PUA Program Team Leader Esco Francene Kileleman. Interpreter Nasima Uddin was also present to facilitate communications.

A list of the documents that were admitted into evidence at the hearing is appended to the end of this Order.

For the reasons stated below, the Department's Determination dated March 16, 2023 is **AFFIRMED**. Appellant is not eligible for benefits for the period of July 10, 2021 to September 4, 2021.

II. JURISDICTION

On March 27, 2020, the Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security ("CARES") Act of 2020 was signed into law creating new temporary federal programs for unemployment benefits

Appellant was accompanied by witness, Mariano Pangelinan. The witness was present to serve as witness, but did not provide testimony.

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called Pandemic Unemployment Assistance ("PUA")² and Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation ("FPUC").³ On December 27, 2020, the Continued Assistance for Unemployed Workers Act of 2020 ("Continued Assistance Act") amended and created new provisions of said federal unemployment insurance programs, which, among other things, extended the PUA and FPUC programs to March 13, 2021.⁴ On March 11, 2021, the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 ("ARPA") extended the programs to September 6, 2021. The CNMI Department of Labor is charged with the responsibility in administering the above-mentioned programs in the CNMI in accordance to applicable law.⁵ The CNMI Department of Labor Administrative Hearing Office has been designated to preside over appeals of agency decisions.

Upon review of the records, the appeal is timely filed. Accordingly, jurisdiction is established.

III. PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND & ISSUES

Appellant filed a claim for unemployment benefits under the PUA and FPUC programs. Upon review of Appellant's application and supporting documents, the Department issued a Disqualifying Determination on March 16, 2023. Based on the March 16, 2023 Disqualifying Determination, Appellant was disqualified from July 7, 2021 to September 4, 2021 for failing to show that he is a US Citizen, Non-citizen National, Qualified Alien, or Commonwealth Only Transitional Worker at the time.

On March 28, 2023, Appellant filed the present appeal and the matter was scheduled for a hearing. In preparation for the hearing, the parties were ordered to file a prehearing statement and proposed exhibits. The Department filed an Amended Prehearing Statement and 12 proposed exhibits on November 8, 2023. Appellant failed to file a prehearing statement or any proposed exhibits.

As stated in the Notice of Hearing, the issues on appeal are:

- (1) Whether the appeal is timely filed; and
- (2) Whether Appellant is eligible to receive PUA benefits during the disqualified period.

² See Section 2102 of the CARES Act of 2020, Public Law 116-136.

³ See Section 2104 of the CARES Act of 2020, Public Law 116-136.

⁴ See Consolidated Appropriations Act. 2021, Division N, Title II, Subtitled A ("Continued Assistance for Unemployed Workers Act of 2020" or "Continued Assistance Act").

⁵ Pursuant to Section 2102(h) of the CARES Act of 2020 (Pub. L. 116-136) and 20 CFR § 625.2(r)(1)(ii), the CNMI Governor issued Executive Order No. 2020-09 declaring Hawaii Employment Security Law as the applicable state law in the CNMI. Hawaii state law applies, to the extent it does not conflict with applicable federal law and guidance.

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⁶ Exhibits 2-4.

23 ⁷ Exhibit 1.

8 Exhibits 3-4.

24 9 Exhibit 1.

¹⁰ See Exhibit 1 (Appellant claimed to be a US permanent resident). 25

11 Appellant testified to being a CNMI permanent resident and non-citizen national. However, Appellant did not have sufficient evidence to prove these statements.

26 ¹² See Exhibits 5-8.

