



Guam Memorial Hospital Authority

Aturidåt Espetåt Mimuriåt Guåhan

850 Governor Carlos G. Camacho Road
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For Immediate Release

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GMHA correcting inaccurate and false news on hiring practices

November 19, 2021 – Tamuning, Guam – The Guam Memorial Hospital Authority team is dismayed and surprised at the news published regarding the hospital’s so-called hiring practices. GMHA is issuing this statement to educate the public and expound on the facts of our recruitment efforts. The recent publication was not verified for veracity and not only damages and destroys trust among our Guam population, who rely on us to deliver excellent, reliable healthcare, but it also affects the entire GMHA staff. It also negatively affects recruitment of future essential employees (clinical and non-clinical) and our pursuit of accreditation. This type of journalism hurts the entire Guam community and our healthcare system.

To begin, the Above-Step Recruitment process is a tool created and approved by the Legislature itself, to allow Government of Guam agencies the flexibility to recruit and retain talent. Guam agencies are competing amongst each other, the private sector and off-island recruitment for a limited amount of talent on our island. The Above-Step Recruitment allows GovGuam agencies to hire highly-credentialed and highly-qualified candidates at higher-rates than the vacancy’s starting salaries. The same goes for hard-to-fill positions. Many Government of Guam organizations have exercised this tool to hire highly-qualified staff.

To be clear: all of the Above-Step recruitment done at GMHA was verified and any credentials presented were checked; everything was done legally, by-the-book and objectively calculated using a formula that GMHA Human Resources uses to determine the salary step the candidate should be offered. The salaries offered are based on experience and qualifications, and compared to the mean of the national salaries, after research by our Human Resources Department.

GMHA has also recruited clinical staff, to include nurses, at Above-Step pay rates. A well-run and organized hospital requires clinical *and* non-clinical staff to operate; neither is more important. We are a **team**, united in our pursuit to deliver the best healthcare to our people on Guam.

GMHA is an extremely large organization, with 1100 full-time staff. Our needs are challenging and dynamic, particularly in a pandemic. As we work to achieve our ambitious goals, we need the talent to get there. We would hope our people, to include Senators and journalists, can support us in our pursuit. We are a hospital for everyone. All the time; 24/7; we are Guam’s public hospital.

GMHA wishes to particularly address and correct some major inaccuracies in a recent news article and video story:



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FALSE NEWS: The issue of above step recruitment at GMH came to light during a recent confirmation hearing for a nominee to the hospital board of trustees who was asked about above step recruitment for a Hospital Marketing and Communications Director. According to the petition for above step recruitment on October 14th the starting salary at Step 1 is \$60,000 but GMH petitioned for a Step 10 salary of \$83,000

ACCURATE FACTS: This position was hired at pay grade Q, Step 7, at \$75,602 based on Exceptional Qualifications of over 10 years in management, communications and journalism, a Master's of Arts in International Affairs, and a Bachelor of Arts in Radio and Television/Journalism.

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FALSE NEWS: Also in February GMH petitioned for the creation of two positions a Hospital Certified Nurse Assistant 1 typically paid at Step 1 at \$24,000 but to be hired at Step 18 at \$42,000. A hospital Certified Nurse Assistant II paid at Step 1 with a salary of \$25,000 but to be hired at Step 18 at \$45,000

ACCURATE FACTS: This is not an above step recruitment but the creation of positions. This posting was simply stating the pay ranges, from step 1 to step 18 on the pay scale, of the positions. This is not a petition to hire at Step 18.

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FALSE NEWS: In April GMH petitioned for above step recruitment for a Food and Beverage Manager normally starting at Step 1 with a salary of \$49,000 but to be hired at Step 10 at \$68,000

ACCURATE FACTS: This position was hired at pay grade O, Step 2, at \$51,787 based on Exceptional Qualifications with a Bachelor of Science in Health Science and years of experience as restaurant entrepreneur.

