



MC No. 2, s. 2022

## MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR

- TO : ALL HEADS OF CONSTITUTIONAL BODIES; DEPARTMENTS, BUREAUS AND AGENCIES OF THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT; LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS; GOVERNMENT-OWNED OR CONTROLLED CORPORATIONS WITH ORIGINAL CHARTERS; AND STATE UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES**
- SUBJECT : Amendment to the Revised Interim Guidelines on the Use of Leave Credits for Absences Due to Quarantine and/or Treatment of COVID-19**

Pursuant to **CSC Resolution No. 2101122** promulgated on **31 December 2021**, the Commission, in consideration of the predicament of government officials and employees aside from PHWs who are repeatedly exposed to COVID-19 while in the performance of official duties and due to community transmission, adopts the following Amendment to the Revised Interim Guidelines on the Use of Leave Credits for Absences Due to Quarantine and/or Treatment of COVID-19 provided under CSC Resolution No. 2000522:

### 1.0 Purpose

These revised guidelines provide for the procedure of availment of leave privileges for absences incurred in relation to the required period of quarantine, **isolation** and/or treatment of public sector officials and employees relative to the COVID-19.

Moreover, said guidelines seek to contribute to ensuring that precautionary measures are adopted in government agencies to avoid the spread of the said virus in the public sector workplace.

Further, since the requirement to go on quarantine, **isolation and/or treatment are** vital health protocols imposed by the IATF-EID for the containment of the virus, and with the government's relaxation of quarantine measures in the majority areas of the country, more government officials and employees became more exposed to COVID-19 due to face-to-face interaction with clients and co-workers **and community transmission.**

Bawat Kawani, Lingkod Bayani

For equity and fairness, it is imperative that the required quarantine, **isolation**, and/or treatment due to repeated exposure to the COVID-19 of government officials and employees aside from PHWs shall be deemed excused absences.

## 2.0 Scope and Coverage

These guidelines shall apply to all public sector officials and employees regardless of status of appointment (permanent, temporary, provisional, substitute, coterminous, casual, contractual or fixed term) including local elective officials.

## 3.0 Guidelines

- 3.1** It is the responsibility of each government official/employee or any individual serving the public sector to ensure adherence to Inter-Agency Task Force in the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) and/or Department of Health (DOH) guidelines, observance of the Minimum Public Health Standards (MPHS) at all times, and utilization of the necessary measures to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 infection in the public sector workplace.
- 3.2** All officials and employees in the public sector who came from official or personal travel from countries with or without localized COVID-19 transmissions shall undergo the **required quarantine<sup>1</sup>**, **subject to the prevailing IATF-EID and/or DOH guidelines.**
- 3.3** All officials and employees in the public sector who came from official or personal local travel who were categorized as **suspect<sup>2</sup>**, **probable and confirmed cases of COVID-19 shall be isolated<sup>3</sup> in the proper facility depending on the severity of their symptoms, subject to IATF-EID and/or DOH guidelines.**

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<sup>1</sup> **Quarantine** -refers to the separation and movement restrictions of people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick. Hence, quarantine intends to keep individuals under observation to see if they will develop COVID-19 signs or symptoms or if they will test positive for COVID-19.

<sup>2</sup> **Suspect Case** – refers to any of the following:

a. A person who meets the clinical AND epidemiologic criteria:

Clinical criteria:

1. Acute onset of fever AND cough OR;
2. Acute onset of ANY THREE OR MORE of the following signs or symptoms: fever, cough, general weakness/fatigue, headache, myalgia, sore throat, coryza, dyspnea, anorexia/nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, altered mental status;

Epidemiological criteria:

1. Residing or working in an area with high risk of transmission of the virus: for example, closed residential settings and humanitarian settings, such as camp and camp-like settings for displaced persons, any time within the 14 days prior to symptom onset; OR
2. Residing in or travel to an area with community transmission anytime within the 14 days prior to symptom onset; OR
3. Working in a health setting, including within health facilities and within households, anytime within the 14 days prior to symptom onset.

b. A patient with severe acute respiratory illness (SARI: acute respiratory infection with history of fever or measured fever of > 38 C; and cough; with onset within the last 10 days and who requires hospitalization).

<sup>3</sup> **Isolation** -refers to the separation of sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick. Therefore, isolation intends to treat and monitor suspect, probable, and confirmed cases.

