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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
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Enforcement of “The Women’s Reproductive Health Information Act” Will Commence on June 2, 2014

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mangilao, April 1, 2014 —

The Department of Public Health and Social Services announced today that the “printed materials” and “checklist certification” (collectively, the “Materials”) designated in Public Law 31-235: The Women’s Reproductive Health Information Act have been approved, and that copies of the Materials are now available for pickup at the Department’s main office in Mangilao.

The Department recommends that abortion providers obtain copies of the Materials as soon as possible so that they are prepared to comply with Public Law 31-235 when it becomes effective on June 2, 2014. These copies are being made available by the Department at no cost until its current supply of two thousand has been exhausted. Thereafter, abortion providers will, in accordance with the law, be required to purchase the Materials from the Department at a price set by the Department.

The obligations imposed on abortion providers under Public Law 31-235 are codified in the Guam Code at 10 G.C.A. § 3218.1, which can be accessed via the website of the Compiler of Laws (<http://www.justice.gov.gu/CompilerofLaws/>). The Department urges abortion providers who have not already read the law, to do so now so that they are ready to fully comply when the law becomes effective in sixty days.

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ABOUT PUBLIC LAW 31-235

Public Law 31-235 was enacted into law in 2012. Its purpose is to ensure that every woman who is considering an abortion receives complete and accurate information material to her decision whether to undergo the procedure. In order to ensure that every woman's decision is fully informed, Public Law 31-235 requires that 24 hours prior to the time scheduled for an abortion the doctor who is to perform the abortion or another "qualified person" provide each woman with the following information:

- A description of the proposed abortion method
- The immediate and long-term medical risks associated with the proposed abortion method
- The probable gestational age of the unborn child at the time the abortion is to be performed
- The probable anatomical and physiological characteristics of the unborn child at the time the abortion is to be performed
- The medical risks associated with carrying the child to term
- That medical assistance benefits may be available for prenatal care, childbirth, and neonatal care
- That public assistance may be available to provide medical insurance and other support for the child while he or she is a dependent
- That public services exist which will help to facilitate the adoption of the child
- That the father of the unborn child is liable to assist in the support of the child, even in instances where he has offered to pay for the abortion.

In addition, the law requires the doctor to provide the woman with "printed materials" which contain the information enumerated above. In order to ensure the accuracy and impartiality of these "printed materials," they were reviewed, revised and approved by a team of five experts drawn from the local medical and social services community. In addition, all of the illustrations contained in the "printed materials" were created by a professional medical illustrator certified by the Association of Medical Illustrators. Finally, the law requires that the information and "printed materials" must be provided to the woman individually and in a private room to protect her privacy and maintain the confidentiality of her decision.

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