



Republic of the Philippines  
**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES**  
Visayas Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City  
Tel. No. 8929-66-26

MAY 12 2020

**MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR**

No. 2020- 05

**SUBJECT : ADOPTION OF MEASURES TO ENSURE SAFETY OF PERSONNEL AND THE CONTINUED DELIVERY OF ESSENTIAL SERVICES UNDER COVID-19 THREAT SITUATION**

Pursuant to Executive Order No. 112 issued by President Rodrigo R. Duterte entitled, "Imposing an Enhanced Community Quarantine in High Risk Geographic Areas of the Philippines and a General Community Quarantine in the Rest of the Country from 01 to 15 May 2020, Adopting the Omnibus Guidelines on the Implementation Thereof, and for Other Purposes", DOH Guidelines No. 2020-0015 entitled, "Guidelines on the Risk-Based Public Health Standards for COVID-19 Mitigation", CSC Memorandum Circular No. 10 series of 2020 entitled, "Revised Interim Guidelines for Alternative Work Arrangements and Support Mechanisms for Workers in the Government During the Period of State of National Emergency Due to COVID-19 Pandemic", and CSC-DOH-DOLE Joint Memorandum Circular No. 1, s. 2020 entitled, "Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Standards for the Public Sector, the Department prescribes the herein guidelines.

**I. SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES**

These guidelines shall cover all offices of the DENR at the Central Office, Regional Offices and their subordinate units, Bureaus and Attached Agencies.

The aim is to ensure health and safety of all DENR personnel as they continue to deliver essential services in their respective units.

**II. WORK ARRANGEMENTS**

**A. DENR OFFICES UNDER ENHANCED COMMUNITY QUARANTINE**

1. DENR offices in areas under Enhanced Community Quarantine shall adopt a work-from-home arrangement for the following tasks:
  - a. research;
  - b. policy formulation/review/amendment;

- c. project work, including but not limited to, drafting of proposals/project studies/training modules;
  - d. data encoding/processing;
  - e. adjudication of cases or review of cases, including legal work;
  - f. budget planning and forecasting;
  - g. recording, examination and interpretation of financial records and reports;
  - h. evaluation and formulation of accounting, auditing and management control systems;
  - i. computer programming;
  - j. database maintenance;
  - k. design work/drafting of drawing plans;
  - l. preparation of information materials;
  - m. sending/receiving e-mail;
  - n. administration of online courses, and other learning and development interventions;
  - o. HR tasks that can be performed through an information system that is accessible online;
  - p. Other analogous tasks which require the use of a computer and internet for reading, encoding, printing or submission of written outputs for the review, evaluation or final presentation/assessment of the immediate supervisor, the of office or the management.
2. For critical/essential services that require employees to be in their workstation, a skeleton (skeletal) workforce may be identified. The number of employees to be assigned shall not exceed 50% of the total workforce, on rotation basis.
  3. The skeleton (skeletal) workforce shall NOT include the elderly, pregnant employees, and individuals with immunodeficiency, comorbidities or other health risks, except when their services are indispensable. The office shall ensure that appropriate precautionary measures are undertaken to assist them in the performance of their official functions.
  4. Employees residing in other ECQ areas shall not be required to report for work. They may, however, be asked to report for work only when necessary. In exceptional cases where their services are indispensable, the office shall provide them with accommodations within office premises.
  5. Each skeleton (skeletal) group must include at least one (1) regular employee at the level of a Section Chief/Unit Head or higher who is fully authorized to sign for and in behalf of the supervisor or to affix the electronic signature of authorized official, upon securing his/her clearance.
  6. Each skeleton (skeletal) group shall render services for a maximum of two (2) weeks. A work-from-home break of two (2) weeks shall be taken thereafter to ensure that possible symptoms may be adequately monitored.

7. Vehicles shall be provided in identified pick-up points for employees who belong to the skeleton (skeletal) force. Physical distancing and proper hygiene shall be observed in all vehicles.
8. Work from home assignments/tasks including instructions on what should be done and deadlines will be transmitted by supervisors to staff and outputs of staff are to be submitted electronically through Viber, Messenger or email and that for this purpose, offices/divisions are encouraged to create their Viber/Messenger groups. Additional reporting guidelines may be developed by each office if deemed needed.
9. Issuance of travel orders shall be prohibited, except when clearance is granted by the Secretary.

#### **B. DENR OFFICES IN AREAS COVERED BY GENERAL COMMUNITY QUARANTINE**

1. DENR offices located in areas covered by General Community Quarantine shall operate under alternative work arrangements such as, but not limited to:
  - a. skeleton (skeletal) workforce;
  - b. four-day (compressed) workweek;
  - c. staggered working hours;
  - d. combination of the above-enumerated work arrangements or a combination with other work arrangements;
  - e. other alternative work arrangements appropriate to the functions and health risk situation of the area where the office is located.
2. Offices that will adopt a skeleton (skeletal) workforce shall deploy not more than 70% of its total workforce for critical/essential services and not more than 50% for other services, on a rotation basis.
3. The skeleton (skeletal) workforce shall NOT include the elderly, pregnant employees, and individuals with immunodeficiency, comorbidities or other health risks. They shall be under work-from-home arrangement, except when their services are indispensable. The office shall ensure that appropriate precautionary measures are undertaken to assist them in the performance of their official functions.
4. Employees residing in ECQ areas may not be required to report for work. They may, however, be asked to report for work only when necessary. In exceptional cases where their services are indispensable, the office shall provide them with accommodations within office premises.

