



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

House Bill No. 5376



Introduced by Representative Jose Enrique S. Garcia III

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Among the civil registry documents more commonly required in certain transaction with employers, government agencies, private companies and other non-government entities are the birth certificate and the death certificate.

A birth certificate is a vital record that establishes the birth of a child.¹ It is an official form that gives details on the time and place of a person's birth, and his or her name, sex, mother's name and (usually) father's name.² A birth certificate has a plenitude of uses. It is used to authenticate one's identity and nationality, and assist in obtaining government-issued identity documents, such as a passport or driver's license.³ It fills in one of the basic requirements for school enrollment, employment, contracting of marriage, social security coverage, and eligibility for government assistance or claims for financial benefits, among others.

On the other hand, a death certificate is an official document setting forth particulars relating to a dead person, including the name of the individual, the date of birth and the date of death.⁴ The death certificate is usually required as a supporting document in settling the estate of the deceased, processing of claims and death benefits, and securing license for subsequent marriage, to mention a few.

Being permanent records of the identity or the fact of death of a person, a birth certificate and a death certificate issued by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) have no expiration period. Unfortunately, this is not clearly spelled out in our civil registry laws. Consequently, certain end-users of birth and death certificates such as employers, government agencies, private companies, and other non-government entities customarily demand that said documents be submitted in the most recent security paper (SECPA). This end-user requirement taken together with the PSA practice of changing some features of the SECPA, such as its color,

¹ <https://psa.gov.ph/civilregistration/birth-certificate>; last accessed on 5 November 2019.

² *Id.*

³ *Id.*

⁴ <https://psa.gov.ph/civilregistration/requesting-civil-registry-document/death-certificate>; last accessed on 6 November 2019.

after some time, to preserve the integrity of the document,⁵ created an impression that birth and death certificates issued by the PSA presumably expire after six (6) months from issuance. The requirement as well as the unwarranted impression compelled the repeated application for a copy of birth or death certificate every time a person is required to submit it, resulting in inconvenience and incurrence of additional expenses.

This bill seeks to lessen if not completely eliminate the inconvenience and additional expenses entailed by the required submission of birth or death certificates printed in the most recent SECPA by:

- (1) declaring in no uncertain terms that a birth or death certificate issued by the PSA does not expire;
- (2) prohibiting all national government agencies and instrumentalities, government-owned and controlled corporations, local government units, private companies, and other non-government entities from requiring the submission of birth or death certificate printed on the most recent SECPA, or issued by the PSA within the past six (6) months.
- (3) making the submission of a photocopy of the PSA-issued birth or death certificate, duly authenticated in the manner provided in the bill, as sufficient compliance of the requirement; and
- (4) mandating the development of an electronic verification facility as an alternative means of authenticating the photocopy of birth or death certificate and encouraging the migration, when feasible, of the required submission of a PSA-issued birth or death certificate into a paperless process.

Support for this measure is therefore earnestly sought from my colleagues.


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⁵ <https://psa.gov.ph/content/press-statement-issue-civil-registry-documents-such-birth-death-and-marriage-certificates>; last accessed on 6 November 2019.



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AN ACT
STRENGTHENING THE CONTINUING VALIDITY OF BIRTH AND DEATH
CERTIFICATES ISSUED BY THE PHILIPPINE STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known as the “Birth and Death Certificates Continuing Validity Act.”

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to establish an effective system for providing copies of civil registry documents and promote efficiency and economy by removing duplicitous processes and requirements involving the use of birth and death certificates. Towards this end, the State shall enforce the continuing validity of birth and death certificates issued by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

SEC. 2. Scope and Coverage. – This Act shall apply to all national government agencies and instrumentalities, government-owned and controlled corporations, local government units, private companies, and other non-government entities requiring the submission of birth or death certificate issued by the PSA as prerequisite for the processing of transactions or the delivery of services.

SEC. 3. Continuing Validity of Birth and Death Certificates. – Every birth or death certificate issued by the PSA shall have a continuing validity. All national government agencies and instrumentalities, government-owned and controlled corporations, local government units, private companies, and other non-government entities are prohibited from requiring the submission of birth or death certificate printed on the most recent security paper or issued by the PSA within a specified period.

1 The continuing validity herein declared, notwithstanding, no person whose
2 birth or death is registered in the civil registry, or his authorized representative,
3 shall be prevented from securing a certified copy of his birth or death certificate in
4 such number of prints or as often as necessary, subject to the payment of the
5 relevant fees prescribed by the PSA.

6 **SEC. 4. Photocopy of the Birth or Death Certificate as Sufficient**
7 **Compliance.** – In all transactions or services where a copy of the birth or death
8 certificate is required, it shall be sufficient for the person concerned or his
9 authorized representative to submit a duly authenticated photocopy of the birth or
10 death certificate to the end-user agency, company or entity. The authentication of
11 the photocopy shall be accomplished by presenting the original birth or death
12 certificate to the person authorized to receive the document with the latter noting
13 “ORIGINAL COPY VERIFIED” or any other notation of similar import on the face of
14 the photocopy submitted.

15 In lieu of the photocopy, the person concerned may, nonetheless, choose to
16 submit the original birth or death certificate.

17 **SEC. 5. Electronic Verification of Birth and Death Certificates.** – Within two
18 (2) years from the effectivity of this Act, the PSA, in coordination with the
19 Department of Information and Communication Technology (DICT), shall develop
20 a viewing facility whereby the agencies, companies and entities requiring the
21 submission birth or death certificates may directly verify the authenticity of the
22 photocopies submitted from the PSA website. The facility shall incorporate such
23 controls and safeguards as are appropriate to ensure that only duly authorized
24 users have access to the facility and the confidentiality of the information is
25 protected at all times in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Child and
26 Youth Welfare Code and the Data Privacy Act. The PSA may charge reasonable
27 fees for the use of the facility.

28 To maximize the ease and convenience offered by technological
29 advancements, the PSA shall continually upgrade the facility and consider the
30 feasibility of adopting appropriate policies towards the migration of the required
31 submission of birth or death certificate into a paperless process.

32 **SEC. 6. Appropriation.** – The amount necessary for the implementation of
33 the provisions of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations
34 Act.

35 **SEC. 7. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** – The PSA shall, within sixty
36 (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, promulgate the implementing rules and
37 regulations necessary to ensure the efficient and effective implementation of this
38 Act.

39 **SEC. 8. Separability Clause.** – If, for any reason, any part or provision of
40 this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions

1 not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

2 **SEC. 9. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, presidential decrees, executive
3 orders, rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this
4 Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

5 **SEC. 10. *Effectivity*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its
6 publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved.