



Republic of the Philippines  
**Department of Environment and Natural Resources**  
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#### **MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY**

**FROM :** The Undersecretary  
Legal, Administration, Human Resources and Legislative Affairs  
Chair, Human Resource Development Committee

**SUBJECT :** **REQUEST FOR CLEARANCE ON THE PROCESSING OF NOMINATION AND ISSUANCE OF TRAVEL AUTHORITY FOR FOREIGN STUDY AND NON-STUDY TRIPS OF DENR OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES DURING THE PANDEMIC**

#### **REFERENCE**

- DENR Special Order (SO) No. 2019-644 dated 6 September 2019 re: Creation of the Human Resource Development Committee (HRDC)
- Executive Order (EO) No. 77 dated 15 March 2019 re: Prescribing Rules and Regulations and Rates of Expenses and Allowances for Official Local and Foreign Travels of Government Personnel
- Memorandum from the Secretary dated 24 February 2020 re: Foreign Study and Non-Study Trips of DENR Officials and Employees
- DENR Administrative Order (DAO) No. 2019-07 re: Guidelines on the DENR Participation to International Commitments, Conferences and Other Related Affairs
- Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) Resolution Nos. 52 dated 6 July 2020; 57 dated 21 July 2020; 79 dated 15 October 2020; 80 dated 22 October 2020; 95 dated 21 January 2021; and 99 dated 11 February 2021 re: Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases

#### **BACKGROUND**

1. The HRDC was created to assist in the strategic alignment of the Departments' learning and development (L&D) needs with the organizational goals and continuously manage human resource development programs for its officials and employees. The Committee formulate and recommend policies on DENR's human resource development; recommend to the Secretary or authorized representative the most qualified nominees for L&D interventions, including foreign study and non-study trips, among others.
2. Despite the pandemic, the Committee has been receiving requests for nomination and travel authority for foreign study and non-study trips. The requests are being reviewed and evaluated to ensure that the nominees meet the requirements pursuant to EO 77, DAO No. 2019-07, Memorandum of the Secretary on foreign travels and other related policies issued by relevant government agencies or authorities such as the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), Bureau of Immigration (BI), Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF), including guidelines being implemented by countries of destination or host countries.

3. The suspension of non-essential travel by Filipinos implemented through IATF Resolution No. 13 dated 17 March 2020 has been lifted pursuant to IATF Resolutions No. 52 and 57, Series of 2020 dated 06 and 21 of July 2020.
4. Further, IATF Resolution No. 79, Series of 2020 dated 15 October 2020, Section E, states that, *“Effective 21 October 2020, the restriction of non-essential outbound travel of Filipinos shall be lifted.”*
5. Furthermore, IATF Resolution No. 80, Series of 2020 dated 22 October 2020, Section A, Number 2 states that,

*“The pre-boarding testing requirement for outbound Filipino travelers pursuant to IATF Resolution No. 79 is hereby lifted. For this purpose, Section [7], Paragraph (2) of the Omnibus Guidelines on the Implementation of Community Quarantine in the Philippines, as amended, is hereby further amended, to wit:*

1. *“OFWs, students enrolled abroad and participants accepted in exchange visitor programs, permanent residents of foreign jurisdictions, and foreign nationals, may leave for abroad through any of the airports or seaports in the country; and*
2. *Outbound travel of Filipinos, regardless of purpose, may be allowed subject to compliance with the following requirements:*
  - a. *For those travelling on tourist or short-term/visitor visas, submission of confirmed round tickets and adequate travel and health insurance to cover travel disruptions and hospitalization in case of COVID-19 infections during their allowable period of stay abroad;*
  - b. *Execution of a Bureau of Immigration Declaration acknowledging the risks involved in travelling, including risk of delay in their return trip, to be provided at the check-in counters by the airlines;*
  - c. *Whenever required by the country of destination or the airline, a negative COVID-19 test taken in accordance with the health and safety protocols of such destination country or airline; and*
  - d. *Upon return, they shall follow the Guidelines of the National Task Force (NTF) for Returning Overseas Filipinos.”*
6. Finally, since no amendments on the aforementioned provisions were made in IATF Resolutions No. 95 and 99 Series of 2021 dated 21 January 2021 and 11 February 2021, respectively, same shall remain in force and effect.

#### COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATION

7. The COVID-19 pandemic continually poses risks and challenges, with the community quarantine and travel ban being among the primary measures implemented to contain the virus. **However, the suspension of travel by Filipinos has been lifted by IATF on July 6, 2020, subject to strict compliance to all health and safety conditions issued by IATF;**

8. Despite the situation, L&D programs are continuously being offered by various local and international academic and non-academic institutions and partners amidst the pandemic. This is under the premise that training and scholarship opportunities is still necessary to enhance and develop the competencies of our workforce despite the present situation;
9. We also consider that all requests for study and non-study trips in the Department may fall under the category of “students enrolled abroad and participants accepted in exchange visitor programs” as provided under the aforementioned IATF Resolutions.
10. In view of the foregoing and *provided that COVID-19 health and safety protocols as well as sufficient supporting documents, including execution of Declaration acknowledging the risks involved in travelling, and the possible risk of delay in their return trip, are satisfied*, the Committee respectfully requests for the continued processing of nomination and issuance of travel authority of our DENR officials and employees on foreign trips except in countries where travel restrictions are in place, subject to final decision of the Secretary.

#### ACTION REQUESTED

For the Honorable Secretary’s consideration and approval.

ATTY. ERNESTO D. ADOBO, JR., CESO I

- Approved  
 Disapproved

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ROY A. CIMATU  
Secretary