

THE CIVIL SERVICE
REPORTER

GAWING LINGKOD BAYANI ANG BAWAT KAWANI
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121st CSC
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
Republic of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE
CIVIL SERVICE ANNIVERSARY



TRANSFORMING PUBLIC SERVICE IN THE NEXT DECADE:
HONING AGILE AND FUTURE-READY SERVANT-HEROES

121st PCSA Highlights Agility, Future-Readiness

People, Performance, Process, and Practice: HRMPs in the New Normal

Employees' Mental Health and the Continuing Pandemic

Contact Center ng Bayan Resolves 99% of Public Feedback Received

for the 1st Sem of 2021

THANK YOU FOR CELEBRATING THE
121ST PHILIPPINE CIVIL SERVICE ANNIVERSARY WITH US!



5
Public Domain
7
From the
Chairperson's Desk
9
Contributors

What's inside?

CITIZEN'S GUIDE

LINGKOD BAYANI

NEWS

10
Civil service exams push through despite pandemic

11
CSC institutionalizes virtual hearings

12
Gov't agencies urged to prepare for disasters

14
Promote PH culture through public service values – CSC

OUTLOOK

16
Contact Center ng Bayan resolves 99% of public feedback received for the 1st sem of 2021

18
PAGTUGON NG LINGKOD BAYANI SA PATULoy NA HAMON NG PANDEMYA

EXECUTIVE LETTER

30
2021 Search for Outstanding Government Workers (Semi-Finalists)

32
People, Performance, Process, and Practice: HRMPs in the New Normal

HEALTH and WELLNESS

41
Nominate Public Service Heroes to Pamana Program - CSC

44
Lunchat with CSC and Lingkod Bayan Diaries

COVER STORY

22
121st Philippine Civil Service Anniversary Highlights Agility, Future-Readiness

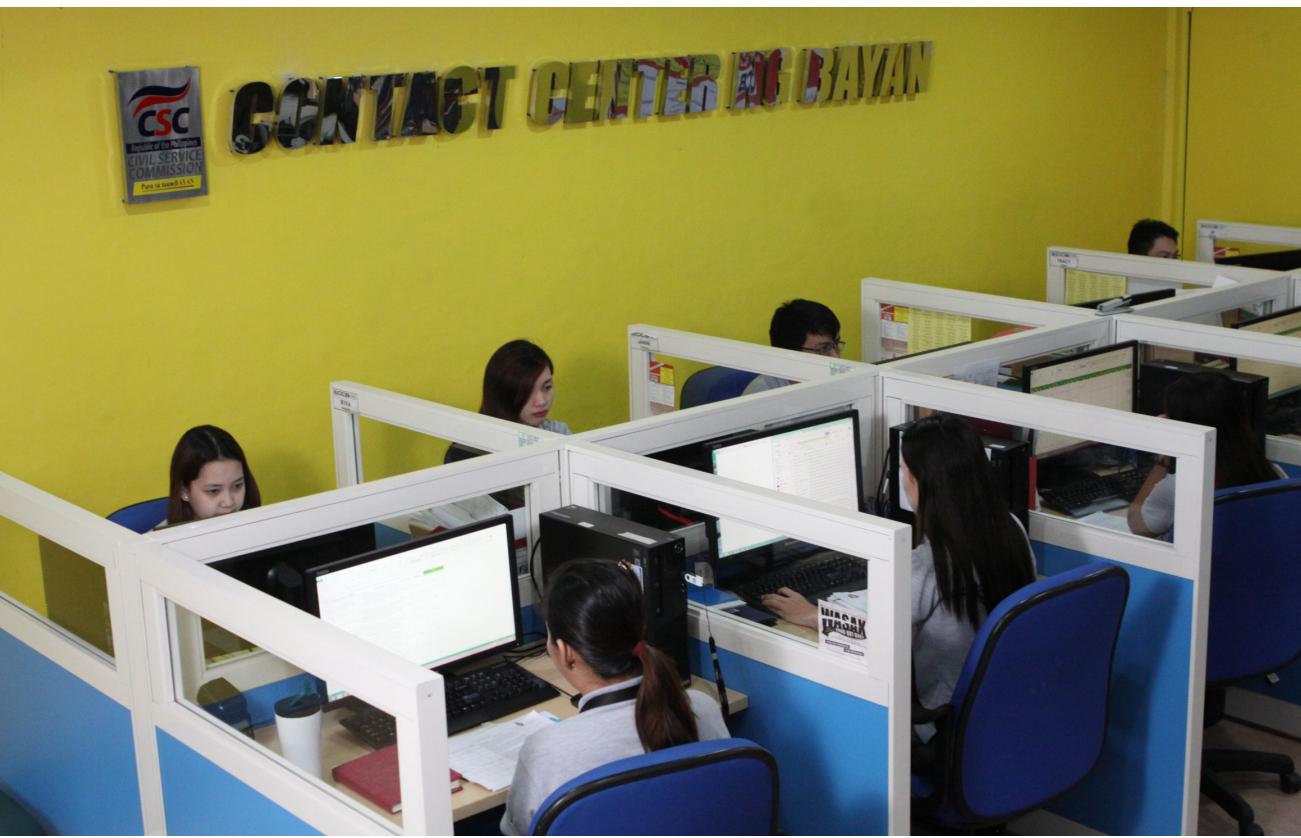
HR SPOTLIGHT

38
PRIME-HRM Bronze Awardees share Strategies



51
Adoption of Virtual Hearing in the Civil Service Commission and its Regional Offices

PUBLIC DOMAIN



Happy 9th Anniversary, Contact Center ng Bayan (CCB)!

The CCB celebrated its 9th year in government service last 27 September 2021. Established through the joint initiatives of the Civil Service Commission and the Department of Information and Communications Technology (then National Computer Center), the CCB was institutionalized through CSC Resolution No. 1400995 as the public feedback mechanism. It aims to promote accountability among government agencies by providing citizens with tools to report feedback on government frontline services.

Using the different CCB access modes—Short Messaging Service (SMS) 09088816565, hotline 1-6565, email address email@contactcenterngbayan.gov.ph, CSC Official Facebook page, and CCB website www.contactcenterngbayan.gov.ph—the public can request for information and assistance on government frontline service procedures, and report commendations, complaints, and feedback.

All of these channels remain active even amid pandemic to provide uninterrupted service to the Filipino people. From January 2021 to June 2021, the CCB has acted on more than 120,000 transactions with a resolution rate of 99.77%.

Below are some success stories and commendations from CCB clients received from July to September 2021.

IRN0254455

Dear Sir/Maam: This is to inform you that I have received the documents I previously requested from the Supreme Court for my retirement. As of now, I am working on my application for the release of my accrued leave credits. I have not yet received any reply from the Supreme Court but I am confident that it will be acted upon the soonest possible time because of your assistance.

I would like to convey my sincerest gratitude to your office for assisting me in my problem. Please continue to provide efficient public service.

IRN0255573

Dear CSC Contact Center ng Bayan: I would like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation for the assistance you have provided for the slow release of my housing loan check. I was able to get the check today at Pag-IBIG and I can now continue my house construction because of your help. I am beyond grateful that your department exists and is helping a lot of Filipinos in their transactions with the government. Sana po ay ipagpatuloy niyo pa ang inyong ginagawa para mas marami pa kayong matulungan. More power po and keep safe.

IRN0255887

Mabuhay ang CCB! Dahil sa inyo naging madali ang lahat. Kahit pandemic hindi kayo tumitigil tumulong sa tulad naming mamamayan. Sana marami pa kayong matulungan at tumagal pa ang ganitong serbisyo lalo na sa gobyerno. Maraming salamat sa inyo.

IRN0255988

Magandang gabi po. Nais ko pong ipaalam sa lahat ng kinauukulan na naayos na po ang aking problema. Naibalik po ngayong araw ang halagang ibinayad ko para sa bagahe at personal po itong inihatid sa aming tahanan.

More power po sa inyo na nakaantabay sa maliliit na problemang malaki para sa aming ordinaryong mamamayan. Hindi po ako nagkamali ng nilapitan. Sa PhilPost naman po ay nagpapasalamat ako at agaran ay umaksyon sila.

God bless you all po sa panahong ito ng pandemya. Nawa'y makatawid po tayo ng ligtas sa panahong ito sampa ng ating mga kapamilya!

Maraming maraming salamat po.

IRN0255720

Hello po. LBP already gave an immediate action after your referral on my request through your help. It was already activated and I am able to transfer money now. Thank you so much!

IRN0254638

Dear Mam/Sir: Mabuting araw. Taos-puso po ang aking pasasalamat sa inyo dahil natulungan niyo ako na ma follow up ang aking retirement claim benefit, sa ngayon ay na-approved na ng SSS. Mabuhay po kayo, ang bilis ng aksyon ng SSS dahil sa inyo Maraming salamat.



contactcenterngbayan.gov.ph



email@contactcenterngbayan.gov.ph



0908-8816565



1-6565 (via PLDT landline)



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FROM THE CHAIRPERSON'S DESK

The Civil Service Commission (CSC) is delighted to bring you the 121st Philippine Civil Service Anniversary (PCSA) special issue of the Civil Service Reporter magazine. This features agencies' best practices for PRIME-HRM assessments. The *Health and Wellness at Work* section (pp. 46-48) expands on the importance and relevance of total wellness as discussed during the 2021 Public Sector HR Symposium. This issue also includes my keynote message during the 27th Digital Regional Council of Human Resource Management Practitioners Conference (Region IV) entitled, "People, Performance, Process, and Practice: HRMPs in the New Normal". You can read this on pp. 32-37.

Transforming Public Service in the Next Decade: Honing Agile and Future-Ready Servant-Heroes. This is the 10-year PCSA theme that we launched this year as the pandemic and other emerging disruptions trigger every sector in the society to move forward with foresight and future-ready skills. The PCSA celebration this year marks only the beginning of rallying public servants and organizational leaders toward a future-ready public service.

We invite you to take a look at the highlights of this year's celebration captured through this CS Reporter issue's stories and photos. Our cover story gives you a summary of highlights per week: Week 1 – *Linggo ng Lingkod Bayani*; Week 2 – *Linggo ng Paglilinang ng Yamang Tao*; Week – 3 *Linggo ng Malasakit*; and Week 4 – *Linggo ng Pasasalamat*.

We also continue to put a face on unsung heroes in the public service—those who have put their lives on the line in the service of the Filipino people. In the *Lingkod Bayani* section (pp. 41-43), we feature a nurse and a rescuer who died in their line of duty. We call on the public to nominate names to our *Pamanang Lingkod Bayani*

Program (PLBi). PLBi grants a one-time financial assistance of PHP100,000 to the bereaved family of the deceased civil servant and scholarships to family members.

Other CSC's latest updates can be found in the *News* section (pp. 10-15) while the 3rd quarter episodes of *LunChat with CSC and Lingkod Bayan Diaries* are listed on pp. 44-45 with links.

We hope that you enjoy reading everything that we have put together in this special issue.

On behalf of the Civil Service Commission, let me thank every one of you for your unwavering dedication to public service. We look back and see the gains of more than a century-old civil service, and bring with us the lessons that we have learned from our experiences and of those who came before us. With wisdom and foresight, let us open ourselves to new opportunities for growth. Let us hope and act toward a better public service in the future.

Mabuhay ang serbisyo publiko!

(Sgd.) **ALICIA dela ROSA-BALA**
Chairperson
Civil Service Commission



OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH STANDARDS FOR THE PUBLIC SECTOR

**Joint Memorandum
Circular No. 1, s. 2020**

"As we sustain our fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Labor and Employment remains committed in fully enforcing the CSC-DOH-DOLE Joint Memorandum Circular No. 1, s. 2020 which institutionalizes occupational safety and health (OSH) in government workplaces.

Along with DOLE's various issued rules and regulations on OSH standards that protects the workers in the private sector, we can assure a fully safeguarded Filipino workforce.

Kaisa ang DOLE sa sama-samang bayanihang pagtugon sa hamon ng bagong panahon."

Silvestre 'Bebot' Bello III
Secretary



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Civil service exams push through despite pandemic

The Civil Service Commission (CSC) has once again begun administering civil service examinations after these were temporarily discontinued in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Career Service Examination-Pen and Paper Test (CSE-PPT) was held on 18 July in Tagbilaran City and Siquijor in Region VII, with a total of 996 examinees; and in Bongao, Tawi-tawi in Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao with 300 examinees. On the same day, the CSC also administered agency-requested CSE-PPT in 35 agencies in the National Capital Region with a total of 9,074 examinees.

The Career Service Examination for Foreign Service Officer (CSE-FSO) was conducted on 12 September in Iloilo City and Bacolod City in Region VI with a total of 22 examinees; in Cebu City, Region VII with 44 examinees; Zamboanga City, Region IX with 8 examinees; and Baguio City in Cordillera Administrative Region with 17 examinees. Overall, there were 91 examinees who took the CSE-FSO.

There were fewer testing centers that proceeded to administer the exams as had been previously scheduled due to changes in



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community quarantine status in various areas, which affected the CSC Regional Offices' preparatory or administrative requirements and procedures. The decision to postpone the exams in some testing centers was also a precautionary measure, recognizing that restrictions in mobility may become a challenge for the examinees.

Aside from the written tests, CSC Regional Offices (RO) also administered the CSE via Computerized Exam or COMEX. From April to June 2021, CSC RO III reported 26 examinees; CSC RO IV, 95 examinees; CSC RO VI, 73 examinees; CSC RO VII, 237 examinees; CSC RO VIII, 264 examinees; CSC Cordillera Administrative Region, 145 examinees; and CSC Caraga, 106 examinees.

Health protocols

The CSE-PPT and CSE-FSO were conducted in compliance with health and safety protocols.

The "No Face Mask and Face Shield, No Entry and No Exam" policy was strictly observed. Examinees' body temperature were scanned prior to entry into the testing venue. They were

also asked to submit a Health Declaration Form accomplished within 24 hours prior to taking the exam.

The conduct of orientation for examinees on exam day was temporarily lifted in observance of COVID-19 health protocols. In place of this, examinees were advised to read thoroughly the examination advisory, as well as read/watch and fully understand the Examinee's Guide and/or Video, which already serve as the briefing material, sent to examinees via email approximately one week before exam day.

Moreover, each testing room was allowed only 50% occupancy to ensure adequate space for physical distancing. Same with examinees with special needs (e.g., pregnant women, persons with disability, elderly), examinees with comorbidities were assigned separate room/s.

Health Monitoring Teams were present on the day of the exam to monitor the observance of health and safety protocols, as well as to handle any case of examinees or examiners who would manifest any COVID-19 symptoms on the day of exam. R



CSC institutionalizes virtual hearings

Hearings at the Civil Service Commission (CSC) will soon be done virtually.

In CSC Resolution No. 2100420 promulgated on 2 June 2021, the CSC adopts guidelines on the use of a videoconferencing platform for hearings and pre-hearing conferences before the CSC and its regional offices. The move would allow speedy disposition of administrative cases despite the pandemic crisis situation, while keeping participants safe from health risks.

Virtual hearings and pre-hearing conferences will be applicable not only during the declaration of a community quarantine, but also in the case of unforeseen or fortuitous events that prevent in-person appearances before the CSC.

The guidelines provide technical and operational standards as well as detailed procedures to ensure that the proceedings in the virtual pre-hearing conferences and hearings would closely resemble in-person proceedings, including maintaining fairness, order, and confidentiality.

The resolution took effect on 30 August 2021.

Procedures

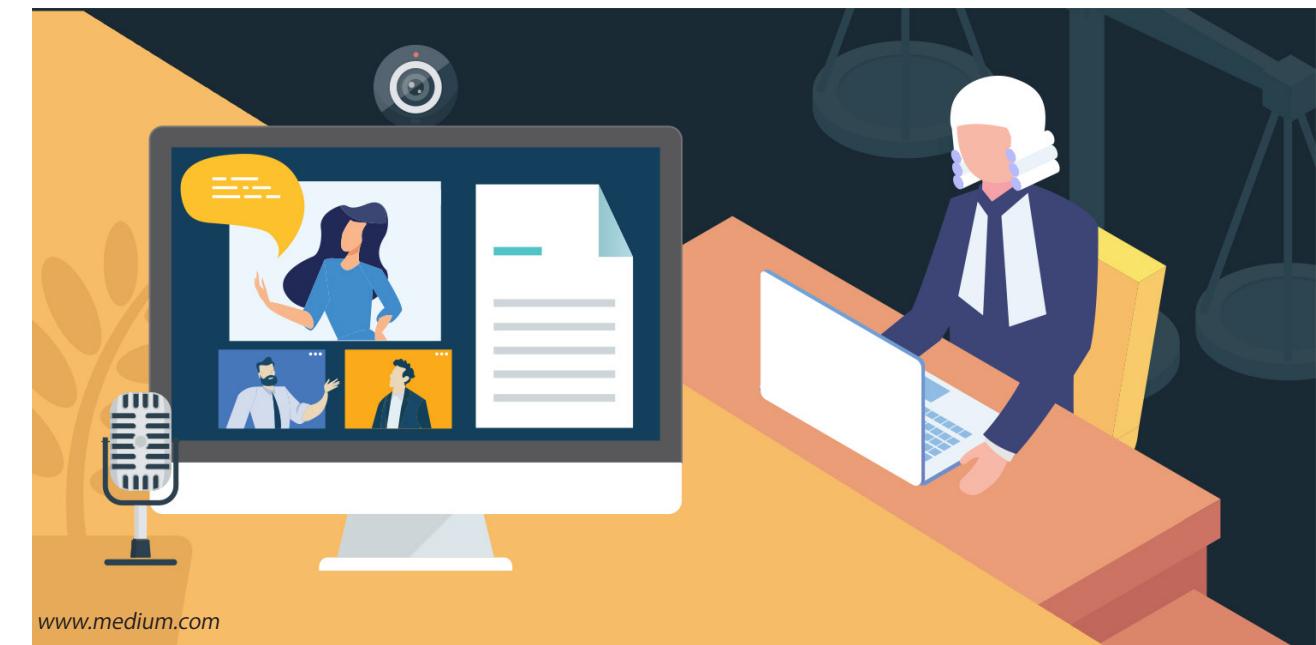
The CSC will use Microsoft Teams for its virtual pre-hearing conferences and hearings. Participants should secure the MS Teams link or access code

provided to them by the CSC hearing officer, and be at the virtual waiting room or lobby at least (15) minutes before the actual proceedings. Should there be any problems accessing the virtual platform, participants should immediately inform the CSC hearing officer via email, phone call, or other electronic means.

Participants will join a test run shortly before an actual hearing in order to resolve any technical problems. They will also be briefed on the procedures before starting so they know what to expect during the proceedings. At this point, the CSC and the participants will ensure steady connectivity, clear audio and video connection, and correct settings in order to proceed smoothly.

Other procedures usually done during in-person hearings, such as placing a witness under oath, testifying, and presenting

(continued on page 12)



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documentary or object evidence, will also be done online.

Grounds for cancelling

A virtual hearing may be suspended, or an in-person hearing may instead be ordered.

Should technical problems persist with any one of the participants despite conducting test runs and briefings, the hearing may be suspended.

If the exhibition, examination, or viewing of documentary evidence or the marking or examination of the object evidence is impossible, insufficient, or difficult due to the limitations of the virtual platform or some other compelling reasons, the in-person hearing may instead be ordered by the hearing officer for the purpose of presenting or completing the testimony of a witness.

At any time in the formal investigation, the parties may decide to terminate the

proceedings by submitting their respective positions papers and submit the case for resolution.

Privacy and confidentiality

All virtual proceedings will be recorded and encrypted by the CSC, and any party may request in writing for the official recording of the proceeding for his or her use in relation to his or her case.

However, to maintain the confidentiality of the proceedings and the privacy of the personalities involved, parties are prohibited from recording, publishing, or posting in any public domain and social media platform the proceedings. Those who do so will be meted with a penalty or punished accordingly, after due process.

Sharing of the recorded proceedings and/or its details and information is strictly prohibited and shall be considered a contempt of the Commission.

Any person found responsible

for the alteration of video recordings shall be held liable administratively and criminally.

Other punishable acts

Any intentional disruption of digital communications intended to deny participation by any party, coaching of any witness presented for examination, and knowingly presenting falsified digital images or evidence will be considered as an administrative offense and shall be dealt with severely.

Administrative justice

As a quasi-judicial body, the CSC continues to perform its mandate of hearing administrative cases and enforcing civil service rules and regulations. As the premiere human resource institution of the Philippine government, the CSC regards employee discipline as a means to create a fair and just working environment. ®

For the full text of the published resolution, go to page 51.

those that may result from natural calamities such as volcanic activities and typhoons, may be inevitable but there are things we can do to prevent or at least minimize the negative impacts on people and property."

She said that adequate preparation would help ensure the continuous delivery of services to the public amid any disruptive event.

Agencies must develop safety and health policies based on their mandate and factors peculiar to their work environment. The Joint Memorandum Circular No. 1, s. 2020, issued jointly by the CSC, Department of Health, and Department of Labor and Employment, contains a comprehensive list of occupational safety and health (OSH) standards.

Among others, the joint circular requires agencies to:

- Install adequate fire, emergency, or danger signs within the building premises;
- Set up a Risk Reduction Management System and a Crisis Management Plan and Contingency Program;
- Provide trainings and drills on Disaster Risk Reduction Management for employees and staff;
- Provide adequate emergency supplies such as fire extinguishers and medical first aid kits;
- Have a first aider trained and certified or accredited by the Philippine National Red Cross or by any authorized organization; and
- Forge a Memorandum of Understanding or Agreement with the nearest government health facility that can provide emergency medical services.

Further, heads of agencies are directed to ensure the creation of a Safety and Health Committee, as well as the strict implementation of and regular budget allocation for OSH programs.

Continuity

Government agencies can also formulate their respective Public Service Continuity Plan (PSCP), an all-hazard plan that aims to ensure continuous delivery of services to the public amid any disruption. It works by highlighting internal capacities, recovery requirements, and strategies to minimize damage and loss to essential processes, ensure succession of leadership, and improve continuity capabilities of all government entities.

Pursuant to National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) Memorandum No. 33 s. 2018, all government member agencies of the DRRM councils at all levels and other government departments, offices, bureaus, services, units, and instrumentalities are enjoined to develop their own PSCP.

In its Memorandum Circular No. 12, s. 2021 dated 27 July 2021, the CSC extended the deadline for submission of PSCP to the Office of Civil Defense-Capacity Building and Training Service, addressed to Usec. Ricardo B. Jalad (OCD, Administrator) through pscp@ocd.gov.ph, until 31 October 2021.

Calamity leave

Relatedly, the CSC reminded government workers who may be directly affected by calamities that they may file for a Special Emergency Leave under CSC Memorandum Circular Nos. 2 and 16 issued 16 February 2012 and 17 October 2012, respectively.

The special emergency leave shall be for a maximum of five (5) working days in a year, which may be applied on a continuous or staggered basis and will not be deducted from the employee's earned leave credits. The said leave may be availed of within 30 days from the actual occurrence of the natural calamity/disaster.

Said privilege may be used for any of the following: for urgent repair and clean-up of damaged houses, being stranded in affected areas, disease/illness of employees brought by natural calamity/disaster, or caring of immediate family members affected by natural calamity/disaster.

The special emergency leave shall be based on the declaration of state of calamity by the President of the Philippines or the Local Sanggunian in the affected area. However, in case a specific area was not declared to be under a state of calamity, the head of agency may still grant the special emergency leave based on proof or evidence to be presented by the employee or relevant news accounts.

The CSC added that the head of agency or office shall take full responsibility for the grant of special emergency leave and shall set parameters in granting said leave like verification of the situation and extent of damage caused by the calamity to affected employees. Extension of the allowed maximum five days of special emergency leave shall be subject to the sound discretion of the head of agency and the agency's internal policy on the matter. Agencies are urged to come up with internal guidelines in the grant of the special emergency leave. ®

Gov't agencies urged to prepare for disasters

The Civil Service Commission (CSC) urged government agencies to adopt safety and health standards in the workplace to protect their employees from risks due to disasters and emergencies. Chairperson Alicia dela Rosa-Bala said, "Hazards at work, especially

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH STANDARDS

CSC-DOH-DOLE

Joint Memorandum Circular No. 1, s. 2020



Promote PH culture through public service values – CSC

The Civil Service Commission (CSC) called on civil servants to take part in promoting Philippine culture by exemplifying public service values.

"Pagmamahal sa Diyos at bayan and malasakit sa kapwa – these are values deeply ingrained in our culture. We can help preserve and cultivate them by practicing them in the way we, civil servants, deliver services to the public," said CSC Chairperson Alicia dela Rosa-Bala.

The CSC made the statement as the nation celebrated the 54th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Anniversary in August. The celebration carried the theme, "ASEAN Connection: Remembering Southeast Asia's Culture and Heritage," which underscored the importance of cultural heritage preservation and its role in protecting local and national identity and pride.

She added that for its part, the CSC continues to promote the core values of Patriotism, Excellence, Integrity, and Spirituality among civil servants through the Public Service Values Program or PSVP. The CSC's Civil Service Institute, which runs the PSVP, holds several learning and development courses aimed at further enabling

civil servants to manifest these public service values in the delivery of public services, as well as capacitating leaders and human resource (HR) practitioners to craft and implement Values Policy Guidelines for their respective workplaces.

The chairperson said that through PSVP, CSC hopes to someday establish a Filipino brand of public service that will be known in ASEAN and across the globe.

ASEAN Month

The occasion is pursuant to Proclamation No. 282 dated 31 July 2017 declaring the month of August of every year as ASEAN Month.

In its Memorandum Circular No. 14, s. 2021 dated 27 July, the CSC enjoined government agencies to support and participate in the commemoration of the 54th ASEAN Anniversary and help raise ASEAN awareness among the public.

Pagmamahal sa Diyos at bayan and malasakit sa kapwa – these are values deeply ingrained in our culture. We can help preserve and cultivate them by practicing them in the way we, civil servants, deliver services to the public.

- CSC Chairperson Alicia dela Rosa-Bala

The Department of Foreign Affairs led this year's celebration with virtual activities, which included:

- Virtual special flag raising activity on 9 August;
- Rollout of ASEAN anniversary Facebook frame and Viber/ Whatsapp stickers;
- Five-part webinar series dealing with pre-colonial Online ASEAN quiz;
- Several ASEAN Cultural and Tourism Showcase in coordination with ASEAN Embassies in Manila; and
- Online "Throwback ASEAN" photo competition.

ACCSM

The CSC has continuously strengthened ties with its counterpart civil service agencies in the region through the ASEAN Cooperation on Civil Service Matters (ACCSM).

Its roots can be traced back to 1981 when the ASEAN Conference on Reforms in Civil

Service was established. Once every two years, civil service agencies gather for information exchange, mentoring, and partnering activities that aim to promote effective cooperation and mutual assistance in public sector capacity building among ASEAN Member States (AMS). But it was in 1989 that the civil service institutions of AMS saw the relevance of formalizing and elevating the network and system of mutual learning and information exchange, and, thus, established the ACCSM for a greater, more systematic, and more enduring cooperation among the civil service agencies.

Through ACCSM, cooperation took life beyond sharing information and experiences in the conference venue toward a more sustainable partnership before and after the conference. The connection among AMS

became sustained, cohesive, and more regular.

The ACCSM led efforts toward the signing of a landmark declaration elevating the civil service as a "catalyst" in achieving the ASEAN's development goals. On the occasion of the 30th ASEAN Summit in April 2017 in Manila, Philippines, leaders of ASEAN's 10 Member States signed the ASEAN Declaration on the Role of the Civil Service as a Catalyst for Achieving the ASEAN Community Vision 2025.

The declaration recognizes "the significance of the civil service as the backbone of good governance in the region, and its critical mission not only in providing vital public services to the people of ASEAN, but also in driving national and social development."

The declaration also tasked the ACCSM to take the lead in realizing the goals to "raise the professional standards and capability of civil servants," "ensure that the civil services of ASEAN embrace good governance principles such as citizen-centricity and innovation", and "uphold and protect the welfare of civil servants in the region," among others.

Currently among the initiatives in the ACCSM's pipeline is Phase 2 of the project ASEAN Guidelines on Public Service Delivery, which aims to provide AMS common guiding principles for improving the quality of public service delivery. The ASEAN Guidelines, developed during Phase 1, was adopted by the Heads of Civil Service on 30 October 2020. Phase 2 of the project is the conduct of Study Visits to China and the Republic of Korea. ▀



Citizen's Guide

Contact Center ng Bayan resolves 99% of public feedback received for the 1st sem of 2021

In continued compliance with President Rodrigo Roa Duterte's directive for government agencies to remain responsive amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the Civil Service Commission's(CSC) Contact Center ng Bayan (CCB) has remained fully operational, resolving 99.77% of feedback received in the first semester of 2021.

As a public feedback facility, the CSC-CCB received and acted on 127,717 transactions classified as simple, complex, and others. Of the transactions, 94.86% were queries, 3.63% were requests for assistance, 1.08% were complaints, 0.39% commendations, and 0.05% suggestions.

Also, the CCB facility recorded a 260% increase in the number of received transactions compared to the 49,162 received in the first semester of 2020. The highest number of transactions were



recorded in January with 25,162 (19.70%), while April received the lowest with 16,136 (12.63%).

The CCB is also handling tickets referred by Citizens' Complaint Hotline 8888 and posted a 100% resolution rate for acting on all 145 tickets. The CCB ensures immediate action on the referrals and complies with the 72-hour timeframe provided under Executive Order No. 06.

Majority of the public feedback were received thru email with 54,503 (42.67%), followed by CSC's Facebook page with 53,161 (41.62%), SMS with 19,524 (15.29%), calls at 250 (0.20%), snail mail with 131 (0.10%). The remaining .011% were transactions endorsed by the Hotline 8888.

CCB CONTACT CENTER ngBAYAN
Your direct line to efficient public service

From January 2021 to June 2021, the Contact Center ng Bayan (CCB) has acted on more than 120,000 transactions with a resolution rate of 99.77%.

For feedback on the delivery of government frontline services, the public may contact the CCB through:

- email@contactcenterngbayan.gov.ph
- [0908-8816565](tel:0908-8816565)
- [1-6565 \(via PLDT landline\)](tel:1-6565)
- [/civilservicegovph](https://facebook.com/civilservicegovph)

CSC CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION AGENT OF THE PEOPLE

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"Slow process" and "courtesy" ranked first and second, respectively, in the nature of complaints received by the CCB, accounting for 48.90% of the total complaints. Majority of the complaints were on dissatisfaction of customers on government agencies' processing of requested services.

From January 2021 up to June 2021, the CCB received the most feedback on the services of the Social Security System (SSS) with 1,389 and recorded 99.86% resolution rate; the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration followed with 706; Bureau of Internal Revenue, 179; Department of Education, 77; and Department of Social Welfare and Development, 58.

Government agencies have credited CCB data as basis for improving the quality of service delivered to their clients. For instance, the Social Security Service (SSS), due to its perennial ranking as one of the most complained agencies, has pushed for the "digitalization and the process of acquiring new digital infrastructure for the improvement of its services to its members and pensioners".

For feedback on the delivery of government services, the public may contact the CCB through: email@contactcenterngbayan.gov.ph; facebook.com/civilservicegovph; www.contactcenterngbayan.gov.ph; SMS 0908-8816565; and hotline 1-6565 (via PLDT landline). ®



2021 PCSA PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST



PAGTUGONG NG LINGKOD BAYANI SA PATULOY NA HAMON NG PANDEMYA

The 2021 Online Photography Contest was one of the major activities lined up for the 121st Philippine Civil Service Anniversary. Themed, "Pagtugong ng Lingkod Bayani sa Patuloy na Hamon ng Pandemya," the contest aimed to highlight the various ways civil servants or lingkod bayani have risen to the challenges brought about by the pandemic.

The Civil Service Commission received 423 entries nationwide, and 48 photos advanced to the national finals. From these entries, Marianne D. Soriano from Pangasinan National High School bagged first prize with her photo "Beyond the Four Corners", featuring a teacher eagerly facilitating his synchronous online class on a pile of two black boxes as a makeshift table for his laptop and other learning materials outside a classroom where other teachers also conduct their school functions in ensuring the continuity of learning amid the pandemic. Ms. Soriano received PHP15,000.

Evelyn P. Pidut from Muta Elementary School (Region II) came in second place with "Bridging Future Through the New Normal Education", while Ryan Rogon Poliran from the Department of Education (Region XI), came in third place, receiving PHP12,000 and PHP10,000 respectively.

Contest judges included prolific photographers and photojournalists Fernando Garcia Sepe Jr., Xyra Cruz Bacani, and Pablo Beltran.

Take a look at the winning photos in this year's photography contest.

OUTLOOK

OUTLOOK



Name : **MARIANNE D. SORIANO**
 Agency : Pangasinan National High School, Region I
 Photo Title : Beyond the Four Corners
 Photo Caption : The image features a teacher eagerly facilitating his synchronous online class on a pile of two black boxes as a makeshift table for his laptop and other learning materials outside a classroom. Other teachers also conduct their school functions in ensuring the continuity of learning amid the pandemic.



Name : **EVELYN P. PIDUT**
 Agency : MUTA Elementary School, Region II
 Photo Title : Bridging Future Through the New Normal Education
 Photo Caption : The threat of COVID-19 never stop the desire of every teacher to educate their pupils. Instead, this situation made them more determined to strategize their way of teaching by giving remediation on reading to learners who are in the same area.



Name : **RYAN ROGON POLIRAN**
 Agency : Department of Education, Region XI
 Photo Title : Edu-Aksyon
 Photo Caption : Despite the announcement of school year culmination, Laila Mae Udani fuels her commitment in combatting and winning battles both pandemic and illiteracy by conducting reading remediation to her learners in Sitio Talos, Sto. Tomas, Davao del Norte. The kinabu, an indigenous garb of Ata-Manobo tribe in the said community symbolizes the vibrance and resilience of education sector in withstanding its mandate of continuing education amid the pandemic.

COVER STORY

121st PHILIPPINE CIVIL SERVICE ANNIVERSARY HIGHLIGHTS AGILITY, FUTURE-READINESS

September is the Philippine Civil Service Anniversary Month!

September is a special month for civil servants because it marks the birth of the civil service on 19 September 1900 by virtue of Public Law No. 5 (An Act for the Establishment and Maintenance of an Efficient and Honest Civil Service in the Philippine Islands). Presidential Proclamation No. 1050, series of 1997 also declares the month of September as the Civil Service Month.

The CSC has introduced a 10-year overarching theme, *Transforming Public Service in the Next Decade: Honing Agile and Future-Ready Servant-Heroes*, reflecting the gains of last year's digital

transformation efforts in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the role of HR in building a competent and credible workforce in the new normal. This promotes strategies to remain relevant, innovative, and adaptive to ensure public service continuity even during exceptional circumstances.

Though the events and activities cannot be held physically, virtual versions still pushed through, showing that civil servants can still enjoy the anniversary online.

The CS Reporter shares below the highlights of the anniversary celebration:

WEEK 1 LINGGO NG LINGKOD BAYANI

The CSC hosted a series of launching activities to introduce the PCSA theme and calendar to the public and members of the media.

Pandemic heroes honored by Philippine Olympians

A total of 10,979 government employees joined the Online Zumba session on 1 September to kickoff the month-long celebration. Olympic gold medalist for weight lifting Hidilyn Diaz, silver medalist for boxing Nesthy Petecio, and bronze medalist for boxing Eumir Marcial also sent their inspirational messages for government workers during the online launch.

Held in partnership with the Film Development Council of the Philippines, the launch was followed by an online film showing featuring selected award-winning Filipino films on the FDCP channel. Registered participants were given access to *Ang Turkey Man Ay Pabo Rin* directed by Randolph Longjas, and *Bata Bata Paano Ka Ginawa* and *Dekada '70* both directed by Chito S. Roño—which were made available for viewing from 1-12 September.

Proceeds from the activity, estimated at PHP2 million, went to the CSC's *Pamanang Lingkod Bayani*, a program that honors government workers who died in the line of duty through the grant of a one-time financial assistance plus scholarship opportunities to their family members.

Hosted by the CSC National Capital Region (CSC NCR), the fund-raising event also aimed to promote health and wellness, appreciation of Philippine arts and culture, and



KICK-OFF (ZUMBA, FILM SHOWING)



Certified Zumba instructor Jill Ngo led the fun physical activity for government workers and their family members.



Olympic gold medalist Hidilyn Diaz graced the anniversary kick-off with an inspirational message, saying to civil servants, "Kayo ang inspirasyon, kayo ang kampeon."



CSC Chairperson Alicia dela Rosa-Bala thanked government workers for their overwhelming support to online anniversary kick-off and fund raising event.



CSC Commissioner Aileen Lourdes A. Lizada shared some stories of fallen servant heroes, who became beneficiaries of the Pamanang Lingkod Bayani program.



Bronze Medalist Eumir Marcial sent his greetings to civil servants online.

WEEK 2 LINGGO NG PAGLILINANG NG YAMANG TAO



The CSC, through its Public Assistance and Information Office, held a virtual press conference on 1 September with the Philippine Statistics Authority (3rd row, 2nd from right) and Philippine Institute for Development Studies (3rd row, rightmost) to highlight government innovations during the pandemic.



The PNP Fitness Team and CSC officials led the online morning aerobics exercises for civil servants.

celebration of the achievements of Philippine Olympians.

To further emphasize health and wellness, the CSC NCR also hosted an online aerobics session on 6 September in partnership with the Philippine National Police fitness team, with an estimated reach of 52,000 on the CSC's official Facebook Page. Philippine National Police General Guillermo Lorenzo T. Eleazar also graced the event with an inspirational message for civil servants.

Press con panel tackles agility and future-readiness

The CSC, through its Public Assistance and Information Office, also hosted a virtual press conference on 1 September, featuring panelists from the CSC and other government agencies to discuss agility and future-readiness. CSC Chairperson Bala discussed the Philippine Talent Management Strategy as means to future-proof the civil service, while CSC Commissioner Lizada



Film Development Council of the Philippines Chairperson Mary Liza Diño addressed civil servants during her welcome message, stressing the importance of Filipino films in culture and the arts. FDCP served as CSC's partner in bringing the online Zumba session and 12-day online film showing to government workers nationwide.

discussed the CSC's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Meanwhile, Assistant Secretary Rosalinda P. Bautista, Deputy National Statistician of the Philippine Statistics Authority, presented "Digital Governance through the Philippine Identification System (PhilSys)/National ID System", and Dr. Charlotte Justine Diokno-Sicat, Research Fellow of the Philippine Institute for Development Studies, presented "Innovating Governance: Building Resilience against COVID-19 Pandemic and Other Risks."

Members of the media were given access to the virtual platform, while Facebook recorded an estimated reach of 41,000 during the livestream.

HR events designed to hone knowledge and skills were conducted through Week 2.

CSC hosts virtual HR confab

The CSC's Civil Service Institute (CSI) hosted the first virtual Public Sector HR Symposium from 15-17 September, gathering more than 3,000 HR practitioners for the big event.

Themed *Transforming Government Agencies Into Smart Organizations: Honing Resilient and Future-Ready Public Servants*, this year's symposium focused on the strategic role of government leaders and HR practitioners in transforming government agencies into smart organizations, especially amid the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to adapt to emerging technologies.

Local and international speakers shared concepts, perspectives, and HR best practices on various topics including Digital Transformation, Cultural Intelligence, People-Centric Leadership, Total Wellness, Public Service Continuity, Data Analytics, Organizational Transformation, HR Transformation, Public Service Values, Learning and Development, and Future-Ready Leaders.

Now on its eighth run, the Public Sector HR Symposium is CSC's annual learning event which started in 2013. From physical gatherings held in Manila, Cebu, and Davao, it now transitioned to virtual mode as the country continues to implement strict public health and safety protocols amid the pandemic.

CSC Regional Offices honor PRIME-HRM Bronze awardees

The goal is to develop HR core processes, improve procedures and service efficiency, and achieve greater client satisfaction.

The PRIME-HRM Awards were scheduled by the CSC Regional Offices within Week 2 to honor Bronze awardees, or government agencies that reached HR Maturity Level 2.

From 2020-2021, 198 agencies nationwide became Bronze awardees.



Acknowledging the support of:
Australian Aid dcp

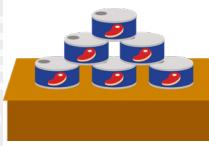
2021 PUBLIC SECTOR HR SYMPOSIUM
TRANSFORMING GOVERNMENT AGENCIES INTO SMART ORGANIZATIONS:
HONING RESILIENT AND FUTURE-READY PUBLIC SERVANTS



Australia Ambassador to the Philippines Steven J. Robinson congratulated the CSC for hosting a virtual version of the HR Symposium, saying it is a testament of the organization's evolution in the age of digital transformation.



CSC Civil Service Institute Executive Director Arthur Luis P. Florentin welcomed more than 3,000 participants to the virtual symposium.



MEAT DEMO



The TESDA Women's Center walked participants through the steps for meat processing, and shared the estimated selling price for meat products.



TESDA Secretary Isidro Lapeña congratulated civil servants on the anniversary and welcomed participants to the online demonstration on meat processing.



PLANTITOS PLANTITAS



Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Plant Industry Director George Y. Culaste greeted civil servants who attended the online event designed for plant enthusiasts.



The DA-Bureau of Plant Industry shared practical tips and skill-building techniques in growing ornamental plants and vegetables.

Online sessions for skills upgrading held

CSC through the CSC National Capital Region also held free online skills development sessions for government workers and the public.

Tips for *Plantitos* and *Plantitas* was held on 13 September in partnership with the Department

of Agriculture-Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI), with an estimated reach of 12,000 viewers. Subject matter expert Dr. Ernie Lito Bollosa discussed urban gardening, including growing and taking care of vegetables and ornamental plants.

The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) Women's Center also held an online

demonstration on meat processing for government workers looking to augment their income during this crisis. TESDA subject matter expert Ms. Wenny Cabantog shared the process of creating meat products for food preparation and business. The online session recorded an estimated reach of 30,000 viewers.

WEEK 3 LINGGO NG MALASAKIT

More than 2,000 vacancies offered during online job fair

The CSC and JobStreet Philippines once again conducted the Government Online Career Fair (GOCF) from 20-24 September.

There were 123 government agencies that signed up for the job fair, and 2,660 vacancies opened. Applicants accessed the online job fair through a link in the CSC website and the JobStreet website as well.

Government agencies were required to go through a registration process to complete their job listings, agency profile, and chat bot training, in order to participate in the virtual event.

Meanwhile, job applicants were required to set up their JobStreet accounts, plus accomplish and upload their Personal Data Sheet,

to be able to view the vacancies and send applications during the job fair. JobStreet recorded a total of 580,086 visits to the online event, and 552,681 job views.

Agencies will conduct the initial assessment of the applications received, and notify the job applicants through email or SMS of the status of their application, or of additional instructions or requirements to be complied with by the applicant.

The CSC highly encouraged application from qualified interested persons, including persons with disabilities (PWD), members of indigenous communities, and of any sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression (SOGIE).

Being online, the GOCF eliminated physical and geographical barriers to submitting job applications, and provided a safe venue

for government agencies and applicants to transact during this pandemic.

Online session on mental wellness held

In partnership with the National Center for Mental Health, the CSC conducted the Q&A on Mental Wellness During the Pandemic, a free session streamed live on the CSC Facebook page. NCMH subject matter experts Dr. Bernard Argamosa and Dr. Rodney Boncajes discussed helpful topics on mental health awareness and coping during crisis.

The CSC has emphasized mental wellness in its HR policies to help government workers cope in the new normal.

CSC Memorandum Circular No. 4 or the Mental Health Program in the Public Sector was issued last year, even before the pandemic hit. The policy promotes over-all mental wellness and provides an inclusive, conducive, and supportive work environment for all public servants.

The CSC also worked with the Department of Health and the Department of Labor and Employment to institutionalize comprehensive occupational safety and health standards. The CSC-DOLE Joint Memorandum Circular No. 1, s. 2020 aims to protect all government employees from the dangers of injury, sickness, or death in the workplace through the adoption of safe and healthy working conditions to ensure the preservation of human lives and resources and prevent loss/damage of properties.

ONLINE JOB FAIR



WEEK 4 LINGGO NG PASASALAMAT



APPRECIATION PROGRAM



"We remember every civil servant who, in big and small ways, went beyond the call of duty; have sacrificed health, life and limb to serve and keep our people safe. Some maybe gone, but their legacy should continue to inspire and motivate us to do our best," CSC Commissioner Aileen Lourdes A. Lizada during the Appreciation Program for Government Frontliners.



CSC officials led the candle lighting and flower offering ceremony to honor frontliners who passed away during the pandemic.



Video tributes for frontliners were interspersed during the program, showing their many roles during crisis.

On 27 September, a virtual appreciation program was held in honor of government frontliners and their priceless contributions in mitigating the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic as well as other crises experienced since last year. CSC Chairperson Bala and Commissioner Lizada led the special program, and presented certificates of appreciation to around 500 frontliners invited as guests.

The semi-finalists of the Presidential Lingkod Bayan, CSC Pagasa, and Dangal ng Bayan awards were already announced through official CSC channels. The Search is conducted under the Honor Awards Program, which is the rewards and recognition arm of the Commission. These are the highest honors that government workers may receive in their careers.

Special Treats offered to gov't workers

Meanwhile, the virtual awards rites for the 2020 and 2021 Search for Outstanding Government Workers will be held at a later date, which would be announced on the CSC website and Facebook Page.

Private sector partners also offered exclusive promos for government workers in honor of the anniversary celebration. These included

discounts on food and drinks with The Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf, Coffee Project, AllAmerican, Boston Chicken, Gastroville and Paluto, Chicken Deli, Dear Joe; on rest and recreation with RedDoorz Hotels and Ramada Hotels; health and wellness with Asian Eye Institute and Dermcare; and in-store and online shopping with The SM Store, SM Appliances, Anthony Audio, Ace Hardware, Toy Kingdom, Pet Express, Ace Hardware, Jacinto & Lirio.

CSC Regional and Field Offices also conducted parallel events in the regions.

The CSC looks forward to hosting the next anniversary celebration next year in honor of all civil servants nationwide. R

We also emphasized support mechanisms during the implementation of AWA, such as health/psychosocial interventions like stress debriefing; provision of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) to frontline service providers and employees; reasonable transportation facilities and housing quarters whenever practicable; and other incentives.

Photo Contest and Song Writing Contest Winners Announced

Also streamed live were the virtual award ceremonies for winners of the 2021 CSC National Song Writing contest (23 September) and 2021 Online Photography Contest (24 September).

The 2021 Online Photography Contest, hosted by CSC Human Resource Relations Office, aimed to highlight through images the various ways civil servants or *lingkod bayani* have risen to the challenges brought about by the pandemic. Now on its second run, this year's theme was *Pagtugon ng Lingkod Bayani sa Patuloy na Hamon ng Pandemya*.

The CSC received 423 entries nationwide, and 48 photos advanced to the national finals. From these entries, Marianne D. Soriano from Pangasinan National High School bagged first prize with her photo "Beyond the Four Corners", featuring a teacher eagerly facilitating his synchronous online class on a pile of two black boxes as a makeshift table for his laptop and other learning materials outside a classroom where other teachers also conduct their school functions in ensuring the continuity of learning amid the pandemic. Ms. Soriano received PHP15,000.

Evelyn P. Pidut from Muta Elementary School (Region II) came in second place with "Bridging Future Through the New Normal Education", while Ryan Rogon Poliran from the Department of Education (Region XI), came in third place, receiving PHP12,000 and PHP10,000 respectively.

Contest judges included prolific photographers and photojournalists Fernando Garcia Sepe Jr., Xyra Cruz Bacani, and Pablo Beltran.

The CSC National Song Writing Contest, on the other hand, was held this year instead of the Government Choral Competition, which was temporarily suspended due to the ongoing pandemic.

The CSC through CSC Regional Office IV invited government

workers to submit original compositions, which includes the lyrics and lead sheet. The lyrics should adhere to the PCSA 2021-2031 theme, *Transforming Public Service in the Next Decade: Honing Agile ang Future-Ready Servant-Heroes*. Entries were assessed on creativity and originality, melody, lyrics, and overall likeability.

From eleven (11) regional entries, three winners emerged: Donalyn N. Onilongo of the Department of Justice, Rizal (2nd Runner Up), Jackson Ray S. Sevilla of Iloilo National High School (1st Runner Up), and Jerome Vincent B. Cruz of Social Security System, Angeles City (Grand Champion).

The winning entries will be performed on the next Government Choral Competition.



The first National Song Writing Contest grand champion Jerome Vincent B. Cruz of the Social Security System-Angeles City, Pampanga performed his original composition, *Ganyan Ang Mga Lingkod Bayani*, during the virtual awards ceremony held on 23 September 2021.

Winning photos are featured on Outlook (p. 18-21)

The Committees on Presidential *Lingkod Bayan* and CSC *Pagasa* Awards, and Outstanding Public Officials and Employees or *Dangal ng Bayan* Award announce the **SEMI-FINALISTS** to the

2021 Search for Outstanding Government Workers

PRESIDENTIAL *LINGKOD BAYAN* SEMI-FINALISTS

INDIVIDUAL



DR. NELLY SIABABA-AGGANGAN
University Researcher II/Scientist I
National Institute of Molecular Biology and
Biotechnology
University of the Philippines Los Baños
College, Laguna



DR. GERARDO MAGABILIN
Aquino Jr.
Medical Center Chief II
Vicente Sotto Memorial Medical Center
Cebu City



MAR-LEN ABIGAIL SOMBILLO BINAY
City Mayor
City Government of Makati
Makati City



FLORDELIZA HIDALGO BORDEY
Deputy Executive Director IV
Philippine Rice Research Institute
Science City of Muñoz
Nueva Ecija

The Presidential *Lingkod Bayan* Award is conferred to an individual or group of individuals for exceptional or extraordinary contributions resulting from an idea or performance that had nationwide impact on public interest, security and patrimony. The contribution may be a suggestion, innovation or superior accomplishment.

GROUP

HOPE BEHIND BARS PROJECT

Bataan Peninsula State University
Balanga City, Bataan

Team Leader : **Dr. Bernadeth Bernalte Gabor**, Associate Professor V
Members : **Joanne Delos Reyes Lobrino**, Associate Professor III
Nomer Navarro Varua, Assistant Professor III
John Robert Sangalang Garcia, Administrative Assistant II

OUTPATIENT DRUG TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION CENTER (ODTRC)

Baguio General Hospital and Medical Center
Baguio City

Team Leader : **Dr. Clarette Rosario Pano Dy**, Medical Specialist III
Members : **Herwin Chan Siong**, Nurse I
Jayvee Olarte Moltio, Health Education and Promotion Officer III

TEAM 2, AUDIT GROUP A-CHARITY FUND AND PRIZE FUND, PHILIPPINE CHARITY SWEEPSTAKES OFFICE, CLUSTER 6, CORPORATE GOVERNMENT SECTOR

Commission on Audit – PCSO
Mandaluyong City

Team Leader : **Belen Balais Ladines**, State Auditor V
Members : **Jinky Bacuyag Rocat**, State Auditor IV
Margeoreane Cruz Derico, State Auditor II
Ian Emmanuel Cumpio Jimenez, State Auditor II
Judith Anne Crizz Cabral, State Auditor II



PGEN GUILLERMO LORENZO TOLENTINO ELEAZAR
Police Chief
Philippine National Police
Camp Crame, Quezon City



DR. ANGEL BALISI ENCARNACION
Agricultural Center Chief II/Scientist I
Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources,
Department of Agriculture
Tuguegarao City, Cagayan



DR. GERARDO DIZON LEGASPI
Director IV
Philippine General Hospital
University of the Philippines – Manila
Ermita, Manila



DR. ROSE MARIE ROSETE LIQUETE
Executive Director IV
National Kidney and
Transplant Institute
Diliman, Quezon City

DANGAL NG BAYAN SEMI-FINALISTS

The Outstanding Public Officials and Employees or *Dangal ng Bayan* Award is conferred to an individual for performance of extraordinary act or public service and consistent demonstration of exemplary ethical behavior on the basis of the employee's observation of the eight norms of conduct provided under Republic Act No. 6713 or Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees.



JOHN LAUMOC ALCAZARIN
Administrative Aide I (Utility Worker I)
Municipal Government of Numancia
Aklan



ANTHONY DURANTE ATAS
Administrative Aide VI
Commission on Audit- Regional Office 1
San Fernando City, La Union



LUCIA JACINTA SANTIAGO BENTER
Medical Technologist I
Municipal Government of La Trinidad
Benguet



DON SEAN ARVIE VALENZUELA BUENCAMINO
Instructor I
Aurora State College of Technology
Baler, Aurora



MA. THERESA HERMOSO CRISTE
Master Teacher I
Schools Division of Cavite
Department of Education
Trece Martires City, Cavite



DR. JOSE JONAS DIÑO DEL ROSARIO
Medical Specialist III
Philippine General Hospital
University of the Philippines – Manila
Ermita, Manila



SHERWYNE TUBAL MANLANGIT
Teacher II
Cagraray Elementary School
Department of Education
Bato, Catanduanes



AQUILINO RONQUILLO MAPILI JR.
Administrative Aide III
Municipal Government of San Jose
Occidental Mindoro



MARKSON BOSQUILLOS MEJIA
Education Program Specialist II
Schools Division of Sorsogon City
Department of Education
Sorsogon



ANALYN CLIMACO PEREZ
Head Teacher III
Dina-ut Elementary School
Department of Education
Altavas, Aklan

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION *PAGASA* SEMI-FINALISTS

GROUP

COVID-19 CRISIS MANAGEMENT TEAM

National Kidney and Transplant Institute
Diliman, Quezon City

Team Leader : **Dr. Romina Angangco Danguilan**, Deputy Executive Director III
Members : **Nerissa Mendoza Gerial**, Deputy Executive Director III
Dr. Glenda Eleanor Pinga Pamugas, Medical Specialist III
Dr. Joseph Michael Acedillo Jaro, Department Manager III

JOBSCOUTS: PATHFINDERS OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

City Government of Tagum
Davao del Norte

Team Leader : **Roy Valdipeña Martinez**, Project Development Officer IV
Members : **Girly Magbanua Vista**, Senior Labor and Employment Officer
Gregoria Lebita Ugay, Senior Labor and Employment Officer
Jessa Mae Alango Sarona, Labor and Employment Officer I
Quiverlie Maquilan Barrientos, Administrative Aide VI (Clerk III)

TECHNOLOGY COMMERCIALIZATION TEAM PHILIPPINE COUNCIL FOR AGRICULTURE, AQUATIC AND NATURAL RESOURCES RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Department of Science and Technology
Los Baños, Laguna

Team Leader : **Noel Almazan Catibog**, Chief Science Research Specialist
Members : **Lucy Alinsunurin Lastimosa**, Senior Science Research Specialist
Abigail Flores Gueco, Senior Science Research Specialist
Mae Angeles Dagaas, Science Research Specialist II
Reynaldo Valencia Ebora, Executive Director



AMBROSE HANS GUIYAB AGGABAO
Professor VI
Isabela State University
Cabanag, Isabela



ZALDY ORDALES BUENO
Head Teacher III
Gumaca National High School
Department of Education
Gumaca, Quezon



DR. ESTER BATTAD FLORES
Supervising Science Research Specialist/Scientist I
Philippine Carabao Center
Department of Agriculture
Science City of Muñoz
Nueva Ecija



CARMEL BONIFACIO GARCIA
Supervising Tourism Operations Officer
Provincial Government of Catanduanes
Virac, Catanduanes



HADJURIA CORNELIO GONZALES
Master Teacher I
Tagabakid Elementary School
Department of Education
Mati City, Davao Oriental



PEOPLE, PERFORMANCE, PROCESS, AND PRACTICE: HRMPs IN THE NEW NORMAL*

*Keynote message of CSC Chairperson Alicia dela Rosa-Bala for the 27th Digital Regional Council of Human Resource Management Practitioners Conference (Region IV), 2 August 2021 via Zoom.

Isang mapagpalang araw po sa lahat. I would like to acknowledge the efforts of CSC Regional Office IV headed by Director IV Karin Litz P. Zerna and the Regional Council of HRMPs in Southern Tagalog for collaborating to organize this virtual conference which zeroes in on the role of human resource management and HRMPs in the development of a dynamic and high-performing human capital in the public sector.

The theme of the 27th RCHRMP Conference is very much on the mark as it focuses on *People, Performance, Process, and Practice* and the role of HRMPs in facilitating change in these 4Ps as we navigate our new normal. The theme calls for the need for new perspectives and shift to a different paradigm as we deal with digital transformation.

May I share a study published by Eversheds Sutherland, a legal research company. Entitled, *Navigating the Future: HR2020 Report*¹. It provided stimulating ideas on how organizations can be better prepared to embrace a future that is projected to be radically different. According to the narrative, and I quote, "Faced with this onslaught of change, part

¹"Navigating the Future: HR2020 Report", Eversheds Sutherland 2017, <http://viewer.zmags.com/services/>

Faced with this onslaught of change, part of the role of HR is to assess which trends are likely to have the largest impact on their organisations and to decide how best to manage the opportunities and problems that these developments represent... Social trends that HR can expect to have a high or very high impact on their workplaces are the war for talent, skills shortages, and remote working.

—*Navigating the Future: HR2020 Report*—
Eversheds Sutherland 2017

Strategic HR: key to the war for talent and diversity in people

"Pundits have observed that many HR functions are too engrossed in the here and now and far too focused on process rather than strategic objectives..."

of the role of HR is to assess which trends are likely to have the largest impact on their organisations and to decide how best to manage the opportunities and problems that these developments represent... Social trends that HR can expect to have a high or very high impact on their workplaces are the war for talent, skills shortages, and remote working." HR 2020 also explored how social and technological trends are transforming the workplace, how society's expectations of businesses are changing, and how HR as a function can become better aligned with the wider executive terrain.

With these disruptions, HR has the chance to strengthen its role and to contribute in ways that will be more effective and more valued than before. As organizations have to adapt quicker than ever to changes, HR is at the forefront, specifically with the development of strategic HR systems, to attract and retain talent for competitive advantage, and to utilize technology to improve processes. Allow me to underscore the discourse on these HR trends and relate them to the conference theme as well as the CSC's programs on human resource management and organization development.

succession plan has been drawn up. The agency ensures that employees have the opportunity to be promoted, have a positive experience with the agency, and that they know that they contributed positively to the health, performance, and well-being of the organization. The tenure of the employee with the agency is a mutually beneficial exchange. The agency has become the "agency of choice", given its strategic HR management and development objectives.

Since the issuance of PRIME-HRM policy in 2012, the CSC has assisted agencies nationwide in improving HR systems, specifically recruitment, selection and placement; performance management; learning and development; and rewards and incentives. Agencies work their way into having each of the four systems accredited or reaching the first, second, third or fourth level of maturity.

Each gradation or level indicates accomplishment of set standards. I am certain that you are aware of these maturity levels. Being in the first or the Transactional level indicates that the agency's HR performs personnel functions that

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is mostly separate from agency and talent needs. If the system has progressed into one where it has a set of defined and documented standard operating procedures, then it has reached the Process-Defined level of maturity. In this level, the agency uses automation to a certain extent. The Integrated HRM maturity level is characterized by the presence of process metrics for continuous improvement; the agency has developed its HR management toolkit and practices data-driven decision-making. The highest maturity level, Strategic HR, is attained if the HR processes are focused on continually improving process performance. Also, HR strategy is already part of the agency strategy.

As of end of December 2020, there have only been five agencies here in Southern Luzon that have been able to transition from Transactional to Process-defined systems. As I laud these agencies, let me remind you that your PRIME-HRM journey continues. I also challenge the other HRMPs of Southern Tagalog to closely collaborate with the CSC to reach higher maturity levels onto attaining Maturity Level 4 or Strategic HR in all the core HR systems. I want to see all of you no longer working on the tactics and

processes but rather on achieving strategic objectives for your human capital and offices.

Employee performance in alternative working arrangement

The pandemic presented performance management challenges given the new work arrangements during the implementation of varying quarantine classifications. Work targets and outputs had to be recalibrated, affecting performance appraisal systems. Restrictions on mobility and face-to-face interaction resulted to revision of work plans. Given these situations, the CSC allowed agencies to draw up their recalibrated parameters and performance standards in response to prevailing conditions.

