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Scheduling hearing set for H-2B lawsuit

Mindy Aguon | The Guam Daily Post Jul 9, 2017 Updated 11 hrs ago



H-2B HEARING: A status conference will be held this week at the District Court of Guam in the ongoing civil lawsuit over H-2B visa denials. The lack of H-2B approvals prompted nearly a dozen companies to file suit against federal labor officials last October. David Castro/The Guam Daily Post

District Court Magistrate Judge Joaquin Manibusan Jr. will hold a status conference this week in the ongoing civil lawsuit over H-2B visa denials.

In an order issued by the court on Friday, the parties were advised of a hearing scheduled for July 14 to discuss scheduling order deadlines, the procedural posture of this case and other pertinent issues, the judge wrote.

The lack of H-2B approvals prompted nearly a dozen companies to file suit against federal labor officials last October.

Guam had about 1,500 workers in March 2016, but visa expiration have reduced that to just around 260 by the end of February – and that number has been further reduced.

Guam's H-2B visas remains at a 0 percent approval rate and the Guam Department of Labor-Alien Labor Processing and Certification Division said Guam had about 1,500 workers in March 2016, but that number has dwindled to 113 visa holders.

The construction industry has expressed concern that the lack of skilled foreign labor might affect military construction projects, including for the planned Marine Corps base.

A proposed settlement agreement did not move forward because U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services denied a proposal from the companies and did not make a counter offer, Post files state.

Results of a survey detailing the impacts of the H-2B visa issue on the Guam economy are expected to be released this month.