



RALPH DLG. TORRES
Governor

ARNOLD I. PALACIOS
Lieutenant Governor

COMMONWEALTH of the NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 27, 2020 GOV20-130

FROM: Governor

TO: All Department and Activity Heads and the people of the CNMI

SUBJECT: Amendments to Second Amended Executive Order 2020-04 by amending Directive 7 and by adding Directive 15 closing all private schools

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”).

Since the issuance of SAEO 2020-04, circumstances have changed necessitating amendments to the executive order. The continued threat of COVID-19 to the people of the CNMI along with complying with the President’s COVID-19 guidelines necessitates continuing the government shutdown.

Further, COVID-19 is spreading on Guam, our island neighbor. Discussions with CHCC indicate that, given the CNMI’s limited resources, prevention and containment of COVID-19 in the CNMI is an absolute necessity. This would be best aided by decreasing the amount of points of interaction and contact the population will have with each other. For example, by closing schools since they are a significant point of interaction that can lead to the transfer of COVID-19. In this way, a person infected with COVID-19 will have fewer chances of infecting others.

Further, it has come to my attention that some private schools have not closed or are planning to re-open despite the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) threat. This despite the fact that the Public School System and other private schools have closed due to the COVID-19 threat. Also despite the order on social distancing and the prohibition on large gatherings contained in my executive orders declaring a State of Public Health Emergency and continued State of Significant Emergency establishing response, quarantine, and preventive containment measures concerning COVID-19. This Directive 15 shall serve to make clear that all private schools are to remain closed until further order.

Accordingly, I amend SAEO 2020-04 by amending Directive 7 to read as follows:

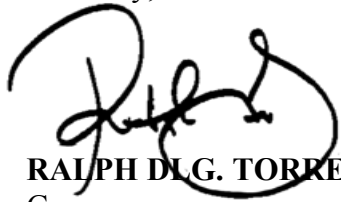
DIRECTIVE 7: All government offices and all non-essential government functions are shut down until further notice. All non-essential personnel are asked to stay home until further notice. Essential personnel shall be identified for COVID-19 public health emergency related work. Mayors of the municipalities shall have discretion in designating employees that engage in public health emergency related work.

Further, I amend the SAEO 2020-04 by adding Directive 15:

DIRECTIVE 15: CLOSING OF ALL PRIVATE SCHOOLS. Pursuant to my authority under the Second Amended Executive Order 2020-04, 13 CMC § 2191(d)(2) and NMIAC 140-10.3-340, I hereby direct that all private schools shall close and remain closed until the emergency is ended or this Directive is ended. All private schools are encouraged to continue student instructional services through distance or online learning, if available. CHCC, assisted by other agencies as is necessary, is directed to ensure that this Directive is followed.

These amendments are effective immediately. Through these measure, as well as the other measures authorized by SAEO 2020-04, it is hoped that the COVID-19 infection will be prevented or contained in the CNMI.

Sincerely,



RALPH DLG. TORRES
Governor