



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Finance
INSURANCE COMMISSION
1071 United Nations Avenue
Manila



OFFICE CIRCULAR NO. 2020- 006
10 May 2020

**SUBJECT: Interim Administrative Protocols in the Insurance Commission
During the Community Quarantine in the Philippines Due to
COVID-19 Pandemic**

1. PURPOSE

This Office Circular is issued to:

- 1.1. Provide the interim administrative protocols to be implemented in the Insurance Commission (IC) for the duration of community quarantine in the Philippines due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 1.2. Ensure that minimum public health standards are continuously observed at all times during performance of official functions.
- 1.3. Reduce exposure of IC personnel and its stakeholders to health risks due to COVID-19.

2. LEGAL BASES

- 2.1. Presidential Proclamation No. 929 signed on 16 March 2020 re: *Declaring a State of Calamity Throughout the Philippines Due to Corona Virus Disease 2019.*
- 2.2. Department of Health (DOH) Administrative Order No. 2020-0015 dated 27 April 2020 re: *Guidelines on the Risk-Based Public Health Standards for COVID-19 Mitigation.*
- 2.3. Omnibus Guidelines on the Implementation of Community Quarantine in the Philippines approved by the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF) on 29 April 2020.
- 2.4. Executive Order (EO) No. 112 signed on 30 April 2020 re: *Imposing an Enhanced Community Quarantine in High-Risk Geographic Areas in the Philippines and a General Community Quarantine in the Rest of the Country from 01 to 15 May 2020, Adopting the Omnibus Guidelines on the Implementation Thereof, and for Other Purposes.*

- 2.5. Civil Service Commission (CSC) Memorandum Circular No. 10, s. 2020 issued on 07 May 2020 re: *Revised Interim Guidelines on Alternative Work Arrangements and Support Mechanism for Workers in the Government During the Period od State of National Emergency Due to COVID-19 Pandemic*

3. COVERAGE

These guidelines shall be implemented at the IC Main Office at 1071 United Nations Avenue, Manila. The Cebu and Davao District Offices are directed to develop appropriate Administrative Protocols to be implemented in their respective offices, subject to the approval of the Insurance Commissioner.

4. GENERAL PROVISIONS

- 4.1. The minimum health standards set by the DOH must be achieved and continuously observed at all times during the performance of official functions. Towards these objectives, including strict observance of social distancing, the IC shall implement restricted movement of persons into, within, and going out of its premises. Queuing and scheduling systems may be adopted for these purposes.
- 4.2. Unless otherwise there is an existing legal requirement to the contrary, the use of appropriate technologies to minimize face-to-face contacts in transacting with co-workers, stakeholders and clients shall be generally adopted. Said technologies may include, but not limited to, video conferencing solutions, contactless payments, and the use of electronic records/information management system to transmit and release official correspondences and documents. Use of technologies shall be subject to provisions of Republic Act (RA) No. 8792, otherwise known as the "Electronic Commerce Act of 2000", and other relevant laws and regulations.
- 4.3. All information provided by persons, relevant to the pursuit of the objectives of these guidelines, including those obtained from health screening procedures, shall be considered obtained with the consent of data subjects, pursuant to RA No. 10173, otherwise known as the "Data Privacy Act of 2012", and other relevant laws and regulations. In the process of obtaining such information, concerned persons shall be informed that their personal data may be used, stored, processed, and disclosed by IC in a manner required and allowed by law.
- 4.4. Persons required to remain in their residences at all times, unless falling under exceptions, pursuant to Section 3 of the Omnibus Guidelines on the Implementation of Community Quarantine in the Philippines, shall be denied entry into IC. Said guidelines provides that for both Enhanced

Community Quarantine (ECQ) and General Community Quarantine (GCQ), *"Any person below twenty-one (21) years old, those who are sixty (60) years old and above, those with immunodeficiency, comorbidities, or other health risks, and pregnant women, including any person who resides with the aforementioned, shall be required to remain in their residences at all times, except when indispensable under the circumstances for obtaining essential goods and services or for work in permitted industries and offices."*

5. PERSONAL PROTECTION AND HYGIENE

5.1. Respiratory Hygiene and Cough Etiquette

- 5.1.1. Wearing of facemask (ear loop masks, indigenous, reusable, do it yourself (DIY) masks, face shields or handkerchiefs), or such other protective equipment that can effectively lessen the transmission of COVID-19 at all times, shall be mandatory. **NO FACE MASK, NO ENTRY POLICY** shall be strictly implemented.
- 5.1.2. Cough and sneeze into tissue, if not available, into shirtsleeve. Dispose used tissue properly and disinfect hands immediately after a cough or sneeze.
- 5.1.3. Avoid touching the eyes, nose and mouth to help slow the spread of the virus. If touching cannot be avoided, disinfect before and after doing so.

