



GOV. COMM.  
(HOUSE) 24-83

**David M. Apatang**  
Governor

**Dennis James C. Mendiola**  
Lieutenant Governor

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS  
**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**

November 26, 2025

GOV2025-545

The Honorable Edmund S. Villagomez  
Speaker  
House of Representatives  
Twenty-Fourth Northern Marianas  
Commonwealth Legislature  
Saipan, MP 96950

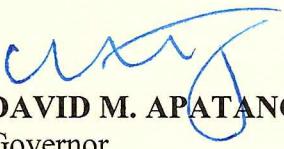
The Honorable Karl R. King-Nabors  
President  
The Senate; Twenty-Fourth Northern  
Marianas Commonwealth Legislature  
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Mr. Speaker and Mr. President:

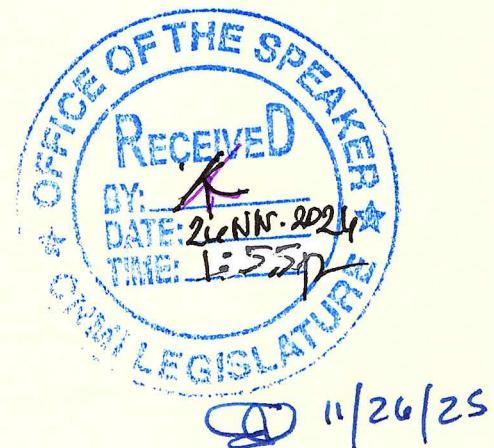
This is to inform you that I have signed into law **House Bill No. 24-54** entitled, "To increase the number of military leave hours available to CNMI government employees and to broaden eligibility for its use.", which was passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate of the Twenty-Fourth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

This bill becomes **Public Law No. 24-18**. Copies bearing my signature are forwarded for your reference.

Sincerely,

  
**DAVID M. APATANG**  
Governor

cc: Lieutenant Governor; Attorney General; Commonwealth Law Revision;  
Public Auditor; Civil Service Commission; Office of Personnel Management;  
Special Assistant for Administration; Programs and Legislative Review



RECEIVED BY: BJR  
DATE: 11/26/25 TIME: 16:30



**TWENTY-FOURTH NORTHERN MARIANA COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**SECOND REGULAR SESSION**

**AUGUST 29, 2025**

**REPRESENTATIVE DANIEL I. AQUINO JR. OF SAIPAN, PRECINCT 2** (*for himself*, Representatives Vincent R. Aldan, Diego V. F. Camacho, Marissa R. Flores, Thomas J. DIC. Manglona, Julie M. A. Ogo, Malcolm J. Omar, John Paul P. Sablan, and Edmund S. Villagomez) in an open and public meeting with an opportunity for the public to comment, introduced the following Bill:

**H. B. No. 24-54**

**AN ACT**

**TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF MILITARY LEAVE HOURS  
AVAILABLE TO CNMI GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES AND  
TO BROADEN ELIGIBILITY FOR ITS USE.**

**IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

The Bill was not referred to a House Committee.

**THE BILL WAS PASSED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON  
FIRST AND FINAL READING, AUGUST 29, 2025;  
without amendments and transmitted to THE SENATE.**

**IN THE SENATE**

The Bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Fiscal Affairs, which submitted Standing Committee Report 24-34; adopted 11/17/2025.

**THE BILL WAS PASSED BY THE SENATE ON FIRST AND FINAL READING, NOVEMBER 17, 2025;  
without amendments and returned to THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.**

**H. B. NO. 24-54 IS DULY PASSED BY THE TWENTY-FOURTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH  
LEGISLATURE.**

  
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Linda B. Muña, House Clerk



TWENTY-FOURTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE  
**IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

SECOND DAY, SECOND REGULAR SESSION  
AUGUST 29, 2025

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**H. B. NO. 24-54**

**AN ACT**

**TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF MILITARY LEAVE HOURS  
AVAILABLE TO CNMI GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES AND  
TO BROADEN ELIGIBILITY FOR ITS USE.**

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE TWENTY-FOURTH NORTHERN  
MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE:**

1                   **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2                   This Act may be cited as the "Military and Emergency Service Leave Act of  
3                   2025."

4                   **SECTION 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.**

5                   The Legislature finds that the Uniformed Services Employment and  
6                   Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), 38 U.S.C. §§ 4301 et seq., is a federal law  
7                   that protects employees who serve in the nation's uniformed services from job  
8                   discrimination. In September 2022, the Civilian Reservist Emergency Workforce  
9                   (CREW) Act amended USERRA to explicitly include Federal Emergency

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1 Management Agency (FEMA) Reservists as part of the protected uniformed  
2 services.

3 In light of the CREW Act, the Legislature finds it necessary to update the  
4 CNMI Government's military leave benefit to reflect the expanded categories of  
5 federal uniformed service now recognized under USERRA. This Act modernizes  
6 eligibility for the CNMI Government's paid military leave benefit by expressly  
7 including permanent CNMI Government employees who serve in the National  
8 Guard, reserve components of the United States Armed Forces, the FEMA  
9 Reservist Program, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
10 Commissioned Officer Corps, or any other uniformed service covered under  
11 USERRA. By doing so, this Act ensures that all eligible CNMI Government  
12 uniformed service employees ordered to perform active duty, training, emergency  
13 response, or other authorized service under competent authority are extended this  
14 employee benefit.

