

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2519



INTRODUCED BY REP. JERICO JONAS B. NOGRALES

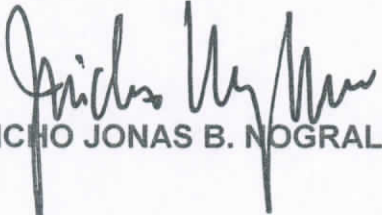
EXPLANATORY NOTE

The continued rise of the demand for care giving service in the Philippines makes it an important national concern. The availability of professional and responsive care giving must be ensured, especially in the light of the country's aging population, the increase in the number of children born with medical issues, and the emergence of new illnesses that require special supportive care.

Corollary to this, the important role of caregivers in national development must also be recognized, and policies in the practice of the caregiving profession must be instituted to protect caregivers from abuse and exploitation.

In view of the above, this bill seeks to institute policies to maintain excellent and globally competitive standards for the caregiver professional service, and for the protection and welfare of caregivers in the Philippines.

The immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


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**AN ACT INSTITUTING POLICIES FOR THE PROTECTION AND
WELFARE OF CAREGIVERS IN THE PRACTICE OF THEIR
PROFESSION**

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Caregivers
Welfare Act”.

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the
State to recognize the role of caregivers in national development and to
institute policies in the practice of the profession with the end in view of
developing competent caregivers whose standards of professional service
shall be excellent and globally competitive.

The State also recognizes the need to protect the rights of the caregivers
towards a decent employment and income, and adheres to a policy of
protecting caregivers against abuse, harassment, violence and economic
exploitation.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act:

(a) *Caregiver* refers to a graduate of a caregiving course from an
accredited training institution that is recognized by the government, or is
certified competent by that same institution, and renders caregiving services
as stipulated in Section 6 of this Act;

(b) *Client* refers to an infant, child or dependent adult;

(c) *Employer* refers to any person who engages and controls the services of a caregiver and is a party to the employment contract; and

(d) *Private employment agency (PEA)* refers to any individual, legitimate partnership, corporation or entity licensed to engage in the recruitment and placement of caregivers for local employment.

SEC. 4. *Employment Contract.* – An employment contract shall be executed by and between the caregiver and the employer before the commencement of the service in a language or dialect understood by both parties. A copy of the duly signed employment contract shall be given to the caregiver which shall include the following:

- (a) Duties and responsibilities of the caregiver;
- (b) Period of employment;
- (c) Compensation;
- (d) Authorized deductions;
- (e) Hours of work and proportionate additional payment;
- (f) Rest days and allowable leaves;
- (g) Board, lodging and medical attention;
- (h) Termination of employment; and
- (i) Any other lawful condition agreed upon by both parties.

The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) shall develop a model employment contract for caregivers which shall be made available at all times, free of charge to caregivers, employers and the general public.

In case where the employment of the caregiver is facilitated through a private employment agency, the PEA shall keep a copy of all employment contracts of their caregivers which shall be made available for verification and inspection by the DOLE.

SEC. 5. *Pre-employment Requirements.* – Prior to the execution of the employment contract, the employer may require the following:

(a) Caregivers training certificate issued by the school or institution accredited by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA);

(b) Medical certificate or health certificate issued by a local government health officer; and

(c) Barangay and police clearance.

SEC. 6. *Duties of the Caregivers.* – The caregiver may provide any of the following services:

- (a) Provide personal care support and assistance to clients with physical impairment or disabilities in private homes, nursing or geriatric care facilities, and other residential setting;
- (b) Help clients with their daily activities and mobility restrictions;
- (c) Provide some basic health-related services, such as checking the clients' pulse rate, temperature and respiration rate;
- (d) Help clients with simple prescribed exercises and assist them with home medications as prescribed by the physician;
- (e) Advise families and patients on cleanliness and household tasks;
- (f) Accompany clients to appointments with doctors or on other errands;
- (g) Assist in housekeeping tasks for the clients; and
- (h) Some other tasks depending on the needs of the clients.

SEC. 7. *Hours of Work.* – The caregiver's working hours shall be based on the employment contract signed by the parties and in accordance with the labor laws, rules and regulations. The caregiver shall be entitled to an aggregate daily rest period of eight (8) hours per day and at least twenty-four (24) hours of rest in a week. The employer shall respect the preference of the caregiver as to the weekly rest day when such preference is based on religious grounds.

SEC. 8. *Minimum Wage.* – The minimum wage of a caregiver shall not be less than the following:

- (a) Seven thousand pesos (P7,000.00) a month for those employed in the National Capital Region (NCR);
- (b) Five thousand five hundred pesos (P5,500.00) a month for those employed in chartered cities and first class municipalities; and
- (c) Four thousand pesos (P4,000.00) a month for those employed in other municipalities.

One (1) year after the effectivity of this Act and, periodically thereafter, the Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Board (RTWPB) shall review and adjust the minimum wage rates for caregivers.

SEC. 9. *Payment of Wages.* – Wages shall be paid on time directly to the caregiver to whom they are due once every two (2) weeks or twice a

month at the intervals not exceeding sixteen (16) days. The employer, unless allowed by the caregiver through a written consent, shall make no deductions from the wages other than what is mandated by law. No employer shall pay the wages of the caregiver by means of promissory notes, vouchers, coupons, tokens, tickets, chits, or any object other than the cash wage as provided for under the law.

They are also entitled to a Thirteenth-month pay as provided for by law.

SEC. 10. *Pay Slip.* – The employer shall at all times provide the caregiver with a copy of the pay slip containing the amount paid in cash every pay day and indicating all deductions made, if any. A copy of the pay slip shall be kept by the employer for a period of three (3) years.

SEC. 11. *Leave Benefits.* – A caregiver who has rendered at least one (1) year of service shall be entitled to an annual service incentive leave of five (5) days with pay. Any unused portion of the annual leave shall not be cumulative or carried over to the succeeding years. Unused leaves shall not be convertible to cash.

SEC. 12. *Other Benefits.* – A caregiver who has rendered at least one (1) month of service shall be covered by the Social Security System (SSS), the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth), and the Home Development Mutual Fund or Pag-IBIG, and shall be entitled to all the benefits in accordance with the pertinent provisions provided by law.

Premium payments or contributions shall be shouldered by the employer. However, if the caregiver is receiving a wage of five thousand pesos (P5,000.00) and above per month, the caregiver shall pay the proportionate share in the premium payments or contributions, as provided by law.

SEC. 13. *Non-diminution of Benefits.* – All existing arrangements between a caregiver and the employer shall be adjusted to conform to the minimum standards set by this Act. The adjustment pertaining to wages shall take effect immediately after the determination and issuance of the appropriate wage order by the RTWPB. Nothing in this Act shall be construed to cause the diminution or substitution of any benefits and privileges currently enjoyed by the caregiver hired directly or through a PEA.

SEC. 14. *Basic Necessities.* – The employer shall provide for the basic necessities of the caregiver to include at least three (3) adequate meals

a day and humane sleeping arrangement. They shall also provide appropriate rest and assistance in case of illnesses and injuries sustained during service without loss of benefits.

SEC. 15. *Privileged Information.* – All information and communication pertaining to the patient or employer or members of the household shall be treated as privileged and confidential, and shall not be publicly disclosed by the caregiver during and after employment.

SEC. 16. *Termination of Service.* – Neither the caregiver nor the employer may terminate the contract before the expiration of the term except for grounds provided for in Sections 17 and 18 of this Act. If the caregiver is unjustly dismissed, the caregiver shall be paid the compensation already earned plus the equivalent of fifteen (15) days work by way of indemnity. If the caregiver leaves without justifiable cause, any unpaid salary due not exceeding the equivalent of fifteen (15) days work shall be forfeited. In addition, the employer may recover from the caregiver costs incurred related to the deployment expenses, if any: *Provided*, That the service has been terminated within six (6) months from the caregiver's employment.

If the duration of the caregiving service is not determined either in stipulation or by the nature of the service, the employer or the caregiver may give notice to end the working relationship five (5) days before the intended termination of the service.

The caregiver and the employer may mutually agree upon written notice to preterminate the contract of employment to end the employment relationship.

SEC. 17. *Termination of Contract by the Caregiver.* – The caregiver may terminate the employment relationship at any time before the expiration of the contract for any of the following reasons:

(a) Verbal or emotional abuse by the employer, client or any member of the household;

(b) Inhuman treatment including physical abuse by the employer, client or any member of the household;

(c) Commission of a crime or offense against the caregiver by the employer, client or any member of the household;

(d) Violation of the terms and conditions of the employment contract by the employer; and

(e) Other causes analogous to the foregoing.

SEC. 18. *Termination of Contract by the Employer.* – The employer may terminate the services of the caregiver at any time before the expiration of the contract for any of the following causes:

(a) Misconduct or willful disobedience by the caregiver of the lawful order of the employer in connection with the former's work;

(b) Gross or habitual neglect or insufficiency in the performance of duties;

(c) Fraud or willful breach of the trust reposed by the employer;

(d) Commission of a crime or offense by the caregiver against the person of the employer, client or any immediate member of the employer's family;

(e) Violation of the terms and conditions of the employment contract by the caregiver;

(f) Any disease prejudicial to the health of the caregiver, the employer, or members of the household; and

(g) Other causes analogous to the foregoing.

SEC. 19. *Settlement of Disputes.* – All labor-related disputes shall be elevated to the DOLE Regional Office having jurisdiction over the workplace without prejudice to the filing of civil or criminal action in appropriate cases. The DOLE Regional Office shall exhaust all conciliation and mediation efforts before a decision shall be rendered.

Ordinary crimes or offenses committed under the Revised Penal Code and other special penal laws by either party shall be filed with the regular courts.

SEC. 20. *Protection of Caregiver Hired Through PEAs.* – The Secretary of Labor and Employment shall, through a system of licensing and regulation, ensure the protection of the caregivers hired through PEAs.

The PEAs shall be jointly and severally liable with the employer for all wages, wage-related benefits, and other benefits due to the caregiver.

The provisions of the Labor Code of the Philippines on the qualifications of the PEAs with regards to nationality, net worth, owners and officers, office

space and other requirements, as well as the non-transferability of license and the commission of prohibited practices, shall apply.

SEC. 21. *Responsibilities of the PEAs.* – In addition, the PEAs shall have the following responsibilities:

(a) Ensure that the caregivers are not charged or levied any recruitment or placement fees;

(b) Ensure that the employment agreement between the caregiver and the employer stipulates the terms and conditions of employment and all the benefits prescribed by this Act;

(c) Provide a preemployment orientation briefing to the caregiver and the employer about their rights and responsibilities in accordance with this Act;

(d) Keep copies of employment contracts and agreements pertaining to recruited caregivers which shall be made available during inspections or whenever required by the DOLE;

(e) Assist caregivers with respect to complaints or grievances against their employers; and

(f) Cooperate with government agencies in rescue operations involving abused or exploited caregivers.

SEC. 22. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of Labor and Employment shall, in coordination with the Director General of the TESDA, promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 23. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 24. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations and other issuances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SEC. 25. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,