

Republic of the Philippines  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS  
First Regular Session

4685  
HOUSE BILL NO. \_\_\_\_\_



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Introduced by TUCP Party-List Rep. **RAYMOND DEMOCRITO C. MENDOZA**

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### EXPLANATORY NOTE

The 300,000 to 700,000 Filipino seafarers in ocean-going vessels around the world is more than enough to enact a Magna Carta of Filipino Seafarers. The Magna Carta has been languishing in Congress since 2012 despite consensus and endorsement by stakeholders, recognizing the need to protect our maritime workers, the Philippines being the biggest supplier of seafarers in the world.

The proposed Magna Carta of Filipino Seafarers benefitted from the consultations and dialogues at the Maritime Industry Tripartite Council (MITC) of the Department of Labor and Employment. The MITC technical working group composed of maritime stakeholders from labor, employer and government sectors has conducted a series of discussions/dialogues to institutionalize a set of standard for Filipino seafarers, recognizing their rights, instituting mechanisms for the enforcement and protection thereof, providing for compulsory benefits and implementing the standards set by the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, which entered into force in the country on August 20, 2013.

This bill proposes to institutionalize not only a bill of rights of Filipino seafarers but recognizes as well the right to expansion and growth of shipowners, manning and recruitment entities as vital partners in promoting and upgrading the skills and competitiveness of Filipino seafarers by providing access to loan facilities and incentives scheme for industry's best practices.

Additionally, a systematic inter-government agency coordination is mandated to ensure coherence in implementation of laws and mandates. The increasing challenge to our Filipino seafarers dominance around the world and the rapidly evolving technology in the maritime industry, require us all stakeholders to work together. We have to work to ensure the flourishing economic prospects it brings to the maritime industry, its workers and their families.

Hence, the enactment of this Bill is earnestly sought.

  
**RAYMOND DEMOCRITO C. MENDOZA**

HOUSE BILL NO. 4685

1  
2       **SEC. 3. Applicability.** –This Act shall cover Filipino seafarers engaged, employed,  
3 or working, in any capacity, on board Philippine registered ships operating domestically or  
4 internationally, as well as those on board foreign registered ships.

5  
6       This Act shall not cover the following categories of ships:

- 7  
8       (a) Warships and naval auxiliaries;  
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10       (b) Government ships not engaged in commercial operations;  
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12       (c) Ships of traditional build, as may be defined under existing rules and  
13 regulations; and  
14  
15       (d) Fishing vessels.

16  
17       **SEC. 4. Definition of Terms.** – As used in this Act:

- 18  
19       (a) **Cadet** refers to a student of a maritime educational institution who is required  
20 to undergo training on-board registered international ships or domestic ships  
21 to fulfil a maritime academic course;  
22  
23       (b) **Domestic Shipping** refers to the transport of passenger or cargo or both by  
24 ships duly registered and licensed under Philippine law to engage in trade and  
25 commerce between Philippine ports and within Philippine territorial or internal  
26 waters for hire or compensation with general or limited clientele whether  
27 permanent, occasional or incidental, with or without fixed routes and  
28 undertaken for contractual or commercial purposes;  
29  
30       (c) **International Maritime Convention or International Convention** refers to  
31 any written treaty or agreement, or any protocol or amendment thereto,  
32 affecting the maritime industry which has come into force and effect, including  
33 the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006;  
34  
35       (d) **License** refers to the document issued by the Department of Labor and  
36 Employment (DOLE) authorizing any person or entity to engage in the  
37 recruitment and placement of seafarers;  
38  
39       (e) **Manning/Recruitment and Placement Agency** refers to any Filipino person,  
40 corporation, partnership, company, or other entity engaged in the canvassing,  
41 enlisting, contracting, transporting, utilizing, hiring or procuring whether for  
42 profit or not, of seafarers whether domestic or international;  
43  
44       (f) **Maritime Industry Stakeholders** refer to all private sector stakeholders,  
45 engaged in the business of owning, managing, chartering or operating  
46 domestic and international ship(s) of Philippine or foreign registry, manning of  
47 ships, management of ports, stevedoring and arrastre services, ship brokering  
48 and chartering, ship-building and ship repair, providing maritime services such  
49 as ship supplies and provisions, maritime education and training, shipping  
50 agency, and other similar activities.  
51

The term shall also include bona fide maritime labor organizations and professional associations of seafarers;