5. Each skeleton (skeletal) group must include at least one (1) regular employee at the level of a Section Chief/Unit Head or higher who is fully authorized to sign for and in behalf of the supervisor or to affix the electronic signature of authorized official, upon securing his/her clearance.
6. Each skeleton (skeletal) group shall render services for a maximum of two (2) weeks. A work-from-home break of two (2) weeks shall be taken thereafter to ensure that possible symptoms may be adequately monitored.
7. Field work may be allowed but only for urgent matters and upon clearance from the DENR Secretary or his authorized representative. Offices shall ensure that employees on official travel are provided with appropriate personal protective equipment. Travel to ECQ areas will not be allowed.

#### **C. DENR OFFICES IN COVID-FREE AREAS**

1. Offices in COVID-free areas may resume normal operations. Employees residing in ECQ areas, however, shall not be required to report for work. Alternative work arrangement may be granted to them.
2. The Head of Office is given the discretion to adopt any of the alternative work arrangements enumerated under Item II.B.1. herein, as precautionary measure, when deemed necessary.
3. Field work shall be allowed upon clearance from the head of office. Offices shall ensure that employees on official travel are provided with appropriate personal protective equipment. Travel to ECQ areas, however, will not be allowed.

### **III. HEALTH AND SAFETY MEASURES IN THE WORKPLACE**

1. All offices shall place handwashing facilities, hand sanitizers, and dispensers with alcohol-based solution in all entrances and facilities.
2. All employees shall be required to wear face mask when reporting for work.
3. Visitors/clients who are not wearing face mask will be denied entry. The Office may, however, make available cloth or surgical face masks for visitors/clients who are not wearing one before they are allowed entry in office premises.
4. All entrances to DENR office compounds and buildings shall be equipped with thermal scanners or non-contact infrared thermometers. Employees, visitors, and clients with temperature reading of 37.8<sup>0</sup>C or higher shall not be allowed entry.

5. Main entrances of employees, visitors and clients on foot must have foot baths. Entrance gates must have disinfection apparatus for vehicles. Passengers of all vehicles entering the compound shall be subject to temperature check.
6. Employees, visitors, and clients with temperature reading of 37.8<sup>0</sup>C or higher shall not be allowed entry.
7. There shall be a designated area to attend to all client concerns to prevent their movement within office premises. Officers-of-the day will be assigned for this purpose.
8. Physical distancing anywhere inside office premises shall be strictly observed. Workplace layout may be modified as deemed necessary.
9. Face-to-face meetings shall be limited. Use of online applications for meetings shall be used instead. Training courses and other learning and development programs shall be conducted online or through other media.
10. The respective Disaster Risk Reduction and Mitigation Teams or Emergency Response Teams shall review their evacuation plan and revise these accordingly, taking into consideration the requirement of physical distancing in case evacuation is needed.
11. Meal and snack breaks shall be scheduled in batches to avoid crowding in canteens, pantries, elevators and wash areas/restrooms. Directional markings shall be created to guide movement of persons within office premises.
12. Employees shall be encouraged to bring their packed meals and snacks.
13. Disinfection of frequently touched surfaces and objects such as, but not limited to, water stations, tables, switches, doorknobs, biometric devices, staircase railings, elevators, toilet seats, lavatories, automatic teller machines and workstations shall be done at least twice a day. Disinfection of vehicles shall be done at the end of the day before these are parked at the Motor Pool Area.
14. The Health and Wellness Team shall issue regular bulletins on the COVID-19 situation and release health and wellness information kits to assist employees in maintaining physical and mental health during the health crisis situation.

#### **IV. MONITORING AND REPORTING OF COMPLIANCE**

1. The Heads of Office shall submit a report to the undersigned, through the Undersecretary for Legal, Administration, Finance, Human Resources and Information Systems, copy furnished their respective Supervising Undersecretaries, on the working arrangement adopted, three (3) working days upon issuance of this Circular. A copy shall, likewise, be

submitted to the Civil Service Commission, through its Regional Offices for records purposes.

2. All offices shall submit periodic accomplishment reports to their respective heads for monitoring and recording purposes and to ensure that delivery essential services to clients is unhampered.

#### **IV. REPEALING CAUSE**

All issuances inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

#### **IV. EFFECTIVITY**

This Circular shall take effect retroactively on 16 March 2020 and shall remain in force for the duration of the State of National Emergency or until lifted by the President.

For compliance.

  
**ROY A. CIMATU**  
Secretary