13 Exhibit 7. 27

14 Exhibit 5.

15 Exhibit 7.

16 Exhibit 7.

17 Exhibit 8.

IV. FINDINGS OF FACT

In consideration of the evidence provided and credibility of witness testimony, the undersigned issues the following findings of fact:

- 1. Prior to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, Appellant was living and working in the CNMI.
- 2. Beginning August 20, 2019, Appellant worked for JEM Corporation as a part-time gas attendant at the Mobil Gas Station in Chalan Kanoa, Saipan.⁶
- 3. On or around March 23, 2020,7 Appellant's work hours were reduced due to the pandemic.8
- 4. On February 18, 2021, Appellant submitted an online application for PUA benefits.⁹
- 5. As demonstrated by inconsistencies with Appellant's initial application, ¹⁰ Appellant's testimony. 11 and other exhibits, Appellant misunderstands his legal status and various employment authorization documents. 12 For that reason, Appellant's statement regarding his status was not credible and given little weight at the hearing.
- 6. Based on the documents provided, the Department initiated a SAVE verification with USCIS to determine status and eligibility during the pandemic assistance period.¹³ The SAVE response and other documents demonstrate:
 - a. Appellant was a parolee from June 29, 2019 to June 29, 2020, 14
 - b. Appellant had employment authorization under Category C11 from March 19, 2020 to June 29, 2020.15
 - c. Appellant became a CNMI Long-Term Resident. 16
 - d. As a CNMI Long-Term Resident, Appellant was given employment authorization under Category C37 from June 28, 2021 to June 28, 2026.¹⁷

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- On or around June of 2022, Appellant quit his job for personal reasons unrelated to the COVID-19 pandemic.¹⁸
- 8. On March 16, 2023, the Department issued a Disqualifying Determination. Appellant was disqualified for benefits from July 10, 2021 to September 4, 2021 because Appellant was not a U.S. Citizen, non-citizen national, qualified alien, or Commonwealth Only Transitional Worker during the relevant time.
- 9. The Disqualifying Determination was served to Appellant through certified mail. The 10-day deadline to file an appeal, as stated in the Determination, was March 26, 2023.
- 10. Appellant does not have his own PO Box and shared one with his friend.
- 11. Appellant claims he checked the PO Box every day. However, the undersigned gives little weight to this statement considering Appellant could only provide generalized information about when he received the Disqualifying Determination. Moreover, Appellant testified that he did not have a vehicle or regular transportation.
- 12. Appellant retrieved the Disqualifying Determination at the PO box on March 27, 2023.
- 13. Appellant filed an Appeal on March 28, 2023.
- 14. Without assistance, Appellant could not read or understand the written instructions because of the language barrier.
- 15. Appellant did not file a prehearing statement or proposed exhibits, as ordered.
- 16. During the hearing. Appellant presented voluminous records for the hearing officer to review. 19 A majority of the documents provided were irrelevant to the issues on appeal. Based on the records reviewed, there were no additional documents to contest the Determination or sufficiently establish an eligible status during the denial period.

V. CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

In consideration of the above-stated findings and applicable law, the undersigned issues the following conclusions of law:

¹⁸ Notably, the employer records were inconsistent with Appellant's testimony. The undersigned hearing officer assigned more weight and credibility to the sworn testimony from Appellant.

¹⁹ It is the Appellant's burden to prove or establish their claim. In order to maintain impartiality, the hearing officer declined to review each document and make Appellant's arguments for him. Instead, the undersigned only requested documents specifically to the issues on appeal.

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1. Appellant's appeal is timely filed.

Generally, an appeal should be filed within ten days after the Notice of Determination was issued or served to the claimant. However, the Department may extend the period to thirty days by a showing of good cause.²⁰ Good cause means: (1) illness or disability; (2) keeping an appointment for a job interview: (3) attending a funeral of a family member; and (4) any other reason which would prevent a reasonable person from complying as directed.²¹

While Appellant filed his appeal the day after receiving the Disqualifying Determination in the mail. Appellant missed his ten-day deadline. However, the undersigned finds good cause for the extension given Appellant's prompt action and language limitations. Based on the 30-day good cause extension, Appellant's appeal is timely filed.

