

## NOTICE TO FOREIGN NATIONAL WORKERS

Before you pay a recruiting fee or sign a contract to come to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands for employment, you should read this important notice about working conditions in the Commonwealth.

1. Contract term: Your contract will be for one year. Your contract may be renewed for additional years, but that is not guaranteed. Your employer may decide not to offer you a renewal at the end of the one year contract and, if no other employer who is eligible wants to hire you, you will be required to return home.
2. Wages: Your contract will specify the wage that you will be paid. The current minimum wage in most cases is \$3.55 per hour, and you must be paid at least that wage unless your contract specifies otherwise. You may be offered overtime for which the minimum wage rate is 1.5 times the wage rate in your contract, but the availability of overtime is not guaranteed. Your employer is not required to offer you overtime and, if business conditions do not warrant overtime, there may be no overtime work available. It is possible that the minimum wage will increase in the future. If it does, your contract provides that you will automatically be paid the higher wage if your job is covered by the legislative provision for the increase.
3. Changing business conditions: Sometimes when business conditions are bad, an employer may close down part of the business or cut back operations so as to use fewer workers. If an employer does that, the employer must give you 30 days notice. This is called a reduction in force. During a reduction in force, citizens are given a preference and foreign workers who have been in the Commonwealth longer are given a preference for jobs. If a reduction in force happens, the Department of Labor will assist you.
4. Your work history: The affidavit that you must provide with the application for approval of your employment contract contains information about your work history, education, and experience. Be sure that this information is complete and accurate. You will be limited in your employment in the Commonwealth to the qualifications that you state in your affidavit.
5. Recruiting fees: If you pay recruiting fees in your home country, and you have a problem with respect to those fees, you must make your claims in your home country. You are encouraged to pay recruiting fees only to a licensed recruiter.
6. Other fees: While you are in the Commonwealth, you are not required to pay fees in connection with your employment except for an annual \$25.00 immigration fee for an entry permit card. All other fees will be paid by your employer, and you should not pay these fees even if someone asks you to do that. It is against the law in the Commonwealth for you to pay employment-related fees.
7. Housing and food: Your employer may offer you housing and food as a part of your contract. When you sign your contract, you are agreeing to the housing and food that your employer offers. Your employer may make deductions from your wages for these benefits only if your contract provides for these deductions. After your one-year contract is completed, if your contract is renewed, you are not required to accept the housing and food offered by your employer, and you may provide these things for yourself. If you provide your own housing and food, your employer may not deduct anything from your wages for

these benefits. If you do accept these benefits, your employer must provide safe and sanitary housing and food. If there are any problems with housing or food, you should report them to the Department of Labor.

8. Taxes and social security: Commonwealth taxes and other taxes may be deducted from your wages. Your employer will provide you with a document that explains each deduction.
9. Renewal of your contract after one year: There is a procedure under which your contract can be renewed by your employer for another year each time your contract ends. You are not obligated to renew your contract. There is a procedure under which you can transfer to a new job working for another employer. You will find out more about these procedures at your orientation session.
10. Preference for citizens and permanent residents: Like every other country, the United States enforces a preference for citizens and permanent residents with respect to jobs that may be held by foreign workers. The Commonwealth, which is a part of the United States, also has a preference for citizens and permanent residents. This means that when your one-year contract is completed, if you and your employer want to renew your contract for another year, or if you find a new job and want to transfer, the job will be advertised to find out if any citizen or permanent resident wants to apply for the job. If they do, and if they are qualified for the job, Commonwealth law requires that the citizen or permanent resident be hired before any foreign worker is hired.
11. Disputes: Occasionally disputes arise between employers and employees. If a dispute arises and is not resolved quickly by your employer, you should report any unresolved dispute to the Department of Labor within two weeks. You will be told at the orientation session how to do this. You do not have to stop working in order to report a dispute or to file a complaint.
12. Returning home: You may return home at any time. When you want to go, you are entitled to a repatriation ticket back to your home country. Your contract requires your employer to provide an airline ticket for you. The Department of Labor will assist you with respect to your departure.
13. Asking questions before you come: If you have questions, please ask them before you come to the Commonwealth. You can contact a person who will answer your questions these ways:
  - ✓ E-mail: DepSec2@cnmi-gov.org
  - ✓ Fax 670 236-0991
14. Information and help when you get to the Commonwealth: When you get to the Commonwealth, you will be required to attend an orientation session, which will be given in your own language. This will provide you with more information about working in the Commonwealth. You will be given more detailed information about this when you arrive at the airport. You must be sure to attend the orientation session because that is the only way that you will be able to get the entry permit that is necessary for you to work in the Commonwealth.

Receipt acknowledged: \_\_\_\_\_  
Employee