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**DIPATTAMENTON SALUT PUPBLEKO YAN SETBISION SUSIAT**



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## **Flu Vaccines Donated to Guam**

The Department of Public Health and Social Services is pleased to receive over 2,000 doses of influenza (flu) vaccine from the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) who is donating over 10,000 doses of excess influenza vaccine to its pacific island partners through the U.S./Pacific Islands (US/PI) Vaccine Program. Transportation of the vaccines to Guam and the other pacific islands in Micronesia was made possible through the generosity and partnership of United Airlines.

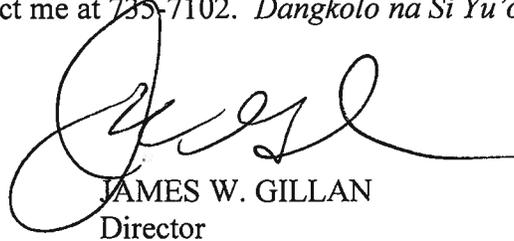
In the U.S. alone, seasonal influenza kills approximately 36,000 Americans on average each year. Invariably, despite efforts to have all service members and beneficiaries receive the vaccine, DOD ends up with excess vaccine that is destroyed at the end of the influenza season. Joint Task Force Homeland Defense (JTF-HD), recognized the need in the pacific for influenza vaccine and the excess influenza vaccine available through DoD and began the US/PI Vaccine Program during the 2006-2007 flu season in the U.S. Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands (CNMI). "The US/PI Vaccine Program is a collaborative effort between DoD, Pacific Islands Health Officers Association (PIHOA), U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), pacific island public health communities and the private sector airline industry. Without them this important program would not be possible" said Michelle Garcia, JTF-HD Interagency Coordinator.

JTF-HD works with the local jurisdictions to identify the requirement and coordinates the vaccine delivery. The U.S. Army Medical Materiel Agency obtains the excess DoD vaccine nationwide before it is shipped to the Military Vaccine Agency and packaged by the Division of Logistics at Tripler Army Medical Center. Fort Campbell, Fort Benning, Fort Gordon, Fort Carson, Fort Bragg and the Naval Academy participated this year by donating over 10,000 doses of influenza vaccine. The Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) donated temperature gauges that identify if the vaccine is kept at an appropriate temperature throughout the journey. These items are valued at over \$5,000. This year's shipments total \$86,000 and are being delivered at no cost to American Samoa by Hawaiian Airlines; to Guam, Saipan, Kosrae by United Airlines; and Majuro by the USCG. "This is always a great experience for me," said George Ka'anana, Cargo Sales Manager for Hawaiian Airlines. "The good folks at Army medicine and JTF-HD recognize the need is always there and they act upon it. I'm very proud to work with these people," added Ka'anana. GovGuam and DPHSS provided invaluable support in ensuring the vaccine made its way through to Guam with no issues.

Headquartered at Fort Shafer, Hawaii, JTF-HD maintains situational awareness of all domains within the Joint Operations Area; executes mission command of assigned forces in the land domain to conduct Homeland Defense operations to deter and defeat threats to critical

infrastructure and key resources and when requested/validated, conducts Civil Support operations in response to all hazards to mitigate human suffering and reduce infrastructure damage.

Should you have any questions, please contact me at 735-7102. *Dangkolo na Si Yu'os Ma'ase.*



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