5.2. Hand Hygiene

- 5.2.1. Hand washing stations shall be installed near lobby entrances. **NO HAND WASHING, NO ENTRY POLICY** shall be strictly implemented.
- 5.2.2. Perform regular and thorough hand washing with soap and water. The constant rubbing action helps soap break down the grease and dirt that carry most germs. Wash your hands for at least 15 to 20 seconds with soap and water.
- 5.2.3. When soap and water are not available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizers containing at least 70% ethanol or isopropanol.
- 5.2.4. Wash hands thoroughly:
 - Before and after preparing food
 - Before and after eating
 - After going to the toilet
 - After coughing and sneezing

- After removing protective personal equipment (PPE), such as mask, face shields, and gloves

5.2.5. Alcohol and other alcohol-based hand sanitizers are available in all common areas.

5.3. Social Distancing Measures

5.3.1. Avoid physical contact such as shaking hands. Whenever possible, keep a distance of at least 3 feet or 1 meter away from other people to reduce the possibility of person-to-person transmission. This distance should be observed even as to apparently healthy persons without symptoms.

5.3.2. Avoid sharing of food, cutlery, crockery, utensils and other personal hygiene items. Eating at common areas is highly discouraged.

5.3.3. Temporary barriers shall be installed in receiving areas and between workstations, as necessary.

5.3.4. Unnecessary movements, loitering and/or congregating in corridors, within IC premises or its perimeter shall not be allowed.

5.3.5. Access to washrooms and toilets shall be limited to a number of personnel/visitor at any given time. Janitorial staff in-charge shall ensure that washrooms and toilets shall not be overly crowded and physical distancing along the washbasins is complied with.

5.3.6. Roving Security Guards shall ensure physical distancing and observance of minimum health protocols.

5.4. Food Safety Measures

5.4.1. All employees are encouraged to bring their own packed meals.

5.4.2. Food deliveries shall only be received at the Guard House near Gate 3.

5.4.3. Eat nutritious and well-cooked food, and drink plenty of fluids.

5.4.4. Avoid consumption of raw or undercooked animal products. Handle raw meat, milk or animal organs with care, to avoid cross-contamination with uncooked foods, as per good food safety practices.

5.5. Environmental Measures

- 5.5.1. Disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects, including tables, chairs, doorknobs, desks, computer keyboards, mouse, printer, telephone, facsimile (fax) machine, photocopying machine, among others.
- 5.5.2. Maintain cleanliness of common areas, such as pantry, light switches, railings, and staircases.
- 5.5.3. Separate waste bins for disposal of PPEs, i.e., masks, gloves, including tissue papers, shall be provided in common areas.

6. SCREENING PROCEDURES OF IC EMPLOYEES, INCLUDING COA PERSONNEL

- 6.1. Prior to entry in the IC Main Office Building, all employees shall:
 - 6.1.1. Wear facemasks at all times and remove the same only when eating/drinking. Should cloth masks be used, the washable cloth masks shall be worn but additional filter material, such as tissue paper, may be placed inside the mask. **NO FACE MASK, NO ENTRY.**
 - 6.1.2. Wash their hands at the designated hand washing stations near the IC Main Office Building Lobby Entrance. **NO HAND WASHING, NO ENTRY.** Employees are advised to bring a pocket cloth towel or paper tissue for hand drying.
 - 6.1.3. After hand washing, concerned employees shall proceed to the **DISINFECTANT FOOTBATH STATION** at the lobby entrance.
 - 6.1.4. Accomplish daily the Health Screening Form (**ANNEX A**) and submit to the Security Guard prior to entry. **NO HEALTH SCREENING FORM, NO ENTRY.**
 - 6.1.5. Have their temperature checked and recorded in the Health Screening Form.
 - 6.1.5.1. **ANY EMPLOYEE WITH A TEMPERATURE OF > 37.5°C, EVEN AFTER A 5 MINUTE REST, SHALL NOT BE ALLOWED ENTRY.**
 - 6.1.5.2. If further evaluation of the responses on the Health Screening Form is required, concerned employee shall be assisted by the Security Guard to the designated Isolation Area (IC Gym) and shall not be allowed entry in the IC Main Office Building.

- 6.2. All employees are advised to observe hand hygiene before and after using the biometric finger-scan or Bundy clock machines (time-in/time-out entries). Automatic/sensor dispensers containing hand-sanitizing gel are mounted near the finger-scanning machines.
- 6.3. Expect longer queuing time at the IC Main Office Building Lobby Entrance. Social distancing must be strictly observed.
- 6.4. In any case that an employee leaves IC Main Office Building for official business or personal transactions, all screening procedures shall be complied with upon re-entry, except the submission of daily Health Screening Form.

