

CNMI Labor Conducts Enforcement Outreach

(Office of the Governor) — Secretary of Labor Vicky Benavente, along with the Division of Enforcement continues to conduct outreach with the private sector.

Benavente shares that collaboration is key to addressing workforce misinformation and enforcement concerns.

“I am pleased that our private sector is reaching out to our department to discuss labor laws and renew their knowledge of current issues. We recently met with Marvin I. Buston who is the administration manager of HBR International and general manager Eduardo Lim. HBR is a company that does general construction, building maintenance services, and manpower supply services and has been in business in the CNMI for 27 years. We want to highlight the fact that we have companies who have been in the Commonwealth for decades and are diligently abiding by our local and federal laws and adopting best practices. We encourage more of our private partners to learn more as we build towards improving our labor policies and workforce,” Benavente said.



Enforcement Director Gil San Nicolas noted that at the request of HBR International, the Department of Labor met with the staff and management to discuss information about CNMI labor laws last week.

“We provided information such as CNMI federal minimum wage, the CW-1 program, medical and repatriation expenses to name a few. The HBR employees asked questions about time and attendance, holiday pay, and safety standards. They were also informed about DOL regulations regarding their employment as contract workers. We want to reiterate that strengthening this dialogue improves enforcement and employee protection. There is still so much work to be done but we are seeing positive feedback from employers and their companies,” San Nicolas said.

Gov. Ralph D.L.G. Torres emphasized that labor outreach is building on the current and future needs of the commonwealth.

“Our private sector needs to be provided with reliable information and resources, and that labor is adapting to improved policies to build towards a resilient workforce. While the department continues its data collection, we must not lose sight of the key industries and continued assistance and collaboration in filling information gaps so that we can address the future of our economy and our community,” Governor Torres said.

Secretary Benavente added that while training to enhance employment services took place just last month, communicating with employers is needed at the same time.

“We are pushing to develop our workforce and encouraging companies to be as competent in current labor practices as possible. We stand by our commitment to the long-term and welcome more of our small businesses and large companies to reach out to us for clarification or to renew their knowledge,” Benavente said.

For more information on the Division of Enforcement, log on to www.marianaslabor.net or call 322-4365 or 323-9938.