

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



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**COMMONWEALTH REGISTER**

**VOLUME 42**

**NUMBER 09**

**SEPTEMBER 28, 2020**

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Office of the Secretary  
Department of Finance

P.O. Box 5234 CHRБ, Saipan MP 96950

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



**PUBLIC NOTICE OF PROPOSED REGULATIONS**  
**of the DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE, DIVISION OF FINANCE AND ACCOUNTING**

**INTENDED ACTION TO ADOPT THESE PROPOSED REGULATIONS:** The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Department of Finance, Division of Finance & Accounting intends to adopt as permanent regulations the attached Proposed Regulations, pursuant to the procedures of the Administrative Procedure Act (APA), 1 CMC § 9104(a). The regulations will become effective ten days after adoption and publication in the Commonwealth Register, 1 CMC §9105(b).

**AUTHORITY:** The Secretary is empowered by the Legislature to adopt rules and regulations not inconsistent with law regarding those matters within its jurisdiction (1 CMC §2257) and to develop and implement uniform government policy for per diem rates for government travel (1 CMC §7407(e)).

**THE TERMS AND SUBSTANCE:** The purpose of the Proposed Regulations is to implement policies and procedures for government travel. The last revision to Administrative Code Chapter 70-20.3 code was through Emergency Adoption in December of 2005. A notice of permanent adoption has not been published.

**THE SUBJECTS AND ISSUES INVOLVED:** These regulations:

1. Permanently establish regulations for government travel, particularly for the executive branch including but not limited to
  - a. Authority and approval of government travel;
  - b. Allowable expenditures relating to lodging, meals, and transport; and
  - c. Cash management policies and forms for travel advances.
2. Fulfill 1 CMC §7407(e) to adopt a uniform policy of per diem allotments for government travel applicable to branches, departments, divisions, agencies and autonomous agencies of the CNMI so as to provide fair and equitable travel allowances for each government employee.

**DIRECTIONS FOR FILING AND PUBLICATON:** These proposed regulations shall be published in the Commonwealth Register in the section on Proposed and Newly Adopted Regulations (1 CMC §9102(a)(1)). Notice of postings will be in convenient places in civic centers, in local government offices in each senatorial district, both in English and in the principal vernacular (1 CMC §9104(a)(1)). A notice of postings and proposed regulations shall be available online at *finance.gov.mp* in the announcements section.

**TO PROVIDE COMMENTS:** Interested parties may submit written comments on the proposed regulations via the following methods:

*Email:* [travel@dof.gov.mp](mailto:travel@dof.gov.mp) , Subject: Travel Regulations comments,

*USPS mail:* Travel Regulations, C/O David Atalig, Secretary of Finance, PO Box 5234 CHRБ, Saipan MP 96950.

*Hand Delivery:* Travel Regulations, C/O David Atalig, Secretary of Finance, Building 1302 Ascencion Drive, Capitol Hill, Saipan.



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Comments are due within 30 days from the date of this publication notice. Please submit your data, views, or arguments. (1 CMC §9104(a)(2)).

These proposed regulations were approved by the Secretary of Finance on August 24, 2020.


Submitted by:  9/24/2020  
Date  
David Dig. Atalig  
Secretary of Finance

Received by:  09/24/2020  
Date  
Matilda A. Rosario  
Special Assistant for Administration

Filed and Recorded by:  09-28-2020  
Date  
Esther Sn. Nesbitt  
Commonwealth Registrar

Pursuant to 1 CMC §2153(e), the proposed regulations attached hereto have been reviewed and approved as to form and legal sufficiency the CNMI Attorney General and shall be published (1 CMC §2153(f)).

Dated the 24<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2020.

  
Edward Manibusan  
Attorney General



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Department of Finance

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**NUTISIAN PUBLIKU PUT I MANMAPROPONI NA REGULASION SIHA gi  
DIPATTAMENTUN FAINANSIÁT, DIBISION FAINANSIÁT YAN ACCOUNTING**

**I AKSION NI MA'INTENSIONA PARA U MA'ADÁPTA ESTI I MANMAPROPONI NA REGULASION SIHA:** I Commonwealth gi Sangkattan na Islas Mariáñas, i Dipattamentun Fainansiát, Dibision Fainansiát & Accounting ha intensiona para u adápta i regulasion siha komu petmanienti i mañechettun Manmaproponi na Regulasion siha, sigun para i maneran nu i Ákton Administrative Procedures (APA), 1 CMC § 9104(a). I regulasion siempri umifektibu gi halum dies (10) dihas dispues di adáptasion yan publikasion gi halum i Rehistran Commonwealth, (1 CMC § 9105(b)).

**ÁTURIDÁT:** I Sekretáriu ma'aturisa ni Lehislatura para u adápta areklamentu yan regulasion siha ni ti kunsisti yan i lai put atyu siha na suhetu gi dentru aturidát-ñiha (1 CMC §2257) yan para u dibelop yan implimenta "uniform government policy" para "per diem rates" para buettan gubietnamentu (1 CMC §7407(e)).

**I TEMA YAN SUSTANSIAN I PALÁBRA SIHA:** I puntu nu i Manmaproponi na Regulasion siha sa' para u ma'implimenta "policies" yan manera siha para buettan gubietnamentu. I uttimu na tinilaika para i "Administrative Code Chapter 70-20.3 code" ginin i "Emergency Adoption" gi Disembri, 2005. I petmanienti na adáptasion na nutisia ti mapublikia.

**I SUHETU NI MASUMÁRIA YAN ASUNTU NI TINEKKA SIHA:** Esti na regulasion siha:

1. Petmanienti umestablesi i regulasion siha para i buettan gubietnamentu, pattikulát para i háli' eksakatibu kuntodu lão ti chi'ña para
  - a. Aturidát yan inaprueban nu buettan gubietnamentu;
  - b. Manmasedi na ginasta ni asosiát para apusentu, sentada, yan transpotta; yan
  - c. "Cash Management policies" yan fotma para atbánsan i buetta siha.
2. Kumpli 1 CMC §7407(e) para u adápta parehu na "policy" nu "per diem allotments" para buettan gubietnamentu inaplikáppli para i háli', i dipattamentu, dibision, ahensia yan i "autonomous" na ahensia siha gi iya CNMI put para u pribeni tai'intires yan parehu na "allowances" buetta para kada na impli'áo gubietnamentu.

**DIREKSION PARA U MAPO'LU YAN PUBLIKASION:** Esti i manmaproponi na regulasion siha para u mapublikia gi halum i Rehistran Commonwealth gi seksiona ni Manmaproponi yan Nuebu na Ma'adápta na Regulasion siha (1 CMC §9102(a)(1)). Nutisian nu i publika siempri mapega gi halum kumbinienti na lugát gi halum civic centers, gi halum ufisinan gubietnamentu siha yan gi halum distritun senadot, parehu Inglis yan i dos prinsipát na linguáhin natibu (1 CMC §9104(a)(1)). I nutisian nu i publika siha yan i manmaproponi na regulasion siha managuaha "online" gi *finance.gov.mp* gi halum i anunsio na seksiona.

**PARA U MAPRIBENIYI UPIÑON SIHA:** I manintiresáo na pattida siha siña ma'intrega hálum tinigi' upiñon siha gi manmaproponi na regulasion ginin i tinattiya na manera siha:

*Email:* [travel@dof.gov.mp](mailto:travel@dof.gov.mp) , Subject: Travel Regulations comments,



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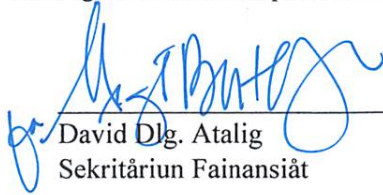
*USPS mail:* Travel Regulations, C/O David Atalig, Secretary of Finance, PO Box 5234 CHRB, Saipan MP 96950.

*Hand Delivery:* Travel Regulations, C/O David Atalig, Secretary of Finance, Building 1302 Ascencion Drive, Capitol Hill, Saipan.

I upiñon siha debi na u fanhålum gi halum trenta (30) dihas ginin i fetcha publikasion esti na nutisia. Put fabot intrega halum imfotmasion, upiñon, pat agumentom-mu siha. (1 CMC §9104(a)(2)).

Esti i manmaproponi na regulasion siha inaprueba ni Sekretariun Fainansiât gi Agustu 24, 2020.


Nina'hålum as:

  
David Dlg. Atalig  
Sekritariun Fainansiât

09/24/2020

Fetcha


Rinisibi as:

  
Matilda A. Rosario  
Ispisiât Na Ayudanti Para Administration

09/24/2020

Fetcha

Pine'lu yan  
Ninota as:

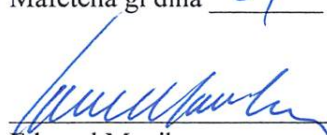
  
Esther Sn. Nesbitt  
Rehistran Commonwealth

09-28-2020

Fetcha

Sigun para 1 CMC §2153(e), i manmaproponi na regulasion siha ni mañechettun guini maribisa yan aprueba komu para fotma yan ligât na sufisienti.

