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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Northern Marianas Housing Corporation Hosts Professional Development Training on Identifying Fraud, Waste, and Abuse and Government Ethics

Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands – December 31, 2024 – The Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC), in collaboration with the CNMI Office of the Public Auditor and the Office of the Attorney General, successfully conducted a Professional Development Training focused on ethics and identifying fraud, waste, and abuse. The training took place in early November and was attended by NMHC staff, providing a vital opportunity to promote greater accountability within the agency.

The training session aimed to bolster NMHC’s commitment to upholding the highest ethical standards in its operations. By engaging experts from the Public Auditor’s Office and the Attorney General’s Office, participants gained critical insights into recognizing, preventing, and reporting fraud, waste, and abuse in government programs and operations.

The primary goal of the training was to strengthen NMHC's internal controls, ensuring that employees are better equipped to identify any potential misconduct or inefficiencies in their day-to-day work. With a focus on ethics, the session emphasized the importance of maintaining transparency, accountability, and the responsible use of public resources.

“The Northern Marianas Housing Corporation is committed to ensuring that we are operating with the highest standards of integrity,” said Zenie Mafnas, Corporate Director, of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation. “Through this professional development training, we are empowering our team with the tools and knowledge needed to detect fraud, waste, and abuse, ultimately improving the efficiency of our operations.” “Transitioning into this new role as Corporate Director and coming from an Audit background, I emphasized the importance of upholding integrity, amongst other virtues such as respect and fairness, in the agency”, says Mafnas. The Northern Marianas Housing Corporation handles a significant number of programs funded by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, US Treasury, Veteran Affairs Office, Rural Development, and the Internal Revenue Service. Being cognizant of fraud, waste, and abuse (FWA) is crucial when handling millions of dollars because these issues can significantly impact the financial integrity, operational efficiency, and reputation of an organization.

The collaboration with the CNMI Office of the Public Auditor and the Attorney General’s Office underscores the importance of cross-agency partnerships in fostering a culture of accountability and transparency. NMHC remains committed to strengthening its internal processes to ensure that public trust is maintained and that resources are used effectively for the benefit of the community.



“NMHC is an equal employment and fair housing public agency”

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Fraud, waste, and abuse are critical issues for NMHC because they directly affect the availability, fairness, and effectiveness of housing and infrastructure programs. By being vigilant about these risks, agencies can ensure that public resources are used efficiently, that people who need housing assistance and the CNMI community who need infrastructure improvements and community development projects are served equitably, and that public trust and legal compliance are maintained. Reducing fraud, waste, and abuse helps housing agencies such as NMHC to fulfill their mission to provide affordable housing and community-oriented public facilities/infrastructure in the CNMI, and in turn, foster stronger, more resilient communities.



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