

For Official Release
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Office of the Governor
Utulei, American Samoa
December 1st, 2021



“Governor Lemanu Hosts Final Cabinet Meeting for 2021.”

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On November 29, 2021, at the American Samoa Community College (ASCC) Multi-Purpose Center, Governor Lemanu and Lieutenant Governor Talauega hosted their final cabinet meeting for 2021. Before the cabinet meeting, Governor Lemanu stated,

"Overall, the Lieutenant Governor and I believe that the Territory is moving in a good direction. Our people are enjoying their families, our economy is stable with cash, and the holiday season is in full swing. This is an unprecedented time that we are witnessing, with the many Blessings that our island is receiving."

"You all should have no doubts about where we are as an Administration or your role in how successful we have been. We could not have made it this far without your outstanding leadership and experience. On behalf of myself and the Lieutenant Governor, I want to say, Thank you. We have accomplished a lot in this first year. However, let us remember that we need to continue prioritizing our projects and paying our debts. We have much work ahead of us. Despite our plans for future projects, do not neglect the work on ongoing projects and finish up old ones. We need to see them through. Continue to communicate to the public and inform them of our plans and what we need to get done. So let's finish this year strong and continue to support each other."

"One way to show support for each other is to make sure we are present at each other's events. Showing our presence is our way of displaying our commitment to supporting the citizens of our Territory. Whether it is another Department's church service or wave, let's show our solidarity and participate."

"I wanted to say thank you to all of those who have supported the Farm Fair and Veterans Day. The Lieutenant Governor and I want to give back to the public and host festivities that all can enjoy during the holidays. Our island is enjoying the fruits of all the hard work by government, public and private sector employees, and this is one way to show our appreciation for all their efforts. We ask that you remind your employees to come out and enjoy these festivities because it is our honor to provide these opportunities to recognize them."

Department of Human Resources

The Department of Human Resources (DHR) presented its updates on the recent Executive Branch ASG Employee Vaccination Report. The Governor has appointed DHR to receive and compile the reports to accurately count whom are fully, partially, or not vaccinated. The current number of total employees is 5018. A total of 1,888 employees are fully vaccinated, and 2,015 are not vaccinated. The difference is made up of partially and unconfirmed vaccination cards.

Lieutenant Governor pointed out that there are still four departments that are required to submit their reports.

Following the presentation, the Governor replied, "As I mentioned before, Cabinet, we need to lead by example. Get your employees vaccinated. DOE, as we know, is the hardest Department to manage because of its size. We need to be mindful of their issues. We believe their time during the 'mass vaccination' will allow them to improve their numbers. DOE is a critical part of our infrastructure if a surge or spread occurs. They deal directly with our children, whom we also need to consider protecting the most during this pandemic. I call upon the DOE leadership to look into why the unvaccinated number is high and why the request for exemption is so low. DOE employees need to understand they are also frontline workers during this pandemic."

"It is impossible for the government to push the mass vaccination program when there are people out there who are standing against being vaccinated. We need to focus on education and outreach. The more prepared we are as leaders, the better prepared we will be to answer those who are fighting for the opportunity to help defend our island."

Department of Health

Dr. Aifili of the Department of Health presented on DOH's preparations for the mass vaccination to be held on December 1st, 8am-4pm.

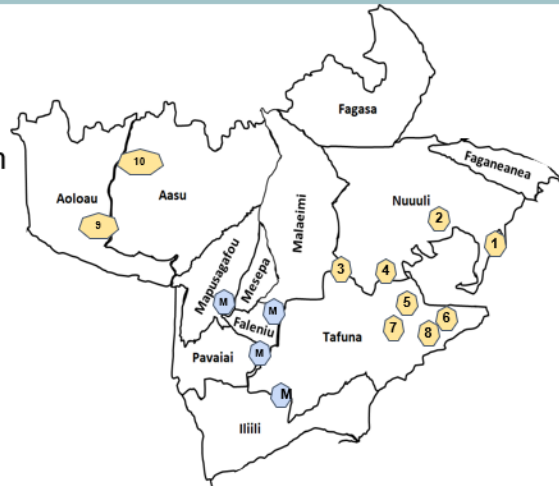
COVID-19 Mass Vaccination Drive Schedule

