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COVID-19: Employment Issues

Klaus Shwab once said, “The pandemic represents a rare but narrow window of opportunity to reflect, reimagine, and reset our world.” It all started on December 31, 2019 when the “Health authorities in China [confirm that dozens of people](https://abcnews.go.com/Health/mystery-pneumonia-outbreak-sickens-dozens-china/story?id=68094861) in Wuhan were being treated for pneumonia from an unknown source” which was the Coronavirus (Schumaker, 2019). Later, it spread throughout Asia and finally on January 21, 2020 it hit the United States causing the Country to shut down and be in quarantine for almost a year now. With this Pandemic, it has been tough on everyone especially the workers here in the CNMI. Many have been furloughed, some businesses had to shut down, however there were some temporary solutions to this issue with the help of the President.

 Furloughed employees are employees with unpaid leave of absence. This was a decision made by the government in efforts to save our island from becoming completely out of hand and broke. My father was almost furloughed but my mom did her best to save him from it. Many of my relatives had been furloughed and they have struggled to pay bills and buy some food for their families. On the bright side, they spent more time with their families. Some businesses had to shut down because they were not making enough money to pay their employees or their bills. In the end, it gave them no choice but to shut down.

In light of this crisis, President Trump had come up with a temporary solution that could help the people while they are at home without pay. He had confirmed the ACTS CARE, Stimulus Checks, and PUA for our people. The ACTS CARE was to help students with their financial bills and other school and emergency expenses. The Stimulus checks were given out to people in the US and US territories to help them pay for their necessities during this tough time. Lastly, we had the PUA which helped all furloughed employees get their pay that they have lost during the quarantine time.

This virus has given us all a rough ending of 2019 and an even rougher start into the year 2020. It has been almost a year of fighting to keep everyone safe from this virus. However, the situation stands in the yellow light which means that we are okay to go out but the virus is still around and that we need to take precaution everywhere we go. This makes it a little less difficult to pay our bills now that some people have returned to work because of the island slowly opening back. For those who were furloughed, they still are struggling without pay. Our lives have changed and we are still learning to adapt to this new normal. Continuing to work together to keep out the virus will eventually bring our lives back to how it was before. Although, for now let us all work together and help each other out during this tough time and keep moving in a positive direction.

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