We often hear the expression “We are on the same boat” to underscore our being caught in the same situation, that we are on equal footing. I disagree however with said assumption. Why? The statement is insensitive to the plight of others. It is more accurate to say that we are battling the same storm, which is the

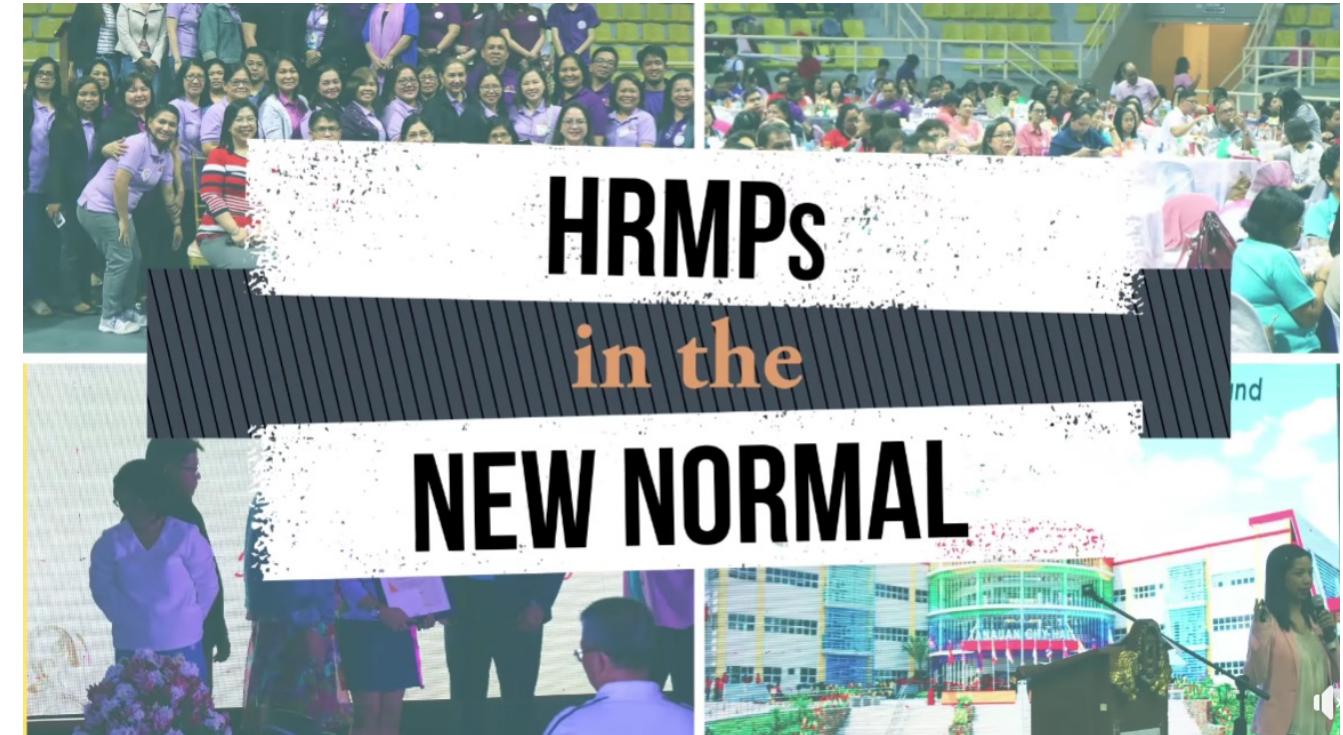
pandemic, but we are not all on the same boat. Some are on a ship, others on a motorboat or a sailboat or even make-shift rowboats. Each of us underwent different circumstances, each one dealt with different environments.

Relating this to performance management, our respective organizations were exposed to varying conditions during the pandemic and the ways of handling the situations are as varied. There is one certainty however. That of employees yearning for sincere concern as some had their physical and mental health tested 500 days into this pandemic. If we fail to empathize and show sincere concern for their health and wellbeing, we lose their trust and their commitment which ultimately translates into how they work or their productivity.

I am certain that you have realized by now that at the heart of our organizations are our employees. Not prioritizing our people's safety and wellbeing will come at a high cost for organizations. People are the source of new or better solutions; they determine the success or failure of any project.

As organizations have to adapt quicker than ever to changes, HR is at the forefront, specifically with the development of strategic HR systems, to attract and retain talent for competitive advantage, and to utilize technology to improve processes.

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Gary Hamel, in his article, The Why, What, and How of Management Innovation published in Harvard Business Review, wrote: *“In this time of crisis, before we ask for their outputs or innovative ideas, can we make sure to first ask how they are? How they are coping? Can we first see to it that we have adopted preventive measures against COVID 19 in the workplace so that when it’s time to go back to physical reporting, our employees are assured that they are safe and that their well-being is taken cared of?”*

Let us not treat our employees as mere commodities, but as strategic partners in overcoming this crisis. Let us put them first.

Start the process of digital transformation

According to the HR 2020 Report, *“With social, digital and technology trends changing*

faster than ever before, we cannot assume to continue to hire and engage with talent in the same way as before. We need to leverage emerging technology to do things differently.”

I would like to take this opportunity to invite the Region 4 Council of HRMP members to participate in the celebration of the 121st Philippine Civil Service Anniversary or our PCSA this coming September. The ten-year theme, ***“Transforming Public Service in the Next Decade: Honing Agile and Future-Ready Servant-Heroes”***, reflects the path the civil service is taking to build on the gains of digital transformation efforts spurred by the COVID-19 pandemic. We have been and are continually being forced to bridge the digital divide and come up with pioneering initiatives in the pursuit of efficient public service delivery.

A key take-away from the 121st celebration of the PCSA is the push to actively pursue future-

readiness in the civil service to respond to evolving needs of both employees and clients in the new normal. We are on crunch time. We need to bank on or take advantage of the opportunities afforded by Information and Communication Technology or ICT towards digital transformation in public service delivery. I have always advocated for the use of ICT in the automation of government systems and processes to pave the way for interconnectivity, online submission of applications, e-payment systems, e-query and feedback mechanisms, and electronic issuance of certificates and permits.

The disruption brought by the digital transformation must not be met with pessimism but with excitement. We are barely scratching the surface as we use the Internet of Things for faster transactions, 24/7 service access, and easier processes.

Not prioritizing our people's safety and well being will come at a high cost for organizations. People are the source of new or better solutions; they determine the success or failure of any project.

''

The public sector physical set-up must be redesigned for flexibility, autonomy and collaboration and to enable an increasingly remote, agile workforce.

''

DR. GINGER KETTING-WELLER

President, Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies



People, Process, Performance, Practice: HRMPs in the New Normal – An Overview

For our part, the CSC will ensure that government workers, especially our tech novices will be equipped with the necessary competence to respond to the challenges and opportunities of digital transformation. One of the priorities in the CSC's learning and development offerings is reinforcement of the foundational digital literacy skills of government workers so they will not be vulnerable in the acceleration of technology.

Practice: Workplace in not just a "Place" but also a "Space"

Finally is a shake-up in the practice and concept of work. Work can

now be conducted anywhere and anytime since information, data and tools are available to an increasingly mobile workforce. Workplaces must adapt as the work and workforce evolves. The public sector physical set-up must be redesigned for flexibility, autonomy and collaboration and to enable an increasingly remote, agile workforce.

Our concept of the "workplace" is no longer what it was before—a physical structure where you go and work alone or with a team to deliver results. Much of our work today takes place in the digital rather than physical space. We use technology to interact with others, access business processes, collect and analyze data, and draft reports; to communicate, collaborate,

and knit our teams together across spatial and organizational boundaries. Work is now digital, mobile, and faster than ever.

The workplace is no longer the place where we go to work. The workplace is independent of a physical place. The new workplace is wherever we are as long as we can go online and navigate a shared digital environment to get things done.

I am extremely proud that majority of government workers were able to make the shift from merely thinking of the workplace as a location, to accepting that the "workplace" as a network of digitally mediated relationships and interactions. We can look at the result of the study released by the Development Academy of the Philippines through the Asian Productivity Organization on the effects of AWA on public sector performance and productivity during the period of community quarantine from 16 March 16 to 31 May 2020. Key findings are as follows:

- Majority of respondents perceived themselves to be still productive while on alternative work arrangements;

- While majority are reportedly productive, better internet connectivity remains a leading concern to effectively perform given tasks; and
- Organizational culture, particularly high levels of trust and support, good communication system, and collaboration within the organization plays a pivotal role in ensuring employee productivity.

Digital is the way to future-proof our human capital and workplaces as technology has woven itself into the fabric of work, society and life. I believe that the more successfully we develop "digital work spaces", the faster we attain improved productivity and performance.

Call-to-action

The real work for our HRMPs begin after this Conference. The learned concepts, theories and ideas should not only remain thus, but MUST be applied, new strategies must be drawn to improve the People, Performance, Process and Practice in your respective workplaces.

Come up with a Learning Application Plan that will effectively apply and integrate these insights into your duties and responsibilities as HRMPs toward improved productivity and performance. Do not be stifled by resource limitations; explore and experiment. The immediate future is bringing inevitable changes and we need to take advantage of the opportunities they bring.

For the CSC Regional Office IV, what I have for you is a challenge to look for promising ideas in these action plans or even in the insights shared through the chatbox and other forms of feedback. Crunch and enrich available and existing data. I am confident that they will yield substantive perspectives, enough to provide the Commission inputs in dealing with the digital workplace. The Commission fully supports L&D programs that reinforce our government workers' digital literacy skills. *Ayaw po namin na may mapag-iwanan sa pagsulong ng teknolohiya, lalo na sa paggamit nito sa paghahatid ng serbisyo publiko.*

Again, congratulations to CSC Regional Office IV and the Regional Council of HRMPs in Southern Tagalog for working together and moving toward upholding the efficiency and effectiveness of public service.

Maraming salamat. Mabuhay ang serbisyo publiko! ®

and professional development guru, Brian Tracy. He wrote and I quote, "*We are now in the age of excellence. Excellence is the commitment to doing work of the highest quality in the service of other people, both inside and outside of the organization.... Integrity underlies all the other qualities. Integrity is complete, unflinching honesty with regard to everything that you say and do.*" As the civil service system continues to move forward and face challenges in the midst of rising global standards, challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, and increasing complex public expectations, we remain bound by our commitment and values to be a prime mover of governance reforms.

Maraming salamat. Mabuhay ang serbisyo publiko! ®



PRIME-HRM Bronze Awardees share strategies



HRMOs gear up for PRIME-HRM

Tough, tedious and time-consuming.

These were the initial reactions of human resource management officers (HRMOs) when they were first introduced to the Program to Institutionalize Merit and Excellence in Human Resource Management (PRIME-HRM).

The Civil Service Commission (CSC) issued PRIME-HRM guidelines in

February 2012 and thereafter, set into motion activities to prepare government agencies for program implementation. It highlighted program features to upscale four core human resource systems in government offices: the Recruitment, Selection and Placement System, the Performance Management System, the Learning and Development System and the Rewards and Recognition System. Progressive levels were prescribed for each HRM system: Level 1 - Transactional HRM, Level 2 -Process-defined HRM, Level 3 - Integrated HRM, and Level 4 -Strategic HRM. PRIME-HRM was envisioned to raise the bar of HRM in the public sector.

"PRIME-HRM was way more complicated than the previous standards on accreditation and the parameters are overwhelming. Throughout the course of our PRIME-HRM journey, a cloud of self-doubt often kicks in, especially at

times when we review and reassess the assessment matrix, coupled with the numerous tasks at HRD," shared Insurance Commission's OIC, HR Division Atty. April Gwen T. Marquez.

Research Institute for Tropical Medicine's HR head Teresa Cristobal confirmed that carrying out PRIME-HRM "was tough, very challenging... commitment was very important in this undertaking as it demands time, effort, and hard work,"

"It was a daunting task to lead the implementation of PRIME-HRM. Like others who introduce reform and transformation, we also experienced birth pains", says Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO) HR Division Chief Mariciel E. Estacio.

Without doubt, implementing PRIME-HRM entailed change, a condition which the human resource units of government agencies did not only have to undergo but had to manage as well.

PRIME-HRM imposed new and continually emerging demands on the agency's HR unit. The HR unit is not only the CSC's first point of contact with the agency in the program's implementation; it is the fulcrum, the determinant of the course of the agency's PRIME-HRM journey.

While compliance with program requisites is the HR unit's primary task, it also had to fulfill attendant responsibilities. Apart from enlisting management support to ensuring employee buy-in,

from reviewing old directives to helping craft more responsive policies, HR units had to attend to their own needs. These include having the appropriate skills and competencies, being abreast with regulations and HR trends, and possessing the right attitude and mindset to effectively implement the program.

The PRIME-HRM focal persons fully realize what needed to be done. Thus, they resorted to different strategies and activities to improve HR staff capability and to better prepare their agencies for the new program. To find out more about these strategies, focal persons of agencies which successfully shifted their HR systems from transactional to process-defined levels were interviewed. The interviewees were all lead persons in implementing PRIME-HRM

and come from agencies which constituted the first batch of Bronze awardees in the National Capital Region.]

How did they prepare for PRIME- HRM?

Among the initial measures undertaken to prepare HR staff was to send them to appropriate seminars and training courses. Training appeared to be the default activity for all HR units. Training was not limited to HR personnel though as it was provided as well to representatives of divisions who were part of HR-led project management teams.

Financial constraints however hindered the attendance of staff to many training seminars as these entailed not only registration fees but transportation and lodging expenses for attendees from the provinces (taking into account the pre-pandemic scenario). Thus, the learning sessions provided by the CSC, mainly through its field directors, were welcome opportunities.

Coaching and mentoring proved to be helpful strategies to arm staff with the needed skills and competencies.

Assignments under PRIME-HRM were distributed to HR staff according to their capability.

Learning from actual practice or experience was valuable thus benchmarking was done with other government agencies. This strategy would be particularly helpful to the second batch of PRIME-HRM awardees. Agencies which received the Bronze Award could be good starting points for benchmarking initiatives.

The list of agencies which have been conferred the recognition can be provided by CSC regional offices, particularly the Policies and Systems Evaluation Division. These were complemented by research on global HR trends. Information technology, both as a tool and a modality, was harnessed to establish, improve, and analyze systems and procedures. New technology was used to assist the HR unit in guiding employees.

Agencies which had the means or financial capacity hired external consultants to help them out in complying with the requirements.

Others depended on in-house expertise.

The HR unit shared its responsibilities with other groups in the organization. To sustain buy-in and participation, regular consultations were held with standing committees like the promotion and selection board, the rewards and incentives committee and performance management committee.

Learning sessions with members of the Management Committee were spearheaded by HR units to refresh senior officials of HR procedures and priorities that have to be undertaken in PRIME-HRM.

On top of these initiatives were the motivational strategies to help prepare HR personnel for their arduous duties. Constant and open communication lines became the norm of the HR unit's operations. It was important to communicate the goals and objectives of any reform initiative. Through communication, the focal person made superiors, peers and subordinates see that PRIME-HRM will help them do their tasks better, that they will be able to accomplish more. Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) HR Chief Cynthia P. Luga cited feedback, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms as crucial

in PRIME-HRM adoption. Also, having a clear timetable and matrix of evidentiary requirements helped check progress and identify gaps.

Department of Trade and Industry Human Resource and Administrative Service Director Joel R. Cruz highlighted the adoption of a collaborative action plan. "Different units of the agency were in varying levels of compliance. Those which were able to substantially comply with requirements shared best practices, which included templates, to assist other. Collaboration lightened the load."

Contributions, whether big or small, were acknowledged. Wins and upsides were celebrated. Stirring up agency pride made the tasks less tedious and less formidable as management and/or the HR unit rallied its ranks beyond trials and toward breakthroughs.