15 The Legislature also finds that multiple jurisdictions are expanding their  
16 military leave benefits to better support citizen-soldiers as they balance  
17 increasingly demanding service obligations with civilian employment. For  
18 example, in 2024, Maryland enacted the Time to Serve Act, which authorized an  
19 increase in the amount of leave state employees may take for military reserve  
20 duties from 15 to 30 days. Similarly, Section 1109 of the Fiscal Year 2025 National  
21 Defense Authorization Act, Pub. L. No. 118-159, increased federal military leave  
22 benefits from 15 to 20 days.

23 Like Maryland and the United States, the Legislature finds that increasing  
24 the CNMI Government's military leave benefit from 15 to 30 days per calendar  
25 year promotes the well-being and financial stability of government employees who

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1 also fulfill military and federal emergency service duties. The Legislature also  
2 acknowledges that this Act's expanded benefit strengthens the CNMI  
3 Government's ability to recruit and retain uniformed service personnel by  
4 enhancing the appeal and competitiveness of public sector employment for those  
5 who serve.

6 Thus, by enacting this legislation, the CNMI affirms its commitment to  
7 supporting citizen-soldiers and emergency responders who bear dual  
8 responsibilities to their nation and their communities. The expanded eligibility  
9 and increased duration of the paid leave benefit authorized by this Act ensures  
10 that the CNMI Government remains a fair, supportive, and mission-ready  
11 employer in line with the evolving expectations of federal law and national service.

12 **SECTION 3. ENACTMENT.**

13 Article 5 of Chapter 5, Part 2, Division 8, Title 1 of the Commonwealth Code  
14 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

15 **"Article 5. Military and Emergency Service Leave.**

16 **§ 101. Military and Emergency Service Leave.**

17 (a) All permanent employees of the Commonwealth government,  
18 including those in the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches, and any  
19 autonomous agency, office, board, authority, commission, or instrumentality,  
20 shall be entitled to paid military and emergency service leave not to exceed  
21 30 working days per calendar year. This leave shall be available to all  
22 permanent Commonwealth government employees that:

23 (1) are a member of any of the following:

24 (i) the United States National Guard;

25 (ii) a reserve component of the United States Armed Forces;

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(iii) the Federal Emergency Management Agency Reservist Program;

(iv) the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps; or

(v) any other uniformed service covered by the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, 38 U.S.C. §§ 4301 et seq.; and

(2) are ordered to perform active duty, training, emergency response, or other authorized service under competent military, federal, or state authority, including service in response to a national emergency, disaster, or other major incident.

(b) Military and emergency service leave shall be granted upon the presentation of valid military orders or other appropriate documentation.

(c) The maximum amount of paid leave authorized under this Section is 30 working days per calendar year. The 30-day cap shall not prevent an employee from electing to use other accrued leave benefits for absences in excess of the cap.

## § 102. Rules and Regulations.

Within 120 days of the effective date of this Article, the Civil Service Commission and all other departments, offices, branches, autonomous agencies, boards, authorities, commissions, and instrumentalities of the Commonwealth government shall adopt or amend their respective rules, regulations, policies, or internal procedures as necessary to implement this Article. Such rules and regulations may include, but are not limited to, procedures for requesting military leave, required documentation, eligibility

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1 determinations, coordination with other leave entitlements, and  
2 recordkeeping or tracking requirements.”

3 **SECTION 4. GENERAL PROVISIONS.**

4 (a) Any existing regulation, policy, or procedure that is inconsistent with this  
5 Act is hereby superseded to the extent of the inconsistency.

6 (b) Nothing in this Act shall be construed to limit the authority of the Civil  
7 Service Commission or any other CNMI government entity, including autonomous  
8 agencies, offices, boards, authorities, commissions, and instrumentalities, to  
9 promulgate regulations, policies, or procedures consistent with this Act.

10 **SECTION 5. SEVERABILITY.**

11 If any provisions of this Act or the application of any such provision to any  
12 person or circumstance should be held invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction,  
13 the remainder of this Act or the application of its provisions to persons or  
14 circumstances other than those to which it is held invalid shall not be affected  
15 thereby.

16 **SECTION 6. SAVINGS CLAUSE.**

17 This Act and any repealer contained herein shall not be construed as  
18 affecting any existing right acquired under contract or acquired under statutes  
19 repealed or under any rule, regulation, or order adopted under the statutes.  
20 Repealers contained in this Act shall not affect any proceeding instituted under or  
21 pursuant to prior law. The enactment of the Act shall not have the effect of  
22 terminating, or in any way modifying, any liability, civil or criminal, which shall  
23 already be in existence on the date this Act becomes effective.

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1                   **SECTION 7. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

2                   This Act shall take effect upon its approval by the Governor, or it becoming  
3 law without such approval.

Attested to by:

  
*Linda B. Muña, House Clerk*

Certified by:

  
**SPEAKER EDMUND S. VILLAGOMEZ**  
*House of Representatives*  
*24<sup>th</sup> Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature*

*Approved* this 26<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2025

  
**DAVID M. APATANG**  
*Governor*  
*Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands*