



MC No. 19, s. 2017

## MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR

- TO :** HEADS OF CONSTITUTIONAL BODIES; DEPARTMENTS, BUREAUS AND AGENCIES OF THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT; LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS; GOVERNMENT-OWNED OR CONTROLLED CORPORATIONS WITH ORIGINAL CHARTERS; STATE UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES; AND OTHERS CONCERNED
- SUBJECT :** Additional Guidelines in Processing Examination Applications, and Admitting Female Examinees Wearing Muslim Covering/Clothing on Examination Day

As contained in CSC Resolution No. 1700630 promulgated on March 13, 2017, the Commission has resolved to adopt the additional guidelines in accepting and processing examination applications, and admitting female examinees wearing Muslim Covering/Clothing on examination day, as follows:

### 1. Accepting and Processing Examination Application

- 1.1. No female applicant wearing Muslim covering/clothing (i.e., Hijab, Niqab or Abaya) shall be prohibited from applying to take any civil service examination. Acceptance of application shall be based on the completeness and authenticity of documentary requirements and qualifications of the applicant;
- 1.2. A female applicant wearing a Hijab in the pictures submitted shall be accepted, provided that the prescribed technical specifications are met, and the applicant's hairline is shown.

The photo capture, if to be taken in the CSC Office and upon request of the female applicant, shall be done in a separate room or any closed area within the premises of the Office where the Hijab may be removed or at least the facial features can be shown. The female applicant shall be assisted by a female CSC employee.

### 2. Admitting Examinees during Examination Day

- 2.1. No female examinee wearing Muslim covering/clothing on examination day, specifically during conduct of pre-examination activities (i.e., admission procedures), shall be prohibited from taking the test, provided she is able to present the required documents;

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- 2.2. Verification of identity of examinee (where the examinee wearing a hijab may be asked to remove the head covering to ensure that the examinee is the same person as the one appearing in the photographs in the ID card presented, Application Form, and Application Receipt (if available) / Admission Pass (for Civil Service Examination for Foreign Service Officer), upon request of the examinee, shall be done in a designated area/room where the covering may be removed or at least enable the CSC staff to see the facial features of the examinee;
- 2.3. Female examinees wearing any Muslim clothing which covers the whole body shall be required to show their arms up to elbow level before they can enter the examination room. In case the examinee refuses to do so on the basis of religious belief, the process shall likewise be done in a separate room.

In which case, the examinee concerned shall be assisted by a female CSC staff to the designated room so as not to disrupt the ongoing admitting procedure.

These guidelines shall apply to applicants and examinees of all civil service examinations, resulting in conferment of civil service eligibility, which are conducted both via Pen and Paper Test (PPT) and Computerized Examination (COMEX).

For the guidance of all concerned.

  
**ALICIA dela ROSA-BALA**  
Chairperson  
14 JUN 2017

Published in the Philippine Star on May 31, 2017  
and effective on June 15, 2017



**CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATIONS**  
**Re: Additional Guidelines in**  
**Processing Examination Applications,**  
**and Admitting Female Examinees**  
**Wearing Muslim Covering/Clothing**  
**on Examination Day**

Number: 1700630

Promulgated: 13 MAR 2017

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### RESOLUTION

**WHEREAS**, Item 7, Section 12, Chapter 3, Book V of the Administrative Code of 1987, provides that the CSC shall have the power to control, supervise, and coordinate civil service examinations. Embedded in it is its constitutional mandate to protect the integrity of civil service examinations (CSEs) as a measure to build a pool of competent and credible workforce;

**WHEREAS**, to protect the integrity of CSEs, stringent measures are being implemented in the administration, from application to actual conduct, including test development and processing of results. In processing examination application, in particular, a thorough review and evaluation of application form and supporting documents is being done to ensure their completeness and authenticity.

**WHEREAS**, vital in ensuring security of CSEs is the picture requirement (with technical specifications) which will be checked against the facial features of the applicant/examinee during the processing of examination application and admitting procedures on examination day to validate the applicant/examinee's identity;

**WHEREAS**, during the filing of examination application and on examination day, female Muslim applicants/examinees wear Muslim covering/clothing as an expression of their faith and religious obligation;

**WHEREAS**, while security (in the administration of examination) and freedom (to exercise religious beliefs) are two fundamental but different values, both are equally significant concerns of the CSC;

**WHEREAS**, Section 5, Article 3 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution provides that "The free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship, without discrimination or preference, shall forever be allowed." Relatedly, Republic Act No. 9710, otherwise known as The Magna Carta of Women, specifically Section 28, recognizes and respects the rights of Muslim women "to practice, promote, protect, and preserve their own culture, traditions, and institutions and to consider these rights in the formulation and implementation of national policies and programs."

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**WHEREAS**, the CSC strongly advocates for the rights of Muslim women, and although respect for the same is evident, specifically in administering civil service examinations, there is a need to formalize the inclusion of their rights in the examination policies;

**WHEREFORE**, the Commission **RESOLVES** to adopt the following guidelines in accepting and processing examination application and in admitting female examinees wearing Muslim Covering/Clothing, to wit:

1. Accepting and Processing Examination Application

- 1.1. No female applicant wearing Muslim covering/clothing (i.e., Hijab, Niqab or Abaya) shall be prohibited from applying to take any civil service examination. Acceptance of application shall be based on the completeness and authenticity of documentary requirements and qualifications of the applicant;
- 1.2. A female applicant wearing a Hijab in the pictures submitted shall be accepted, provided that the prescribed technical specifications are met, and the applicant's hairline is shown.

The photo capture, if to be taken in the CSC Office and upon request of the female applicant, shall be done in a separate room or any closed area within the premises of the Office where the Hijab may be removed or at least the facial features can be shown. The female applicant shall be assisted by a female CSC employee.

2. Admitting Examinees during Examination Day

- 2.1. No female examinee wearing Muslim covering/clothing on examination day, specifically during conduct of pre-examination activities (i.e., admission procedures), shall be prohibited from taking the test, provided she is able to present the required documents;
- 2.2. Verification of identity of examinee (where the examinee wearing a hijab may be asked to remove the head covering to ensure that the examinee is the same person as the one appearing in the photographs in the ID card presented, Application Form, and Application Receipt (if available) / Admission Pass (for Civil Service Examination for Foreign Service Officer), upon request of the examinee, shall be done in a designated area/room where the covering may be removed or at least enable the CSC staff to see the facial features of the examinee;
- 2.3. Female examinees wearing any Muslim clothing which covers the whole body shall be required to show their arms up to elbow level before they can enter the examination room. In case the examinee refuses to do so on the basis of religious belief, the process shall likewise be done in a separate room.



**CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATIONS**

Re: *Additional Guidelines in  
Processing Examination Application  
and Admitting Female Examinees  
Wearing Muslim Covering/Clothing, p.3*

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In which case, the examinee concerned shall be assisted by a female CSC staff to the designated room so as not to disrupt the ongoing admitting procedure.

The Commission **FURTHER RESOLVES** that the guidelines shall apply to applicants and examinees of all civil service examinations, resulting in conferment of civil service eligibility, which are conducted both via Pen and Paper Test (PPT) and Computerized Examination (COMEX).

This Resolution shall take effect after fifteen (15) days from its publication in a newspaper of general circulation.


Quezon City.

  
**ALICIA dela ROSA-BALA**  
Chairperson

  
**ROBERT S. MARTINEZ**  
Commissioner

**VACANT**  
Commissioner

Attested by:

  
**DOLORES B. BONIFACIO**  
Director IV  
Commission Secretariat and Liaison Office