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Governor

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Lieutenant Governor

COMMONWEALTH of the NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS  
**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**

## MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 1, 2020 GOV20-140

FROM: Governor

TO: All Department and Activity Heads and Members of the Public

SUBJECT: Amendment to Directive 14 of the Second Amended Executive Order 2020-04 to promote social distancing and prevent spread of COVID-19

On March 19, 2020, I issued the Second Amended Executive Order 2020-04 (hereinafter “SAEO 2020-04”). SAEO 2020-04 declared a continuing State of Significant Emergency and a State of Public Health Emergency for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands due to the imminent threat of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). Under SAEO 2020-04, I invoked my authority under Article III, § 10 of the Commonwealth Constitution, the Homeland Security and Emergency Management Act of 2013, 1 CMC § 20144, and the CNMI Emergency Health Powers Act of 2003, 3 CMC §§ 2181-2195, to take all necessary measures to address the threats facing the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (“CNMI”).

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (“CHCC”) recommends the closure of all businesses engaged in gaming including the casino, video poker establishments and e-gaming facilities. CHCC states that CNMI residents frequenting these establishments, often for long duration, are at significant risk of being exposed to persons who may be infected with COVID-19. CHCC further states that given confirmation of community transmission in Saipan, continued access to these establishments would jeopardize the health and well-being of our residents. For these stated reasons, I will direct the closure of the casino and all video poker establishments and e-gaming facilities throughout the CNMI.

Further, I will direct the closing of businesses engaged in recreational or amusement type activities. These businesses include but are not limited to the roller-skate rink, businesses with child play facilities, and arcades. Like gaming establishments, CNMI residents, mainly children, frequent these facilities for long duration and often in close contact or near close contact with other persons. Persons are also in contact with surfaces that may have been infected by COVID-19. Therefore, persons who go to these locations are at a significant risk of being exposed to persons who may be infected with COVID-19.

In conformance with the above findings, I amend Directive 14 of the SAEO 2020-04 by deleting language from section (a) and by adding sections (b)(6) and (7) to the Modifications and Exceptions as follows:

**DIRECTIVE 14:** (a) As authorized under 1 CMC § 2191(d)(2) and NMIAC 140-10.3-340, and subject to the modifications and exceptions stated in section (b) of this Directive, all businesses that have facilities open to the general public shall only be open to the public from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Outside of those hours, businesses may operate but may not be open to the general public. Businesses may not conduct drop-off/pick-up and delivery services during the curfew hours set in Directive 16.

Businesses covered by this section must implement the following social distancing guidelines: Posting of “one-way” flow signs for entrance and “one-way” flow signs for exit; maintaining crowd control; and ensuring there are visible customer line-up markers that are six feet apart leading to the cashier counter. Businesses must regularly and frequently clean all surfaces; sanitize main entrance door handles; sanitize handles of shopping baskets and shopping carts; sanitize handles for chill boxes, cooler, and freezers.

Businesses covered by this Directive are subject to verification by the Department of Commerce as assisted as necessary by agencies listed under (c). If, upon inspection by the Department of Commerce, it is determined that the business did not properly implement social distance guidelines, then the business must immediately properly implement the guidelines. If the business is unable to properly implement the guidelines, then the business shall remain closed until it can and does in fact, properly implement the guidelines.

**(b) Modifications and Exceptions:**

(1) All businesses that offer food or beverages for on premises consumption, including restaurants and bars, must suspend services and may not permit on-premises consumption. Such businesses are permitted and encouraged to serve food and beverages so that they may be consumed off-premises through means such as in-house delivery, third-party delivery, drive through, and curb-side pick-up. In addition, customers may enter the premises to purchase food or beverages for take-out. However, establishments offering food or beverages for take-out, including food trucks, must ensure that they have an environment where patrons maintain adequate social distancing. Businesses located in the airports or hospital are exempt from this Directive. Hotel restaurants may continue to provide room service and take-out. Catering services may continue. The in-house delivery, third-party delivery, drive through, cur-side and take-out services are subject to the curfew hours set in Directive 16.

(2) All public parks including Mañagaha Island and the Grotto are hereby closed to the public.

(3) All public beaches and pathways are hereby closed to the public.

(4) CHCC, public and private health clinics, dental clinics and pharmacies are excepted from the hours stated in section (a) but may set hours that, in their judgment, best deal with the COVID-19 threat. Further, these facilities and

businesses are encouraged to follow best social distancing practices for health facilities.

(5) Gas stations may be open for the dispensing of gasoline only outside of curfew hours stated in Directive 16. If the station has a convenience store, then that store may not be open before or after the hours set in section (a).

(6) All businesses engaged in gaming, including the casino, video poker establishments and e-gaming facilities, are hereby closed to the public.

(7) All businesses engaged in recreational or amusement type activities are hereby closed to the public.

(c) CHCC, in coordination with and with the assistance of the Department of Public Safety, the Department of Commerce, Alcohol Beverage & Tobacco Control Division, the Department of Fire & Emergency Medical Services, and any other necessary commonwealth agency, shall enforce this Directive. Failure to follow this Directive will subject the violator to penalties available under the law.

These amendments to Directive 14 are effective as of 7:00 p.m., April 1, 2020. Through these measures, as well as the other measures authorized by SAEQ 2020-04, it is hoped that the COVID-19 infection will be contained in the CNMI.

Sincerely,



RALPH DLG. TORRES  
Governor