



## COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

**Benigno R. Fitial**  
Governor

**Eloy S. Inos**  
Lieutenant Governor

### EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 2012-01

**SUBJECT:** Relative to transferring the responsibility for the administration and operation of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Passport Office from the Office of the Attorney General to the Department of Finance

**AUTHORITY:** "The Governor may make changes in the allocation of offices, agencies and instrumentalities and in their functions and duties that are necessary for efficient administration." CNMI Constitution. Article III. Section 15.

**WHEREAS,** the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Passport Office is currently organized under the Attorney General's Division of Immigration and the Division of Immigration is no longer a functional element of the Office of the Attorney General,

**WHEREAS,** the Passport Office collects in excess of \$300,000.00 per annum in passport fees,

**WHEREAS,** the Passport Office processes in excess of 3,000 passport applications per annum,

**WHEREAS,** the Department of Finance has greater expertise in monitoring financial transactions than does the Office of the Attorney General,

**WHEREAS,** the Department of Finance has greater expertise in the processing of applications than does the Office of the Attorney General.

**NOW, THEREFORE,** to promote efficient administration and operation of the Passport Office, it is hereby

#### **ORDERED:**

The Attorney General shall relinquish responsibility for the administration and operation of the Passport Office; and the Department of Finance shall assume responsibility for the administration and operation of the Passport Office.

All records and property (including office equipment) of the Passport Office used in the administration of the Passport Office. all the personnel used in the administration of the

Passport Office (including employees whose chief duties relate to such administration) are hereby transferred to the Department of Finance. All personnel transferred pursuant to this Executive Order shall maintain their current positions and status in the classified civil service or in the excepted service as the case may be. The Office of Personnel shall ensure an orderly transfer of personnel.

The unexpended balances of appropriations, allocations, allotments, or other funds available for the use of the Passport Office on the effective date of the transfer are transferred to the Department of Finance on the effective date of this transfer. In the transfer of such funds, an amount may be included for the liquidation of obligations incurred prior to the transfer. Any portion of such balances not so transferred may be reprogrammed by the Governor. Subsequent to the transfer, Passport Office operations shall be reflected in the annual Department of Finance budget.

There shall be regular communication between the Attorney General, and or his designees and the Secretary of the Department of Finance or his designees to ensure a smooth transition. This communication and cooperation shall extend beyond the transfer with the ultimate goal of optimal efficiency in the operations of the Passport Office.

In accordance with the Constitution, this plan shall become effective sixty days after submission to the Legislature, unless specifically modified or disapproved by a majority of the members of each house of the Legislature, provided, that in case it shall appear to the Governor that the interest of economy or efficient management require that the transfer be delayed beyond the date this plan becomes effective, the Governor may, in his discretion, fix a later date therefore, and he may for like cause further defer such date from time to time.

**SIGNED AND PROMULGATED** on this 6th day of February, 2012.

  
**Benigno R. Fitial**  
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands