GENERAL MEMORANDUM NO. 116 – 22

To: Directors and Agency Heads

From: Governor of American Samoa

Subject: GAO COVID 19 Relief Funding to U.S. Territories

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act and 5 consequent COVID 19 Relief laws providing support for the territories authorize and designate the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) to conduct a review of all U.S. Territories that received COVID 19 Relief Funding.

In compliance with GAO’s letter of July 27, 2022 (attached and incorporated as Exhibit “A”) announcing this engagement, I designate Directors of the following Departments and Agencies to work on the COVID-19 engagement:

- Department of Treasury
- Governor’s Office Special Program Coordinator
- ARPA Oversight Office
- Office of Program Planning and Budget
- Department of Commerce
- Territorial Audit Office
- Office of Procurement
- Department of Public Works
- Department of Health
- Department of Education
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Department of Port Administration
- Office of Disaster Assistance and Petroleum Management
- American Samoa Department of Homeland Security
- Governor's Office

The standard preliminary entrance call is scheduled for Wednesday, August 17, 2022 at 1:00 PM AS Time at the Governor’s Office Conference Room. Designees are hereby notified to be present for this call.
Please coordinate your efforts to ensure timely response to meet the federal requirements of this GAO notice.

LEMANU P. S. MAUGA
Governor

Enclosure
July 27, 2022

The Honorable Lemanu Palepoi Sialega Mauga
Governor
American Samoa

Dear Governor Mauga:

This letter is to inform you of a new U.S. Government Accountability Office engagement on COVID-19 Relief Funding to U.S. Territories—code 106050. The enclosure provides information on the engagement. If we determine it is necessary to visit locations other than those specified in the enclosure, we will advise you.

We would appreciate your notifying the appropriate officials of this work. The next step will be to set up an entrance conference. At that meeting, we will request that your agency identify a point of contact for this engagement.

Sincerely yours,

Jeffrey Arkin.
Director
Strategic Issues Team

Enclosure (1)
cc: Blanche Barber, Department of the Treasury
Information on New Engagement

Engagement subject: COVID-19 Relief Funding to U.S. Territories

Engagement code: 106050

Source for the work: GAO is beginning this work in response to a congressional mandate in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, Public Law 116-136.

Issue(s) under review/Objective(s)/Key question(s):

1. What COVID-19 Relief Funding did the U.S. territories receive and what is known about how those funds were used?

2. How, if at all, did federal agencies meet any unique needs of the U.S. territories in administering COVID-19 relief funding, and what lessons learned could improve future federal emergency relief to U.S. territories?

Departments/agencies to be contacted: We are reaching out to agencies responsible for administering the largest COVID-19 relief programs to Tribes, States, Localities, and Territories – those that received $10 billion or more exclusively or primarily for those entities in at least one of the six COVID-19 relief laws. This includes the Department of Treasury Office of Recovery; Department of Homeland Security Federal Emergency Management Agency; Department of Transportation Federal Transit Administration and Federal Highway Administration; Department of Health and Human Services; and Department of Education.

We will also reach out to the Department of the Interior Office of Insular Affairs and the governments of American Samoa, Guam, Commonwealth of Northern Marianas Islands, Puerto Rico, and U.S. Virgin Islands.

Estimated start date for the work: Immediately

Time frame for holding the entrance conference: the second half of August (8/15-8/31)

GAO Team(s) performing the engagement: Strategic Issues

GAO contacts:

- Jeffrey Arkin, Director, 202-512-2754 and arkinj@gao.gov
- Alexandra Edwards, Assistant Director, 202-512-5591 and edwardsae@gao.gov
- Kerstin Meyer, Analyst-in-Charge, 202-512-9914 and meyerk@gao.gov