



# COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

## THE JUDICIARY

Guma' Hustisia / Iimwal Aweewe / House of Justice  
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### Press Release

### For Immediate Release

March 21, 2018

## Operations at Guma' Hustisia Affected by Inoperable Air-Conditioning System

Saipan, MP – On Thursday, March 15, 2018, the Guma' Hustisia, Iimwal Aweewe, House of Justice's air-conditioning system began to malfunction and was not properly cooling courtrooms and office areas. Emergency assessment of the equipment was necessary and measures were immediately taken to repair the aged system, which has served the Judiciary for over twenty years. Repair work continued during the weekend through Wednesday, March 21, 2018. By Friday, March 16, the system was fully off-line. The increased temperature and lack of air circulation required the Judiciary to close at 11:00 a.m. on Friday. The Judiciary remained closed through Wednesday, March 21.

Court proceedings and various services, such as the disbursement of funds and collection of fees have been rescheduled. Certain services will resume temporarily during the repair. In the interim, the Judiciary is securing alternate sites to continue operations and address immediate access to hearings and court services. The United States District Court for the Northern Mariana Islands in Garapan, the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe, and the Department of Public Safety's training offices in Susupe will serve as temporary court locations.

The Judiciary will continue to provide updates on the progress of the air-conditioning system and its impact on services and court proceedings. A joint statement from CNMI Supreme Court Chief Justice Alexandro C. Castro and CNMI Superior Court Presiding Judge Roberto C. Naraja provides: "Court sessions and services resumed in part today, and the courts' calendar and the location of other ancillary service locations and times are posted at the Guma' Hustisia. Personnel from the Marshals Services Division and others will be available to provide directions and information. The Guma' Hustisia, however, will remain closed to the public. Your patience and understanding is greatly appreciated."

During the past two fiscal years, the Judiciary has made continuous changes and upgrades within the Guma' Hustisia to improve the two-decade old building for use by personnel and the public. Such modifications include: carpet removal, new flooring installation and air handling units, and installing dehumidifiers throughout various divisions. In addition, a mold remediation assessment has recently commenced to assist in long-term planning. The potential impact from the rise in temperature and lack of air circulation, caused by the recent air-conditioning system malfunction, is being closely observed and monitored.

*Photos: Justices, Judges, and Managers meet at the Civil Service Commission's training room at the Springs Plaza in Middle Road to discuss the continuity of operations plan for the Guma' Hustisia. (03/20/2018)*