- (g) **Master** refers to a person having command of a ship;
- (h) **Maritime Labour Certificate** refers to the document that certifies that the working and living conditions of the seafarers on the ship have been inspected and are compliant with the requirements of Philippine laws and regulations;
- (i) **Officer** refers to a member of the crew other than the master who has been designated as such by national law or regulation or, in the absence of such designation, by collective agreement or custom;
- (j) **Deck Officer** refers to an officer qualified in accordance with Chapter II of the International Convention on the Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) 1978, as amended;
- (k) **Engine Officer** refers to an officer qualified in accordance with Chapter III of the International Convention on the Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) 1978, as amended;
- (l) **Philippine National** refers to any individual who is a citizen of the Philippines, or a commercial partnership or corporation organized under the laws of the Philippines, at least 60% of the capital of which is owned by citizens of the Philippines;
- (m) **Philippine Seafarers' One Stop Processing Center (PSOC)** refers to the facility created under DOLE Administrative Order No. 56, series of 2003, which houses multiple offices or agencies involved in providing services to seafarers, in one place;
- (n) **Point of Hire** refers to the place where the contract of employment was executed;
- (o) **Recognized Organizations** refer to organizations recognized by the DOLE to carry out inspections or issue the Maritime Labour Certificate in accordance with the scope of activities covered by their authorizations;
- (p) **Repatriation** refers to the process of returning a seafarer to the point of hire;
- (q) **Seafarer** refers to a person who is employed or is engaged to work in any capacity on board a ship to which the Act applies;
- (r) **Ship or Vessel** refers to any kind, class or type of craft or artificial contrivance capable of floating in water, whether publicly or privately owned, ordinarily engaged in commercial activities and offshore operations, except fixed platform;
- (s) **Sea Going Ship** refers to a ship other than those which navigate exclusively in inland water or water within or closely adjacent to sheltered water, or areas where port regulations apply;

- (t) **Shipowner** refers to the owner of the ship employing Filipino seafarers to work on board domestic ships and ships engaged in international trade, or any other organization or person, such as the manager, agent or bareboat charterer, who has assumed the responsibility for operation and management of the ship, and who, in assuming such responsibilities, has agreed to take over all the attendant duties and responsibilities of a shipowner under this Act, regardless of whether any other organization or persons fulfill certain duties or responsibilities on behalf of the shipowner.

## CHAPTER II SEAFARERS' RIGHTS

**SEC. 5. *Right to Just Terms and Conditions of Work.*** – All seafarers shall have the right to:

- (a) Safe and secure workplace that complies with safety standards;
- (b) Decent working and living conditions on board a ship;
- (c) Medical care, welfare measures and other forms of health and social protection; and
- (d) Fair terms and conditions of employment including salary commensurate to their rank, hours of work, and other relevant basis for wage computation, minimum number of working hours, rest period consistent with Philippine laws or international maritime conventions, when applicable.

**SEC. 6. *Right to Self-Organization, to Engage in Collective Bargaining and to Participate in Decision-Making Processes.*** – All seafarers shall enjoy the right to self-organization, to collective bargaining and to participate in the deliberation of issues and in the formulation of policies that affect them, including representation in governing boards or appointment in government instrumentalities on seafarers and related maritime concerns.

**SEC. 7. *Right of Access to Affordable Educational Advancement and Training.*** – All seafarers shall have access to affordable educational advancement and training.

Toward this end, relevant government agencies shall ensure that no fees or charges shall be imposed on cadets, interns, apprentices, on-the-job-trainees or other persons similarly situated, and shall:

- (a) regulate the operation of all educational and training institutions offering courses related to seafaring;
- (b) pursue grant programs such as scholarships, subsidies, loan assistance and other measures that will harness the skills of Filipino seafarers toward greater competitiveness given to new demands in the industry; and
- (c) promote quality maritime education and training that respond to the needs of the industry and in accordance with minimum international maritime standards of competency.

1       **SEC. 8. *Right to Information.*** – All Filipino seafarers shall have the to right to  
2 information and accordingly, shipowners, manning agencies, and other organizations  
3 responsible for their recruitment and placement shall fully disclosed the terms and  
4 conditions of employment, company policies, grievance procedure and such other relevant  
5 information affecting them including the right to self-organization and collective bargaining.  
6

7       All ships covered by this Act shall have a copy of the Maritime Labour Convention of  
8 2006 and the grievance procedures to be observed on board.  
9

10       **SEC. 9. *Right to Consultation.*** – All seafarers, shipowners and legitimate  
11 seafarers' and shipowners' organizations, as well as other relevant stakeholders, shall be  
12 adequately consulted in the formulation and adoption of any maritime policy, executive  
13 issuance, rules or regulations affecting seafarers and their families.  
14

15       **SEC. 10. *Right Against Discrimination.*** – Seafarers shall have the right against  
16 discrimination by sole reason of race, sex, religion and political opinion. Career opportunities  
17 shall be promoted and appropriate working and living conditions shall be guaranteed equally  
18 among male and female seafarers.  
19

20       **SEC. 11. *Right to Free Legal Representation.*** – Seafarers who are victims of  
21 violations of the provisions of this Act and who cannot afford the services of a competent  
22 and independent counsel shall have the right to free legal assistance and protection at  
23 government's expense, subject to existing rules and regulations.  
24

25       **SEC. 12. *Right of Access to Communication.*** – All seafarers, especially during  
26 their free time or when they are not on duty, shall be afforded reasonable access to ship-to-  
27 shore telephone communications, and email and internet facilities, where available.  
28

### 29                                   **CHAPTER III** 30                                   **DUTIES OF SEAFARERS**

31       **SEC. 13. *Duties of Seafarers.*** - All seafarers shall have the following duties:  
32

