

## Visa applications could stimulate upswing in island construction



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Recent developments in the H2B foreign labor crisis are fueling new optimism for those in the construction industry. One local regulator is encouraging contractors

to start filing worker visa applications again, in the hopes that the approvals will start flowing.

Greg Massey is the administrator of the Labor department's alien processing and certification division, which oversees the H2 worker program. He says contractors won't know for sure if until they start trying. "What we're really encouraging everyone to do right now is if you have a temporary need and you've got contracts or you've got work, then go ahead and file," he told KUAM News.

Massey has been one of the point men in the effort to reverse a nearly two year trend in which the USCIS has denied almost all H2 visa applications for Guam. But two recent events are expected to help. Governor Calvo got the personal commitment of President Trump to help fix the H2 situation, and the house has just passed a defense appropriations bill with a special provision easing approvals of H2 visas for military projects here.

"All the way from the white house to the DHS they said if you have a proper application and its temporary, then you should get approved," Massey added. "So, we're going to hold them at their word."

And while Massey is hopeful that the H2 crisis is easing, he cautions contractors to be very thorough with their applications. "It doesn't mean everybody's going to be approved; again, the days of easy H2 are kind of over, and you need to be really smart about how you file," he said.



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