

*passed
3rd reading
2/21/25*

A BILL FOR AN ACT

To amend Title 2 of the Palau National Code to establish the Ministry of Interior, and for other related purposes.

THE PEOPLE OF PALAU REPRESENTED IN THE OLBIIL ERA KELULAU DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

1 **Section 1. Legislative findings.** The Olbiil Era Kelulau finds that the creation of the
2 Ministry of Interior represents a transformative step in modernizing Palau’s governmental
3 structure to better address the evolving challenges and opportunities facing the Republic. This
4 reorganization is critical to ensuring a more cohesive, efficient, and responsive administration
5 by consolidating several key domestic agencies under a single ministry. Agencies such as the
6 Bureau of Lands and Surveys, the Public Defender’s Office, the Weather Service, and the
7 National Archives will now operate within a unified framework, fostering improved
8 coordination, reducing redundancies, and enhancing the delivery of essential services to the
9 people of Palau.

10 Beyond administrative efficiency, the Ministry of Interior will play a vital role in
11 preserving and promoting Palau’s rich cultural heritage. By safeguarding traditional arts,
12 language, and customs, the Ministry ensures that these invaluable aspects of Palauan identity
13 are passed down to future generations. Additionally, the Ministry will serve as a central
14 institution for the development and empowerment of the nation’s youth, creating programs
15 and opportunities that nurture their potential and enable them to contribute meaningfully to
16 the Republic’s progress.

17 The Ministry will also prioritize sports development, recognizing its ability to inspire
18 national pride, promote healthy lifestyles, and showcase Palauan talent on the regional and
19 international stage. By integrating these diverse but interconnected responsibilities, the
20 Ministry of Interior will foster unity, resilience, and a sense of shared purpose among the
21 people of Palau. This legislation reflects the government’s commitment to building a
22 governance framework that is both efficient and reflective of the cultural and social aspirations
23 of the nation.

24 **Section 2. Amendment.** Title 2 of the Palau National Code is hereby amended
25 as follows:

26 “ . . .

1 § 102. Ministries.

2 (a) The major departments of the Executive branch of the national government shall
3 be:

4 (1) the Ministry of State;

5 . . .

6 (7) the Ministry of Human Resources, ~~Culture~~, Tourism, and Development; and

7 (8) the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and the Environment.; and

8 (9) the Ministry of Interior.

9 (b). . .

10 . . .

11 § 117. Functions of Ministry of Human Resources, ~~Culture~~, Tourism, and Development.

12 (a) The Ministry of Human Resources, ~~Culture~~, Tourism, and Development shall be
13 responsible for ~~the preservation, development and promotion of cultural and historical~~
14 ~~resources, including museum facilities, development and promotion of the local economy, and~~
15 administering the human resources functions of the executive branch workforce, ~~the~~
16 ~~management and development of programs for youth affairs,~~ the promotion and development
17 of tourism, and related matters.

18 (b) The Ministry of Human Resources, ~~Culture~~, Tourism, and Development shall be
19 responsible for developing the national occupational standards of tourism and shall have the
20 following powers and duties:

21 (1) to regulate tourism activities and services throughout Palau, in accordance with the
22 national tourism plan;

23 (2) to register, license, and grade all tourism and tourist-related businesses, including
24 cottages and private residences engaged in guest house services;

25 (3) to develop and implement, in consultation with relevant states, national and quasi-
26 government agencies and stakeholders, criteria for standardization and classification of
27 tourism facilities and services;

28 (4) to develop and regulate, in consultation with the Ministry of Education and Palau
29 Community College, matters relating to education, tourism and hospitality curriculum,
30 examination and certification;

31 (5) to develop and implement a code of practice for the tourism sector;

1 (6) to monitor and assess tourist activities and services to promote continuous
2 improvement and adherence to sound principles and practices of sustainable tourism; and

3 (7) to issue citations for any violations of regulations promulgated consistent with this
4 section and to suspend or revoke any license issued pursuant to this section for failure to
5 comply with regulations.

6 . . .”

7 Section 3. Amendment. Title 2 of the Palau National Code is hereby amended to add
8 a new section §121 as follows:

9 “§ 121. Functions of Ministry of Interior.

10 (a) The Ministry of Interior shall be responsible for the oversight, coordination,
11 and management of key domestic functions to promote effective governance and
12 administrative integrity.

13 (b) The Ministry of Interior shall be responsible for the preservation,
14 development and promotion of cultural and historical resources including:

15 (1) Museum facilities;

16 (2) National Archives;

17 (3) Public Records.~~(including museum facilities), emergency management,~~
18 ~~meteorological services, public records and archives, national media and public information,~~
19 ~~land and resource surveys, and the promotion of gender equity and equality.~~

20 (c) The Ministry of Interior shall be responsible for programs and services related
21 to the welfare and protection of citizens, including the coordination of domestic administrative
22 affairs, national media and public information, emergency management, and meteorological
23 services, and land and resource surveys.

24 (d) The Ministry of Interior shall be responsible for the management and development
25 of programs for youth affairs, fostering development of the Republic’s youth, promotion of
26 gender equity and equality, preserving and promoting cultural, and sports
27 development~~advancing participation and excellence in sports.~~”

28 . . .”

1 Section 4. Amendment. Title 2 of the Palau National Code is hereby amended as
2 follows:

3 “§ 104. Functions of Ministry of State.

4 (a) The Ministry of State shall be responsible for national defense, treaty
5 matters, relations between the national and state governments, relations with other nations, the
6 United Nations and other international organizations, ~~maintenance of the National~~
7 ~~Archives~~, and related matters.

8 (b) ...

9 ...”

10 Section 5. Amendment. Title 2 § 106 (a) of the Palau National Code is hereby amended
11 as follows:

12 “§ 106. Functions of Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Industries.

13 (a) The Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Industries shall be responsible for
14 the maintenance, operation, engineering, and design of government-owned facilities and
15 equipment, including public utilities and park and recreation facilities; public works;
16 capital improvement projects; infrastructure; ~~lands, surveys~~; land, sea, and air
17 transportation, including ports; communications; and for other related matters.

18 (b)...

19 ...”

20 Section 6. ~~3~~ Amendment. Title 19 of the Palau National Code is hereby amended as
21 follows:

22 “ ...

23 § 103. Definitions.

24 Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, in this chapter:

25 (a) “Board” means the Palau Historical and Cultural Advisory Board.

26 (b) “Chief” means the administrative head of the Division of Cultural Affairs.

27 (c) “Division” means the Division of Cultural Affairs.

28 ...

1 (g) "Minister" and "Ministry" means the Minister and Ministry of ~~Human Resources,~~
2 ~~Culture, Tourism, and Development.~~ Interior.

3 ...

4 § 402. Archives Office.

5 (a) There is hereby established within the ~~Ministry of State~~ Ministry of Interior the
6 Palau National Archives (the Archives), wherein shall be stored for preservation and reference
7 such of the public records of the Republic as are transferred thereto or acquired by the
8 Archivist.

9 ..."

10 **Section 7. ~~4~~ Amendment.** Title 35 of the Palau National Code is hereby amended as
11 follows:

12 "...

13 § 1303. Definitions.

14 (a) "Bureau" means Bureau of Lands and Surveys in the ~~Ministry of Public~~
15 ~~Infrastructure and Industries~~ Ministry of Interior;

16 ...

17 § 1305. Bureau of Lands and Surveys responsibilities; land registration employees.

18 ...

19 (d) The Bureau shall complete the surveying required under this section within a
20 reasonable time period. The ~~Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Industries~~ Ministry of
21 Interior may utilize private surveyors for the surveying work, through bidding pursuant to law.
22 Land owners may hire private surveyors to complete a private monumentation of the land.
23 Should a party utilize a private surveyor, that surveyor must be registered with the Board of
24 Land Surveyor Examiners and must follow all of the notice provisions in this chapter. A map
25 of a private monumentation is not official until it is certified and registered with the Bureau.

26 (e) Each survey team shall prepare a monthly report detailing its work for that month,
27 which shall include the number of lots surveyed within the monthly reporting period. The
28 Director of the Bureau shall prepare a monthly report detailing the lands scheduled to be
29 monumented and surveyed each month, and the actual work performed on these tasks. The

