



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Batasan Hills, Quezon City

Eighteenth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5201



Introduced by Representatives Florencio Gabriel "Bem" G. Noel

EXPLANATORY NOTE

A caregiver, as defined by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) and the Gale Encyclopedia of Childhood and Adolescence, is a person who is responsible for meeting the physical and psychological needs of an infant, child, or dependent adult. Generally, they provide care and assistance to those who are already dependent on the help of others. They are also engaged in providing services and support to private households across the country and the demand for our caregivers has increased even overseas.

This Act seeks to make caregiving careers more desirable by implementing policies that protect their welfare and provide caregivers the best possible conditions for work. With the nurturing and interpersonal nature of their employment being at the heart of the family home, it is imperative for the State not only ensure that the quality of our caregivers is of optimal standard but it is just as important to ensure that their welfare and well-being is given its appropriate primacy under Philippine laws.

With this act, the State recognizes that caregivers are a strong part of labor which is the primary social economic force in the country and they are vital for the national development. Caregivers must be protected under the law from abuse, harassment, and violence, and are provided the most optimal conditions and environment for work.

In view of the foregoing, immediate approval of this bill is earnestly sought.

FLORENCIO GABRIEL "BEM" G. NOEL
An Waray Partylist Representative



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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 a dependent infant, child or 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, association, corporation or entity licensed to engage in the recruiting 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 and notarized 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 or overtime pay;
- f) Rest days and allowable leaves;
- g) Board, lodging and medical attention;
- h) Other benefits as stipulated under Section 12 of this Act;
- i) Termination of employment; and
- j) Any other lawful condition agreed upon by both parties.

The DOLE shall develop a model employment contract for caregivers which shall be made available at all times post on website, 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) Caregiver's 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) National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) or 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 settings;
- b) Help clients with their daily activities and mobility restrictions;
- c) Provide some basic health-related services, such as checking a client's pulse rate, temperature and respiration rate;
- d) Help clients with simple prescribed exercises, and assist in the administration of home medications as prescribed by the physician, provided that assistance in the administration of intravenous medications shall be upon written consent of the physician;
- e) Advise clients and their families on cleanliness and household tasks;
- f) Accompany clients to appointments with doctors or on other errands;
- g) Assist in housekeeping tasks within the client's room;
- h) Prepare food for clients; and
- i) Other tasks directly related to 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 labor laws, rules, and regulations. A caregiver shall have an eight (8) hour work shift, beyond which the mandatory overtime pay shall be applied.

Sec. 8. **Minimum Wage.** - The minimum wage of a caregiver shall not be less than the applicable wage in the region.

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 note, vouchers, coupons, tokens, tickets, chits or any object other than the cash wage as provided for under the law.

Caregivers 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 payslip containing the amount paid in cash every pay day, and indicating all deductions made, if any. A copy of the payslip 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 at least five (5) days with pay. Any unused portion of the annual leave shall be cumulative or carried over to the succeeding years. Unused leaves shall be convertible to cash.

Sec. 12. **Other Benefits.** - A caregiver shall be covered by the Social Security System (SSS), the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth), and the Home Development Mutual Fund (Pag-Ibig) and shall be entitled to all benefits in accordance with the pertinent provisions of law. The effective date of coverage shall be on the first day of employment.

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. Nothing in this Act shall be construed to cause the diminution or substitution of any benefit or privilege currently enjoyed by the caregiver hired directly or through a PEA.

Sec. 14. **Basic Necessities.** - The employer of a household-based caregiver shall provide for basic necessities which shall include at least three (3) adequate meals a day, and humane sleeping arrangement. The employer shall also provide appropriate rest periods, and assistance in case of illnesses and injuries sustained during the exercise of the caregiver's duties and responsibilities without loss of benefits.

Sec. 15. **Privileged Information.** - A 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 of work by way of indemnity. The caregiver and the employer may mutually agree upon written notice to pre-terminate the contract of employment to end the employment relationship.

Sec. 17. **Termination of Contract by the Caregiver.** - A 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; Inhumane treatment including physical abuse against the caregiver by the employer, client or any member of the household;

- b) Commission of a crime or offense against the caregiver by the employer, client or any member of the household;
- Violation of the terms and conditions of the employment contract by the employer; and
- c) 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 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; and
- f) Other causes analogous to the foregoing.

Sec. 19. ***Settlement of Disputes.*** - All labor-related disputes shall be elevated to the DOLE Regional Office and/or the National Labor Relations Commission (NLRC) 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 Hires 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 provision of the Labor Code of the Philippines on the qualifications of a PEA with regards to nationality, net worth, owners and officers, office space, and other requirements, as well as non-transferability of license, and commissions of prohibited practices shall apply.

Sec. 21. ***Responsibilities of 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 whatsoever;
- b) Ensure that the employment contract between the caregiver and the employer stipulates the terms and conditions of employment and all the benefits prescribed by this Act;
- c) Provide a pre-employment orientation briefing to the caregiver and the employer about their rights and responsibilities in accordance with this Act;
- d) Keep copies of employment contracts 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 portion or provision of this Act is subsequently declared invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

Sec. 24. ***Repealing Clause.*** - All other laws, acts, presidential decrees, executive orders, presidential proclamations, issuances, rules and regulations, or parts thereof which are contrary to or inconsistent with any of the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

Sec. 25. ***Effectivity.*** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,