DATE	DISTRICT	HOURS
12/01/2021	DAY 1 CENTRAL	8AM - 4PM
12/02/2021	DAY 2 CENTRAL	8AM - 4PM
12/08/2021	DAY 1 WEST	8AM-4PM
12/09/2021	DAY 2 WEST	8AM-4PM
12/15/2021	DAY 1 EAST	8AM-4PM
12/16/2021	DAY 2 EAST	8AM-4PM
12/16/2021	DAY 1 MANU'A	8AM-4PM
12/17/2021	DAY 2 MANU'A	8AM-4PM

DAY 1: CENTRAL (Ituau-Aitulagi) 12/1/21

Fixed School/Village Based Vaccine Sites:

1. Nuuuili/Malaeimi: Manumalo Gym
2. Manulele Elementary (887)
3. Nuuuili Vocational Tech
4. Kanana Fou
5. Tafuna High (1,189)
6. Tafuna Elementary (755)
7. Lupelele Elementary (568)
8. Pavaia'i Elementary (1,033)
9. Tafeta/Aasu- Aasu Catholic Hall
10. Siliaga Elementary (145)



DAY 2: CENTRAL DISTRICT 12/2/21

Team	8-11AM	12-4PM
Team 1	Nuuuli Soliai Guest House	Nuuuli Tago Area/Soliai Uta
Team 2	CCCAS Matuu Hall	Falenui EFKAS Hall
Team 3	Makeke The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints	Mapusaga LDS Stakecenter
Team 4	Iakina SDA	Peteli Academy
Team 5	Samoa Baptist School	To'aono Guest House
Team 6	CCCAS Iilili Hall	TBD
Team 7	Pacific Horizons	TBD
Team 8	South Pacific Academy	TBD
Team 9	Tuana'itau Guest House	Tuana'itau Guest House

Dr. Aifili also presented on the Omicron Variant that has been talked about in the news recently. "We do not have all the information about this variant at this time, but what DOH does know is that the vaccine is the best line of defense that we have available." He continued to support the Governor's earlier comments about getting vaccinated to help prepare the Territory and give DOH the best opportunity to contain or eliminate the spread or surge if COVID-19 ever begins to spread here in American Samoa.

Governor Lemanu is hopeful that we will reach the number that we will be able to ease the travel restrictions and decrease if not remove the quarantine part of the process. "Those of us who have left and returned and went through the quarantine process, it is not easy. So we must work together to try and make movement off and on the island a little easier. "We continue to encourage families and individuals to please not travel if you do not need to. This is one way of introducing COVID into the Territory when we are not fully prepared to handle the spread."

Governor has also asked all ASG Departments to support the mass vaccination efforts and provide DOH with all government resources needed to carry out the mass vaccination events as scheduled. He further asked Directors to be lenient with employees who have children they would like to take to get their vaccinations and may need to leave work early to do so.

Department of Commerce

Governor Lemanu has requested that the DOC inquire how to approach the Census to conduct a recount. "The 49,000, truthfully, is going to impact all the Federal resources that come into our island. It does not matter how big or small your grant program is; our population count will affect our Federal resources," stated Director Matila. The US Congress uses the Census data to

calculate any formula to budget the money for your programs. Currently, the Census Data generates new data through government services that show that more than 49,000 people live in American Samoa. ASG will be requesting a complete count review and a recount to include those who were repatriated after the Census was conducted.

DOC Director and statistician spoke about what the next steps are, which are listed below:

- ▶ **COMMUNICATE FOLLOWING ISSUES TO US CENSUS BUREAU:**
 - ▶ Complete Count Review – Lack of resources to conduct review
 - ▶ Post Enumeration Survey – Need geography used in 2020 census
 - ▶ Usual Place of Residence for stranded residents in the Mainland
 - ▶ Count of stranded residents using Individual Census Reports
 - ▶ Request immediate count by single age and sex by village

- ▶ **IDENTIFY ALL DATA SYSTEMS WITH POPULATION COMPONENTS – ASSESS, EVALUATE AND APPLY**
 - ▶ COVID-19 vaccine coverage by age, sex, village
 - ▶ ASNAP Food Stamp – individuals, families, by age, sex, village
 - ▶ Immigration Board – registered permanent residents, one year ID holders, temporary residents, arrival/departure details
 - ▶ Other data systems such as enrollment, public health immunization, voter rosters etc.

