



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

# DEPARTMENT OF AGRARIAN REFORM

Tunay na Pagbabago sa Repormang Agraryo

## MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 01

SERIES OF 2021.

TO : ALL DAR OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES

FROM : **ATTY. LUIS MEINRADO C. PAÑGULAYAN**  
Undersecretary for Legal Affairs  
Chief Implementer, Protocol Committee

Subject : **STRICT COMPLIANCE WITH PUBLIC HEALTH SAFETY PROTOCOLS FOR THE 2020 NATIONAL SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT AND 2021 PLANNING CONFERENCE**

DATE : 28 JANUARY 2021

The recently concluded First Batch of the 2020 National Summative Assessment and 2021 Planning Conference for the Luzon Group held last January 25-27 at the Travelers Hotel in Subic Bay in Olongapo, Zambales has been undertaken in full compliance with the health and safety protocols as prescribed by the **Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF)**.

Any allegation made in print or broadcast media that a COVID-19 infected person actually attended the DAR planning and assessment activity or that the DAR has violated public safety health protocols is fabricated false news.

It cannot be overemphasized that the DAR even went beyond the minimum health safety protocol requirements. The DAR requires all participants to undergo the COVID-19 Real Time Reverse Transcription-Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR) test at a government-accredited center as per **Memorandum dated 19 January 2021 of the Planning Director**. No person was allowed to attend the Assessment and Planning in Subic until and unless a Certificate was issued by the testing center that the person is negative for the presence of SARS-COV-2 virus at the time of testing prior to the said event.

It is this requisite which was used in determining the persons who are allowed to be admitted in the venue of the activity. It is this very rule which enabled the DAR and the management of the Travelers Hotel in Subic Bay to disallow one individual who was found positive for the virus but asymptomatic from being admitted in the hotel. The person was barred from attending the planning and assessment activity. Said person was immediately isolated and transported to a proper facility for quarantine. The person never attended the planning and assessment activity. We express our gratitude to the concerned DAR officers and personnel as well as the management and staff of the Travelers Hotel in Subic Bay for having averted a breach of public health safety protocols.

The DAR has been compliant with all the public health safety protocols. This is evident when it issued **DAR Memorandum Circular No. 15 Series of 2020 (Guidelines for the Implementation of Protocols for the New Normal in the Department of Agrarian Reform) on 01 May 2020**. In the said Memorandum, all DAR personnel nationwide are required to wear face masks and face shields, undergo daily temperature checks, execute health declaration forms, utilize online processing of all applications and hearing of cases, practice social distancing and the installation of dividers inside the office for the protections of the employees and the use of work-from-home arrangements.

Subic Bay was selected as a venue for the Annual Assessment and Planning activity because the area is under the Modified General Community Quarantine (MGCQ) as per **Memorandum of Executive Secretary Salvador C. Medialdea dated 01 January 2021 (Community Quarantine Classification of Provinces, Highly Urbanized Cities and Independent Component Cities from 01-31 January 2021)**.

The number of attendees in the activity did not exceed 180 persons. The **Department of Tourism Memorandum Circular No. 2020-006 dated 14 July 2020** provides that MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conventions, and Exhibitions) events in MGCQ areas which is the case for Subic Bay should not go beyond 50% of the Maximum Venue Capacity. The DAR activity was held at the main function room of the Travelers Hotel in Subic Bay which has a capacity of 800 persons. The actual number of participants at the DAR activity never exceeded 170 at any given time which is way below the Maximum Venue Capacity as required by the Department of Tourism which in this case is at 400 persons.

The DAR is fully compliant with **Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) Guidelines for Tourists in the Subic Bay Freeport Zone which took effect last 21 October 2020**. The only requirement of the SBMA is for the participant to present a Health Certificate. The DAR went over and beyond the requirement and required all attendees to undergo the RT-PCR test and to submit the certification that he or she is negative for the presence of SARS-COV-2 virus. As an additional safety measure, the attendees to the planning and assessment activity were not allowed to leave the hotel for the entire duration of the activity. The public health safety protocols of the IATF were observed during the sessions.

The **Management of Travelers Hotel in a Certification dated 27 January 2021** stated that the "DAR followed the health protocols and standards against the spread of COVID-19 in the Freeport. Prior to accommodation, participants submitted the required COVID-19 RT-PCR Test apart from the health certificate. The hotel observed the Minimum Public Health Standards across all settings pursuant to **Department of Health Administrative Order No. 2020-0015**. They are taking every precaution to help flatten the curve. Accommodation is only on a 50% capacity. This means support will be somewhat selective and limited during this time."

It is in the light of these developments that this Office reminds all concerned to be mindful of all the public health safety protocols and be ever vigilant in the enforcement of all pertinent rules and regulations of the IATF, our Department, and the requirements

of the concerned local government units on the guidelines and protocols as we proceed with the completion of our 2020 National Summative Assessment and 2021 Planning Conference. **Thus, no concerned DAR personnel shall travel from the place of origin to the designated venue of the annual activity without first securing a Certificate issued by the testing center that the said person is negative for the presence of SARS-COV-2 virus at the time of testing prior to the said event.** Failure to comply with this important requisite as well as with all public health safety protocol measures may constitute a ground for disciplinary action.

For strict compliance.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Luis Pañgulayan', written over a diagonal line that extends from the bottom left towards the top right.

**ATTY. LUIS MEINRADO C. PAÑGULAYAN**