



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

March 18, 2020

DEPARTMENT CIRCULAR

No. 2020 - 0152

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 THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL AIDS COUNCIL AND TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION CENTERS, AND OTHERS CONCERNED

SUBJECT: Guidance to All Public and Private Healthcare Facilities and Other Concerned Establishments to Assist Surveillance Officers in the Epidemiologic Investigation on the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

In view of the ongoing threat of the spread of the COVID-19, the Department of Health (DOH) hereby reiterates Administrative Order 2020-2012 entitled, "*Guidelines for the Inclusion of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in the List of Notifiable Diseases for Mandatory Reporting to the Department of Health*".

Section VI.4. of the said AO details the specific guidelines on epidemiologic investigation by disease surveillance officers, as follows:

- a. *Investigation of detected and/or reported suspect, probable, and confirmed COVID-19 cases shall be undertaken by disease surveillance officers. The investigation shall include, but is not limited to the following: review of medical records, case interview, and laboratory sample collection and its results.*
- b. *Officials and staff of health facilities and concerned institutions shall comply to the request for access to patient and laboratory records for the purpose of this epidemiologic investigation.*
- c. *Other documents and access may be required in conducting investigation and tracing of contacts of a confirmed case. These may include:*
 - i. *Flights sea vessel, and land transport service manifests and records, including passenger contact information;*

- ii. *Access to records and close circuit television recording in accommodations, facilities, and vehicles, and*
- iii. *Other venues and transport services used by a confirmed case*


To expedite information gathering on new COVID-19 cases, the DOH has deployed teams to conduct epidemiologic investigation and contact tracing activities such as but not limited to reviewing patient records and interviewing patients, relatives, healthcare providers, and other concerned personnel of the facility

The objectives of these activities are to (1) obtain a validated profile and travel or exposure history of a positive COVID-19 case, (2) collect updated information on the daily status of the cases, (3) track and identify people who may have been exposed to the case, and (4) recommend necessary actions and measures accordingly.

Further, all are enjoined to provide assistance and cooperate fully during the epidemiologic investigation and contact tracing activities of this Department.

Submissions of reports or any relevant information concerning contact tracing activities may be made via email to covidcontacttracing.eb@gmail.com with the subject heading "FOR INVESTIGATION".

For strict compliance.


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