- 33
- 34           (a) To comply with and observe the terms and conditions of his/her  
35           employment contract;
  - 36
  - 37           (b) To abide by lawful and reasonable company personnel policies;
  - 38
  - 39           (c) To be obey the lawful commands of the Master or the Master's lawful  
40           successor, and to comply with the shipowner's/principal's policy on  
41           safety and operational procedures and instructions given in connection  
42           therewith;
  - 43
  - 44           (d) To be diligent in the performance of duties relating to the ship, its  
45           stores, equipment and cargo, whether on board, in transit or ashore;
  - 46
  - 47           (e) To be, at all times, orderly and respectful to the shipmates, passengers,  
48           shippers, stevedores, port authorities, and other persons who have  
49           official business with the ship; and
  - 50
  - 51           (f) To be personally responsible for maintaining a healthy lifestyle.  
52

**CHAPTER IV**  
**MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR SEAFARERS**

**SEC. 14. *Minimum Age.*** – No person below eighteen (18) years old, other than a cadet, shall be employed, engaged, or otherwise allowed to work on board Philippine registered ships operating domestically or internationally, as well as on board foreign registered ships.

**SEC. 15. *Medical Certificates.*** – No seafarer shall be employed, engaged, or otherwise allowed to work on board a domestic or ocean-going ship unless a medical certificate has been issued declaring the seafarer to be fit to work.

The seafarer shall hold a valid medical certificate issued by a medical facility duly accredited by the Department of Health (DOH) in accordance with its existing rules and regulations.

The medical certificate shall certify that the person is expected to be able to meet the minimum requirements for performing the duty specific to the person's post at sea safely and effectively during the period of the validity of the certificate.

For the purpose of this Section, a medical certificate issued in accordance with the requirements of STCW shall be accepted.

**SEC. 16. *Training and Qualifications.*** – Only seafarers certified by appropriate government agencies shall work, be employed or be engaged on board a ship.

**SEC. 17. *Recruitment and Placement.*** – Only duly licensed manning or placement and recruitment agency shall be allowed to operate and engage in the recruitment and placement of seafarers, in accordance with the rules and regulations as may be issued by the Secretary of Labor and Employment.

No fees shall be charged to the seafarer for their recruitment and placement.

**SEC. 18. *Contracting or Subcontracting of Services.*** – The contracting or subcontracting of seafarers for work on board domestic ships shall be governed by existing rules and regulations issued by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE).

**CHAPTER V**  
**CADETSHIP**

**SEC. 19. *Applicability.*** – The shipboard training of cadets shall be governed by Sections 5 to 12 of Chapter II; Section 13 of Chapter III; Section 15 of Chapter IV; Sections 22 to 23 of Chapter VI; Sections 25 to 27 of Chapter VII; Sections 31 to 35 of Chapter IX; Section 36 of Chapter X; and Section 42 of Chapter XIV hereof.

**SEC. 20. *Shipboard Training Agreement for Cadets.*** – There shall be a written agreement between the shipowner on one hand, and the cadet and the maritime institution or school on the other, and which shall include the following information, terms and conditions:

- (a) Cadet's full name, date of birth, birthplace and age, which should be at least 16 years old;



- (b) Name and address of the maritime institution or school;
- (c) Name and address of the shipowner, if applicable;
- (d) Place and date when the cadet's agreement is entered into;
- (e) Capacity in which the cadet is to be trained;
- (f) Amount of the cadet's allowance or stipend;
- (g) Required number of hours of training and rest which would not be less than the prescribed hours of work and rest in Section 21 of this Act;
- (h) Duties and responsibilities of the sponsoring company, Maritime Higher Education Institutions, and cadets, as may be provided under the Standard Cadet Training Agreement on Ships Engaged in International Voyage of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA); and
- (i) Other benefits in accordance with law, company policy or agreements.

The foregoing agreement shall be written in a working language or in English, executed in three (3) original copies before the commencement of the shipboard training. The shipowner, cadet and the maritime institution/school shall each have a signed original of the agreement and an electronic copy thereof shall be submitted to the DOLE, through the Bureau of Working Conditions (BWC). A signed original copy shall also be made available on board the ship.

Maritime Higher Education Institutions (MHEIs) shall demonstrate that over the last three (3) years, an average of at least the minimum percentage of the target number of cadets, as per updated relevant CHED Memorandum Order are able to secure berths in connection with their studies, which minimum percentage, however, shall not be lower than sixty percent (60%) of students enrolled in their Bachelor of Science in Marine Transportation (BSMT) or Bachelor of Science in Marine Engineering (BSMarE) programs. The Commission on Higher Education (CHED), in coordination with the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA), shall ensure that only BSMT or MSMarE programs in MHEIs that meet the above requirement are conferred approved or accredited.