Mafetcha gi diha 24 gi September, 2020.

  
Edward Manibusan  
Henerât Abugâdu



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ARONGORONGOL TOULAP REEL POMMWOL MWÓGHUTUGHUTÚL  
BWULASIYOL FINANCE, BWULASIYOL FINANCE ME ACCOUNTING

**MÁNGEMÁNGIL MWÓGHUT REEL REBWE ADÓPTÁÁLI POMMWOL MWÓGHUTUGHUT:**

Commonwealth Téél Falúw kka Efáng Ilól Marianas, Bwulasiyol Finance, Bwulasiyol Finance me Accounting re mángemángil rebwe adóptááli Pommwol Mwóghutughut ikka e appasch bwe ebwe lléghló, sáangi mwóghutughutúl Administrative Procedure Act (APA), 1 CMC § 9104(a). Ebwe bwunguló mwóghutughut kkal seigh ráál mwiril aal adóptááil me akkatééwowul me Ilól Commonwealth Register, 1 CMC §9105(b).

**BWÁNGIL:** Eyoor bwángil Sekkretóoriyo sáangi Legislature reel ebwe adóptááli allégh me mwóghutughut ikka ese weewe ngáli allégh ikka e ssúl ngáli milikka e lo llól lemelem (1 CMC §2257) me ebwe ayoor me ebwe ayoorai mwóghutughut ikka e weewe ngáli mwóghutughutúl gobetnameento ngáli “per diem rates” ngáli “government travel” (1 CMC §7407(e)).

**KKAPASAL ME AWEEWEL:** Bwulul Pommwol Mwóghutughut nge ebwe ayoorai mwóghutughutúl “policies” me mwóghutughutúl “government travel”. Ottimwol liiwel ngáli Administrative Code Chapter 70-20.3 code nge sáangi “Emergency Adoption” llól Tumwur ráághil 2005. Esáál yoor mwo arongorongol adóptáá kka aa lléghló.

**KKAPASAL ME ÓUTOL:** Mwóghutughut kkal:

1. E itittiw mwóghutughut ikka aa lléghló ngáli “government travel”, spesiatmente ngáli “executive branch” e schuulong nge ese yúgh ngáli
  - a. Bwángil me átirowal; “government travel”;
  - b. Óbwóss ikka re mweiti ngáli me e schuu llól “lodging”, áfááf, me taay; me
  - c. Mwóghutughutúl selaapi me pappidil ngáli “travel advances”.
2. Ebwe tam 1 CMC § 7407(e)-reel ebwe adóptááli mwóghutughut iye e weewe reel “per diem allotments” ngáli “government travel” iye e ffil ngáli “branches”, “departments”, “divisions”, “agencies” me “autonomous agencies” sáangi CNMI reel rebwe ayoorai “fair” me “equitable travel allowances” ngáli ghal escháy schóól angaangil gobetnameento.

**AFAL REEL AMMWELIL ME AKKATÉÉWOWUL:** Ebwe akkatééwowul pommwol mwóghutughut kkal me llól Commonwealth Register llól táilil Pommwol me Ffél Mwóghutughut ikka ra Adóptááli (1 CMC §9102(a)(1)). Appaschal Arongorong ebwe lo llól civic centers, bwulaisyol gobetnameento llól senatorial district, fengál reel English me mwáliyaasch (1 CMC §9104(a)(1)). Ebwe bwal yoor arongorongol appasch me pommwol mwóghutughut online me *finance.gov.mp* llól táilil arongorong.

**REEL ISISILONGOL KKPAS:** Schoo kka re tipáli rebwe isisilong ischil kkapas wóól pommwol mwóghutughut kkal rebwe attabweey mwóghutughut iye:

Email: [travel@dof.gov.mp](mailto:travel@dof.gov.mp), Subject: Travel Regulations comments,



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Ischil kkapas ebwe toolong llól eliigh ráál mwiril aal akkatééwow arongorong yeel. Isiisilong yóómw data, views, ngáre angiingi. (1 CMC §9104(a)(2)).

Aa átirow pommwol mwóghutughut kkal sáangi Sekkretóoriyol Finance wóól Elúwel 24, 2020.

Isáliyalong:

  
David Dlg. Atalig  
Sekktretóoriyol Finance

9/24/2020

Ráál

Bwughiyal:



Mathilda A. Rosario  
Special Assistant ngáli Administration

09/24/2020

Ráál

Ammwelil:



Esther Sn. Nesbitt  
Commonwealth Registrar

09-28-2020

Ráál

Sáangi 1 CMC § 2153(e), ra takkal amwuri fischiiy pommwol mwóghutughut ikka e appasch me átirowa bwe aa lléghló reel fféerúl me legal sufficiency sáangi Soulemelemil Allégh Lapalpal CNMI me ebwe akkatééwow (1 CMC §2153(f)).

Aghikkilátiw wóól

24<sup>th</sup>

ráálil

September

, 2020

Edward Manibusan

Soulemelemil Allégh Lapalpal

PROPOSED TRAVEL REGULATIONS

**Chapter 70-20.3 CNMI Government Travel Regulations**

**Part 001 – General Provisions**

- § 70-20.3-001 Overview and Summary
- § 70-20.3-005 Authority
- § 70-20.3-010 Applicability
- § 70-20.3-015 Definitions
  
- § 70-20.3-020 Policy
  
- § 70-20.3-025 General Rules
- § 70-20.3-030 Salary while on Travel Status

**Part 100 – Types of Travel Authorization; Per Diem, and Expenses**

- § 70-20.3-101 Type of Travel Authorization
- § 70-20.3-105 Persons Authorized to Travel at Government Expense
- § 70-20.3-110 Per Diem Allowances
- § 70-20.3-115 Use of Leave While Traveling
- § 70-20.3-120 Traveling between Conferences with Wait Time
- § 70-20.3-125 Death during Official Traveling
- § 70-20.3-130 Baggage
- § 70-20.3-135 Telephone Service
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- § 70-20.3-145 Miscellaneous Expenses
- § 70-20.3-150 Receipts Required

**Part 200 – Travel Advances, Traveler’s Transportation, Travel Authorization, and Travel Voucher**

- § 70-20.3-201 Travel Advances
- § 70-20.3-205 Traveler’s Transportation
- § 70-20.3-210 Travel Authorization (TA)
- § 70-20.3-215 Termination or Cancellation of Travel
- § 70-20.3-220 Travel Voucher (TV)

**Part 300 – Miscellaneous Provisions**

- § 70-20.3-301 Travel Authorization Request for Dependents
- § 70-20.3-305 Extension of Travel Time
- § 70-20.3-310 Loss of Traveling Documents
- § 70-20.3-315 Oversold Seats
- § 70-20.3-320 Grounded Due to Inclement Weather, Natural Disaster or Catastrophes
- § 70-20.3-325 Mode of Travel Conversion
- § 70-20.3-330 Traveler’s Insurance
- § 70-20.3-335 Meals on Non-Serving Flights
- § 70-20.3-340 Travel Card
- § 70-20.3-345 Disclaimer



PROPOSED TRAVEL REGULATIONS

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PROPOSED TRAVEL REGULATIONS

**Part 001 – General Provisions**

**§ 70-20.3-001 Overview and Summary**

- (a) The regulations in this subchapter provide procedures to all official travel performed in the best interest of the CNMI Government by its employees, board members, and other individuals traveling on official business for the CNMI Government.
- (b) The regulations in this subchapter shall supersede all rules and regulations issued by the Department of Finance, other CNMI agencies under the executive branch, and memorandums and directives from the Office of the Governor in effect prior to the adoption of these regulations for CNMI Government travel activities.

**§ 70-20.3-005 Authority**

The Department of Finance is authorized to adopt these travel regulations pursuant to 1 CMC § 2557.

**§ 70-20.3-010 Applicability**

- (a) These regulations apply to all work-related off-island travel for classified and unclassified employees, governing or advisory board members, consultants, and individuals representing the CNMI Government on official business, including off-island and interisland training.
- (b) The CNMI Government shall compensate authorized travelers their reasonable expenses for necessary travel authorized by the Government. A *reasonable* expense is one for which the cost is not excessive. *Necessary* travel is travel for which a clear business reason exists. This procedure applies to all travelers regardless of travel funding source.
- (c) Medical referral patients are not covered by these regulations. The CNMI Medical Referral Program shall apply their applicable procedures for patient travel per NMIAC Title 75 § 75-50-005 and § 75-50-010 (b).
- (d) Autonomous agencies, public agencies, and independent agencies that have current travel regulation authority in place are not covered by these regulations, except for § 70-20.3-110, which shall be applied uniformly.