**3.4** All officials and employees in the public sector who are identified as **close contact<sup>4</sup> of any of the following** shall undergo the required quarantine in their homes, agency-supported accommodation, or designated quarantine facility, **subject to the prevailing IATF-EID and/or DOH guidelines:**

- a. probable case<sup>5</sup>,**
- b. confirmed COVID-19 case<sup>6</sup>, and**
- c. inbound international travelers**

**3.5** Absence from work due to the required period of quarantine, **isolation** and/or treatment for the COVID-19, as applicable, shall be treated, as follows:

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Nature of Absence from Work; Applicable Leave of Absence</b>	<b>Procedure Upon Return to Work</b>
1. Government officials and employees coming from official or personal travel from countries with or without localized COVID-19 transmissions who underwent the required quarantine period, isolation and/or treatment for COVID-19	For those on official travel under categories 1 and 2, absence from work during the <b>required quarantine period*</b> , isolation and/or treatment, for every instance, shall be considered as excused absence <sup>7</sup> (required quarantine leave, isolation and/or COVID-19	Submit to agency's HR office/Unit the following:  1. Application for Leave of absence  2. Certificate issued by government/

<sup>4</sup> **Close Contact** – refers to a person who has experienced any one of the following exposures during the 2 days before and the 14 days after the onset of symptoms of a suspect, probable or confirmed case:

- a. Face-to face contact with a probable or confirmed case within one (1) meter and for more than 15 minutes;
- b. Direct physical contact with a probable or confirmed case;
- c. Direct care for a patient with probable or confirmed COVID-19 disease without using proper personal protective equipment (PPE) OR
- d. Other situations as indicated by local risk assessments.

<sup>5</sup> **Probable case** - A patient who meets clinical criteria: 1. Acute onset of fever AND cough OR 2. Acute onset of ANY THREE OR MORE of the following signs or symptoms: fever, cough, general weakness/fatigue, headache, myalgia, sore throat, coryza, dyspnea, anorexia/nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, altered mental status; AND is

- a. a contact of a probable or confirmed case, or epidemiologically linked to a cluster of cases which has had at least one confirmed case identified within that cluster. Epidemiologically linked refers to exposure of a suspect case to a confirmed case which occurred within 2-14 days prior to the suspect case's onset of illness. This is based on current available data on COVID-19 incubation period.
- b. a suspect case (described below) with chest imaging showing findings suggestive of COVID-19 disease
- c. a person with recent onset of anosmia (loss of smell) or ageusia (loss of taste) in the absence of any other identified cause
- d. Death, not otherwise explained, in an adult with respiratory distress preceding death AND who was a contact of a probable or confirmed case or epidemiologically linked to a cluster which has had at least one confirmed case identified within that cluster.

<sup>6</sup> **Confirmed COVID-19 case** refers to a person with laboratory confirmation of COVID-19 infection, irrespective of clinical signs and symptoms.

<sup>7</sup> **"Excused Absence"** as used in this Resolution shall refer to the period when government personnel are not required to report for work (required quarantine and/or treatment, and work suspension), but are entitled to pay, as declared by the President or the appropriate and competent authorities.

Categories	Nature of Absence from Work; Applicable Leave of Absence	Procedure Upon Return to Work
<p>2. Government officials and employees coming from official or personal local travel from areas under community quarantine who underwent the required quarantine period, isolation and/or treatment for COVID-19</p>	<p>treatment leave) <b>subject to the provisions of 3.7 hereunder.</b></p> <p>For those on personal travel under categories 1 and 2, absence from work for <b>every instance of the required quarantine period* shall be considered as excused absence (required quarantine leave) subject to the provisions of 3.7 hereunder.</b></p> <p>However, the period of their isolation and/or treatment shall be considered sick leave chargeable against their leave credits, if any.</p> <p>In case work suspension is declared during the required period of isolation and/or treatment, it shall be considered excused absence and shall be not chargeable against their earned leave credits.</p>	<p>private physician that he/she has submitted himself/ herself for monitoring/ investigation, as applicable, (<b>For close contact<sup>2</sup></b>);</p> <p>3. Completion of Quarantine Certificate issued by the local quarantine/ health official;</p> <p>4. Medical Certificate that he/she is cleared to report back to work;</p> <p>and</p> <p>Medical Records showing that he/she was treated of the COVID-19 signed by the attending physician (<i>for those under treatment of COVID-19</i>).</p>
<p><b>3. Government officials and employees who are infected or identified as close contacts of a suspect, probable and/or confirmed cases of COVID-19 while in the performance of their official functions (onsite or WFH arrangement) and underwent the required quarantine period, isolation and/or treatment for COVID-19</b></p>	<p>Absence from work for <b>every instance</b> of the <b>required quarantine period*</b>, isolation and/or treatment for COVID-19 shall be considered as excused absence (required quarantine leave, isolation and/or COVID-19 treatment leave) <b>subject to the provisions of 3.7 hereunder.</b></p>	<p>5. <b>Copy of RT-PCR test result. (For those under Category 3)</b></p>

Categories	Nature of Absence from Work; Applicable Leave of Absence	Procedure Upon Return to Work
<p>4. Government officials and employees who are infected or identified as close contacts of a suspect, probable and/or confirmed cases of COVID-19 due to personal activities and underwent the required quarantine period, isolation and/or treatment for COVID-19</p>	<p>Absence from work for <b>every instance</b> of the <b>required quarantine period*</b> shall be considered as excused absence (required quarantine leave) <b>subject to the provisions of 3.7 hereunder.</b></p> <p>However, the period of their isolation and/or treatment shall be considered sick leave chargeable against their leave credits, if any.</p> <p>For personal activities in violation of IATF-EID protocols, absence from work for the <b>required quarantine period*</b>, isolation and/or treatment of COVID-19, shall be considered as sick leave chargeable against their leave credits, if any.</p> <p>In case work suspension is declared during the required period of quarantine, isolation and/or treatment (<i>as indicated in 2nd and 3rd paragraphs hereof</i>), it shall be considered excused absence and shall be not chargeable against their earned leave credits.</p>	<p><b>6. Copy of Vaccination Card (For those fully vaccinated)</b></p> <p><b>7. Copy of Barangay Contact Tracing form for those under Category 4, who are identified as close contacts with a suspect, probable and/or confirmed cases of COVID-19.</b></p>

Categories	Nature of Absence from Work; Applicable Leave of Absence	Procedure Upon Return to Work
5. Government officials and employees, on personal travel from countries WITHOUT APPROVED TRAVEL AUTHORITY BEFORE OR AFTER the declaration of THE STATE OF PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY DUE TO COVID-19 threat, who underwent the required period of quarantine, <b>isolation</b> and/or treatment for COVID-19	Absence from work during the <b>required quarantine period*</b> , <b>isolation</b> and/or treatment for COVID-19 shall be considered as sick leave and shall be deducted from their earned sick leave credits, if any.  However, in case work suspension is declared during the required period of quarantine, isolation and/or treatment, it shall be considered excused absence and shall not be chargeable against their leave credits without prejudice to administrative sanctions as determined by their respective agency/office head.	

\* **Subject to prevailing IATF-EID and/or DOH guidelines**

- 3.6** In the event of circumstances abovementioned wherein the employee has exhausted his/her sick leave credits, Section 56 of the Omnibus Rules on Leave shall apply allowing the use of vacation leave credits in lieu of sick leave credits. In case the vacation leave credits have been exhausted, the employee may apply for sick leave of absence without pay.
- 3.7** **Government officials and employees who are identified as close contacts of suspect, probable and/or confirmed case of COVID-19 or those asymptomatic and underwent the required quarantine while waiting for the result of the swab test administered upon him/her or completing the required quarantine as prescribed by the IATF-EID and/or DOH may be required to adopt a Work-from-Home arrangement depending on the nature of work of the employee pursuant CSC MC No. 18 s. 2020<sup>8</sup>.**
- 3.8** Government officials and employees under Categories 1, 2, 3 or 4<sup>9</sup> whose absences should have been considered excused absences under the

<sup>8</sup> Amendment to the Revised Interim Guidelines for Alternative Work Arrangements and Support Mechanisms for Workers in the Government during the Period of State of Public Health Emergency due to COVID-19 Pandemic

<sup>9</sup> Required 14-day quarantine period only

herein guidelines but were deducted against their leave credits prior to the issuance of these guidelines can have the said leave credits restored through their respective agencies' Human Resource/Personnel Office/s/Units.

**3.9** The **DOH Department Memorandum No. 2020-0512 dated November 26, 2020, and DOH Department Circular No. 2021-0070 dated 16 February 2021** shall apply. Moreover, future instructions/advisories issued by the Office of the President based on the recommendation/s of the IATF-EID on the assessment and management of COVID-19 shall also be subsequently applied. For announcements and public advisories, you may visit the following official DOH channels:

- a. Website: <https://www.doh.gov.ph/2019-nCoV>
- b. Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/OfficialDOHgov/>
- c. Twitter: <https://twitter.com/DOHgov>

**3.10** Office heads shall also ensure that efficiency and productivity work standards are met, and that delivery of public service is not prejudiced during the required quarantine and/or treatment of concerned officials and employees.

**3.11** The following documents may be required in support of absences due to required quarantine period or treatment in relation to COVID-19:

<b>Documents</b>	<b>On Official Business</b>	<b>Personal Travel</b>
Travel Authority ( <i>International</i> )	/	/
Office Order ( <i>International/Local</i> )	/	x
Certificate of Appearance ( <i>Local</i> )	/	x
Laboratory Test Results	/	/
Waiver	x	/
Other Travel Documents	/	/

#### **4.0 Responsibilities of the Agency Head**

The agency head through the Human Resource Management Office/Officer shall monitor the implementation of the use of leave credits for absences due to quarantine, **isolation** and/or treatment relative to COVID-19 based on herein guidelines.

#### **5.0 Repealing Clause**

All other existing guidelines which are inconsistent herewith are deemed modified accordingly.

## **6.0 Effectivity**

The guidelines under CSC Resolution No. 2101122 dated December 31, 2021 shall take effect retroactively on March 16, 2020, the start of the Enhanced Community Quarantine in Luzon, and shall remain in force until the State of Public Health Emergency and the Community Quarantine has been lifted by the Office of the President.



**ALICIA dela ROSA - BALA**  
Chairperson

**18 January 2022**