**WORC Levies CI$1 Million Plus in Fines Over Past 3 Years**

**Grand Cayman, 6 April 2022** – Between 2019 and 2021, Workforce Opportunities & Residency Cayman (WORC) has levied administrative fines amounting to CI$1,045,154 on companies and individuals in breach of the Immigration (Transition) Act, (2022 Revision).

The fined offences include:

* Failing to disclose a Caymanian applicant;
* Employing a person without a work permit;
* Making a false representation;
* Overstaying;
* Causing a person to overstay;
* Being employed or working outside of the terms of a work permit;
* Failing to answer truthfully;
* Unlawful payment of a work permit; and
* Possession of a forged document.

Deputy Premier and Minister for Labour Hon. Chris Saunders said, “Companies and individuals need to ensure that they remain compliant with our Immigration Laws to avoid being fined and/or prosecuted. This Government is sending a clear message that if people want to continue doing business in the Cayman Islands, they must play by the rules. These rules are not arbitrary. They are not voluntary. They are the law of the land. These laws are designed to ensure that Caymanians are given fair opportunity in their own country, which is no different than any other country around the world requiring their nationals to be given priority.”

During the three-year period, WORC collected CI$740,256.60 of the total fines levied. Fees in the amount of CI$200,472.50 were transferred to the Courts Office for further disposition. A further CI$104,425 was deemed to be non-collectable due to the company or individual’s inability to pay.

In these instances, other avenues of redress are followed including the revocation of the affected work permits.

The chart below provides a breakdown of fines issued and collected during 2019, 2020 and 2021:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Total Breaches** | **Companies** | **Individuals** | **Total Fines Issued** | **Total Fines Collected** | **Not Collected/**  **Court** | **Not Collected Stayed/Reassessed** |
| **2019** | 137 | 53 | 84 | $339,012.50 | $317,383.00 | $7,662.50 | $13,967.00 |
| **2020** | 118 | 32 | 86 | $312,572.50 | $139,674.50 | $109,080.00 | $63,818.00 |
| **2021** | 150 | 45 | 105 | $393,569.00 | $283,199.00 | $83,730.00 | $26,640.00 |
| ***Total*** | ***405*** |  |  | ***$1,045,154.00*** | ***$740,256.50*** | ***$200,472.50*** | ***$104,425.00*** |

In each year, there were several repeat offenders. In 2019, two companies and four individuals had multiple offences filed against them. In 2020, one company and four individuals were fined for multiple offences. In 2021, three companies and eight individuals were in breach of the Islands’ Immigration Laws on multiple occasions.

Deputy Premier Saunders noted that public “whistleblower” assistance is vital when it comes to ensuring compliance.

He said, “I would like to thank the many individuals who have used the compliance portal and reported suspected breaches. We serve the public and also require the help of the public in identifying and prosecuting offenders.”

WORC Acting Interim Director Jeremy Scott outlined new measures in place to improve detection of breaches and enforcement of the relevant laws moving forward.

He said, “I am also pleased to report that WORC is enhancing its Compliance Unit through a number of strategies, including a review of the administrative systems to verify if an offending company or individual has the financial means to pay a levied fine. Moving forward, if companies or individuals are unable to pay, outstanding matters will be referred to the Director of Prosecutions (DPP) for review and potential Court charges.”

Mr. Scott also noted that WORC’s computer systems are being upgraded to ensure that timely notice of expired work permits will be provided to the Compliance Unit for follow-up and enforcement.

These measures are complemented by the set-up of a high-risk registry for repeat offenders that will be closely monitored by Compliance Unit staff.

Deputy Premier Saunders said, “In addition to monitoring and sanctioning repeat offenders, on the flip side, we will be rewarding those employers who follow the letter and spirit of our Immigration Laws by hiring, training and advancing Caymanians through a new accreditation system based on their past and ongoing human resources practices. Although we are focusing strongly on compliance, enforcement and redress, we are also keen to give credit where it is due.”

(ENDS)