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **TERMS AND CONDITION OF EMPLOYMENT**

**SEC. 21. *Standard Employment Agreement for Seafarers.*** – There shall be an agreement in writing between the shipowner and the seafarer, which shall include the following information and terms:

- (a) Seafarer's full name, date of birth or age, and birthplace;
- (b) Shipowner's name and address;
- (c) Place where and date when the seafarer's employment agreement is entered into;



- (d) Capacity in which the seafarer is to be employed;
- (e) Amount of the seafarer's salary, and the formula used for calculating the same;
- (f) Hours of work and hours of rest;
- (g) Wages and wage-related benefits, which include the following: overtime pay, holiday pay, premium pay, paid leaves, 13th month pay, if applicable;
- (h) Social security and welfare benefits;
- (i) Stipulation on repatriation or similar undertakings;
- (j) Separation pay and retirement pay, if applicable;
- (k) Reference to the collective bargaining agreement, if applicable;
- (l) Other benefits in accordance with law, company policy or agreements.

The foregoing employment agreement shall be in a working language or in English, executed in three (3) original copies before the commencement of the employment. The shipowner and the seafarer shall each have a signed original of the agreement. A signed original shall be made available on board the ship.

The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration - Standard Employment Contract (POEA-SEC) approved by the DOLE shall be observed in the employment of Filipino seafarers on board foreign registered ships.

When there is a collective bargaining agreement, a copy thereof must be maintained on-board the ship and readily accessible to the seafarers.

**SEC. 22. Wages.** – Upon effectivity of this Act, the Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Boards shall set the minimum wage rates of the seafarers on board ships engaged in domestic shipping, taking into account the peculiarities of the employment arrangement of seafarers and the criteria as determined pursuant to Republic Act No. 6727, otherwise known as "Wage Rationalization Act": Provided, that wages for actual work hours and days shall not be lower than the applicable minimum wage rates in the domicile or head office of the employer. Wages shall be paid at least once every two (2) weeks or twice (2) a month, at intervals not exceeding sixteen (16) days.

Trainees, probationary crew members and others similarly situated shall be paid full minimum wage in accordance with the services rendered.

Cadets, on-the-job trainees, apprentices and other similarly situated persons who are onboard vessels as part of the completion of their academic or training program, shall be provided with stipends or allowances, which should not be less than 75% of the existing minimum wage of regular seafarers. No training fees shall be charged to cadets, on-the-job trainees, apprentices and other similarly situated persons.

**SEC. 23. Hours of Work and Hours of Rest.** – The normal hours of work of seafarer shall not exceed eight (8) hours a day. If the seafarer is allowed to work beyond eight (8)

1 hours, the maximum hours of work shall not exceed fourteen (14) hours in any 24-hour  
2 period, and seventy-two (72) hours in any 7-day period and is subject to corresponding  
3 overtime pay and wages.

4  
5 The minimum hours of rest for every seafarer shall not be less than ten (10) hours.  
6 Hours of rest may be divided into no more than two (2) periods, one of which shall be at  
7 least six (6) hours in length, and the interval between consecutive periods of rest shall not  
8 exceed fourteen (14) hours.

9  
10 In exceptional cases, seafarers in watchkeeping duties may be required to work  
11 beyond fourteen (14) hours provided that the rest period is not less than seventy (70) hours  
12 in any 7-day period. This exception shall not be allowed for more than two (2) consecutive  
13 weeks. The intervals between two (2) periods of exceptions shall not be less than twice the  
14 duration of the exception. The number of working hours rendered is subject to  
15 corresponding wages and benefits.

16  
17 **SEC. 24. Paid Annual Leave.** – Whenever applicable, the seafarers shall be paid  
18 an annual leave to be calculated on the basis of a minimum of 2.5 calendar days per month  
19 of employment.

20  
21 For ships licensed to engage in domestic shipping, the provisions on “Holidays,  
22 Service Incentive Leaves and Service Charges” of Presidential Decree No. 442, or the Labor  
23 Code of the Philippines, as amended, shall continue to apply unless higher annual leave is  
24 already provided under the Collective Bargaining Agreement or by the shipowner as  
25 company practice or policy.

## 26 27 CHAPTER VII 28 REPATRIATION 29

30 **SEC. 25. Seafarers' Repatriation.** - All costs related to the repatriation or transport  
31 of the personal effects of a seafarer shall be borne by or charged to the shipowner and the  
32 manning agency concerned. The expenses of repatriation shall include the transportation  
33 charges, pay and allowances from the moment the seafarers leave the ship until they reach  
34 the repatriation destination, the accommodation and the food of the seafarer during the  
35 journey and transportation of thirty kilograms (30 kg) of the seafarers' personal luggage to  
36 the repatriation destination. The primary responsibility to repatriate entails the obligation on  
37 the part of the shipowner or agency to advance the repatriation and other attendant costs,  
38 including plane fare, deployment cost of the principal and immigration fines and penalties,  
39 to immediately repatriate the seafarer should the need for it arise, without a prior  
40 determination of the cause of the termination of the seafarer's employment. However, after  
41 the worker has returned to the country, the shipowner or agency may recover the cost of  
42 repatriation from the seafarer if the termination of the employment was due solely to the  
43 seafarer's fault.