7. SCREENING PROCEDURES OF VISITORS

- 7.1. Prior to entry in the IC Main Office Building, all visitors shall:
 - 7.1.1. Wear face masks at all times. **NO FACE MASK, NO ENTRY.**
 - 7.1.2. Wash their hands at the designated hand washing stations near the IC Main Office Building Lobby Entrance. **NO HAND WASHING, NO ENTRY.** Visitors are advised to bring a pocket cloth towel or paper tissue for hand drying.
 - 7.1.3. After hand washing, visitors shall proceed to the **DISINFECTANT FOOTBATH STATION** at the lobby entrance.
 - 7.1.4. Submit to routine bag checks, present a valid Identification Card to the Security Guard, and fill-up logbook entries.
 - 7.1.5. Accomplish daily the Visitor Health Screening Form (**ANNEX B**) and submit to the Security Guard prior to entry. **NO VISITOR HEALTH SCREENING FORM, NO ENTRY. ANY VISITOR WHO EXHIBITED COVID-19 RELATED SYMPTOMS, AS PROVIDED IN THE VISITOR HEALTH SCREENING FORM, SHALL NOT BE ALLOWED ENTRY.**
 - 7.1.6. Have their temperature checked and recorded in the Visitor Health Screening Form. **ANY VISITOR WITH A TEMPERATURE OF >37.5°C, EVEN AFTER A 5 MINUTE REST, SHALL NOT BE ALLOWED ENTRY.**
- 7.2. Entry of visitors shall be through the IC Main Office Building Lobby only.
- 7.3. Visitors are advised to observe hand hygiene before and after accomplishing the logbook and Visitor Health Screening Form.

- 7.4. Expect longer queuing time at the IC Main Office Building Lobby Entrance, **particularly during peak hours in the morning (9:00 AM – 10:00 AM)**. Please arrive at least 30 minutes before your scheduled meeting. Social distancing must be strictly observed.
- 7.5. If a visitor becomes ill while inside the IC premises, he/she shall be immediately asked to leave. Janitorial staff shall thoroughly disinfect all concerned work areas.

8. SCREENING PROCEDURES OF SECURITY AND JANITORIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS

- 8.1. Prior to entry in the IC Main Office Building, all security and janitorial services personnel shall:
 - 8.1.1. Wear face masks at all times. **NO FACE MASK, NO ENTRY.**
 - 8.1.2. Wash their hands at the designated hand washing stations. **NO HAND WASHING, NO ENTRY.**
 - 8.1.3. Submit to routine bag checks at the Guard House near Gate 3, and fill-up logbook entries.
 - 8.1.4. Accomplish daily the Health Screening Form (**ANNEX A**) and submit to the Security Guard prior to entry. **NO HEALTH SCREENING FORM, NO ENTRY. ANY SECURITY OR JANITORIAL SERVICES PERSONNEL WHO EXHIBITED COVID-19 RELATED SYMPTOMS, AS PROVIDED IN THE HEALTH SCREENING FORM, SHALL NOT BE ALLOWED ENTRY.**
 - 8.1.5. Have their temperature checked and recorded in the Visitor Health Screening Form. **ANY SECURITY OR JANITORIAL SERVICES PERSONNEL WITH A TEMPERATURE OF >37.5°C, EVEN AFTER A 5 MINUTE REST, SHALL NOT BE ALLOWED ENTRY.**
- 8.2. If a security or janitorial services personnel becomes ill while inside the IC premises, he/she shall be immediately asked to leave. Disinfection and sanitation of all concerned areas shall be immediately conducted.

9. SCREENING PROCEDURES OF CONTRACTORS

Screening procedures for contractors of IC infrastructure projects, i.e., Rehabilitation of IC Grounds and Drainage System, Replacement of Roofing Sheets, shall comply with the rules set by the Department of Public Works and

Highways (DPWH) re: **Construction Safety Guidelines for the Implementation of Infrastructure Projects During the COVID-19 Public Health Crisis**. Additional protocols may be issued when appropriate.

10. DISINFECTION OF VEHICLES, EQUIPMENT AND PARCELS

- 10.1. All motor vehicles entering IC premises must go through a disinfection process at Gate 3. Same applies to all equipment and parcels being delivered.
- 10.2. Personal deliveries and packages shall only be received at the IC Guard House near Gate 3.
- 10.3. IC Drivers shall ensure that assigned official motor vehicles are kept clean and sanitize after each use/trip. The **Guidelines on Physical Distancing on Transport Vehicles** set by the Department of Transportation (DOTr) shall be strictly complied.