HR officers pointed out the clear and rigid requirements of PRIME-HRM but many expressed that when they took a closer look at their existing systems and processes, they realized that they needed only some fine tuning and realignment.

Atty. Marquez rounded off the HRMOs observations. "As we

completed the requirements for Maturity Level 2, our systems became more effective, efficient and responsive. There was a greater sense of professionalism and ownership among HRD personnel. We came to realize that our goal is not merely earning points to achieve Maturity Level 2 but a total system redesign and the journey is a continuous learning process challenged by sustainability as we move further with Maturity Level 3 or even Level 4 accreditation."

For the PVAO, PRIME-HRM stirred up agency pride. Management and staff moved as *Pangkat PVAO*. "It was an appeal to organizational unity and cohesion." HRDD Chief Estacio added that thru PRIME-HRM, a high-performance culture permeated the organization.

These different initiatives undertaken by the HR units depended on host of factors: scope, duration, creativity, engagement, management support, financial backing, to name a few. They also posted different success levels. But while agencies carried out varied strategies and activities, they shared one goal – moving to a higher maturity level. Despite the diversity and in spite of obstacles, these agencies have all made the first of many steps in their PRIME-HRM journey to better HR systems.

②

Nominate Public Service Heroes to Pamaña Program - CSC

Based on the data of the Civil Service Commission (CSC), the number of government employees with confirmed COVID-19 cases as of 20 April 2021 has reached 95,569, with 84,043 recovered and 1,388 fatalities.

"Many of these civil servants remained on the frontline until they contracted the virus and died in the service of our fellow Filipinos. Given the high transmission rate of the virus, they had no relatives around to hold their hands as they breathed their last. Some had to be buried right away; others were cremated with no ceremony to

remember their heroism," this was said by CSC Commissioner Aileen Lourdes A. Lizada during the kick-off ceremony of the 121st Philippine Civil Service Anniversary (PCSA) as she called for nominations to the CSC's *Pamanang Lingkod Bayani* (PLBi) Program.

One of the main event of the PCSA is the annual R.A.C.E to Serve Fun Run, but because of the pandemic, it had to be put on hold. This year, the CSC, led by the National Capital Region held a nationwide virtual Zumba participated by more than 13,000 government workers.

"This initiative has deeper, more noble goal as the proceeds will

be used to fund the PLBi. *Hindi naman po lingid na ang Komisyon, bilang bahagi ng ating social responsibility, ay nagbibigay ng pagkilala at pinansiyal na tulong sa mga natatanging lingkod bayani na nagbuwis ng buhay upang makapaghatiid ng serbisyo publiko,*" explained the Commissioner.

Bayaning Nars

Nurses became the parents and guardians of the children who were admitted to the COVID-19 wards, which is something very unique to Philippine Children's Medical Center (PCMC). The nurses did not falter in the performance of their duties with added responsibilities



Many of these civil servants remained on the frontline until they contracted the virus and died in the service of our fellow Filipinos.

- CSC Commissioner Aileen Lourdes A. Lizada

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and challenges, and one of these was Nurse II Ian Anthony Vilog who died on 26 July 2020.

The PCMC described Nurse Ian as the embodiment of a health worker—compassionate, competent, diligent, and strives for excellence. During his years of service, he demonstrated professionalism and utmost dedication. Even during the height of the pandemic, he never took a leave of absence from work. He continued to serve despite being assigned on cases with high risk of infection with the virus. Even with fears and anxiety over his own health, he vowed to continue to care for sick children admitted in the PCMC. Most of the patients under his care became his friend

because of his pleasant demeanor and kindness.

He reported for his last duty on the night of 2 July 2020 and finished his work efficiently, business as usual. The next day, he manifested symptoms, cough, and fever. Despite diligently observing precautions, he got ill and he immediately got himself tested for COVID-19 as it is the responsible thing to do, the result was positive.

His health rapidly deteriorated and he was admitted on 10 July at the Lung Center of the Philippines. The following day, he was intubated, but he continued to fight valiantly. Two weeks after, he succumbed to the infection.

He wanted to save lives, but lost his own saving others

"Tuwing may sumisigaw, sasabihin ni Kelly, 'Sir, may nahingi ng tulong doon, puntahan natin," this was one of the last moments that Fisheries Resource Protection Group Officer-in-Charge Sherwin Buguina, remembered him.

Fishing Regulations Officer I Kelly Recolizado Villarao was part of the team under the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources tasked to do law enforcement against all forms of illegal, unreported, unregulated fishing (IUUF). They also investigate underwater crime scenes as well as land, water, and fishing conflicts.



But on 13 November 2020, government agencies sought the group's help for a rescue mission due to the sudden flooding in some areas in Cagayan Valley due to the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses. They are, after all, trained in diving, SOLAS (safety of life at sea), and basic life support (BLS), so they can be called to respond in emergency situations, along with their floating devices. On that day, they were tasked to take care of the Northern part of Tuguegarao.

Villarao couldn't ignore the people calling out for help on the roofs of houses, so he asked for his supervisor's permission if he could first rescue the people calling out to him although they are assigned to another area. Kelly was able to rescue 20 people, including children and pregnant women and brought them to the nearest evacuation center.

Unfortunately, disaster struck during the rescue mission, an electrical blast rocked their boat due to electrical wires submerged in the flood and Kelly was electrocuted. He was given CPR and when they arrived at the docking, he was immediately brought to the nearest hospital, but he was declared dead on arrival.

He was given tribute via the PLBi on 23 August 2021 attended by his family and colleagues from BFAR RO2. Undersecretary Cherryl Marie Natividad-Caballero of the Department of Agriculture (DA), highlighted the timely conduct of the awarding in honor of Villarao as a hero, and said, "August is a special month as we take cognizance of celebrations such as the "Araw ng mga Bayani" on August 30 and August also means "respected"-honor in service to the country is the takeaway and gem we can share to each other in this event as we recognize the selflessness and bravery of Fishing Regulations Officer I Kelly Recolizado Villarao."

Nominations to the PLBi

The Pamanang Lingkod Bayani (PLBi) grants a one-time financial assistance of Php100,000 to the bereaved family of the deceased civil servant. Aside from the cash assistance, immediate family members of grantees may also be entitled scholarships under the Pamanang Iskolarsip component of PLBi. Up to three members of the deceased employee's immediate family may enroll in any of the 110-member state universities and colleges of the Philippine Association of State Universities

and Colleges. A certificate of recognition is also given to acknowledge the deceased employee's sacrifice.

Under CSC Resolution No. 1401700, covered under the program are civil servants occupying permanent, elective, contractual, casual and coterminous status of employment. Likewise included are civilian or non-uniform personnel of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Nominations may be filed with any CSC regional or field office.

Part of the requirement for the selection of recipients of the Pamanang Lingkod Bayani are: Narrative of circumstance surrounding the death or the extent to which the government employee is actually performing his/her duties and responsibilities at the time of the demise; obscurity of the position, that is, the salary grade at the time of death; and the financial condition of the nominee's family given the combined salaries as against their monthly expenses.

The CSC launched PLBi in 2008 providing scholarships to the family of deceased state employees. The program was expanded in 2011 to what it is now. Since 2011, there have been 214 beneficiaries awarded under the program. Majority of recipients are uniformed law enforcers and fire fighters, civilian personnel who perished in rescue efforts during super typhoon Yolanda, and environment warriors.

The Pamanang Lingkod Bayani forms part of CSC's Honor Awards Program (HAP). For more details, contact the HAP Secretariat at telephone numbers (02) 8-931-7993, (02) 8-932-0381 and hotline (02) 931-4180 or email hapsecretariat@yahoo.com or hapsecretariat@gmail.com. ®

LIVE Lunchat with CSC

2021 PUBLIC SECTOR HR SYMPOSIUM
Transforming Government Agencies Into Smart Organizations: Honing Resilient and Future-Ready Public Servants






Host: Mark Malitan
Guest: Director III Tina Katharine Sison, Civil Service Institute
Host: Moon Danipog

Short URL : <https://bit.ly/LunChatwithCSCJuly2021>



Watch Now!

This episode promotes the 2021 Public Sector HR Symposium and gives a background on its theme, "Transforming Government Agencies Into Smart Organizations: Honing Resilient and Future-Ready Public Servants," and lined up topics.

You can also watch the Symposium highlights here: <https://bit.ly/2021PublicSectorHRSymposiumHighlights>

Guest : Director III Tina Katharine Sison
Civil Service Institute

Short URL : <https://bit.ly/LunChatwithCSCJuly2021>

LINGKOD BAYAN DIARIES

AN ANTHOLOGY OF CIVIL SERVANTS' STORIES

JULY



Ligtas na Pamayanang, Ligtas na Sambayanan

feat. Cedric D. Daep, Head of the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office, Albay
2019 Dangal ng Bayan Awardee

Photo by ASTROS

LINGKOD BAYAN DIARIES
AN ANTHOLOGY OF CIVIL SERVANTS' STORIES

Watch Now!



Watch Now!

This is the story of Cedric D. Daep, Head of the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office Provincial Government of Albay. He was awarded the 2019 Dangal ng Bayan award for making the Province of Albay a frontrunner in disaster preparedness, and for engaging and empowering people to be ready and resilient amid calamities.

In this Lingkod Bayan Diaries episode, learn about what motivates him and be inspired by his message to fellow public servants.

Short URL: <https://bit.ly/LBDJuly2021>

Philippine Civil Service Anniversary Government Online Career Fair, and Online Zumba & Film Showing







Host: Mark Malitan
Acting Director III Roderick Romualdo
Examinations, Recruitment, and Placement Office
Director IV Judith Dongallo-Chicano
CSC National Capital Region
Host: Moon Danipog

Short URL : <https://bit.ly/LunChatwithCSCAugust2021>



Watch Now!

This episode tackles some of the major PCSA events including Online Zumba and Film Showing, and the Government Online Career Fair.

Guest : Director IV Judith Dongallo-Chicano,
CSC National Capital Region
Director III Roderick Romualdo
CSC Examinations, Recruitment, and Placement Office

Short URL : <https://bit.ly/LunChatwithCSCAugust2021>



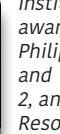
Space Heroes

Advanced Space Technology, Research, Operations, and Services (ASTROS) Team
Advanced Science and Technology Institute
Department of Science and Technology
2019 Presidential Lingkod Bayan Awardee

Photo by ASTROS

LINGKOD BAYAN DIARIES
AN ANTHOLOGY OF CIVIL SERVANTS' STORIES

Watch Now!



Watch Now!

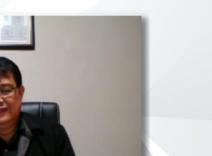
What are the values we can learn from the team that launched the country's first microsatellite, DIWATA-1, into space? What is it like to work in the dynamic field of space science and technology?

Meet the Advanced Space Technology, Research, Operations, and Services (ASTROS) Team of the Advanced Science and Technology Institute, Department of Science and Technology. The team was awarded the Presidential Lingkod Bayan in 2019 for placing the Philippines in the space technology map through the development and operation of the country's first microsatellites Diwata-1 and 2, and the first ground receiving station, the Philippine Earth Data Resource and Observation (PEDRO).

Short URL: <https://bit.ly/LBDAugust2021>

Thanksgiving Episode for the 121st Philippine Civil Service Anniversary





Chairperson Alicia dela Rosa-Bala
Asst. Comm. Ariel G. Ronquillo

Also featuring the Philippine Statistics Authority for the promotion of the National Statistics Month

Hosts: Moon Danipog & Mark Malitan

Short URL : <https://bit.ly/LunChatwithCSCSeptember2021>



Watch Now!

LunChat with CSC dedicates this special episode to thank all government workers and partners for the success of the 121st Philippine Civil Service Anniversary.

It also promotes the National Statistics Month happening in October.
Guest : CSC Chairperson Alicia dela Rosa-Bala
CSC Commissioner Aileen Lourdes A. Lizada
CSC Assistant Commissioner Ariel G. Ronquillo
Deputy National Statistician Minerva P. Esquivias
Assistant National Statistician Severa De Costo
Philippine Statistics Authority

Short URL : <https://bit.ly/LunChatwithCSCSeptember2021>

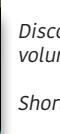


Teaching Beyond the Classroom

Michelle D. Rubio, Master Teacher II
Calao Elementary School, DepEd-Sorsogon
2019 Dangal ng Bayan Awardee

LINGKOD BAYAN DIARIES
AN ANTHOLOGY OF CIVIL SERVANTS' STORIES

Watch Now!



Watch Now!

Tchr. Michelle was awarded the 2019 Dangal ng Bayan Award for her creativity in stimulating learning. Her Classhome, Resort for Learning, and Reading Car among other innovations have developed comprehensive reading skills while the Dugtong Buhay supported the basic needs of indigent students, encouraging them to come to school even without baon and school materials.

Discover what makes her passionate about teaching and her other volunteerism projects in her community.

Short URL: <https://bit.ly/LBDSeptember2021>

SEPTEMBER



Employees' Mental Health and the Continuing Pandemic

With more than a year into the pandemic, the mental health of Filipinos is not getting any better.

A survey by MindNation on employees' mental health, conducted from September 2020 to June 2021, revealed that two out of 25 employees are at a risk of suicide, or eight percent have suicidal thoughts. These are due to "COVID-19 fears, personal matters, financial pressures, work pressure, and loneliness." In a separate report by MindNation in 2021, mental health challenges at work can cost companies as much as PHP700,000 per 100 employees annually.

Aside from the stress, anxiety, and depression experienced by many since the start of the on-off lockdowns, people are now experiencing pandemic fatigue. The World Health Organization defines it as an "expected and natural response to a prolonged public health crisis." Being one of the few countries to have the longest lockdowns, Filipinos are becoming more and more exhausted, severely affecting their mental health. That is why the discussion of mental health from the start of the pandemic has

never stopped to help alleviate the risks posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the 121st Philippine Civil Service Anniversary spearheaded by the Civil Service Commission (CSC) this September, mental health wellness has been highlighted in its various activities, from Zumba and aerobics to the Q&A on mental health. There were also several sessions tackling mental wellbeing of government workers in the 2021 Public Sector HR Symposium.

These are some of the ways on how the CSC, as the central human resource institution of the Philippine bureaucracy, is helping the entire government workforce to stay afloat, protect their wellbeing, and remain productive. Moreover, even before the pandemic hit, the CSC has put guidelines on the development of mental health program in the public sector through CSC Resolution No. 1901265, promulgated on 23 October 2019. This is in response to the Mental Health Act of 2018, which mandates the CSC to develop guidelines and standards on appropriate and evidence-based mental health programs for the workplace, develop policies that promote mental health in the

workplace, and address stigma and discrimination suffered by people with mental health conditions.

In this health and wellness section, CS Reporter will tackle the Mental Health Program of the Public Sector and the best practices that two organizations do to achieve mental wellness in the workplace. Read on!

Mental Health Program in the Public Sector

The Guidelines on the Development of Mental Health Program in the Public Sector aims to promote the overall mental wellness of government workers and provide an inclusive, conducive, and supportive work environment to ensure a healthy and productive workforce.

It covers all employees, regardless of employment status, under National Government Agencies (NGAs), Constitutional Bodies, Government-Owned or Controlled Corporations (GOCCs) with original charters, State Universities and Colleges (SUCs), Local Government Units (LGUs), and Local Water Districts.