44  
45 **SEC. 26. Emergency Repatriation for Seafarers On-board Foreign Registered**  
46 **Ships.** – In cases of war, epidemics, abandonment of ship by shipowners, disasters,  
47 calamities, natural or manmade, and other similar events, the Department of Foreign Affairs  
48 (DFA), in coordination with the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA)  
49 and the Overseas Workers' Welfare Administration (OWWA), shall undertake the  
50 repatriation of seafarers. The DFA shall draw from the Emergency Repatriation Fund (ERF)  
51 provided under the General Appropriations Act (GAA) to defray the expenses involved in  
52 the repatriation of undocumented seafarers, while the POEA shall require manning

1 agencies to effect the repatriation of seafarers within forty-eight (48) hours or suffer the  
2 penalty of suspension. In case of failure of the manning agency to provide for the  
3 repatriation within the prescribed time, the POEA shall coordinate with the Overseas  
4 Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) to advance the cost of repatriation of the seafarer  
5 without prejudice to reimbursement from the concerned manning agency.

6  
7 The DFA shall take the lead in the repatriation of the affected seafarers in areas  
8 where there is no Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO).

9  
10 **SEC. 27. Repatriation for Seafarers On-board Domestic Ships.** – The provisions  
11 on repatriation shall also apply to seafarers working on domestic ships. Seafarers on board  
12 domestic ships shall be entitled to emergency repatriation in cases of war, epidemics,  
13 abandonment of ship by shipowners, disasters or calamities, whether natural or man-made,  
14 and other similar events.

## 15 16 CHAPTER VIII 17 MANNING REQUIREMENT 18

19 **SEC. 28. Manning Levels.** – All ships of Philippine registry shall observe the  
20 required minimum manning levels in accordance with the requirements prescribed by  
21 Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA).

22  
23 Every ship shall be manned by a crew that is adequate in terms of size and  
24 qualifications taking into account the need to operate the vessel safely and efficiently.

25  
26 **SEC. 29. Crew Competence.** – The crew members of a ship of Philippine Registry  
27 shall possess the appropriate certificate of competency, which sets forth their competence  
28 to serve and perform the functions involved at the level of responsibility, for the position  
29 held, for the type, tonnage, power, means of propulsion, and trading patterns of the ships  
30 concerned.

31  
32 The certificate of competency shall attest to the fact that the seafarer to whom it is  
33 issued meets the requirements for service, age, qualification, and has successfully passed  
34 the examinations conducted to determine the seafarer's proficiency and level of expertise  
35 for the position.

36  
37 **SEC. 30. Registry of Seafarers.** – To better respond to the manning requirements  
38 of ocean-going ships of foreign registry, and domestic and ocean-going ships of Philippine  
39 registry, the POEA and MARINA, respectively, shall maintain a registry of all seafarers in  
40 the Philippines. The registry shall contain the relevant information or data to promote  
41 employment opportunities for seafarers whether on board or ashore, and allow for the  
42 appropriate learning for and implementation of additional training, skills and competency  
43 development programs for seafarers.

## 44 45 CHAPTER IX 46 ACCOMMODATION, RECREATIONAL FACILITIES, FOOD AND CATERING 47

48 **SEC. 31. Accommodation Facilities.** – Unless otherwise exempted herein or by  
49 appropriate regulations, all ships of Philippine registry shall have safe, decent and adequate  
50 accommodations for seafarers taking into account the need to protect the health and safety  
51 of seafarers working or living on board.

1       **SEC. 32. Requirements for Sanitation.** – All ships of Philippine registry shall have  
2 sanitation facilities that meet the minimum standards for health and hygiene and are  
3 accessible to seafarers on board. The sanitation facilities shall be located at convenient  
4 places, allowing for easy access to work stations. Separate facilities shall be provided for  
5 male and female crew.  
6

7       **SEC. 33. Recreational Facilities.** – Unless otherwise exempted herein or by  
8 appropriate regulations, all ships of Philippine registry shall have recreational facilities,  
9 amenities, and services that are appropriate and accessible to seafarers.  
10

11       Domestic ships shall be exempted from this requirement considering that their  
12 trading patterns and length of voyages allow their crew to go home or to make use of  
13 comparable facilities on land.  
14

15       **SEC. 34. Food and Catering.** – The shipowner shall ensure the protection and  
16 promotion of health of seafarers. Whenever applicable, a shipowner shall ensure that a ship  
17 serves free food and drinking water of appropriate quality, quantity and nutritional value that  
18 adequately cover the requirements of the ship and take into consideration the differing  
19 cultural and religious backgrounds of seafarers. All foods and drinks and the preparation  
20 thereof shall be in accordance with the standards of the Sanitation Code of the Philippines  
21 and pertinent laws, rules and regulations.  
22

23       **SEC. 35. Application.** – The requirements of this Chapter for crew accommodation  
24 and recreational facilities covering ships of Philippine Registry shall be applicable to the  
25 following:  
26

- 27       (a) All ocean-going ships and domestic ships constructed on or after the date  
28       when the Maritime Labor Convention of 2006 comes into force;  
29
- 30       (b) All second-hand ships, whether ocean-going or domestic, acquired or leased,  
31       and entered in the Philippine Registry after the entry date into force of the said  
32       Convention unless provided exemption by the relevant Philippine government  
33       agency; and  
34
- 35       (c) All ships constructed prior to the entry into force of the Maritime Labor  
36       Convention, 2006 which have undergone major or substantial structural  
37       alterations after the entry into force of the Convention, unless provided  
38       exemption by the relevant Philippine government agency.  
39

