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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CNMI Department of Labor clarifies PSS earnings reporting method

The CNMI Department of Labor (CNMI DOL) would like to clarify circulating information regarding the method to which certain Public School System (PSS) employees report earnings for their Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) and Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) claims.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor – Employment and Training Administration (USDOL-ETA), PSS’s 190-day contract employees who received lump sum payments for less than their customary “summer pay” may be eligible for PUA/FPUC benefits, provided that those payment amounts fall below a monetary threshold.

The application of a \$150 earnings disregard based on Hawaii unemployment insurance law automatically caps the CNMI’s monetary threshold amount at \$494. Claimants who report earnings below the cap will be qualified for benefits for that particular week; conversely, claimants who report earnings above the cap will be ineligible for benefits for that particular week.

USDOL-ETA has established that PSS’s 190-day contract employees must report their lump sum payment earnings on a weekly, rather than one-time basis. PSS has established June 16, 2020 to August 26, 2020 as the date range for all summer pay remunerations. Since there are roughly eleven (11) weeks from June 16, 2020 to August 26, 2020, 190-day contract employees must break down their one-time payment into 11 increments.

Example 1: \$3,000 divided by 11 weeks equals \$272.72 ($3000/11 = 272.72$). In this example, the amount of \$272.72 should be reported as weekly earnings. This claimant would be eligible for benefits because the weekly reported amount of \$272.72 is less than CNMI’s monetary threshold amount of \$494.

Example 2: \$6,000 divided by 11 weeks equals \$545.45 ($6000/11 = 545.45$). In this example, the amount of \$545.45 should be reported as weekly earnings. This claimant would be ineligible for benefits because the weekly reported amount of \$545.45 is more than CNMI’s monetary threshold amount of \$494.

Important Note:

All PUA/FPUC claims are processed on an individual case-by-case basis. The information contained in this press release may be subject to change upon further guidance from USDOL-ETA.

CNMI DOL would like to remind the general public that all information regarding its programs and unemployment assistance is vetted for accuracy before transmittal to the CNMI Office of the Governor.

Please continue to follow updates from CNMI DOL through local media partners and through the CNMI Office of the Governor's Facebook page and website at www.governor.gov.mp.

CNMI DOL is an equal opportunity employer/program and auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Visit CNMI DOL's website at www.marianaslabor.net for more PUA/FPUC-related information.

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