



JUDICIARY REPUBLIC OF PALAU

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*(It is our duty at the Judiciary to inform the people what we do.
This Press Release is one way to achieve that responsibility.)*

The Palau Judiciary Implements Mandatory Drug Testing Policy for All Judiciary Employees

Administrative Directive No. 26-003 Issued Pursuant to RPPL 12-5, Enacted May 3, 2026

KOROR, Republic of Palau — The Palau Judiciary announced today the implementation of a comprehensive mandatory drug testing policy applicable to all employees of the Judiciary. Administrative Directive No. 26-003, issued by Chief Justice Oldiais Ngiraikelau and Administrative Director Kenneth Uyehara pursuant to constitutional authority, establishes drug testing requirements in furtherance of the Republic of Palau Public Law 12-5 (RPPL 12-5), which was signed into law on May 6, 2026.

The directive requires that all current Judiciary employees submit to drug testing within sixty (60) days of the directive's signing. All applicants for Judiciary positions are subject to pre-employment drug testing at their own expense, and a passing result is required prior to any offer of employment. Marshals and Probation Officers are subject to enhanced requirements, including twice-yearly random drug testing, with testing plans to be submitted to the Administrative Director by June 15, 2026.

Testing will screen for the presence of controlled substances as defined under RPPL 12-5 and Title 34 of the Palau National Code, including marijuana, cocaine, methamphetamine, and all Schedule I through V controlled substances. Testing may be conducted by blood or urine sample. In addition to the all-staff initial testing, the directive provides for reasonable suspicion testing and post-incident testing where circumstances warrant.

Employees who test positive for a controlled substance, as well as those who refuse to submit to a required test, are subject to immediate termination of employment. A confirmed positive result also triggers mandatory referral to the Attorney General and the Special Prosecutor. Former employees terminated under this policy are ineligible for reinstatement for a period of one (1) year, and reinstatement requires completion of a recognized rehabilitation program and a verified negative drug test.

The policy incorporates procedural safeguards to ensure accuracy and fairness. Where an initial test result is positive, a confirmatory test is conducted within one calendar day. If the confirmatory test returns a negative result or establishes a false positive, the employee is fully reimbursed for the cost of the confirmatory test. All drug test results are maintained confidentially in individual personnel files by the Human Resource Specialist and are not disclosed publicly.

The Chief Justice determined that extending mandatory testing to all Judiciary employees — beyond the “designated employees” required by RPPL 12-5 — is necessary to promote transparency and maintain the public trust essential to the proper functioning of the judicial system. The directive was issued pursuant to the authority vested in the Chief Justice under Article X, Section 14 of the Constitution of the Republic of Palau.

Judiciary employees and applicants with questions regarding the policy or testing procedures are encouraged to contact their supervisor or the Office of the Administrative Director directly.

Media Contact:

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