## 40       **CHAPTER X** 41       **HEALTH PROTECTION AND MEDICAL CARE** 42

43       **SEC. 36. Medical Care On-board Ships and Ashore.** – The shipowner shall  
44 provide adequate equipment, paraphernalia and medical supplies, including medicines on  
45 board, and shall ensure access to shore facilities for the health of seafarers, as well as the  
46 corresponding medical or trained personnel who shall provide first-aid and medical care  
47 pursuant to the Maritime Occupational Safety and Health Standards and other pertinent  
48 laws, rules and regulations.  
49

50       The shipowner shall ensure that seafarers have access to medical treatment for any  
51 illness or injury, hospitalization and dental treatment.  
52

1 A seafarer shall have the right to consult a qualified physician or dentist without delay  
2 in ports of call, where practicable.

3  
4 A seafarer shall have the right to material assistance and financial support from the  
5 shipowner with respect to the expenses incurred during and as a result of medical treatment  
6 for sickness, injury or death occurring while they are serving under a valid employment  
7 contract or those which arise from their employment, without prejudice to any other legal  
8 remedies that a seafarer may seek.

9  
10 **CHAPTER XI**  
11 **WELFARE AND SOCIAL SECURITY PROTECTION**  
12

13 **SEC. 37. *Social Welfare Benefits.*** – Without prejudice to established policy,  
14 collective bargaining agreement or other applicable social agreement, all seafarers shall  
15 become members of the Social Security System, Employees' Compensation and State  
16 Insurance Fund, PhilHealth, Home Development Mutual Fund (or Pag-IBIG Fund) and shall  
17 enjoy the benefits afforded pursuant to membership thereof.

18  
19 **CHAPTER XII**  
20 **COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT**  
21

22 **SEC. 38. *Compliance and Certification.*** – All ships of Philippine registry shall  
23 comply with the provisions of this Act. The shipowner or master shall ensure the compliance  
24 of the ship with the provisions of this Act and its implementing rules and regulations.

25  
26 The shipowner and master, as acting shipowner's representative, shall be made  
27 principally liable for any violation of the provisions of this Act and its implementing rules and  
28 regulations.

29  
30 For this purpose, a Maritime Labour Certificate or a certificate of compliance, as  
31 applicable, shall be issued in accordance with the implementing rules and regulations. The  
32 DOLE, DFA and MARINA, in consultation with shipowners and seafarers' organizations,  
33 shall formulate the said implementing rules and regulations.

34  
35 **SEC. 39. *Inspection and Enforcement.*** – The Secretary of Labor or a duly  
36 authorized representative, shall have the sole and exclusive authority to inspect all  
37 Philippine ships, domestic or ocean-going to ensure compliance with the provisions of this  
38 Act. The duly authorized representative shall have the power to board ships and carry out  
39 any examination, test or inquiry in order to ensure that the standards established under this  
40 Act and its implementing rules and regulations are strictly observed.

41  
42 The Secretary of Labor and Employment may authorize other government agencies  
43 or duly recognized organizations to conduct inspection and issue certification in accordance  
44 with the provisions of this Act and its implementing rules and regulations.

45  
46 The Secretary of Labor and Employment or a duly authorized representative shall  
47 have the power to order immediate restitution of differences, and impose fines for violations  
48 of the provisions of this Act.

49  
50 If the violation or deficiency constitutes serious breach of the requirement of this Act  
51 and its implementing rules and regulations, or poses imminent danger to the ships or to the

1 life or limb of the seafarer, the Secretary of Labor or a duly authorized representative may  
2 immediately order the detention of the ship until the violation or deficiency is corrected.

3  
4 **SEC. 40. *Recognized Organization.*** – Recognized organizations may be  
5 authorized by the Secretary of Labor and Employment to conduct the inspection of ship's  
6 premises and issue the Maritime Labour Certificate or the Certificate of Compliance with,  
7 as appropriate, in accordance with the provisions of this Act and its implementing rules and  
8 regulations.

9  
10 A recognized organization must have the necessary knowledge of the requirements  
11 of this Act and its implementing rules and regulations, the Maritime Labour Convention of  
12 2006 and other relevant international treaty or convention.

13  
14 Likewise, to be recognized and authorized to inspect a ship, it must also have the  
15 necessary and qualified professional and technical expertise to conduct the inspection and  
16 certify to the ship's compliance with established standards.

## 17 18 **CHAPTER XIII** 19 **TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT**

### 20 21 ***SEC. 41. Termination of Employment.***

- 22  
23 (a) The employment of Filipino seafarers on board Philippine-registered ships  
24 operating internationally as well as those on board foreign-registered ships  
25 shall cease when the seafarers complete their period of contractual service  
26 aboard the ship, sign off from the ship, and arrive at the point of hire.

27  
28 The employment is also terminated effective upon arrival at the point of hire  
29 for any of the following reasons:

- 30  
31 (1) When the seafarer signs off and is disembarked for medical reasons in the  
32 event the seafarer is declared: (1) fit for repatriation; or (2) when after an  
33 illness the seafarer is declared fit to work, but the employer is unable to  
34 find employment for the seafarer on board the ship originally boarded or  
35 on another ship of the employer;  
36  
37 (2) When the seafarer signs off due to the sale of the ship, lay-up of ship,  
38 discontinuance of voyage or change of ship principal;  
39  
40 (3) When the seafarer, voluntarily resigns in writing and signs off prior to the  
41 expiration of contract within a reasonable period as may be prescribed in  
42 the implementing rules and regulations of this Act; or  
43  
44 (4) When the seafarer is discharged for just causes in accordance with the  
45 provisions of the POEA Standard Employment Contract;  
46  
47 (b) The termination of employment of a seafarer on board domestic ships shall be  
48 governed by the provisions of the Labor Code of the Philippines, as amended,  
49 on domestic shipping.  
50

(c) The termination of employment of a seafarer on board a foreign vessel or foreign registered ships shall be governed by the POEA SEC or applicable collective bargaining agreement (CBA).

## CHAPTER XIV SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES

**SEC. 42. *On-board and Onshore Grievance Machinery.*** – All ships of Philippine registry shall prescribe and observe fair, effective and expeditious on-board and on-shore methods and procedures to handle grievance at no cost to the seafarer, in accordance with the implementing rules and regulations of this Act.

In cases where a seafarer is a member of a legitimate trade union organization, any grievance shall, as a condition precedent to conciliation-mediation, undergo the grievance machinery with the involvement of the union as established in its collective bargaining agreement (CBA). Without prejudice to any existing law, any agreement reached by the parties during the grievance negotiation shall be final and binding.

**SEC. 43. *Mandatory Conciliation-Mediation and Arbitration.*** – Seafarers, whether engaged, employed or working on-board ships of Philippine registry or other registries, shall avail of the conciliation-mediation services of the DOLE pursuant to Republic Act 10396 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations, by filing a request for assistance before the conciliation-mediation desks at the Regional/Field/Provincial Offices of the DOLE or its attached agencies.

In case of failure of conciliation-mediation in cases where seafarers are covered by CBA, the case shall be submitted for Voluntary Arbitration in accordance with Articles 261 and 262 of the Labor Code, as amended. In cases where seafarers are not covered by the CBA, the seafarer shall have the option to submit the case to Compulsory Arbitration or Voluntary Arbitration.

## CHAPTER XV REINTEGRATION FOR OVERSEAS FILIPINO SEAFARERS

**SEC. 44. *Reintegration.*** – Returning or unemployed overseas Filipino seafarers may avail of the livelihood development and training programs, placements and other services offered by concerned government agencies, including Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), Technical and Livelihood Resource Center (TLRC), Cooperative Development Authority (CDA), National Maritime Polytechnic (NMP) and CHED.

These agencies shall formulate skills upgrading or retraining curricula to meet the needs of returning or unemployed seafarers. The participation of the maritime sector, in particular, port and shipping industry, and maritime educational institutions shall be likewise solicited by the DOLE in devising the appropriate retraining and local job placement programs for unemployed seafarers.

The National Reintegration Center for OFWs (NRCO) shall attend to the needs of returning seafarers. The Center shall provide mechanisms for their reintegration into the Philippine society, serve as a promotion house for their local employment, and tap their skills and potentials for national development.



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**CHAPTER XVI**  
**INCENTIVES AND AWARDS GRANTED TO THE MARITIME INDUSTRY**

**SEC. 45 *Incentives and Awards.*** – There shall be established an incentives and awards system for the maritime industry stakeholders which shall be developed and administered by the concerned government agency in consultation with the Maritime Industry Tripartite Council (MITC). Incentive schemes shall include ease in access to loan facilities for shipping fleet expansion, upgrading and retrofitting for ease in compliance with the requirements of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006.

Under such rules and regulations that may be promulgated, deserving shipowners, seafarers, manning and other organizations or entities shall be awarded for best practices in promoting and upgrading the skills and competitiveness of Filipino seafarers and for outstanding performance in upholding the rights of seafarers under this Act.

**CHAPTER XVII**  
**GOVERNMENT AGENCIES**

**SEC. 46. *Role of Government Agencies.*** – The following government agencies shall perform the following functions to promote the welfare and protect the rights of Filipino seafarers:

- (a) Department of Labor and Employment – The DOLE shall exercise sole and exclusive jurisdiction in implementing the provisions of this Act and ensure that the standards set forth herein, under Presidential Decree No. 442, as amended, and other laws, the Maritime Labour Convention 2006 and other international treaties and conventions to which the Philippines is a signatory are faithfully complied with and fairly applied to Filipino seafarers;

The DOLE shall likewise determine and set appropriate benchmarks consistent with the MLC 2006, this Act and other applicable laws on employment conditions and other labor standards and regulations;

- (b) Department of Foreign Affairs – The DFA, through its home offices or foreign posts, shall give paramount importance to the safety and well-being of Filipino seafarers, by providing adequate and timely intervention and assistance, such as representing their interests with foreign authorities concerned and facilitating their repatriation when they are distressed or beleaguered;

- (c) Department of Health – The DOH shall regulate the activities and operations of all clinics which conduct physical, optical, dental, psychological and other similar examinations, hereinafter referred to as health examinations, on Filipino seafarers;

The DOH shall determine and prescribe the nature of the health examination that shall be required of a seafarer, ensuring that such examination will genuinely determine the seafarer's state of health, considering the duties that the seafarer shall be required to perform on board. The DOH shall likewise prescribe the contents of the medical certificate to ensure that such certification will genuinely reflect the seafarer's state of health.

