

For Official Release
PR 001-0409021
Office of the Governor
Utulei, American Samoa
April 9, 2021



“Governor Lemanu Raises Pay for ASG Employees.”

Governor Lemanu raises salaries \$11k-\$12k to \$15k-\$16k.

Pay increments have been reinstated.

During a cabinet meeting held on Thursday, April 8, 2021, Governor Lemanu announced the next phase as part of the "rollback" initiative applied shortly after taking office. "As I mentioned before, the rollback was the first phase in trying to 'right the ship.' We needed to efficiently and legally assess the personnel structure and ensure it aligned with the Administration's overall goal of eventually raising the pay for all ASG employees. As before, I want to ask for your patience and cooperation while the Administration begins to make the necessary changes to employees raises."

Governor Lemanu also explains, "If I am a veteran, receiving veteran benefits and I have an ASG job but cannot manage to afford the current cost of living, how can I expect someone making **\$11k-\$12k** a year to afford to live comfortably? We need to work together to provide our people some relief. We need to raise the income because the cost of living continues to increase."

Governor Lemanu continued to explain, "...the Good News is that our budget can support the raise and that we have started working on processing the raises." The pay increase for ASG employees that start with salaries at **\$12K** will increase to **\$15K-\$16K**. The Administration's plan will also include raising each salary level until the increases reach the Director level. All salaries will be increased. Requirements are still in place for raises such as education and years of experience will be taken into consideration. Also, all employees that were affected by the rollback need to resubmit their raises for reconsideration.

Increments have also been reinstated.

The Administration's timeline for all salary increases is the end of the year.

This announcement occurs when residents are awaiting tax, stimulus, and other benefits flowing into the Territory. "This is a time we have never seen before," states Lt. Governor Talauega. He continues, "the amount of money that our Territory will receive here shortly will be unprecedented. A family of 10 can potentially receive over **\$14k** and a family of 5 **\$7k**. My concern is that our people need to make sure they are practicing good financial management. You have an opportunity to make wise decisions to help build generational wealth for you and the future of your families. I encourage you all to educate yourselves in making sound decisions with your money. But do not leave your jobs. Instead, look at savings, Certificate of Deposit's (CD), or other investments that you may find that have a huge return."

The Lt. Governor stated that it would be a huge disservice if the Administration does not get in front of this issue and assure that the citizens of American Samoa are prepared for after these benefits subside.