**§ 70-20.3-015 Definitions**

- (a) “Baggage” refers to containers consisting of public property or private property to be used exclusively for official business, and wearing apparel needed by the traveler for the journey.
- (b) “CNMI” stands for the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands.
- (c) “Conference” refers to any training, conference, travel fair, symposium, or other activity that is the purpose or partial purpose of the travel.
- (d) “Conference organized lodging” refers to lodging where a conference is held or lodging whether the conference has entered into an agreement for the purpose of providing a discounted lodging rate and/or to provide additional amenities to conference attendees.
- (e) “Covered employees” refers to employees, through government contract, that are eligible for overtime pay and other benefits.
- (f) “Day(s)” refers to calendar days, including weekends, and holidays. Each calendar date is a day.
- (g) “Government” refers to the CNMI Government.
- (h) “Individual Travel” refers to travel conducted by an individual traveling alone.

## PROPOSED TRAVEL REGULATIONS

- (i) "Group Travel" refers to travel conducted by a group of two or more persons for the purpose of attending the same official business function.
- (j) "Incidental expenses" include, but are not limited to, ground transportation, parking fees, tolls, work-related communication expenses, and registration fees.
- (k) "Inter-island travel" refers to travel between the islands of the Commonwealth.
- (l) "Traveler" means the person who is traveling for the Government.
- (m) "Spouse" refers to a person's lawfully married husband or wife.
- (n) "Per diem" refers to the amount of money the traveler receives to cover the cost of lodging and meals for one day.
- (o) "Stipend" refers to the amount of money the traveler receives for additional expenses not covered by per diem as stated in § 70-20.3-110 (a).
- (p) "Subsistence allowance" refers to the amount of money the traveler receives for food.

### § 70-20.3-020 Policy

It is the declared policy of the CNMI Government that all travel must be performed either for the direct benefit of the Government or to fulfill a real and legitimate obligation of the Government. With this purpose in mind, all Executive departments and agencies shall exercise prudence in authorizing off-island travel for seasonal, temporary, probationary employees; in such instances, a narrative travel justification to accompany the travel request and authorization must be submitted to the Governor, or designee. Travel to conferences, conventions, and the like shall be held to a minimum consistent with this policy.

### § 70-20.3-025 General Rules

- (a) Travelers must have written authorization prior to incurring any travel expenses.
  - i. While operation within the allocated travel budget is the responsibility of each traveler, the expenditure authority of the account has the overall duty of coordinating, reviewing, and approving travel requests. The Governor, or designee, will be the final approving authority or as authorized by § 70-20.3-105.
- (b) Travelers are expected to exercise the same care in incurring expenses that a prudent person would exercise if traveling on personal business.
- (c) Travelers are expected to pay for their personal expenses out of their per diem allowance while traveling on official government business.
- (d) The traveler is responsible for additional expenses over the authorized travel costs established in this procedure. The CNMI Government will not pay for excess costs resulting from circuitous routes, voluntary delays, or luxury accommodations, travel expenses, or services unnecessary or unjustified in the performance of official business.
- (e) Frequent Traveler Programs. Any frequent traveler benefits received from a travel service provider in connection with official travel shall be retained for personal use, if such items were obtained under the same conditions as those offered to the general public and at no additional cost to the CNMI Government. Travel airfare selection is subject to CNMI Procurement Regulations and the traveler may not select a specific travel service provider based on frequent traveler benefits.

### § 70-20.3-030 Salary while on Travel Status

- (a) The traveler shall receive his/her regular salary in addition to per diem, subsistence, or stipend during the authorized travel time.

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- (b) When on official travel, the timekeeper shall place the traveler on travel authorization (TA) status.
  - a. TA status begins on the departure date three (3) hours prior to departure from home island.
  - b. TA status ends on arrival date three (3) hours after arrival to home island.
- (c) When authorized by the expenditure authority, covered employees are entitled to earn overtime while off-island and on travel authorization status, especially but not limited to, when their job requires them to execute emergency, enforcement, or public safety activities, i.e., combat a brush fire on Rota at 5PM to 10 PM. A memorandum of justification from the Commissioner of Public Safety or Department of Fire & Emergency Services, shall be accompanied with the master payroll sheet and a copy of the Travel Authorization will be given to the Department of Finance, Payroll Section to substantiate overtime pay.

## Part 100 – Type of Travel Authorization; Per Diem; and Expenses

### § 70-20.3-101 Type of Travel Authorization

- (a) The following are types of travel authorization:
  - i. Travels on Official Business.
    - a. The Governor or designee shall authorize this type of travel including that funded by federal agencies.
    - b. Any requests not duly authorized prior to the commencement of travel will be charged to the individual traveler or to the director, administrator, or head official authorizing such travel, as appropriate.
    - c. All travels using federal funds from grants require the grantor's approval letter or evidence from the grant narrative.
  - ii. Travel Incident to Recruitment or Termination of Contract
    - a. Refer to NMIAC § 120-10-201.
- (b) Once a travel authorization request has been cleared by the Governor or designee, any subsequent change on the approved document must be resubmitted to the Governor, or designee in the form of an amended TA for review and recertification. Amendments to the TA include changes in dates and/or amount calculations. When amendments for additional expenses are made below \$500.00, the amended TA must be signed by the expenditure authority. When amendments are made above \$500.00, the amended TA must be signed by the Governor or designee.
- (c) Total length of travel, including subsequent amendments, may not exceed a total of sixty (60) consecutive days.

### § 70-20.3-105 Persons Authorized to Travel at Government Expense

- (a) Any person who is traveling for the government in any capacity may travel at the government's expense, provided that it is authorized by the Governor or designee.
- (b) The Governor's travel must be approved by the Lt. Governor.
- (c) Mayors of each municipality may authorize travel for their employees when traveling within the CNMI. Mayors traveling within the CNMI must be approved by the chairperson of the municipal council.
- (d) Agency lead officials, directors, or administrators shall restrict requests for travel on official government business for contract employees still serving their first 6 months of

## PROPOSED TRAVEL REGULATIONS

their new government contracts and to those with expiring contracts who have officially declared their desire not to renew their employment with the government, unless the Governor or designee waives this section in writing with reasonable justification.

- (e) **Persons Authorized:** The following persons are authorized to travel at the government's expense while on official business:
  - i) Employees of the CNMI Government.
  - ii) The spouses of the Governor and Lieutenant Governor.
  - iii) Members of governing and advisory board to any CNMI Government agency or commission. Board members must return to their home island fifteen (15) days prior to appointment's expiration. Board members must attach appointment letters to travel authorizations.
  - iv) Persons rendering service to the government. Any traveler who is not employed by an agency, i.e. consultant, student, performing artist, or related must have a justification report prepared by the department or agency head to include the reason(s) "why a person, other than an agency employee, was required to travel at the agency's expense."
- (f) **Authorized Travel Notifications**
  - i. If the traveler is a member of the Governor's Cabinet, a notice or Delegation of Authority (DoA) letter must be accompanied with the travel request for the Governor's approval for travels outside of the CNMI. Should travel occur within the CNMI, no DoA is required. The Press Secretary will disseminate your approved DoA to all respective agencies.

### § 70-20.3-110 Per Diem Allowances

The maximum amount of per diem allocated for individual travelers is determined by the approved destination of official business. For travel outside of the CNMI, per diem will be calculated in accordance with the scale set by the federal government as outlined in the Federal Transportation Regulations (FTR) in 41 CFR Chapters 300 to 304 and implemented by Governor's Directive. Per diem rates must be reviewed annually by the Department of Finance. For travel within the CNMI, per diem will be calculated at a rate set forth within this section. The per diem rate will cover lodging, meals, and incidental expenses.

#### (a) **Definition:**

- i. The Per diem allowances include all charges for meals; lodging; meal and lodging tips; and laundry services. Receipts for purchases made using per diem and for additional incidental charges need not be furnished unless the Hotels Plus Option is availed of as detailed in § 70-20.3-110 (e)-vi.

#### (b) **Per Diem when Leave is Taken**

- i. If leave of absence begins or terminates within the traveler's prescribed hours of duty, per diem allowance will terminate or begin at the same time, but if leave of absence does not begin or terminate until after the traveler's prescribed hours of duty, the traveler will be regarded as being in travel status until midnight of the day in which the leave of absence begins and from 12:01 a.m. of the day following the leave of absence. A traveler will be in travel status on non-working day is immediately preceded and followed by leave of absence. Leave may be authorized when travelling

PROPOSED TRAVEL REGULATIONS

provided that proper leave forms are submitted and approved prior to traveling. Adjustments on time sheets will be made accordingly.

**(c) Amount of Per Diem**

- i. The allowance for persons traveling for the Government, including the Governor and Lieutenant Governor’s spouse, shall equal to the number of days of authorized office travel multiplied by the current per diem allowance rate, contained in the Joint Travel Regulations, to its employees for the respective travel destinations when engaged in official business.
- ii. Under no circumstances will per diem be allowed for an employee at his/her permanent duty station, except off-island hired teachers, licensed allied health professionals, and individuals who are hired within the Executive Branch because they possess unique skills or other qualifications not available in the CNMI. Per diem may be allowed on temporary basis with Governor’s explicit approval on the travel authorization or the Employment Contract of off-island hired professionals or individuals who are hired within the Executive Branch because they possess unique skills or other qualifications not available in the CNMI prior to the commencement of travel.