(d) Philippine Overseas Employment Administration – The POEA shall look into the contracts of employment and the working conditions of the officers and crew of vessels of Philippine registry operating internationally, and of such officers and crew members who are Filipino citizens and employed by foreign vessels to ensure that these comply with the prescribed standards;

(e) Overseas Workers Welfare Administration – The OWWA, through its welfare officers or coordinating officers, shall provide the Filipino seafarers and their families all the assistance they may need in the enforcement of contractual obligations by agencies and their principals.

The OWWA shall likewise formulate and implement welfare programs for overseas Filipino seafarers and their families while they are abroad and upon their return. It shall ensure the awareness by the overseas Filipino workers and their families of these programs and other related governmental programs.

(f) Maritime Industry Authority - The MARINA shall ensure that all maritime education including the curricula and training programs are structured and delivered in accordance with written programs, methods and media of delivery, procedures and course materials, international standards as prescribed under the STCW Convention and other applicable laws.

(g) Philippine Coast Guard – The PCG, in line with its function to assist in the enforcement of applicable laws within the maritime jurisdiction of the Philippines, shall assist the DOLE in the enforcement of Department Orders and other issuances implementing the MLC 2006, including orders to detain vessels found in gross violation of pertinent laws, rules and regulations.

Unless otherwise provided in this Act, the mandate, power and function of all existing departments, agencies or instrumentalities of the government, including government-owned and controlled corporations, shall remain and continue to be recognized in accordance with the law or order creating them.

**SEC. 47. Philippine Seafarer One Stop Processing Center (PSOC).** – The PSOC has been tasked to operationalize and make available to the public, an integrated document processing center for the seafarers and the general public to conduct official transactions. The agencies that are mandated to provide services in the PSOC are as follows:

(a) Department of Labor and Employment;

(b) Department of Foreign Affairs;

(c) Commission on Higher Education;

(d) Professional Regulation Commission;

(e) National Telecommunications Commission;

(f) Philippine Overseas Employment Administration;

(g) Overseas Workers Welfare Administration;

- (h) Technical Education and Skills Development Authority;
- (i) Maritime Industry Authority;
- (j) National Bureau of Investigation;
- (k) Social Security System;
- (l) Philippine Health Insurance Corporation;
- (m) Philippine Statistics Authority;
- (n) Home Development Mutual Fund;
- (o) Such other government agencies that the Secretary of DOLE may deem appropriate to be included in the PSOC.

## CHAPTER XVIII FINAL PROVISIONS

**SEC. 48. *Administrative Fines and Penalties.*** – Any shipowner, master, their representative or other person who fails or refuses to present employment records, such as payrolls, daily time records, payslip or other documents, when required by the Secretary of Labor and Employment, or his/her duly authorized representative, or the duly authorized representative of a recognized organization, shall be imposed administrative fines and penalties in accordance with the implementing rules and regulations promulgated to implement this Act.

**SEC. 49. *Penalties for Violations of Sections 38 and 39.*** – Any person who, without proper authorization, exercises the authority granted to the Secretary of Labor and Employment under Sections 38 and 39 of this Act, shall be punished with a fine of not less than One hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00) nor more than Four hundred thousand pesos (P400,000.00), or imprisonment of not less than one (1) year nor more than four (4) years, or both at the discretion of the court. The foregoing offense shall prescribe after five (5) years from its commission, or upon discovery of the violation by competent authorities.

**SEC. 50. *Transitory Provision.*** – All rights, privileges and benefits previously enjoyed by Filipino seafarers before the effectivity of this Act, including those set forth in Presidential Decree No. 442, otherwise known as the Labor Code of the Philippines, as amended, and Republic Act No. 8042, otherwise known as the “Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act of 1995,” as amended, shall continue to be recognized and shall not be diminished.

**SEC. 51. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), in coordination with the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) and other concerned agencies, shall formulate the rules and regulations to implement this Act within ninety (90) days after its effectivity.

**SEC. 52. *Separability Clause.*** – If, for any reason, any section, clause or term of this Act is held to be illegal, invalid, or unconstitutional, such parts not affected by such declaration shall remain in full force and effect.

1           **SEC. 53. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, presidential decrees, issuances, executive  
2 orders, letters of instruction, rules or regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act  
3 are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.  
4

5           **SEC. 54. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication  
6 in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.  
7

8   ***Approved.***