HEALTH and WELLNESS

Under the said guidelines, all agencies must develop their own Mental Health Program (MHP). A model MHP is one of the key elements of the guidelines. However, agencies have the freedom to expand the program based on their unique requirements. The MHP should be integrated into the regular HRD program under health and wellness.

The components of an agency MHP include the (1) rationale,

(2) objectives, (3) coverage, (4) guiding principles, (5) strategies, (6) implementation mechanism of the MHP, (7) roles and responsibilities of heads of agencies, human resource management officer, and employee associations, (8) communication plan, and (9) monitoring and evaluation.

Let's take a deeper look at the strategies that agencies can do to promote mental health in their organizations:

MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM: STRATEGIES

1 PREVENTION, PROMOTION, AND IEC

- Conduct mental health wellness activities such as regular stress management, teambuilding, organized peer counseling, physical fitness, support groups and interest group sharing.
- Conduct of continuing mental health awareness/education activities such as production of information, education, and communication materials, conduct of seminars and fora on mental health, and stress debriefing

2 TREATMENT AND RECOVERY

- Provide intervention, treatment, and referral to employees with mental health issues at work
- Conduct debriefing interventions to employees in case of life-threatening situations or traumatic experiences which may or may not be work related
- Support retiring employees for easier transition

3 MENTAL HEALTH INTEGRATION TO HR POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

- Assess mental health of an employee during recruitment and if applicable during promotion
- Integrate mental health awareness session in the new employees' orientation
- Include mental health assessment in the Annual Physical Examination
- Provide mechanism to ensure the psychological wellness of its human resource personnel and agency mental health service providers.

4 INSTITUTIONAL NETWORKS AND REFERRAL SYSTEM

- Create inventory of health institutions that provide treatment and recovery program for people with mental health issues/concerns, with list of services offered and their contact numbers
- Mobilize organized support groups on mental health
- Provide DOH MH Hotline and other support mechanisms for employees at risks and with mental health conditions
- Establish protocol or referral system for employees with mental health conditions

5 CAPACITY-BUILDING FOR MHP ADMINISTRATORS

- Provide basic education and training on mental health for MHP administrators
- Provide information and training on how to handle employees at risk or those with mental health conditions

6 REVIEW OF WORKING CONDITIONS

- Assess workplace conditions/environment
- Assess workload assignment vis-a-vis accomplishment
- Review job description

These are the standard strategies that government agencies can develop and implement as part of their human resource office's health and wellness program.

To implement these strategies, three (3) entities are critical to its success—the head of agency, human resource office, and the employee organization/association. The agency head shall institutionalize the implementation of the MHP by ensuring that (1) all established mental health policies are administered and enforced in the workplace, (2) mental health program is integrated with the human resource development and management policies and processes, (3) resources including funding is provided, and (4) institutional network is established.

Meanwhile, the Human Resource Management Office (HRMO) or functionally related office of the agency shall manage the MHP and its programs and activities. These include all strategies abovementioned. Officers and members of the employee organization shall also be tapped to collaborate with the agency head and HRMO and provide support and assistance in developing strategies, administration, information dissemination, implementation, and monitoring of the programs and activities on mental health initiatives.

To strengthen the implementation of the MHP, a communication plan and monitoring and evaluation are needed. Agency shall adopt and implement a communication plan to promote the mental health program through available media. A quarterly monitoring report shall be submitted by the HRMO to the agency head and be included in the annual accomplishment report of the agency.

Wellness and resiliency at TaskUs: A Best Practice

In the recently concluded Public Sector HR Symposium, TaskUs Wellness & Resiliency (W&R) Asia Director Vina Paglicawan shared her company's best practices on protecting and taking care of their employees' mental health. Yes, you read it right, TaskUs has its own department focused on its workforce's wellness and resilience. This fact already makes it a best practice as not all companies or organizations have a unit or department entirely dedicated to managing the mental health of its employees. For most, this colossal task is lodged in the human resource department.

As shared by Ms. Paglicawan, the company's employee governance model is different from the typical HR management models. Their company believes that they should take care of their employees first for them to do a great job and not the other way around. "If we take care of our employees, particularly their mental health, wellness, and wellbeing, and if we teach them how to take care of themselves, they will do their best to serve their clients," Ms. Vina Paglicawan underscored during her session.

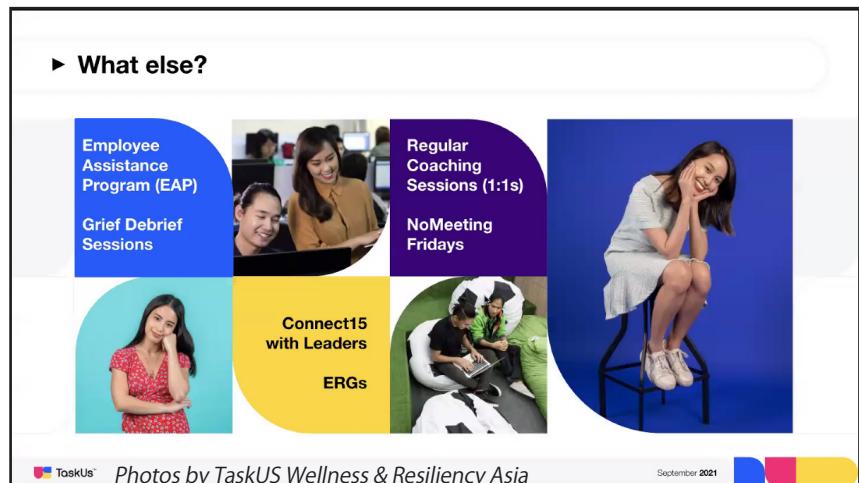
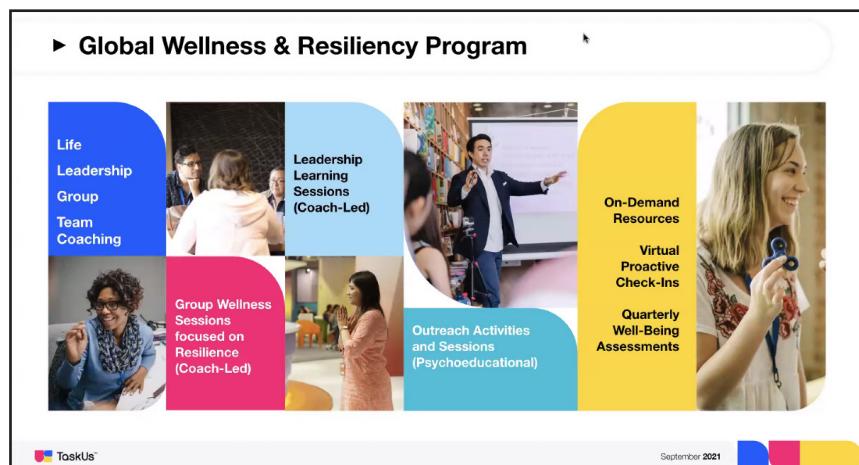
TaskUs' W&R department has more than 100 mental health professionals attending to the mental health needs of their workforce. It aims to "be a meaningful partner for teammates (employees) in their pursuit of personal wellbeing and transformation." They provide psychological and psychiatric support to their employees and even to their family members. They also have preventive care as well as resiliency skills training.

The company adheres to four principles in implementing mental health programs in the company: (1) employee-centered, (2) inclusive, (3) collaborative, and (4) transformative. Employees are empowered to identify and advance their wellness goals. They have access to mental health providers and can also communicate and collaborate freely with leaders in the company. They are also encouraged to expand their knowledge and understanding of their wellbeing.

Being a staunch advocate of holistic wellness, TaskUs considers eight dimensions of wellness: environmental, intellectual, physical, occupational, emotional,

financial, social, and spiritual. They cover all these dimensions in their mental health programs to ensure that employees function well as individuals.

TaskUs has a wide array of programs under its Global Wellness & Resiliency Program. This includes coaching sessions, psychoeducational activities, grief debrief sessions, group wellness and leadership learning sessions, virtual proactive check-ins, among others. During such activities, they openly talk about trauma, suicide, domestic abuse, which for many are taboos. Their goal is to normalize discussion about mental health among their employees.



C.A.R.E.S. Protocol in the Workplace

Paglicawan emphasized that their department does not do all the implementation of the program. "It is never about the W&R team's job; it is about the partnership of the leaders and the department to help their employees." This shows that the management should take an active role in the mental health program of the organization.

Because of these mental health initiatives, TaskUs has achieved various employer awards such as the Investors in People (Platinum), Glassdoor's 2019 Best Places to Work, 2021 Stevie Winner (Gold) for Great Employers, among others. These awards show that they have created a culture of HR excellence in their organization.

Check for imminent danger.
The first step is for managers

It is a first-aid protocol for mental health that aims to help managers/colleagues respond to their direct reports/co-employees who may be experiencing mental health issues.

* * *

- Check for imminent danger
- Actively listen without judgement
- Reassure and inform
- Encourage to seek professional help
- Support self-help strategies

C.A.R.E.S in the Workplace

to communicate with their subordinates to check their status and identify assistance they may need. A face-to-face or online *kumustahan* can be done. Managers must be both psychologically and emotionally ready to touch base with their employees.

Actively listen without judgment. An emphatic type of listening is needed to encourage employees or colleagues to share their feelings. There is no need to share your own opinion. You need to reflect on their thoughts through encouraging, paraphrasing, reflecting, and summarizing what they have already said.

Encouraging may be verbal and non-verbal. Verbal means can be in the form of prompt and invitation to continue what a person is saying. Non-verbal cues can be nodding or mirroring the other's facial expression. Paraphrasing means highlighting the important details with just a few words. Reflecting is mirroring their feelings, while summarizing is presenting the key points of what they have shared to show that you understand their experience.

Reassure and inform. Once they have opened up, it is essential to validate their feelings and affirm

them by saying that there are no right or wrong feelings. The manager, HR, and you can ask the person how you can help them. You may also share other coping strategies if theirs seem to be problematic.

Encourage to seek professional help. As a colleague, you should refer them to the right people in your agency to help them with their mental health needs, such as the HRMO or professional help such as psychologists, psychiatrists, counselors, and therapists, only if this is available in your organization.

Support self-help strategies. Aside from obtaining professional help, employees should also be empowered

Support self-help strategies

- S** – Start a gratitude journal
- E** - Eat nutritious meals and eat at regular times
- L** - Limit exposure to upsetting media coverage/social media & get information from credible sources
- F** - Find time for self-development (hobbies & skills)
- C** - Connect with family and friends regularly and reach out to health worker/professionals when overwhelmed
- A** - Avoid tobacco, alcohol or drugs to cope with your emotions
- R** - Remember your strengths and how you've coped with past challenges
- E** - Exercise, sleep and pray or meditate regularly

Photo by Ateneo CORD

to create their own strategies for taking care of their mental health. Leaders and HR should support them in this way also. Dr. Mactal shared eight tactics that any employee can follow:

These are some self-care tips that employees can do regularly to maintain their wellbeing, especially during this pandemic. On the part of managers and the HR officers who are the usual responders during first aid for mental health, part of the risk is feeling fatigued or absorbing the negative emotions of their employees. Thus, it is also vital for them to do self-care strategies. They need to find a way to release the stress without disclosing the situation of their colleagues.

Dr. Mactal pointed out that the C.A.R.E.S. protocol "is one way for you to help colleagues in need. It takes time and practice, but you can do it. What's most important is that you have the heart to listen and to journey with the person in need."

Creating a healthy mental health culture at work

With the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on employees' overall wellbeing and work productivity, mental health policies, programs, and initiatives are paramount in every government organization.

The model mental health program as prescribed in CSC Resolution No. 1901265 provides the impetus for agency heads and HRMOs to ensure that their human resource, who serves as the machinery of their institutions, are well taken care of in all aspects of their lives, not only work-wise but also in their personal circumstances.

The strategies in the CSC's mental health program model and the best practices from TaskUs and Ateneo CORD have one common denominator: communication. Without effective communication among and between leaders and employees, the strategies would not be carried out successfully as communication is the most basic and most vital form of connection among people. 

ADOPTION OF VIRTUAL HEARING IN THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION AND ITS REGIONAL OFFICES

Number : 2100420
Promulgated : 02 June 2021

RESOLUTION

GUIDELINES ON THE USE OF VIRTUAL MEETING PLATFORMS FOR HEARINGS AND PRE-HEARING CONFERENCE BEFORE THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION AND ITS REGIONAL OFFICES

I. Definition of Terms

1. Virtual hearing refers to an online hearing through the use of video, audio, data transmission devices and applications to allow parties in a case, located in different physical locations to simultaneously communicate by seeing and hearing each other, thereby resembling or mirroring an in-person hearing.
2. Virtual Pre-hearing conference refers to an online pre-hearing conference through the use of video, audio, data transmission devices and applications to allow parties in a case, located in different physical locations to simultaneously communicate by seeing and hearing each other, thereby resembling or mirroring an in-person pre-hearing conference.
3. Parties/Participants refer to all those notified and allowed by the hearing officer for the virtual hearing or virtual pre-hearing conference.
4. Proceedings refer to all and any of the stages in the preliminary investigation, pre-hearing conferences and formal hearings of all administrative cases in the Civil Service Commission and its Regional Offices.
5. Hashing is a cryptographic process that can be used to validate the authenticity and integrity of a recording data. It is essentially a process that translates information about the file into a code. Two hash values (of the original file and its copy) can be compared to ensure the files are equal.

II. General Provisions

1. The CSC Central Office and the CSC Regional Offices shall conduct administrative virtual hearings and pre-hearing conference, in close coordination with the Integrated Records Management Office (IRMO), and using the Microsoft Teams platform prescribed by IRMO.
2. Participants or parties in the virtual hearing proceedings who do not have the Microsoft Teams app may download said app on their devices. Parties/Participants invited/allowed by the hearing officer to join the virtual proceedings are invited as guests to the team.
3. The said virtual platform must meet the requirements and needs of a

virtual hearing as set forth in this guideline.

4. The proceedings in the virtual hearing and pre-hearing conference shall closely resemble the proceedings in an in-person proceedings. In the same manner, the dignity and solemnity of in-person proceedings shall at all times be mirrored in the virtual proceedings. The remote location shall be viewed as an extension of the hearing room.
5. The confidentiality of attorney-client communications shall always be preserved.

III. Coverage and Applicability

1. The Commission authorizes the conduct of virtual hearings and pre-hearing conference by the Office for Legal Affairs (OLA) and Regional Offices through its Legal Services Division, where in-person hearings are not possible. The virtual platform may also be used in the conduct of preliminary investigation where a clarificatory meeting with the parties to discuss the merits of the case is needed pursuant to Section 18, Rules 4 of the 2017 Rules on Administrative Cases in the Civil Service (2017 RACCS).
2. The herein guidelines shall apply to all appearances and testimonies of all parties attending said proceedings.
3. The virtual platform shall apply to all stages of the formal hearings and to the pre-hearing conference of newly-filed and pending administrative cases.
4. Virtual hearings and pre-hearing conference shall be applicable not only during declared GCQ, MGCQ, ECQ and MECQ but also on occasion of unforeseen and or fortuitous events, which prevent in-person appearances before the CSC.