**(d) Per Diem Rates should be obtained from the following:**

<b>For travel in</b>	<b>Rates set by</b>	<b>For per diem and actual expenses, see the following:</b>
(1) Continental United States (CONUS)	U.S. General Services Administration	For per diem, see applicable FTR Per Diem Bulletins issued periodically by the U.S. Office of Government-wide Policy, Office of Personal Property, Travel Management Policy, and available on the internet at: <a href="http://www.gsa.gov/perdiem">http://www.gsa.gov/perdiem</a>  Rates shall be reviewed annually on October 1 <sup>st</sup> , and implemented per Governor’s Directive.  Per diem rates will be based on the average rate for lodging, meals, and incidentals in that state, and no less than \$225.
<b>For travel in</b>	<b>Rates set by</b>	<b>For per diem and actual expenses, see the following:</b>
(2) Non-foreign areas (Guam, Saipan,	U.S. Department of Defense	Per Diem Bulletins issued by Per Diem, Travel and Transportation Allowance Committee

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<p>Tinian, Rota and all other U.S. Insular areas)</p>		<p>(PDTATAC) and published periodically in the Federal Register or internet at:  <a href="http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/perdiemC alc.cfm">http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/perdiemC alc.cfm</a></p> <p>Rates shall be reviewed annually on October 1<sup>st</sup> and implemented per Governor’s Directive.</p>
<p>(3) Foreign States</p>	<p>U.S. Department of State</p>	<p>A per diem supplement to section 925, Department of State Standardized Regulations (Government Civilian – Foreign Areas and available on the internet at:  <a href="https://aoprals.state.gov/">https://aoprals.state.gov/</a></p> <p>Rates online shall be pulled on October 1<sup>st</sup>, entered in the Department of Finance’s Financial Management Information System, and updated on the same day annually thereafter.</p> <p>Per diem rates will be based on the average rate for lodging, meals, and incidentals in that state, and no less than \$225</p>
<p>(4) CNMI (Northern Islands- Pagan, Alamagan, Aguiguan, etc.)</p>	<p>CNMI Government</p>	<p>A flat rate for per diem shall be provided to travelers going to the Northern Islands (islands north of Saipan and to include Aguiguan):</p> <p>The daily rate is set at \$60.00 per calendar day. No fractional rates will be calculated.</p>

**(e) Computing Per Diem**

**i. Day Defined**

In computing the per diem, the calendar days, midnight to midnight, will be the unit, and for fractional parts of a day at the commencement or ending of such continuous travel, constituting a travel period. If the travel period exceeds six (6) hours and requires lodging accommodations, a full day’s per diem will be provided. If the travel does not require lodgings, or the period is six (6) hours or less, one-half of the per diem rate will be allowed. Stipend or subsistence allowances will not be allowed for travels exceeding six (6) hours, except as stipulated in paragraph (viii) of this section.

**ii. Time of Departure and Arrival**

Dates and times beginning and ending of travel must be shown on the travel voucher.

**iii. Crossing of International Dateline**

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In computing per diem in case where the traveler crosses the International Dateline (one hundred and eightieth meridian), actual elapsed time shall be used rather than calendar days.

**iv. Indirect route or interrupted Travel**

Where there is an interruption of travel or deviation from the direct route for traveler's personal convenience or through the taking of leave, , the allowable per diem and expenses, including fare, shall not exceed that which would have been incurred on an uninterrupted travel by a usually traveled route.

**v. Per Diem while transiting between travels outside of the CNMI**

A full day's per diem will be provided if a traveler is making an overnight layover to catch a transiting flight. Full per diem will be given based on the traveler's overnighing airport/ city code. A traveler should not be allowed to book a transiting/overnight stay in excess one (1) night.

**vi. Hotels Plus Option**

In instances where a traveler feels compelled to stay in the hotel where the conference, seminar, or training is being held or where the hotel is conveniently or relative close in proximity to the area of business and where the prices of lodging exceed daily per diem allowance, the traveler may opt to choose the Hotels Plus Option. The traveler's hotel expense will be limited to \$500.00 per night and stipend will be made available at the rate of 25% the daily per diem rate for that location. Lodging estimates must be submitted 15 working days prior to travel date or as approved by the Governor, or designee, in emergency circumstances. Ground transportation via car rental or taxi fare will also be allowed in conjunction with this option. All receipts must be submitted for proper reconciliation and liquidation. Should the lodging rate fall below the submitted estimates, the traveler will repay the difference to Department of Finance.

**vii. Advanced Arrivals**

Advanced arrivals up to one day and a half, with a cut off time of 12:00 PM noon on the day before expected arrival date, shall be allowed. All applicable per diem rates shall be applied to cover the two extra days.

**viii. Per Diem with Stipend**

A stipend is allowable to be received in addition to per diem by the traveler in advance at a maximum of 50% of the established per diem rate. Stipends will only be allowable for additional expenses as described in 70-2.3-150(k) not covered by per diem only when proper invoices are attached to the travel authorization.

**(f) Stipend or Subsistence Allowance in Lieu of Per Diem**



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- i. Stipend in lieu of per diem may be granted by the Governor or designee only. Department or division heads will need to provide justification for allowing stipend for a traveler.
- ii. Stipend amounts cannot exceed 50% of the daily established per diem rate. Department and division heads can set the rate provided it does not exceed 50%.
- iii. Stipends may be awarded to travelers whose lodging or meals are paid for by a sponsoring group or program, but only through the request of the division head and approval by the Governor or designee.
- iv. Subsistence allowance cannot exceed the rates as follows: \$20 for breakfast, \$25 for lunch, and \$35 for dinner.

### **§ 70-20.3-115 Use of Leave While Traveling**

#### **(a) Reporting Leave Use**

- i. An employee traveling on official government business shall be considered to be on travel status only during the time when conducting official business away from the regular place of business and while traveling to and from the place at which the official business is transacted. Unless otherwise specified and approved, travel status begins with the departure of the common carrier from the CNMI and terminates upon the traveler's return to the island.
- ii. Travel time in excess of the allowable travel time as provided in this section may be charged to annual leave or to leave without pay. If leave of any kind is to be taken while on travel status, the traveler must attach a copy of the approved leave form to the travel request. Upon returning to the CNMI, the traveler must show the exact hour of departure from and return to duty station.

#### **(b) Leave as a Result of Illness or Injury**

- i. If a traveler gets injured, not due to his/her own misconduct, while on official travel status, additional per diem shall be provided not to exceed 7 calendar days. The traveler must provide medical documentation and/or receipts of such injury or illness. This documentation should accompany the travel voucher.
- ii. The traveling personnel should refund the per diem allowance if he/she received no hospitalization under any statute and received reimbursement under such statute for hospital expenses paid by him/her. If approved by the official authorizing the travel, transportation expenses to employee's designated post of duty and per diem en route whenever the employee becomes incapacitated due to illness or injury not due to his own misconduct while en route to or while at temporary duty station prior to completion of same, shall be allowed.

### **§ 70-20.3-120 Traveling between Conferences with Wait Time**

If an off-island traveler is traveling between two or more conferences, seminars, or professional development training and it is cost effective for the traveler to remain off-island than it would be to fly back to the CNMI, then the traveler shall be allowed to wait at their current location or travel early to the next business site location with per diem. Applicable per diem rates shall be given based on the flight itinerary and choice of waiting location. The traveler will not be reimbursed for ticket expenses associated with traveling to another state, aside from those planned originally for official travel.

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**§ 70-20.3-125 Death during Official Traveling**

- (a) If a CNMI Government employee passes away while on official government travel, the CNMI Government shall bear all expenses to repatriate the remains back to the CNMI or place of contract, if hired from off-island. Personal effects and reasonable shipping expenses will be shouldered by the CNMI Government. Cargo or shipping arrangements will be made by the deceased employee's department.
- (b) The department or division that employs the deceased will complete the necessary travel voucher to clear that individual's travel obligations.

**§ 70-20.3-130 Baggage**

**(a) Checking Baggage(s)**

Charges for the checking of baggage will be allowed.

**(b) Excess Baggage**

- i. Baggage subject to additional fees due to weight or size will be classed as excess baggage. Claims for reimbursement for excess baggage charges will be allowed when reasonable, authorized, and approved. All charges for excess baggage must be supported by receipts showing the weight of the baggage and between destinations.
  - 1. For inter-island commuter flights within the CNMI, a maximum of 20 pounds in excess baggage weight will be allowed for reimbursement.
  - 2. Travelers should exercise prudent and rational thought when packing for travel. For example, the government should not be held liable for excess baggage weight of 5 pounds, thus resulting in a \$200 carrier charge.

