



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

April 16, 2020

DEPARTMENT MEMORANDUM

No. 2020 - 0182

TO: ALL UNDERSECRETARIES AND ASSISTANT SECRETARIES; DIRECTORS OF BUREAUS AND CENTERS FOR HEALTH DEVELOPMENT; MINISTER OF HEALTH – BANGSAMORO AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO; EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS OF SPECIALTY HOSPITALS AND NATIONAL NUTRITION COUNCIL; CHIEFS OF MEDICAL CENTERS, HOSPITALS, SANITARIA AND INSTITUTES; PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION; DIRECTORS OF PHILIPPINE NATIONAL AIDS COUNCIL AND TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION CENTERS AND OTHERS CONCERNED

SUBJECT: Revised Interim Guidelines on the Mass Repatriation and Mandatory Quarantine of Land-based Overseas Filipinos (OFs) during the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic

I. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

With the increasing incidence of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) worldwide, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) last January 30, 2020. Due to the continued spread of the disease, the WHO classified COVID-19 as a pandemic last March 11, 2020.

On March 16, 2020, President Rodrigo R. Duterte declared a state of calamity, placing Luzon in enhanced community quarantine. In the said declaration, the President made directives for the safe repatriation of Overseas Filipinos (OF).

The goal of these guidelines is to repatriate and accommodate all the incoming OFs from land-based employment, following the President's directives, and, at the same time, maintaining precautions so as to prevent the risk of importing COVID-19 cases from abroad. Considering the influx of OF repatriates, the Department of Health (DOH) hereby issues these interim guidelines to provide ease in the arrival of OFs from land-based employment.

On April 13, 2020, the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-MEID) issued Resolution No. 23 which stipulates:

“Establishing a Sub-Task Group (STG) for the Repatriation of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) under the NTF Task Group on Response Operations to facilitate and implement the mandatory fourteen-day facility quarantine requirement of all repatriated OFWs, whether sea-based or land-based. For this purpose, a one-stop-shop shall be established and maintained at the port of entry. The STG shall be composed of the Department of Transportation (DOTr) as chair

DOLE, DOH, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), the Philippine National Police, the Department of Tourism (DOT), the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), the Bureau of Quarantine (BOQ), and such other agencies as may be determined by the NTF, as members."

These guidelines shall apply to all the aforementioned government agencies. At the same time, during the pendency of the Expanded Community Quarantine (ECQ) due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the private sector is enjoined to take part in alleviating the plight of land-based OFs.

II. GENERAL GUIDELINES

- A. The repatriation of all OFs shall be the primary consideration of all relevant public and private agencies or organizations.
- B. The repatriation procedures to be undertaken shall consider minimizing the risk of importing COVID-19 cases from abroad.
- C. The land-based OFs shall undergo the processes illustrated in the Procedure flowchart for the repatriation of land-based overseas Filipinos including the roles of each agency/entity in each step of the process (see Annex A).

III. SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

A. Pre-Arrival

- 1. The Philippine Embassy/ Consulate in the place of origin or DOLE/OWWA shall provide the BOQ and DOTr the "List of Repatriating OFs," which includes, at least, the complete first, middle, and last names of the repatriates and their flight numbers.
- 2. For expediency, the Philippine Embassy/ Consulate or DOLE/OWWA shall transmit the "List of Repatriating OFs" through electronic files, preferably not less than 12 hours prior to specified flights, via the following e-mail addresses:
 - i. For BOQ: boqrepatriation@gmail.com
 - ii. For DOTr: au.tuazon@dotr.gov.ph
 - iii. For BIHC: dohrepatriation2020@gmail.com
- 3. The BOQ shall coordinate the arrival of the repatriating OFs with the necessary airport agencies (i.e. airport management, Bureau of Immigration (BI), etc.).
- 4. In case when an OF shows signs and symptoms prior to repatriation, the Philippine Embassy/ Consulate in the place of origin or DOLE/OWWA shall request the concerned local authorities to disallow boarding of plane by the OF and to refer said OF to the appropriate medical facility for health and medical management.
- 5. The DOT shall provide the BOQ the list of hotels that can be utilized as quarantine facilities.