2. Appellant is not a U.S. Citizen, Non-citizen National, or Qualified Alien during the disqualified period.

PUA and FPUC are federal public benefits as defined by 8 USC §1611(c). As a condition of eligibility for any federal public benefit, the claimant must be a US Citizen, Noncitizen National, or "qualified alien" at the time relevant to the claim. 8 USC §1611(a). Pursuant to 8 USC §1641, the term "qualified alien" is:

- 1. An alien admitted for permanent residence under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA);
- 2. An alien granted asylum under § 208 of the INA;
- 3. A refugee admitted to the US under § 207 of the INA:
- 4. An alien paroled into the US under § 212(d)(5) of the INA for at least one year;
- 5. An alien whose deportation is being withheld under § 243(h) of the INA ... or whose removal is being withheld under § 241 (b)(3) of the INA;
- 6. An alien granted conditional entry pursuant to § 203 (a)(7) of the INA;
- 7. An alien who is a Cuban or Haitian entrant as defined in § 501(e) of the Refugee Education Assistance Act of 1980; or
- 8. An alien who (or whose child or parent) has been battered or subject to extreme cruelty in the U.S. and otherwise satisfies the requirements of § 431(c) of the Act.

Further, Section 265 of the Continued Assistance Act provides that a Commonwealth Only Transitional Worker (CW-1) shall be considered a qualified alien for purposes of eligibility under the PUA and FPUC programs. As provided in UIPL 16-20, change 4, page I-16, "CW-1 workers

²⁰ HI. Rev. Statute § 383-38(a).

^{| | 21} HAR § 12-5-81(j).

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may receive PUA and FPUC if they meet all PUA eligibility requirements beginning with claims filed after December 27, 2020 (i.e., claim effective dates beginning on or after January 3, 2021)."

Appellant does not meet this requirement because he was not a U.S. Citizen, Noncitizen National, or Qualified Alien during the denial period of July 10, 2021 to September 4, 2021. Further, while Appellant may misunderstand and argue otherwise, Appellant fails to provide sufficient evidence to contest the Department's Disqualifying Determination.

Upon review, Appellant used to qualify as a parolee during the earlier phases of PUA. Based on the record and admitted exhibits, Appellant used to hold parolee status up until June 29, 2020. Upon inquiry, there were no other documents to show continuing parolee status after June 29, 2020. Considering that Appellant must meet this requirement for each week claimed, this previous parolee status is not relevant to the denial period.

After his parolee status, Appellant transitioned into the CNMI Long Term Resident status and was given employment authorization to work under category C37 from June 28, 2021 to June 28, 2026. Notably, a CNMI Long Term Resident does not meet the status requirements, as defined above. Upon further inquiry, Appellant failed to provide sufficient evidence to establish his status under any other eligible category, described above.

Accordingly, based on the law and record, Appellant is not a US Citizen, Non-citizen National, or Qualified Alien during the disqualified period, July 10, 2021 to September 4, 2021. For this reason, Appellant failed to meet his burden to prove eligibility for PUA benefits.

VI. DECISION

For the reasons stated above, it is ORDERED that:

- 1. The CNMI Department of Labor's Disqualifying Determination, dated March 16, 2023, is **AFFIRMED**;
- 2. The Appellant is **NOT ELIGIBLE** to receive PUA benefits for the period of July 10, 2021 to September 4, 2021.

If a party is aggrieved by this Order and would like to contest the decision, he or she must submit a written request to reopen the decision pursuant to Hawaii Admin. Rule § 12-5-93. The written request should be supported by legal, factual, or evidentiary reasons to reopen the decision. The written request must be submitted to the Administrative Hearing Office, either in

person at 1331 Ascencion Drive, Capitol Hill Saipan MP 96950 or via email at hearing@dol.gov.mp.

In the event a request to reopen the decision is granted, the matter shall be scheduled for a subsequent hearing. In the event a request to reopen the decision is denied, or if the Appellant still disagrees with a subsequent decision, the Appellant may seek judicial review with the CNMI Superior Court under the local Administrative Procedures Act. See 1 CMC § 9112. All forms, filings fees, and filing deadlines for judicial review will be as established by the applicable law and court rule.

So ordered this 17th day of April, 2024.

