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Sexual Abuse and Prevention Task Force Members Gather

Hagatna, Guam-Task force members of “The Lanikate Protehi Y Famagu’on-ta Act” met today for the second time at the Office of the Attorney General to further discuss ways to prevent and reduce child sexual abuse on Guam.

The duties of the task force, created under the mandates of P.L. 31-97, include gathering statistical data concerning child sexual abuse, creating goals for local policy on child abuse prevention, and improving the services offered by government agencies, private organizations and community-based groups to victimized children.

The first meeting of the task force involved its members selecting Attorney General Leonard Rapadas as the task force presiding officer and a review and orientation of the “Lanikate Protehi Y Famagu’on-ta Act.”

Attorney General Leonardo M. Rapadas said in today’s meeting, “Together, with the broad scope of work we all do concerning our youth, a solid and viable solution will take shape for us to execute the mission of this task force.”

Agencies and non-profit organizations who are a part of the task force intend to adopt recommendations that seek to expand services and programs through educational means. Policies addressing sexual abuse of children may include age appropriate curriculum for students, training for school personnel, and counseling and other resources for affected children.

A preliminary report with the task force recommendations on policies addressing sexual abuse of children is expected to be submitted to I Maga’låhen Guahan and I Liheslaturan Guahan by April 1, 2012.

Members present at the meeting today include representatives from the Association of Individual, Marriage and Family Therapists, Department of Education, Department of Public Health and Social Services, Department of Youth Affairs, Guam Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Family Violence, Guam Police Department, Healing Hearts, the Judiciary of Guam, the legislature, the Office of the Attorney General, and Victims Advocates Reaching Out (VARO).

The task force also consists of representatives from Catholic Social Services, the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Guam Youth Congress, Sanctuary and the University of Guam.

The next meeting is set for March 15, 2012.

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