- ▶ **DEVELOP A MASTER ADDRESS FILE FOR IMMEDIATE RECOUNT**

- ▶ **CONSIDER ANOTHER LOCAL POPULATION COUNT**

- ▶ **EXECUTIVE SUPPORT!**



ARTS COUNCIL

Executive Director Fuata M. Tiumalu announced that planning and logistics for the 44th Annual Holiday Music Festival hosted by the American Samoa Arts Council are underway. The Festival is scheduled to take place on December 12th, 13th, and 14th. As of November 29, 41 groups have registered and include LMS, Metotisi, Catholic, LDS, and Nazarene faith-based groups. Auditions are completed on Tuesday, November 30. No participants from Manua. Fagatogo Pavillion.

LT. GOVERNOR REMARKS

Statistician

“I want to thank DOC and the statistician for the outstanding report. I cannot express the importance of a statistician to American Samoa. I ask all Departments and Agencies to give Director Petti and the statistician all the help they need when they call on you for information. Information is key to getting our count corrected. Travel, immigration, health, and the Office of Samoan Affairs all this information is key to knowing what we do and do not have. It's like a checking account; no one ever wants to balance the checkbook. They just want to keep writing checks until you get the NSF warning. We all know how seeing the warning nonsufficient funds affects us. This is what will happen to us if we do not track our population and know how many and where they have been, so we begin to guess. What happens when we guess? Before you know it you will begin to see a drop in our population. That is drastic.”

“The population count is key to any growing society, it is the key to our economy, businesses will not grow. It is also very important to our workforce. If we do not have enough people, we need to start bringing people in from other countries. Recruiting from other countries because our own talent pool and our own local resources are scarce. I qualify this by using the Tafuna High School Football Team as an example. People ask, 'Why is Tafuna so good every year?' Its because they have a bigger pool of students to choose from that have diverse talents. The teams from smaller schools or the far east do not have as many kids to choose from to make up a strong team.”

“But this is why it is important to understand what our population looks like, because we need to understand what our pool looks like. Population matters. The bigger the pool, the more chances we will have to recruit better chances for us to do better and talent from local resources.”

Vaccination

“I feel saddened, that during the past month the Governor had to ask Directors to have ASG employees receive their shots, and even mandating this as a condition to continue working for ASG, yet today, over 3000 government employees have not reported their vaccination status or have refused not be vaccinated. The Governor does not want to force anyone to do any of this. The Governor does not force the employees to come work for the American Samoa Government. But if you choose to work for the American Samoa Government, then you will have to follow the rules. Working for the American Samoa Government is not a right, it is a privilege. We are privileged to have the opportunity to serve the people of American Samoa.”

“Directors, this mandate falls upon you. If you have listed your top three priorities moving forward, getting your employees vaccinated should be number one. Make sure

you are personally involved with identifying your employees and getting them vaccinated. We need your help.”

“The Director of Health has asked what the process is to request exemptions for two reasons: medical or religious beliefs. You have to qualify. The requests that I have seen are incomplete. Just saying you want to be exempt with no reason fails to meet the requirements. Forms will be available to apply for exemption. And if approved, then you have to follow the rules for reasonable accommodations. These accommodations will be to let you wear masks or exempt you from public gatherings.”

“We now have a growing population of those opposing vaccinations. Some say it's because of their religious beliefs, but others say they are exercising their individual rights. I got my vaccination to make sure I would not be the cause of killing someone else. I was thinking about my elders and my kids. But, people that oppose the vaccine are not thinking about the rest of the island. They do not think about others. They are thinking only internally. They think about me, it's all about me. My individual rights, my freedoms, and nobody can tell me what to do. We need to educate others that it is not only a personal choice. We need to do it to protect our kids and our island.”

“The virus is continuing to mutate and grow, and we will need to continue being vigilant. Please encourage more of our citizens to get vaccinated.”