

# PORT AUTHORITY OF GUAM

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## NEWS RELEASE

### General Manager's Statement on Employee Protections at the Port

**Piti, Guam, September 15, 2025:** The following is a statement from Port General Manager Rory J. Respicio regarding legislative testimony on Bill 148-38:

I respect the legislative process and the right of individuals to testify before our elected leaders. At this morning's hearing on Bill 148-38, testimony was presented by a former employee who read the testimony of another employee. Both currently have serious personnel matters pending before the Civil Service Commission. These cases rightfully belong in that forum, where they will be resolved under the established merit system. They should not be litigated through a political process.

This morning's testimony focused on personal grievances that are already before the Civil Service Commission. That is the appropriate and independent venue to resolve such matters under Guam's merit system, and are all consistent with the rule of law. For the record, I am following the law that protects every classified employee of the Government of Guam. Guam law and the Port's Personnel Rules and Regulations already provide strong, enforceable safeguards, including:

- 4 GCA § 4503 – prohibits retaliation, coercion, intimidation, and conflicts of interest in personnel actions.
- 4 GCA § 4504 – guarantees the right of employees to file grievances.
- 4 GCA § 4403(c) – requires the Civil Service Commission to hear grievance appeals at Step 4, ensuring fair and independent review.
- Port PRR Rule 12.401 – protects employees' right to file grievances without restraint, interference, coercion, discrimination, or reprisal.
- Port PRR Rule 12.406 – affirms that an employee who has filed a grievance may not be terminated because of filing that grievance.

In March 2025, we also adopted the Port's Workplace Violence Policy, which strengthened accountability, set clear expectations for Division Heads and managers, and incorporated employee feedback to ensure stronger protections. These safeguards are longstanding, comprehensive, and apply equally to every Port employee.



The allegation of “unchecked power” or a “hostile climate” is not supported by fact. Oversight and accountability are normal functions of management under the Personnel Rules and Regulations and Guam law. Existing safeguards prohibit retaliation, coercion, and intimidation in personnel actions, and guarantee employees the right to file grievances with access to Civil Service Commission review. These protections ensure that no unchecked power or hostility exists at the Port. What we have built is a climate of accountability, where expectations are clear and every employee is held to the same standards of professionalism and integrity.

We trust that the legislature will hold Bill 148-38 in abeyance and recognize that the protections being sought already exist under Guam law and the Port's Personnel Rules and Regulations. These frameworks are designed to protect employee rights while preserving accountability and fairness across government.

Since taking the helm in 2019, we have remained focused on the Port's mission of serving the people of Guam and supporting our island's economy and security. Working with our Board of Directors, management team, and workforce, we have:

- Strengthened the Port's financial position while meeting bond obligations, including catching and correcting revenue leakage that stemmed from one individual's misinterpretation of tariff provisions.
- Modernized critical infrastructure, including container yard transformation, new equipment acquisitions, and federal grant projects.
- Implemented hiring reforms and strengthened accountability to ensure fairness and transparency in personnel matters.
- Expanded partnerships with federal agencies to position the Port as a strategic national asset.

The record speaks for itself. Our Board members are community volunteers who provide oversight with professionalism and dedication. To suggest otherwise distracts from the substantial progress we have made in building a high-performing organization.

I will not be deterred by personal attacks or misinformation. My commitment as General Manager is to transparency, accountability, and results that serve our island and nation.