



MC No. 10, s.2010

MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR

**TO: ALL HEADS OF CONSTITUTIONAL BODIES;
DEPARTMENTS, BUREAUS AND AGENCIES OF THE
NATIONAL GOVERNMENT; LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS
(LGUs); GOVERNMENT OWNED AND/OR CONTROLLED
CORPORATIONS (GOCCs) WITH ORIGINAL CHARTERS;
AND STATE UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES (SUCs)**

SUBJECT: WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY 2010 CELEBRATION

The Civil Service Commission enjoins all government agencies to participate in this year's celebration of the World No Tobacco Day on May 31, 2010 with the theme "**Gender and Tobacco, with an emphasis on Marketing to Women**".

Every 31st of May each year, the World Health Organization (WHO) celebrates "**World No Tobacco Day**" to highlight the health risks associated with tobacco use and advocating effective policies to reduce its consumption. Cigarette smoking is the major cause of chronic debilitating diseases affecting the cardiovascular and respiratory systems of both smokers and non-smokers who are exposed to the perils of tobacco smoke. Even the unborn child is adversely affected when the pregnant mother is a smoker.

The Department of Health estimates that at least 20,000 Filipinos die every year due to tobacco smoking-related diseases. The use of tobacco drains nearly 20% of the household income of families of smokers and annually robs our national budget in health care cost.

Women comprise 20% of the world's more than one billion smokers. Women and teenage girls, who are lured into lifetime nicotine dependence, have become an easy target of the advertising/tobacco industry which needs to recruit new users and eventually replace half of current users who will die from tobacco-related diseases.

In the WHO 2007 report, "*Sifting the Evidence: Gender and Tobacco Control*", WHO commented that "*Both men and women need full information about sex-specific effects of tobacco use... equal protection from gendered advertising and marketing and the development of sex-specific tobacco products by transnational companies...and gender sensitive information about, and protection from, second-hand smoke and occupational exposure to tobacco or nicotine.*"

The World Health Organization's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC), a public health treaty on tobacco control of which the Philippines is a signatory, aims to promote measures of tobacco control to protect present and future generations from the devastating health, social, environmental and economic consequences of tobacco consumption and exposure to tobacco smoke. One of the key measures of the treaty is Article 5.3, which is a general obligation to protect public health policies from the commercial and other vested interests of the tobacco industry. It recognizes ***“the need for gender-specific tobacco control strategies”***, as well as for the ***“full participation of women at all levels of tobacco policy-making and implementation of tobacco control measures.”***

All government agencies are encouraged to actively participate in and organize week-long activities beginning May 31, 2010 to celebrate World No Tobacco Day. For inquiries, you may contact Director IV Asuncion M. Anden of the DOH National Center for Health Promotion at telephone number (02) 743-8301 local 2801 or (02) 743-8438 telefax.

Let us observe a 100% smoke-free workplace at all times.


FRANCISCO T. DUQUE III, MD, MSc.
Chairman

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