**(c) Stoppages in Transit**

Care should be taken to stop baggage that has been checked on a ticket beyond the point where the traveler leaves the conveyance. If baggage cannot be intercepted or transferred and is carried through original destination on unused portion of tickets full explanation of the facts should be made to the administrative office at the time of transmitting unused ticket for redemption. Failure to observe this rule will result in any excess cost to the Government being charged to the employees.

**(d) Transfer of Baggage**

Necessary charges for the transfer of baggage will be allowed.

**(e) Storage of Baggage**

Charges for the storage of baggage will be allowed when it is shown that such storage was solely on account of official business.

**§ 70-20.3-135 Telephone Service**

**(a) Local Calls**

Charges for local telephone calls on official business are allowable. The travel voucher shall show the number of such calls, the person called, rate per call, total amount expended, and that the calls were for official business.

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**(b) Long Distance Calls**

Charges for long distance telephone calls on official business are allowable provided the traveler furnishes a statement showing the name of the party called, the points between which service was rendered, the date, time occupied, the amount paid on each call, and that the calls were for official business. When the public interest so requires, the name of the party and the points between which the service was rendered need not be stated in the travel voucher.

**(c) Personal Calls**

Charges for telephone calls requesting leave of absence, payment of salary or expense vouchers, hotel reservations, and those as to any matter of a purely personal nature will be disallowed.

**§ 70-20.3-140 Wireless Service**

- (a) Wireless service fees and charges will be allowed up to \$10 per day with approved justification. This includes purchasing of a wireless device subscriber identification module (SIM) card, any and all activation fees, pre-paid minutes, text, and data.
- (b) For wireless service on flights, the traveler is limited to \$20.00 fees per way to and from final destination, not by segment. Approved justification must be submitted to the Department of Finance.

**§ 70-20.3-145 Miscellaneous Expenses**

**(a) Other Expenses**

Charges for necessary stenographic or computer equipment in connection with the preparation of reports or correspondence, clerical assistance, services or guides, interpreters, packers, and drivers of vehicles will be allowed when authorized or approved by the official who authorized the travel.

**(b) Hire of Room for Official Use**

When necessary to engage a room at a hotel or other place in order to transact official business, a separate charge therefore will be allowed when authorized or approved by the official who authorized the travel. Advanced payment may be requested upon supporting documentation from hosting hotel or room for hire establishment.

**(c) Conversion of Currency**

Commission for conversion of currency in foreign countries may be allowable.

**(d) Check Cashing Charges**

Charges covering exchange fees for cashing government checks incurred for travel in foreign countries may be allowed. Exchange fees incurred in cashing checks or drafts issued in payment of salary or in cashing travelers checks will not be allowed.

**(e) Translation Services**

Charges relating to the translation services or the need of a guide to accomplish business activities shall be permitted.

**(f) Mailing of Professional Development Materials**

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Charges associated with the mailing of professional development, conference, seminar materials when off-island will be allowed provided that receipts are submitted and claimed during the travel voucher process. This may be subjected to weight limitations, not to exceed 50 pounds.

**(g) Exiting Fees, Departure Tax, and Visitor Fees**

Countries that charge exit fees, departure tax, or visitor fees shall be allowed for reimbursement. Payment for such item may be advanced to the traveler provided with supporting documentation. Proper receipts must be submitted alongside the travel voucher. If the receipts are lost, the traveler may only claim 50% of the total exit fee, departure tax, or visitor fee.

**(h) Method of Payment**

- i. Where payment is made for services outlined in paragraphs § 70-20.3-145 (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), and (g) above, reimbursement for the charges actually made may be allowed if the voucher is supported by receipts showing the quantity, unit, and unit price.
- ii. If payment is not made directly to the vendor or service provider, but through an intermediary, the account should be approved by the traveler, and certified by the payee (intermediary). The account must show the dates of service, quantity, unit and unit price, and such other particulars as may be needed for a clear, understanding of the charge.
- iii. If services were provided by traveler's personal resources to conduct official business, the traveler must provide reasonable proof of costs incurred to the traveler and may include the dates of service, quantity, unit and unit price, and such other particulars as may be needed for a clear, understanding of the charge.
- iv. If a government voucher is not used, care should be taken that such account is submitted in duplicate, the original of which shall be the approval of the traveler and the following certification by the payee: *"I certify that the foregoing account is correct and just and that payment therefore has not been received."*

**(i) Parking and Towing Expenses**

- i. Parking fees for lots, garages, or other parking structures are reimbursable with valid receipts.
- ii. Expenses incurred by a traveler for any parking tickets and fines, traffic violations, or towing fees are not reimbursable.

**(j) Taxes and Gratuity**

Taxes and gratuity (tips) are included in the per diem rate for meals and incidentals and are not reimbursable.

**(k) Other Expenses**

Miscellaneous expenditures, when necessarily incurred by the traveler in connection with the transaction of official business, are allowable when approved by the official who authorized the travel.

### § 70-20.3-150 Receipts Required

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(a) **Receipts must Support all Expenditures** not included in per diem which exceed five dollars (\$5.00).

(b) **Hosting Expense**

Hosting expense necessarily incurred while on travel status is strictly reserved only for the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Mayor, member of the Legislature, or the Attorney General and must be justified in writing stating:

- a. Date of Hosting Event;
- b. Specific purpose of hosting or nature of business benefit derived or expected to be derived; and
- c. Specific names and occupations of those persons hosted.
- d. The justification must be accompanied by supporting original hotel or restaurant receipts indicating the amount of expenditures and the name and address of facility used for hosting. Such an expense is reimbursable only directly in connection with the transaction of official business for the Government.
- e. The maximum allowed for each official hosting event is \$5,000.

**Part 200 – Travel Advances, Traveler’s Transportation, Travel Authorization (TA), and Travel Voucher (TV)**

**§ 70-20.3-201 Travel Advances**

(a) **Advance of Funds**

- i. The Department of Finance must advance per diem and miscellaneous allowances. Advances to travelers are chargeable to the traveler’s account or until the account is settled in a travel voucher.
- ii. A traveler must receive his/her travel advance three (3) full days prior to departure for travel, provided that all travel authorization documents are submitted one (1) week in advance.
- iii. For travels within and outside the CNMI, the Department of Finance must advance 100% of the total per diem, meals, incidentals, and car rental amounts. The Department of Finance may withhold 20% of the total advance if the traveler has a pending travel voucher. However, for consecutive travels within a period of fifteen (15) days, the Department of Finance must advance 100% to the traveler without question.
- iv. Registration or enrollment fees are allowable. For training registration or enrollment fees, the Department of Finance may opt to provide registration or enrollment costs into the per diem check or it may require the traveler to provide billing information so that a check could be generated in the company’s name. The traveler is entitled to 100% of the registration or enrollment costs.
- v. Travel advance should be considered as a loan to the traveler until proper reconciliation or approved travel expenses has been authorized and no outstanding amount is due to either the traveler or the CNMI Government.
- vi. Travel advances shall not include the cost of airfare. Exceptions may be made for inter-island commuter flights whereby GTRs are not accepted and may be made with the prior approval of the Governor, or designee, and are subject to the CNMI Procurement Regulations.
- vii. Form: DOF-TR-B is to be updated upon DOF’s discretion.

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**(b) Recoveries of Advances**

The Department of Finance shall assure travelers account for advances by filing travel vouchers with all proper signatures within fifteen (15) days upon return from travel unless travel is performed at a closing period of a federal grant. The Department of Finance's Travel Section may request for the travel voucher within fifteen (15) days prior to a closing of a grant for liquidation purposes.

- i. The Department of Finance shall initiate recovery of any outstanding advances not fully recovered by deductions from reimbursement vouchers or voluntary refunds by the traveler thirty -five (35) days following arrival on the CNMI by the following methods:
  1. set off of salary due,
  2. retirement credit,
  3. lump sum payment for work separation, or
  4. by such other legal method of recovery as may be necessary.

In the event the advance exceeds the reimbursable amount, the traveler shall return the excess amount in full or have it recovered in installments in accordance with paragraph (ii) of this section.

- ii. Should the traveler choose the installment plan, Department of Finance shall determine a schedule that is suitable, and shall collect at a minimum \$50.00 bi-weekly, and may not exceed 20% or \$500 of the traveler's gross bi-weekly income for each installment.
- iii. For separating employees, the Department of Finance shall collect 100% of travel obligations owed prior to final Notice of Personnel Action. Obligation clearance from the Department of Finance's Travel Section will be mandatory.
- iv. In the event that a cancellation of travel for any reason occurs after per diem, stipend, and/or subsistence allowance was issued, the traveler is obligated to return 100% of these funds. This shall be paid to the CNMI Treasury and receipts must be submitted to the Department of Finance. The Department of Finance must devise a rigid payment plan to recover these funds or adhere to §70-20.3-201 (b)(iii).
- viii. In the event that expenses exceed actual per diem allowed, the Department of Finance shall reimburse the traveler for all allowable expenses after travel voucher reconciliation. The Department of Finance will have no more than two weeks or 14 calendar days to release the reimbursement upon the payment voucher posting.

**§ 70-20.3-205 Traveler's Transportation**

**(a) Definitions**

This transportation includes all necessary official travel on airlines, buses, streetcars, taxicabs, rideshares, and other usual means of conveyance. Transportation may include fares and such expenses incident to transportation. When required for travel, fees in connection with the issuance of passports and visas, cost of photographs for passports and visas, cost of birth certificates and charges for inoculation are not allowable. For purposes of these regulations the term "place of abode" may include any point from which the employee concerned commutes daily to his/her official post of duty.

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**(b) Routing of Travel**

All travel routes should be at the most economical and direct route(s) available to the point of the official business determination. Travel by other routes is allowable upon establishment of the official necessity thereof. All government travel shall be on unrestricted tickets, unless sponsored by an outside federal or work-related agency, group, or firm.

**(c) Transportation Expense**

- i. The expense of traveling by air will be allowed on the basis of cost. The traveler is expected to use the coach or economy fare.
- ii. The traveler must obtain two quotes from a qualified provider for the most economical airfare possible considering expense, time, and convenience.
- iii. When a traveler prefers a higher class than that authorized for purchase, the traveler must pay the incremental difference.
- iv. Any upgrade provided to the traveler by the airline is allowed, provided that there is no additional cost to the CNMI Government.
- v. The CNMI Government will not reimburse travelers for tickets purchased with frequent flyer miles.
- vi. Any tickets purchased by the employee will be reimbursed by the CNMI Government if it is an approved travel.

**(d) Indirect Route Travel**

- i. Travel tickets should be issued for complete routes, including direct connections. Any charges related to travel not related to the official government business are the responsibility of the employee. Such include, but not limited to are, stopovers, personal side trips, or any routing which would impact the lowest available unrestricted fare.
- ii. If a person travels by an indirect route for his/her convenience, he/she will bear the extra expense; reimbursement for expenses will cover only such charges as would have been incurred by a usually traveled route.

**(e) Special Conveyances**

- i. The hire of automobile, taxicab, rideshare, and other special conveyance is allowable.
- ii. The usual taxicab fares from station, wharf, or other terminal to either place of abode or place of business, and from either place of abode or place of business to station, wharf, or other terminal is allowable.
- iii. Taxicab fares for transportation between places of official business are also allowable. An advance of \$30.00 per day for ground transportation, such as taxi fares and/or rideshares, will be provided to the traveler upon approval by the Governor, or designee. Fares in excess of advanced amount will be reimbursed to the traveler so long as receipts are provided with the travel voucher.
- iv. For relocation of off-island hired professionals or individuals who are hired within the Executive Branch, automobile rental must have the Governor or designee's explicit approval on the Travel Authorization or the Employment Contract. The traveler must attach a copy of the car rental agreement with supporting receipts to the travel voucher. Without approval of the Governor, or

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- designee, of the employment contract, the expense will be disallowed notwithstanding sufficient documentation to cover the expense is provided.
- v. Rental of an automobile requires the Governor, or designee's explicit approval on the Travel Authorization prior to the commencement of travel. Upon claiming this expense, the traveler must attach a copy of the car rental agreement with supporting receipts to the travel voucher. Without prior approval of the Governor, or designee, the expense will be disallowed notwithstanding sufficient documentation to cover the expense is provided.
  - vi. Car rentals stipends shall be provided at 100% of the cost. The daily car rental allowance shall be \$70.00. This expense will be treated as actual costs and will be subject to recovery upon over payment. For car rental driven by the Governor's or Lieutenant Governor's Protective Service Detail Agent, he/she shall receive a daily car rental allowance of \$140.00 prior to traveling off-island and should be supported by receipts upon return for claim.
  - vii. Insurance for collision damage (loss-damage waiver) and liability shall be paid by the CNMI Government for official travel requiring the use of a rental vehicle as authorized by the Travel Authorization. Travelers are required to obtain collision damage and liability insurance when renting or other obtaining a vehicle. Costs related to damages to or malfunctioning of rented vehicles (and other vehicles damaged in an accident in which a CNMI Government Traveler is at fault) may be paid by the CNMI Government up to the minimum deductible amount shown in the rental contract for the location.
  - viii. Associated car rental expenses are allowable, including but not limited to fuel purchase, flat tire repair, geographic positioning system (GPS) units, parking fees, valet parking fees, toll fees, or personal accident insurance coverage. Other expense items will need the clearance of the department head.
  - ix. In certain instances, the traveler may find it necessary to rent a car not duly authorized. If a compact car is not available, the next higher class may be rented subject to prior justification and approval. Rental of vans or their equivalents are allowable provided that the group travel consists of three (3) or more travelers. Receipts for car rental are required to be submitted subsequent to the completion of travel. The CNMI Government will not pay the car rental agencies directly.
  - x. A traveler may avail for ground transportation allowances, such as for taxi fares and rideshares, regardless if a co-worker has received car rental allowance. Receipts must be submitted for expenses to be claimed.
  - viii. The rental of official transportation, such as boats, bicycles, motorized wheelchairs, animals for hauling or service, etc., in addition to car rentals will be permitted for purposes of carrying out work-related business activities. This will be charged on the travel authorization.

### **§ 70-20.3-210 Travel Authorization (TA)**

All travel shall be authorized with an approved Travel Authorization (TA). Situations requiring emergency official travel shall be permitted upon approval of a written justification.

#### **(a) Form of Authority**

- i. All Executive Branch travel requests shall be subject to the Governor or designee's final approval.



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- ii. It is expected that ordinarily the authority will be issued prior to the incurrence of the expenses and will specify the travel to be performed as definitely as possible unless circumstances in a particular case prevents such action.
- iii. All travel authorizations shall be made on the CNMI Government Form issued by the Department of Finance, unless explicitly directed by the Secretary of Finance.
- iv. The Department of Finance's Travel Section will have no more than five (5) days to process the TA and return to the traveler and/or department.

### **(b) Preparation and Approval**

- i. The travel request shall be prepared by the requesting organization and must be submitted to the Department of Finance's Travel Section for review and per diem calculation at least fifteen (15) working days prior to the commencement date of travel. Emergency processing of travel within the CNMI is allowable only with the Secretary of Finance's concurrence and the Governor, or designee's concurrence, for those traveling outside of the CNMI.
- ii. The department or agency's head must sign and approve the Travel Request and Authorization Form authorizing the representative to travel on official Government business.
- iii. The agency, department, bureau and other instrumentality shall ensure that adequate funding for travel is available throughout the duration of the travel period.
- iv. Supported documentations must be attached. This includes, but is not limited to, formal invitations, conference notifications, professional development course offering, registration, or other formal documentation that requires the traveler to be present off-island. Email invitations from Department Heads, Mayors, Governors, or Federal Grant Officers/Managers will be allowed as proof. A copy of the flight itinerary from a local ticketing agency that accepts Government Travel Requests (GTR) and a completed Travel Advance Request Form (Form           ) must accompany the entire Travel Authorization package.
- v. The TA form used by the CNMI Government requires the purpose, justification, and all the appropriate signatures to be completed prior to any travel. The following documents must be attached to the TA:
  - a. Justification memorandum for the travel;
  - b. Itinerary (schedule of departure, arrival, and destination(s));
  - c. Estimated cost to include airfare, ground transportation, per diem allowance, and any other miscellaneous expenses; and
  - d. Documentation of invitation, meeting confirmation, or conference agenda, if applicable, or other business agenda.
  - e. Travel Advance Form, completed and signed.
- vi. All travel authorizations will require approval in advance by the approving official as indicated in Part 210 (b)(1)-(5) below. This authorization certifies that the expenses are proper and within the scope of the budget to be charged. Any unanticipated expenses that were not authorized in advance will be subject to approval upon closing out of the TA by the appropriate department head or expenditure authority official, and reimbursement will only be made upon the submission of relevant receipts and documentation.

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- a. All travel within the CNMI shall be first authorized by the division head concurred by the Department Head as the expenditure authority and approving official,
- b. All travel within the CNMI by those Department Heads, Cabinet Members, or expenditure authority officials that report directly to the Governor shall receive concurrence by the Special Assistant for the Administration.
- c. All travels outside of the CNMI must be first authorized by expenditure authority, usually the Department Head, and then signed by the Governor, or designee, for concurrence as the approving official.
- d. All travel (within and outside of the CNMI) by the Governor shall seek concurrence by the Lieutenant Governor as the approving official.
- e. All travel (within and outside of the CNMI) by the Lieutenant Governor shall seek concurrence by the Governor as the approving official.
- vii. Upon the completion of review and calculation by the Travel Section of the Department of Finance, the Director of the Travel Section shall certify the Travel Authorization documents. These documents must then be transmitted to the Governor, or designee, for final approval.