6. The BOQ shall inspect the hotels in the list provided by DOT for their appropriateness as stringent quarantine facilities.
7. The Philippine Recruitment Agencies (PRA) or DOLE/OWWA, in coordination with DOTr, shall coordinate the transportation upon arrival at the airport.

B. Upon Arrival at the Airport

1. The BOQ shall undertake the following actions upon arrival of repatriating OFs at the airport:
 - i. Conduct thermal scanning and medical assessment, and collects health declaration forms;
 - ii. Segregate symptomatic OFs from asymptomatic OFs
 - iii. Facilitate OF's clearance by the BI;
 - iv. Orient asymptomatic OFs on Mandatory Quarantine protocols and issue individual Quarantine Clearance; and,
 - v. Refer symptomatic OFs to DOLE/OWWA for Stringent Quarantine in BOQ approved quarantine facility/hotel; and,
 - vi. Provide ambulance services for OFs with signs and symptoms to be referred to hospitals or quarantine facility, whichever is applicable.
2. The DOLE/OWWA shall operate a One-Stop Shop in airports, which shall include BOQ, BI, Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), Philippine National Police (PNP), and Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), assist the OFs in the processing of their needs, such as quarantine accommodation, transportation, and security and welfare, among others.
3. The PRAs or DOLE/OWWA, in coordination with DOTr, shall provide separate transportation arrangements to OFs for Mandatory Quarantine and OFs for Stringent Quarantine.
4. The DILG, through the PNP, shall provide police escorts for the transportation of OFs.
5. The PRAs or DOLE/OWWA shall provide for the temporary quarantine accommodation of OFs required to undergo 14-day Mandatory Quarantine.
6. The DOLE/OWWA shall issue a Certificate of Completion of Quarantine Period upon completion of the 14-day Mandatory Quarantine.
7. The PRAs or DOLE/OWWA shall provide for the BOQ-approved quarantine facility/accommodation of OFs required to undergo 14-day Stringent Quarantine.

C. At BOQ-approved Quarantine Facility/Hotel Accommodation

1. The BOQ shall assign quarantine officers in DOLE/OWWA commissioned stringent quarantine facilities/hotels

2. The PRA or DOLE/OWWA shall ensure that the following are implemented in stringent quarantine facilities/hotels:
 - i. Room accommodation at one (1) repatriate per room;
 - ii. Room accommodation for each BOQ staff;
 - iii. Distribution of PPEs (e.g. face masks) to repatriates, BOQ quarantine officers, security personnel and hotel staff;
 - iv. Distribution of meals (i.e. breakfast, lunch dinner and 2 snacks) following quarantine protocols;
 - v. Distribution of groceries and supplies following quarantine protocols;
 - vi. Issuance of ID pass to hotel staff and crew, as coordinated with DILG; and,
 - vii. Presence of DOLE/OWWA representative to attend to other needs and concerns of the repatriates.
3. The DILG, through the PNP, shall provide police security to the surrounding areas of the quarantine facility/hotel.
4. In case of marine-based facilities, the PCG and PPA shall provide security around the vicinity of the quarantine facility (i.e. ship, port, pier, etc.).
5. The BOQ shall issue a Certificate of Completion of Quarantine Period upon completion of the 14-day Stringent Quarantine.
6. The PRA or DOLE/OWWA, in coordination with DOTr, shall provide transportation arrangements to OFs who have completed 14-day quarantine.
7. The DILG, through the PNP, shall provide police escorts for the transportation of OFs.

IV. REPEALING CLAUSE

Department Memorandum No. 2020-01524

All Orders, rules, regulations, and other related issuances inconsistent with or contrary to this Order are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly. All other provisions of existing issuances which are not affected by this Order shall remain valid and in effect.

For strict compliance of all concerned.


FRANCISCO T. DUQUE III, MD, MSc
Secretary of Health

Annex A. Procedure flowchart for the repatriation of land-based overseas Filipinos