IV. Technical and Operational Standards

1. Technology and facilities used by the hearing officers and parties for the virtual hearing must be of such quality as to allow hearing officer and the participants to observe the demeanor and non-verbal communications of all participants in the virtual hearing; observe any physical or documentary evidence or exhibits presented during the proceedings; see and hear what is taking place in the virtual hearing

- rooms to the same extent as if they were present in the hearing rooms, and converse with each other simultaneously.
2. Upon approval of this Resolution and before implementation of this activity, the Office for Legal Affairs and the Information Technology Division (ITD), Integrated Records Management Office (IRMO), this Commission, shall conduct an online technical training to hearing officers and designated prosecutors on the basic principles of virtual hearing, and operation of the virtual hearing equipment to ensure familiarity with the guidelines and technology.
 3. As part of the technical training, a virtual hearing pilot test may be conducted upon request by the Regional office with the assistance of the ITD to surface possible issues and problems that have to be addressed.

V. General Procedure

1. Virtual hearing and pre-hearing conference shall be scheduled by the hearing officer. He/She shall act as the moderator to ensure that the one accepted in the scheduled virtual proceeding was invited therein or is allowed to participate. He/She has the right to remove unwelcome or uninvited participants therein.
2. The hearing officer shall notify the parties or their counsels through their respective email addresses. He may use his/her electronic signature in the issuance of such notification/order. The notification email shall indicate the time and the date when the virtual hearing or pre-hearing conference shall be held, and contain a link (access code) which the parties shall click to join the hearing. The notification email shall likewise remind the parties that all details and information to gain access to such proceedings shall be treated with strict confidentiality. The recipient shall immediately respond to the invite or send an acknowledgment email confirming the receipt of the link to the virtual hearing. Proofs of receipt of the invitation shall be properly recorded by the hearing officer.
3. Any participant who has not received an invitation link at least within twenty-four (24) hours before the scheduled virtual hearing or who cannot access it shall immediately inform the hearing officer through email, phone call or other electronic means.
4. The hearing officer together with the designated prosecutor/s, counsels, parties and witnesses, before proceeding to the actual virtual hearing shall conduct a virtual hearing test to resolve any technical problem and ensure a proper and clear audio-video connection between the parties. Participants may be reminded of basic procedures such as how to mute and to unmute the audio settings and how to make the most of their video settings. It is incumbent upon the participants to the hearing to secure a good connectivity and ensure their capabilities to address technical issues. Otherwise, this may justify

- the cancellation of the hearing. In such case, the party who encounters a connectivity problem shall be given one chance to address it and a single resetting may be afforded.
5. No one is allowed to join the virtual hearing or pre-hearing conference except the parties notified by the hearing officers. Upon motion by any party on reasonable ground, a party not notified in the hearing or preliminary conference maybe allowed by the hearing officer to join the virtual proceedings.
 6. Participants appearing remotely must be at the virtual or waiting lobby at least fifteen (15) minutes before the scheduled virtual proceeding;
 7. When participants and their counsel are not present at the same location during the virtual hearing, they shall be permitted to confer privately without the other participants overhearing them through the provision of means such as secured phone lines, separate meeting rooms within the virtual platform and other suitable electronic means. A person who is under cross-examination, however, shall not be allowed to confer with his/her counsel unless with the permission of the hearing officer.
 8. Even at the highest currently available transmission speeds and with the most modern equipment, there is a delay between video picture being seen and sound being heard. In addition, the quality of the picture received is affected by movement of the person or object before the camera. Thus, allowances appropriate to the delays between picture being seen and sound being heard may still occur. Thus, allowances appropriate to the delay being experienced during a virtual hearing shall be observed to avoid one participant talking over another. Participants are also advised to reduce their body movements as much as possible.
 9. Considering that the participants in the virtual hearing or pre-hearing conference may be in multiple locations, the hearing officer shall pin the monitors or screen of the participants to ensure that at any given time during the virtual proceedings, the same can be viewed from the respective monitors or screens of all the participants.
 10. Hearing officers of areas under the GCQ, GMCQ or MECQ shall be in their respective hearing rooms at all times during the virtual hearings and pre-hearing conference, except those who are under work-from-home arrangement who may conduct the virtual proceedings in their place of residence. Hearing officers in areas under the ECQ or under work-from-home arrangement may likewise access the virtual proceedings from their place of residence.
 11. Hearing Officers shall be assisted by an administrative staff during the conduct of the virtual hearing and pre-hearing conference.
 12. The proceeding, including the respective locations of participants, shall be recorded by the hearing officer using the video recording in

the MS Teams application. Thereafter, the recordings shall be encrypted. When there is a technical problem in the MS Teams app recording, the hearing officer may use other recording gadgets. Such recording shall be considered official minutes of the proceeding. Any other recordings shall not be allowed and considered, and cannot form part of the records of the case. To maintain the confidentiality of the proceedings, and the privacy of the personalities involved, parties are prohibited from recording and publishing/posting in any public domain and social media the proceedings during the virtual proceedings, otherwise they shall be meted with a penalty /punished accordingly, after due process. Such instruction shall be relayed to the participants of the virtual proceedings prior to their conduct. Any party may request in writing for the official recording of the proceeding for his/her use in relation to his/her case. Sharing of the recorded proceedings and or its details and information is strictly prohibited and shall be considered a contempt of the Commission. Through the assistance of the IRMO, "hashes" shall be generated in the recorded data for purposes of validating the authenticity and integrity of the recording. The hashes shall be for the use of the Commission to determine whether an alteration in the recording has been made. The person responsible for the alteration shall be held liable administratively and criminally.

13. Participants are encouraged to use earphones or headsets during the virtual hearing and pre-hearing conference, unless the remote locations from which they participate have dedicated online hearing solutions with noise cancellation features in the place.
14. When there are technical issues like connectivity affecting the conduct of the virtual proceedings, the hearing officer may, on his own initiative or upon motion of the parties, suspend the proceedings. In such event, the reason/s for such suspension shall be properly recorded.
15. Any intentional disruption of digital communications intended to deny participation by any party, coaching of any witness presented for examination and knowingly presenting falsified digital images or evidence shall be considered as an administrative offense and shall be dealt with severely.
16. The provisions under the 2017 Rules on Administrative Cases in the Civil Service (RACCS) which are not inconsistent with these guidelines shall continue to be in full force and effect.

VI. Procedure of the Pre-hearing Conference

1. At the commencement of the formal hearing which shall be held not earlier than five (5) days nor later than ten (10) days from the receipt of the respondent's answer or upon the expiration of the period to answer, the hearing officer shall issue an order for

the parties, through their counsels, to submit to the hearing officer their respective Pre-hearing Briefs, copy furnished the other party, pursuant to Section 36, Rule 8, 2017 RACCS. The Pre-hearing briefs together with the original and copies of all documentary exhibits to be marked such as Sworn statements and Judicial Affidavits and in their desired marking order shall be submitted within five (5) days upon receipt of the order. No motion for extension of time to submit shall be allowed.

In this case, where the e-Filing of Pleadings in the Commission is still not in place, the extension of the filing of the pleadings may be allowed, just like when the CSC came up with CSC MC No. 11, s. 2020 (Extension of Filing of Pleadings and Other Case Requirements and Cancellation of Scheduled Hearings during the Period of Community Quarantine). If the schedule of the virtual hearing is dependent on the pleading whose filing has been extended or interrupted, the virtual hearing will necessarily be postponed as well.

2. The counsels shall furnish photocopies of such documentary exhibits to the other party. The parties shall retain photocopies of their documentary exhibits for reference during the marking of the exhibits in the pre-hearing conference. Upon receipt of their respective Pre-hearing briefs, the hearing officer shall schedule immediately the pre-hearing conference and shall send the notices for such conference through the email addresses of the parties or through their counsels.
3. During the pre-hearing conference, the documents earlier filed by the parties through their Pre-hearing Briefs shall be marked. Upon comparison and verification that the copy is a faithful reproduction of the original, the hearing officer shall mark such copy with letters, if for the prosecution, and numbers, if for the respondent. Such markings shall bear the signature of the hearing officer and the date when the marking was made.
4. After the marking of the exhibits, upon request of the concerned party, the hearing officer shall return to the requesting party the original and the photocopies of the marked exhibits. He/She shall retain the marked exhibits for purposes of the virtual hearing.
5. The non-submission of the documentary exhibits to be marked shall be construed as a waiver to present documentary evidence during the formal investigation.
6. The pre-hearing conference shall be governed by Section 36 (Pre-hearing Conference) of the 2017 RACCS.

VII. Procedure of the Hearing Proper

1. At the start of the virtual proceedings, the hearing officer shall require participants at remote locations to pan their cameras across the room to determine that there are no uninvited guest/s in the room, and

- that the doors are closed. Participants should also be reminded to refrain from using their cellphones during the proceedings unless with prior permission of the hearing officer. In the event that the participants are situated in the office of their lawyer, all the participants (the party to the case and the witness) shall be admitted to the hearing separately. Hence, each of them would have their respective accounts whether as guests or otherwise for better audio-visual quality and monitoring.
2. The hearing officer shall ensure that:
 - a. The persons appearing remotely before him/her are identified by reminding counsels to introduce themselves pursuant to Section 39 of the 2017 RACCS and to describe their present location for the purpose of the virtual hearing;
 - b. Section 38 (Preliminary Matters) of the 2017 RACCS is complied with particularly the placing of a witness under oath and the taking of his/her personal circumstance as required under the rules.
 - c. He/she is seen and heard by the participants;
 - d. Participants understand that the virtual proceeding is pursuant to the CSC rules and guidelines and that the same rule applies as if they are physically in the CSC court room;
 - e. If there is an objection on the use of the virtual proceedings, a ruling would be made on such objection;
 - f. A reminder shall be given that attendance of persons not invited in the virtual hearing, photographing, recording and rebroadcasting the proceedings are prohibited;
 - g. A reminder is given to the participants of the protocol or procedures for speaking, which include the order in which the participants shall be speaking, raising timely objections during the hearing, and conferring privately with counsel.
 3. Participant speaking or testifying must always be seen from a frontal angle and heard clearly by all other

(Sgd.) **ALICIA dela ROSA - BALA**
Chairperson

(Sgd.) **ATTY. AILEEN LOURDES A. LIZADA**
Commissioner

VACANT
Commissioner

Attested By:

(Sgd.) **KATHERINE LIMARE-DELMORO**
Acting Director IV
Commission Secretariat and Liaison Office

participants. The hearing must be conducted in such a way that the hearing officer is not prevented in determining the credibility of the witnesses and their testimonies, notwithstanding the hearing officer's remote observation on the demeanor and conduct of the witnesses.

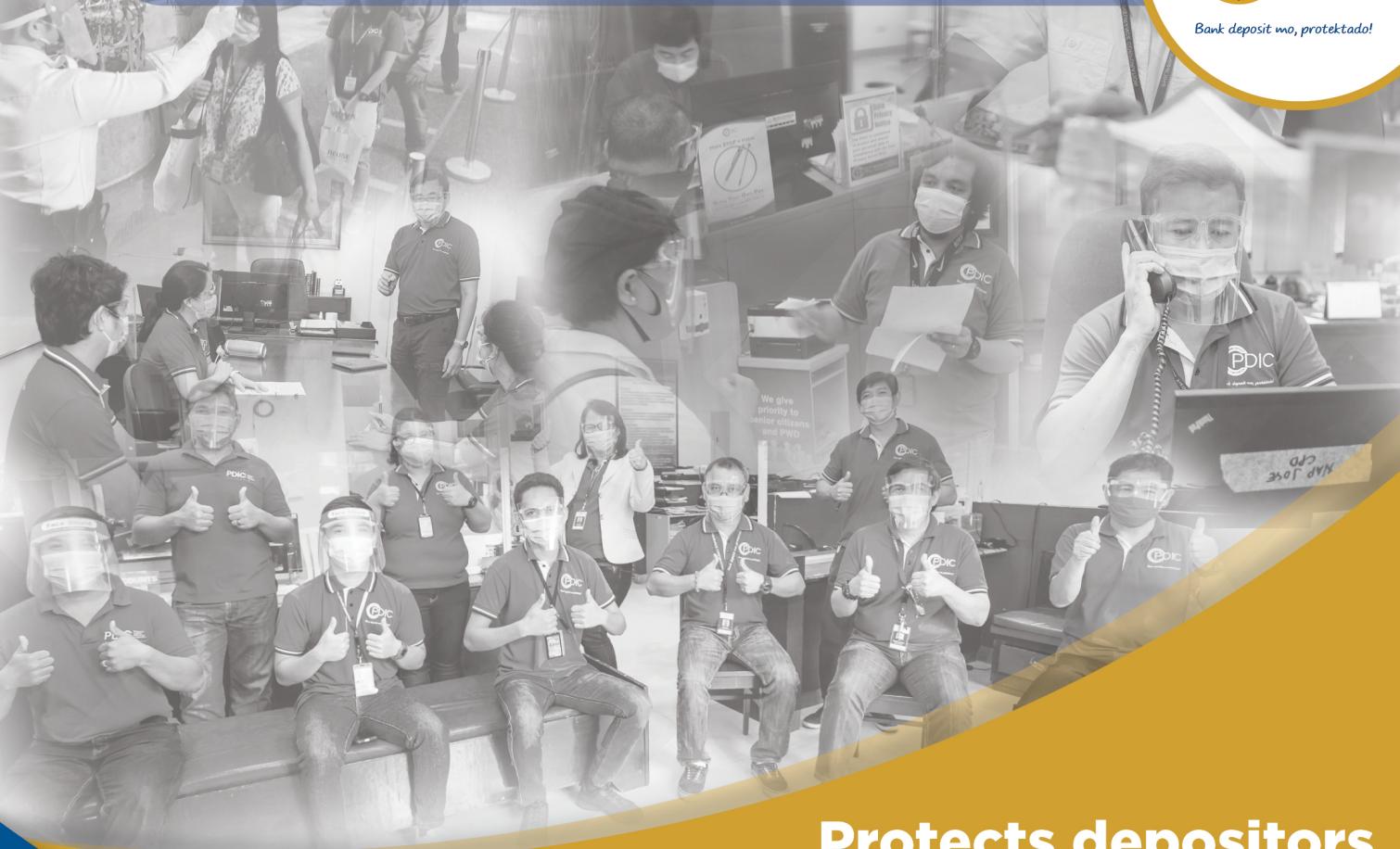
4. If testimony is to be given, the hearing officer should explain the administration of the oath or affirmation, how evidence will be taken and who will be conducting examination and cross-examination.
5. Only documents that were previously marked by the hearing officer during the preliminary conference shall be affirmed and/or testified to by a witness. The hearing officer who is the repository of the marked documents shall screen share or display to the camera the marked document to be testified to by the witness, upon motion of the prosecutor/counsel of the parties concerned.
6. Object evidence may be presented and marked during the virtual hearing if it can be exhibited, examined or viewed by all participants, by displaying the object on the screen, or physically showing it to the witness testifying thereto at his/her location, with full view of the participants.
7. Should the exhibition, examination or viewing of the documentary evidence or the marking or examination of the object evidence be rendered impossible, insufficient or difficult by the limitations of the platform or some other compelling reasons, the in-person hearing may instead be ordered by the hearing officer for the purpose of presenting or completing the testimony of a witness.
8. At any time in the formal investigation, the parties may decide to terminate the proceedings by submitting their respective positions papers and submit the case for resolution.

VIII. Effectivity

These guidelines shall take effect after fifteen (15) days from date of publication in the Official Gazette, or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Quezon City.

The Daily Tribune, 14 August 2021



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