**(c) Explanation of Items on Travel Authorization Form**

Form: DOF-TR-A

Item 1: The TA Number shall be provided by Department of Finance's Travel Section personnel.

Item 2: Place the date of when the TA is prepared.

Item 3: Place the Division and Department Name

Item 4: Place the Legal Name accompanied by your government employee number. Refrain from putting your Social Security numbers.

Item 5: Place the Official Station (the island of traveler's occupation).

Item 6: Place the Official Position Title

Item 7: Place the Accounting Office's Station (the island where you the finance documents are processed).

Item 8: Place the Island of Embarkation (island where you are leaving from)

Item 9: Place the city (or cities) and state/country traveling to and this should be followed by the word "Return" For example, Phoenix, Arizona & Return.

Item 10: Briefly describe purpose of travel and this should be followed by the phrase "Travel to be performed in the best interest of the CNMI Government."

Item 11: Allowance method to be used. Choices could include a) established government per diem rates b) Stipend set at "X" amount of dollars, or c) No per diem or allowance will be provided.

Item 12: Place beginning and ending dates of official travel.

Item 13: Mark "X" if mode of travel is through Common carrier, such as by an airline.

Item 14: Mark "X" if mode of travel requires extra fare at a mileage rate set by federal transportation regulations.

Item 15: Mark "X" if Government-owned conveyance will be used. This is applicable when a traveler uses another government vehicle when off-island. This will automatically set off allowable gas reimbursements via gas receipts.

Item 16: Mark "X" if travelers will be using privately own vehicle. This, too, will follow the mileage rate set by federal transportation regulations. Options (a), (b), or (c) are

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available and one letter should be chosen under this item. This is specifically reserved for federal accounts allowing such an activity by their approved grant.

Item 17: Mark "X" under miscellaneous if transportation of immediate family member is required. This item is reserved for the medical referral program as patient escorts may be needed.

Item 18: Mark "X" under "Other (Specify) and Type in "Car Rental Authorization" with the Governor's name and title below the line. "Ground Transportation Authorization will be done in the same fashion. Only when the Governor, or designee, affixes his/her signature on the prescribed line, will the traveler receive the appropriate ground transportation.

Item 19: Mark "X" if the shipment of household goods and personal effects will be needed as in cases of new off-island recruitments and eligible repatriating non-renewed employees.

Item 20: Provide the name of the Travel agency to which a reservation has been made and cost of airfare or fare on provided line.

Item 21: Under Per Diem, the Travel Section at the Department of Finance will generate a calculated worksheet of per diem to be awarded. Leave this section blank.

Item 22: This section is reserved for other items not mentions in items 20 or 21. This includes Car Rental, Registration Fees, Ground Transportation. Use each item as needed. Registration fees must be accompanied by off-island agency or firm registration costs and billing information.

Item 23: For Total, leave this blank and the Travel Section of the Department of Finance will fill it in for you.

Item 24: Place the chargeable account here. It usually the office's business unit followed by the subaccount number of 62500 for Travel or 62690 for Personnel Training. For federal accounts, Personnel Training is the preferred chargeable account for conferences, professional development, etc. (Example of chargeable account is I7575X – 62500). If an arrangement has been made to use another office's business unit to charge the account, then the head of that agency will be the requesting individual on Item 25.

Item 25: Place the name of the Travel Section Director on the given line. If all items are complete, reasonable, and allocable, then the Travel Section Director will affix his/her signature.

Item 26: Place the requestor's name on the given line. This is usually the expenditure authority of the department's account. However, for travels within the CNMI, this line is reserved for the Travel Section Director's name.

Item 27: Place the title of name provided in Item 26.

Item 28: For inter-island travel, the Department Secretary will be the authorizing officer. For Special Assistants under the Governor's Office, the Special Assistant for the Administration will be the authorizing officer for inter-island travel within the CNMI. For any other travel outside of the CNMI, the authorizing officer will be the Governor, or designee. Place the name of the Governor on this line.

Item 29. Place the title of the individual named in Item 28.

Form: DOF-TR-A is to be updated upon DOF's discretion.

### (d) Action by the Governor or designee

Once the calculations have been made by the Travel Section of the Department of Finance, the Travel Authorization package will be forwarded to the Governor or designee's Office.

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Upon receipt of the travel request, personnel shall ascertain justification of travel. If a transmittal and written justification do not accompany the request, the TA reviewer shall notify traveler and hold the travel request pending receipt of the required documentation.

When the requesting organization provides the necessary documentation, the reviewer shall ascertain the completeness of the information provided on the travel request and verify the accuracy of the estimated travel costs. Upon noting any discrepancies, the reviewer shall advise and settle with the requesting organization such matters. Upon settlement of these matters, the reviewer shall initial and forward the travel requests for the Governor or designee's approval.

### **(e) Action by the Department of Finance**

- i. Upon receipt of the signed Travel Authorization request from the Governor or designee's Office, the Travel Section shall enter in the CNMI Government Financial Management Information System all applicable expenses. Then it is certified by the head of the Travel Section for local accounts or reviewed and certified by the Federal Programs Coordinator for travels that are federally funded. After certification, it will head to the Director of Finance and Accounting (F&A) for review and signature.
- ii. In instances, that the Director of F&A is unavailable for signature or review, the Secretary of Finance can sign over the Director.
- iii. Once it is approved by either the Director of F&A or the Secretary of Finance, the Travel Section shall issue a Government Travel Request (GTR) to the travel agency named on Item 20 on the Travel Authorization Form.
- iv. The Travel Section will then post or generate a Payment Voucher (PV) number in the CNMI Government Financial Management Information System so that the CNMI Treasurer may immediately issue the check to the traveler. The traveler or agency's administrative staff may pick-up the check and must sign for the receipt of the check from Division of Treasury.

### **(f) Amendments**

- i. Travel Authorizations may be amended only upon approval by the approving official. A justification for the amendment must be attached.
- ii. Amendments requiring additional funds to be obligated must have their TAs routed just like a new TA.
  - a. When amendments for additional expenses are made below \$500.00, the amended TA must be signed by the expenditure authority. When amendments are made above \$500.00, the amended TA must be signed by the Governor, or designee.
- iii. If no additional funds are required, and the traveler has performed less days as traveled, i.e. or incurred less expenses as originally planned or projected, then the submission of an amendment TA will not be necessary. Automatic payroll deduction shall commence on the following pay period.

### **(g) Zero Travel Authorizations**

Travel authorization with no expense to the CNMI Government as in cases by sponsoring organizations must be approved with a travel authorization showing zero

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travel expense. All travel performed by travelers representing the CNMI Government must be in the interest of the CNMI Government. If authorized and approved, a zero TA will allow the traveler to be on official administrative/travel leave status. In such cases, a stipend (not per diem) may be granted by the expenditure authority.

**§ 70-20.3-215 Termination or Cancellation of Travel**

(a) Termination of travel due to illness, death or serious illness of a family member, or catastrophic circumstances thus directly affecting the traveler home or other extraneous circumstances as approved by the Expenditure Authority or Governor/designee may be authorized prior to completion of temporary duty assignment. Termination of travel as result of the traveler's own misconduct shall be at the expense of the traveler.

(b) Whenever a traveler plans in advance to deviate from the most direct route or itinerary for business-related travel or deviates from his/her approved travel for personal reasons not due to illness or injury, or other emergency circumstances outside of the traveler's control, approval for the deviation must be received in advance and the proper leave application must be filed with the travel authorization and approved by the authorizing official. In addition, the traveler must attach the itinerary actually traveled in order to determine that the CNMI Government paid only what was reasonable and necessary (i.e., what the CNMI Government should have paid had the traveler departed in time to attend the authorized official travel function and back).

**§ 70-20.3-220 Travel Voucher (TV)**

All persons authorized to travel on business for the Government should keep a running log of expenditures properly chargeable to the Government, noting each item at the time the expense is incurred, together with the date, and the information thus accumulated will be available for the proper preparation of travel vouchers. Receipts are the best proof for travel reconciliation and request for reimbursements.

This form must be completely filled by all travelers, except those on medical referral and those being recruited or repatriated.

**(a) Travel Voucher 1 Form**

All claims for the reimbursement of traveling expenses shall be submitted on the regular authorized form of travel voucher and must be itemized and stated in accordance with these regulations. For Travel Voucher 1, Form: DOF-TR-C will be used. Form: DOF-TR-C is to be updated upon DOF's discretion.

**(b) Explanations for Travel Voucher 1 Form**

Item 1: Indicate Traveler's Name

Item 2: Indicate Travel Authorization Number (Located on Travel Authorization/Item#1)

Item 3: Indicate the personal or office's mailing address

Item 4: Indicate the Government Employee Number.

Item 5: Indicate the contact number to reach the traveler by.

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Item 6: Indicate the Division's Name and Department Name. For example, DOF, DLNR.

Item 7: Indicate the work phone number.

