

Compact of Free Association Judicial Training Fund

On August 28, 2020 Chief Justice Dennis K. Yamase met with members of the Joint Committee on Compact Review and Planning(JCRP). Members of the JCRP who attended the meeting included; the Honorable Asterio R. Takesy, Chairman JCRP, Honorable Leo A. Falcam Jr. ,Chief Negotiator, and Mr. Epel K. Ilon, Director JCRP.

The FSM Supreme Court and the four state Courts within the FSM receives training funds on an annual basis through the Compact of Free Association with the United States of America. Because of this funding, the FSM Supreme Court and the four state courts have participated in a wide variety of training programs designed to strengthen court governance and the rule of law, improve judicial operation, and develop the skills of newly appointed judicial officers. Some example of training programs include:

- The training of judges/justices to provide fair, impartial, and speedy justice, with a bench instilled with integrity, professionalism, and competence;
- The training of court leaders with ethical principles to train court staff and lead courts in the 21st century;
- The training of court interpreters to provide access to justice to local communities; and
- The training of probation officers, court security officers, clerks, and other court personnel to effectively and efficiently administer access to justice.

This funding is one of the main sources of funding available to the FSM and its four state courts for training. This financial assistance to the Courts will be ending in 2023. Chief Justice Yamase's meeting with the JCRP members was an opportunity for the Court to brief them on how the funds have been used and administered, and to allow the Court to express the importance of having this funding continued after 2023.