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FALSE NEWS: In May GMH petitioned for above step recruitment for a Program Coordinator IV for Capital Improvement Projects normally starting at Step 1 at \$45,000 but to be hired at Step 10 with a salary of \$62,000

ACCURATE FACTS: This position was hired at pay grade N, Step 5, at \$52,235 based on Recruitment Difficulty, as the only applicant qualified and interviewed for the position. In addition, this applicant has a number of national construction certifications and Bachelors in Finance & Economics. Additionally, this was a petition for a Program Coordinator III and not Program Coordinator IV as stated in the article.



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FALSE NEWS: Also in May, GMH petitioned to hire a Hospital Respiratory Care Equipment Technician which at Step 1 is paid about \$25,000 but petitioned to be brought on board at \$34,000

ACCURATE FACTS: This position was hired at pay grade G, Step 3, at \$26,638 based on Exceptional Qualifications with over 9 years of work experience as a Respiratory Therapist/Technician, a Bachelor's degree in Respiratory Therapy and based on Recruitment Difficulty as the only applicant qualified and interviewed for the position.

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FALSE NEWS: Also in June GMH Petitioned for an above step recruitment for a Program Coordinator III for their Emergency Health Records system normally starting at Step 1 at \$45,000 to Step 10 to \$62,000

ACCURATE FACTS: This position was hired at pay grade N, Step 5, at \$52,235 based on Exceptional Qualifications with a Bachelors in Business Management and management skills in the applicants work experience and history. Additionally, this individual oversees the **Electronic** Health Records system, not an "Emergency Health Records system."

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FALSE NEWS: In July GMH petitioned for above step recruitment for a Program Coordinator IV for Fiscal. This position normally starts at a Step 1 salary of \$49,000 but GMH petitioned to hire this person at Step 10 at \$68,000

ACCURATE FACTS: This position was hired at pay grade O, Step 7, at \$62,371 based on Exceptional Qualifications with Bachelor's degree in Accountancy and over 10 years of experience as a financial analyst in the healthcare industry.

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FALSE NEWS: In October GMH petitioned for above step recruitment for a Hospital Chef Supervisor normally hired at Step 1 at \$37,000 but recruited at Step 10 with a salary of \$51,000

ACCURATE FACTS: This position was offered at pay grade L, Step 2, at \$38,506, accepted then declined due to a counter offer/higher salary at another hospital. Position is still vacant.

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FALSE NEWS: Also in October GMH petitioned for the creation of a position for a Deputy Assistant of Administrator of Operations. The Step 1 is at \$70,000 but GMH recruited the individual at Step 18 at \$125,000

ACCURATE FACTS: This is not an above step recruitment but the creation of position. The posting was stating the pay ranges, from step 1 to step 18 on the pay scale, of the position. This is not a petition to hire at Step 18 or an Above Step petition.

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FALSE NEWS: and apparently that deputy will serve as the assistant to the Assistant Administrator of Operations jumping from a Step 1 salary of \$76,000 to a Step 18 salary of \$134,000.

ACCURATE FACTS: This is not an above step recruitment but an amendment to a positions' title, job standard and minimum qualification(s). The posting simply stated the pay ranges, from step 1 to step 18 on the pay scale of the position. This is not a petition to hire at Step 18.

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FALSE NEWS: And just this month GMH petitioned for above step recruitment for a Medical Coder I whose step 1 salary is typically \$31,000 but GMH recruited the individual at Step 18 at \$55,000, GMH also petitioned for a Medical Coder II at Step 1 would be hired at \$33,000 but recruited for a Step 18 salary of \$60,000

ACCURATE FACTS: This is not an above step recruitment but an amendment to the minimum qualifications of the job standard. The posting states the pay ranges, from step 1 to step 18 on the pay scale of the position. This is not a petition to hire at Step 18. Additionally, the medical coder positions are essential resources for GMHA (and any medical facility), as they process medical claims, therefore maximizing the hospital's capacity to be reimbursed by the health insurance plans/payers and sustaining the hospital's financial viability.

GMHA has been, and continues to be, transparent in dealings and hiring processes. If anyone has questions or concerns, please feel free to contact GMHA directly.

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