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## “Governor Announces American Samoa’s First Reported COVID-Related Fatality”

*“Our prayers are with the family of the patient who has passed away as well as the families of the people who are affected by this outbreak. Do not be discouraged; this is a time to work together, and to be resilient.”*

On March 23, 2022, Governor Lemanu P.S. Mauga announced on a live Press Conference on KVZK-TV, that American Samoa has reported its first COVID-19 related fatality. “Our prayers are with the family of the patient who has passed away as well as the families of the people who are affected by this outbreak. The health of the citizens, emergency first responders, staff and community of American Samoa are a top priority. We will work with the Department of Public Health – to support the care of the patients, the safety of the health care workers, and the well-being of the people of our territory.”

The Governor also hosted a virtual Cabinet Meeting immediately after the Press Conference to encourage government leaders to continue their service to the people of American Samoa. “Do not be discouraged; this is a time to work together, and to be resilient.” Governor Lemanu highlighted the humble beginnings of the people of American Samoa, and encouraged them to “Remember the foundation of which we were built upon, we must hold fast our faith in God.” He asked the Cabinet to pray for our neighboring Pacific Islands, and the people of Samoa who are in similar hardships due to COVID.

Governor Lemanu gave special recognition to the medical doctors and first responders for their continued fight against COVID-19, “On behalf of the Lieutenant Governor, I want to express our sincerest gratitude to our team of medical doctors local and federal, our first responders, and frontline workers. You are our first line of defense against COVID-19. I commend you for your sacrifice and service, thank you for caring for the people of American Samoa.”

Earlier in the week, on Monday, March 21, 2022, GAR Lieutenant Governor Talauega announced at the COVID-19 Task Force Press Conference a series of measures on the next

phase of a gradual re-opening of services. On that note, Governor Lemanu advised the Cabinet members to incorporate the Emergency Declaration guidelines when planning to re-open services to the community. “Our way of life has been uprooted, and we need to think outside of the box to reassess plans of providing services to our people, while continuing to enforce mitigation measures that ensure public health and safety,” Lemanu stated.

The final remarks were by Lieutenant Governor Talauega who gave thanks to Governor Lemanu and the Cabinet Members for their continued support to the EOC and the COVID-19 Task Force, and to everyone for their hard work.

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