Jacqueline A. Nicolas

Chief Administrative Hearing Officer

Documents Admitted into Evidence

- 1. Exhibit 1: Copy of Appellant's Application Snapshot, filed February 18, 2021;
- 2. Exhibit 2: Copy of Appellant's Separation Notice, dated June 17, 2020;
- 3. Exhibit 3: Copy of Appellant's Verification of Employment, dated March 14, 2023;
- 4. Exhibit 4: Copy of Appellant's Certification of Employment, dated July, 13, 2023;
- 5. Exhibit 5: Copy of Appellant's Notice of Parole, dated November 4, 2019;
- 6. Exhibit 6: Copy of Homeland Security article re: USCIS Extends Transitional Parole for CNMI Long-Term Resident Status Applicants, dated December 31, 2020;
- 7. Exhibit 7: Copy of Department's SAVE Verification Response, initiated September 13, 2021; and
- 8. Exhibit 8: Copy of Appellant's EAD Card valid from June 28, 2021 to June 28, 2026.



CNMI DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

A D M I N I S T R A T I V E H E A R I N G O F F I C E

In Re Matter of:) PUA Case No. 23-0244
Arwin Reyes,	
Appellant,) ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER GRANTING APPELLANT'S REQUEST FOR
v.) DISMISSAL
CNMI Department of Labor,)
Division of Employment Services-PUA, Appellee.	

On March 21, 2024, the parties were ordered to clarify the pending request for dismissal. Based on the joint statement filed, the undersigned finds:

- Appellant was requalified for PUA benefits beginning August 22, 2021 to September 4, 2021, and disqualified for weeks beginning December 27, 2020 to March 27, 2021 and July 25, 2021 to August 21, 2021.
- 2. Appellant was overpaid in the amount of \$8,385 and has agreed to pay all amounts not waived.
- 3. Appellant does not contest the new determinations.
- 4. The Department does not oppose dismissal.

In consideration of the foregoing, the undersigned finds there are no other issues to resolve and dismissal is appropriate. Accordingly, this appeal is **DISMISSED** and the Department's Determinations are final. The Administrative Hearing scheduled for May 2, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. is **VACATED**. In the event that the Appellant disagrees with a subsequent determination or notice, Appellant may file a new appeal.

So ordered this <u>27th</u> day of March, 2024.

JACQUÉLINE A. NICOLAS
Chief Administrative Hearing Officer



In Re Matter of:) PUA Case No. 23-0252
Eldrone Quizon,	
Appellant, v.) ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION) GRANTING APPELLANT'S REQUEST) FOR DISMISSAL
CNMI Department of Labor, Division of Employment Services-PUA,	
Appellee.))

Pursuant to Appellant's Request to Appeal, this matter was scheduled for an Administrative Hearing for July 11, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. at the Administrative Hearing Office in Saipan. On April 8, 2024, Appellant filed a written request to voluntarily dismiss his appeal due to personal reasons. Specifically, Appellant is no longer interested in contesting the Department's determinations or pursuing an appeal.

In consideration of the above, the undersigned finds that dismissal is appropriate. Accordingly, this appeal is hereby <u>DISMISSED</u> and the Administrative Hearing scheduled for July 11, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. is <u>VACATED</u>. The underlying determination, dated June 1, 2023, is hereby final. Appellant is not eligible for PUA benefits from April 12, 2020 to September 4, 2021. In the event that the Appellant disagrees with a subsequent determination or notice, Appellant may file a new appeal.

So ordered this <u>9th</u> day of April, 2024.

ACQUELINE A. NICOLAS
Chief Administrative Hearing Officer



CNMI DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

A D M I N I S T R A T I V E H E A R I N G O F F I C E

In Re Matter of:) PUA Case No. 24-0276
Loreta Dupra,	
Appellant, v. CNMI Department of Labor,) ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION GRANTING APPELLANT'S REQUEST FOR DISMISSAL)
Appellee.	

On April 15, 2024, Appellant filed a written request to voluntarily dismiss her appeal due to personal matters. Specifically, Appellant is no longer interested in contesting the Department's determinations or pursuing an appeal. The Department does not oppose the dismissal.

In consideration of the above, the undersigned finds that dismissal is appropriate. Accordingly, this appeal is hereby <u>DISMISSED</u>. In the event that the Appellant disagrees with a subsequent determination or notice, Appellant may file a new appeal.

So ordered this 18th day of April, 2024.

JACQUELINE A. NICOLAS
Chief Administrative Hearing Officer

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL CIVIL DIVISION

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