11. DOCUMENT RECEIVING AND HANDLING

- 11.1. Receiving area for documents submitted to IC shall be transferred from the reception lobby to the former room assigned for the Office of the Ombudsman (OMB), located in front of the Female/Male Comfort Rooms at the GF Main Office Building. Said room shall be renamed as Document Receiving Area.
- 11.2. Personnel assigned at the Document Receiving Area are required to wear PPE, i.e., facemasks, face shields, and disposable gloves.
- 11.3. All documents received shall be disinfected using store-bought sprays/solutions prior to dissemination to concerned divisions/units.
- 11.4. Personal delivery of outgoing documents shall be avoided. As far as practicable, transmission of outgoing documents shall be done via email using IC official accounts, facsimile machine (telefax), or pigeonhole. The Records Section – Administrative Division shall also exhaust third-party service solutions available from Phil Post and other local couriers for delivery of outgoing documents.

12. CASH HANDLING

- 12.1. Personnel assigned at the Cashier Section – Administrative Division are required to wear PPEs, i.e., facemasks, face shields, and disposable gloves.

- 12.2. All cash/checks and other documents received shall be disinfected using store-bought sprays/solutions prior to cash storage.
- 12.3. For the daily cash collections conducted by the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP), checking and verification of collections shall be done outside the Cashier Office. A designated workstation/cubicle shall be provided to concerned LBP personnel.

13. GENERAL CLEANING AND DISINFECTING OF IC OFFICES

- 13.1. Routine cleaning and disinfecting shall be conducted daily based on the following protocols:
 - 13.1.1. Routine cleaning includes removal of dirt and impurities from surfaces and objects using dry cloth/floor mop and/or with detergent/soap and water.
 - 13.1.2. Disinfection of common areas and frequently handled surfaces/objects, such as, Lobby Guard/Reception Area countertops, doorknobs, and glass/metal door handles, queuing system and touch-screen monitors, ATM, photocopying machines, biometric finger scan and Bundy clock machines, water dispensers, staircases and its railings, visitor chairs, and tables/desks, among others, shall be conducted every 2 hours, or more frequently as necessary.
 - 13.1.3. Routine cleaning and disinfection of comfort rooms using diluted bleach solution shall be intensified, at least once every 2 hours. All washrooms and toilets shall have sufficient clean water and liquid hand soap.
- 13.2. Diluted household bleach solutions or alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol shall be used for disinfection. Diluted household bleach solutions to be used should be appropriate for the surface, i.e., wooden, marble-finish, and ceramic. Manufacturer's instructions on the application and proper ventilation must be observed.
- 13.3. Household bleach solutions or alcohol solutions must not be mixed with ammonia or any other cleaner. Bleach solutions mixed with water may use any of the following dilution rates:
 - 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) bleach per gallon of water
 - 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water
 - 1 part bleach to 99 parts water
 - chlorine bleaching solution and 1:100 phenol-based disinfectant
- 13.4. In washing of linen, drapes, rugs, hand towels, etc., regular laundry soap and water may be used, or machine wash at 60-90°C with common

household detergent, then sundry. Placed used linen, drapes, rugs, hand towels, etc. into a laundry bag. Do not shake soiled laundry.

- 13.5. Aside from the daily standard procedures undertaken by the third-party janitorial services provider of IC, general cleaning and intensive disinfecting activities shall be conducted every Saturdays.
- 13.6. In the event of decontamination of workplace, the following shall be followed:
 - 13.6.1. Work shall be suspended, and concerned IC Divisions/Units shall advise all stakeholders accordingly.
 - 13.6.2. Workplace shall be decontaminated with appropriate disinfectant as enumerated in Section 13.3 herein.
 - 13.6.3. Normal work operations shall resume 24 hours after decontamination.
- 13.7. Janitorial staff shall be required to use PPEs, i.e., facemasks, face shields, disposable gloves, in the conduct of routine cleaning and disinfecting activities.
- 13.8. Janitorial staff shall ensure availability of liquid hand soap and disinfectants in the washrooms and toilets, including availability of alcohol supply at common areas.

14. CONTACT TRACING

In case of contamination, contract tracing shall be immediately and jointly administered by the Administrative Division, Human Resource Division (HRD), and concerned Division Managers/Acting Division Managers/Officers-in-Charge where employee or visitor transacted business, with assistance from security personnel. Additional guidelines on contact tracing may be issued when appropriate.

15. SAVING CLAUSE

The IC Management shall continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation and ensure commitment both to the safety and wellbeing of IC personnel and the unhampered delivery of public service.

The foregoing guidelines/protocols may be amended taking into consideration the rules and regulations that relevant government agencies may further provide.

Cases not covered and other clarifications regarding the implementation of this Circular shall be addressed via email to the Office of the Insurance Commissioner (ocom@insurance.gov.ph), copy furnished the Office of the Deputy Insurance Commissioner – Management Support Services Group (eh.balmes@insurance.gov.ph).

16. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE

If for any reason, any section or provision of this Circular needs to be amended to take into consideration said rules and regulations, the remainder of this Circular shall not be affected by such declaration and shall remain in force and effect.

17. EFFECTIVITY

This Office Circular shall take effect immediately.


DENNIS B. FUNA
Insurance Commissioner