Item 8: Indicate all arrivals and stops, dates, and time as provided by the boarding passes. Each boarding pass should provide you with enough information to fill one section of the departure and arrival information. If not, please refer to the itinerary.

Item 9: Indicate itemized expenditures to be claimed. On the left side, place a brief description, i.e. Car Rental or Gas, and on the right side place the amount in U.S. dollars. If there are multiple gas receipts, then indicate each receipt by price.

Item 10: Indicate traveler's name, so that the traveler may sign above his/her name.

Item 11: Indicate the name of the department or agency head official, so that the traveler may sign above his/her name.

Item 12: Indicate the name of the approving official. For travels outside of the CNMI, it will be the Governor of the CNMI, or designee, and for travels within the CNMI, it shall be the Special Assistant for the Administration. This is to allow the approving official to sign over their typed name.

The rest of the items will be left for the Department of Finance and Travel Section to fill. The traveler will then proceed to filling out Travel Voucher 2, which is the Official Trip Report.

### (c) **Travel Voucher 2 Form**

In Form: DOF-TR-D, the traveler will provide in paragraph form and typed written a summary of the events that took place in relation to the purpose of the trip. The traveler should point out accomplishments, CNMI gains, and benefits through this travel excursion. The traveler may indicate challenges experienced through the travel or during conferences or seminars, for example. Form: DOF-TR-D is to be updated upon DOF's discretion.

### (d) **Explanations for Travel Voucher 2 Form**

Item 1: Indicate Travel Authorization Number.

Item 2: Indicate Traveler's Name as it appears on the Travel Authorization.

Item 3: Indicate official travel date range.

Item 4: Indicate places traveled. This is usually meant to indicate actual conference, seminar, city location, etc.

Item 5: Indicate the Purpose as stated on the Travel Authorization. Copy what has already been approved and stated in the TA.

Item 6: Provide the experience, training gained, contact made, problems encountered, suggestions or recommendations to improving the travel experience in this section. It must be typed written.

Item 7: Provide any travel notations to the Department of Finance may understand certain expenditures, flight re-routes, flat tire charges, etc. This area should be allowed for the Travel Section personnel to understand what happened without having to call the traveler for more explanation.

Item 8: Indicate name of traveler. The traveler must sign his/her trip report unless authorized.

Item 9: Indicate name of department or agency head. If the agency head performed the travel, immediate supervisor for travels outside of the CNMI will be the Governor, or

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designee. Similarly, if travelling within the CNMI, the immediate supervisor is the Special Assistant for the Administration (SAA). Signatures must be obtained accordingly.

**(e) Submission Timeframe for Travel Vouchers**

The traveler must submit the travel voucher within fifteen (15) days upon return from travel unless travel is performed at a closing period of a federal grant. The Department of Finance's Travel Section may request for the travel voucher within fifteen (15) days prior to a closing of a grant for liquidation purposes. If a travel voucher is not submitted within the time period allowed, the Department of Finance will assume a cancelled trip and may begin recovery of any cash advance to the traveler as described in § 70-20.3-201 (b).

**(f) Order of Documents for Submission**

The following is the prescribed order for submitting your completed travel vouchers (starting from the top). Only one travel package may be routed. Make a copy before submission.

1. Travel Voucher 1 (Form: DOF-TR-C)
2. Travel Voucher 2: Trip Report (Form: DOF-TR-D)
3. Copy of Signed Travel Authorization Request with TA Number (Form: DOF-TR-A)
4. Boarding Passes (placed and taped onto 8.5" x 11" paper) or as photocopied
5. Car Rental Agreement, if any.
6. Gas Receipts or any other applicable receipts deemed for reimbursement (placed and taped onto 8.5" x 11" plain paper).

**(g) Alterations**

Any alternation to a travel voucher must be initiated by the person who makes the voucher, and alterations in the totals on receipts must be initialed by the person who signed the receipt.

**(h) Indirect Route Travel**

The supporting documents of a travel voucher should set forth the details of the expenses actually incurred, the hour of departure from the post of duty, and the hour of arrival at place of duty.

**(i) Suspensions of Charges**

Items in travel vouchers not stated in accordance with these regulations, or not properly supported by receipts when required, will be suspended and the notification of such action will indicate the reasons, therefore. Such items as may be subsequently allowable should be included in a subsequent regular or supplemental or amendment travel voucher. Full itemization will be required for all suspended items which are reclaimed, and charges must be properly supported by the original suspension notice or a copy thereof.

**(j) Foreign Currencies**

Travelers in foreign countries should report their expenditure by items in the currency of the country in which made the total expenditure in. Foreign currency must be converted into United States dollars at the rate or rates at which the foreign money

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was obtained. Every time money is converted, the traveler should obtain a receipt to be commission charged. The exchange rate shall be determined on date of currency exchange.

### (k) **Exchange Fees**

Charges for cashing United States or CNMI Government checks or drafts issued in reimbursement of expenses incurred for travel in foreign countries will be allowed in subsequent vouchers.

### (l) **Routing of Documents**

The traveler shall file the voucher in an original. The Travel Section shall retain a copy of the Travel Voucher for follow-up and shall instruct the traveler to submit the original and remaining copies to the Governor or designee's Office for review and subsequent approval should amounts exceed \$500.00. If the travel voucher does not exceed \$500.00, the expenditure authority is authorized to approve. If the approved travel request and the airline ticket stub do not accompany the travel voucher, the Special Assistant for Administration shall defer further processing of the voucher pending submission of the required documentation. Upon securing the Governor or designee's approval, the travel voucher is forwarded to the Travel Section which retains the original for placement in the employee's personnel jacket and the Travel File. The remaining copies go to the department.

## **Part 300 – Miscellaneous Provisions**

### **§ 70-20.3-301 Travel Authorization Request for Dependents**

Dependents are not authorized to travel at the government's expense, except as an escort under the Medical Referral Program or as stipulated in §70-20.3-105(e)(2).

### **§ 70-20.3-305 Extension of Travel Time**

- (a) All extensions of official travel for the Government require prior approval by the department head or designee. If the department head determines an extension is necessary to carry out the traveler's mission, then a memorandum shall be submitted to the Governor or designee justifying the extension and requesting an amendment to the traveler's travel authorization. Additional expenses and per diem will be allowed according to § 70-20.3-110. Leave (annual) will not be charged against the traveler. This will be supported by the boarding pass(es).
- (b) For Extensions of time due to airline delays, additional expenses and per diem will be allowed according to § 70-20.3-110 . Leave (annual) will not be charged against the traveler. This will be supported by the boarding pass(es).

### **§ 70-20.3-310 Loss of Traveling Documents**

The loss of a traveler's passport, birth certificate, government-issued identification, or other documents for the purpose of official travel shall not be the responsibility of the CNMI Government, including expenses or costs incurred by the rerouting of said traveler

### **§ 70-20.3-315 Oversold Seats**



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Travelers with a confirmed ticketed seat who get bumped off due to no fault of the traveler shall be allowed rerouting or rebooking expenses. Per Diem shall also be allowed, recalculated, and issued upon return to the CNMI. Confirmation of such incident shall be confirmed by the airline through a formal letter or proper documentation stating the reason for being bumped off.

This section is not applicable if a traveler decides to opt, as a volunteer, to give up his/her seat for complimentary vouchers.

### **§ 70-20.3-320 Grounded Due to Inclement Weather, Natural Disaster, or Catastrophe**

Travelers grounded due to inclement weather, natural disaster, or catastrophe shall be afforded with rerouting, rebooking, and per diem expenses upon return to the CNMI. Confirmation of such incident shall be confirmed by the airline through a formal letter or proper documentation stating the reason for the flight cancellation.

### **§ 70-20.3-325 Mode of Travel Conversion**

Instances that occur due to limited mode of travel, i.e. limited scheduled flights to neighboring island, and within reason and cost effectiveness to the government, travelers in a group may be allowed to convert airfare charges for fuel for sea transport. A ground transportation stipend shall be generated at 100% and based on 80% of the total group airfare charge. This is for roundtrip via boat/vessel service. If a traveler within the group decides not to utilize the sea transport on return and opts to ride by airplane, he/she will bear the additional expense unless a reasonable justification is presented.

### **§ 70-20.3-330 Traveler's Insurance**

All travelers have the option of obtaining traveler's insurance at their personal expense. The CNMI Government will not shoulder this expense.

### **§ 70-20.3-335 Flights with meal purchases**

For airline tickets that include meal service, the per diem calculated will be deducted according to the rate schedule for meals and incidentals. For airline tickets that do not include meal service, or provide for-purchase services, the per diem or subsistence allowance must be included in the estimated travel expenditures.

### **§ 70-20.3-340 Travel Card**

Use of a travel card may be allowable in the future when it becomes available.

### **§ 70-20.3-345 Changes to Travel Regulations**

The information provided in these regulations is subject to change. Any future amendments will be published and adopted pursuant to 1 CMC § 9104.