



Republic of the Philippines

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

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**AMENDED GUIDELINES ON THE FOREIGN TRAVEL OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES PURSUANT TO THE DIRECTIVE FROM THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE PERTINENT PROVISIONS OF DILG MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 2018-197 DATED NOVEMBER 9, 2018**

Memorandum Circular No. 2019-83

May 29, 2019

**1.0 Purpose**

This Memorandum Circular is issued in pursuance of Presidential Executive Order No. 77 dated March 15, 2019.

Further, the directives stated herein amends the pertinent provisions of DILG Memorandum Circular No. 2018-197 dated November 9, 2018.

**2.0 Policy Content and Guidelines**

**2.1 Definition of Terms**

- 2.1.1 Official Time Only - except for the payment of salary and other applicable emoluments for the duration of such trip, no other government expense such as, international airfare (economy) or daily subsistence allowance is authorized.
- 2.1.2 Official Business - refers to a foreign travel with entitlements, i.e., payment of international airfare (economy), and/or travel allowance as prescribed under OP Executive Order No. 77 dated March 15, 2019.
- 2.1.3 Incidental Expenses - refers to expenses for foreign exchange; passport, visas; photographs; affidavits; certificates of birth, health or identity; inoculation; taxi fares, bus fares, airport fees; and other similar expenses.

**2.2 Coverage of Official Travel**

Official travels shall cover only those which meet the following criteria:

- 2.2.1 It is essential to the effective performance of an official or employee's mandates or functions;
- 2.2.2 It is required to meet the needs of the LGU concerned, or there is substantial benefit that can be derived;
- 2.2.3 The presence of the official or employee is critical to the outcome of the meeting, conference, seminar, consultation or any official activity to be attended; and
- 2.2.4 The projected expenses involve minimum expenditure, and not excessive.

## 2.3 Nature of Travel

The nature of travel is categorized as follows:

- 2.3.1 Study Trip - covers technical training, fellowship, studies abroad or scholarship grant processed or coordinated either by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), Local Government Academy of this Department, other national government agencies, international agencies, foreign governments, or as part of an existing partnership between a local government unit in the country and its counterpart abroad.
- 2.3.2 Non-Study Trip refers to the following:
  - 2.3.2.1 Attendance to international conferences, seminars or meetings to which the Philippine Government has commitments, or to undertake official missions/assignments which cannot be assigned to government officials posted abroad; and
  - 2.3.2.2 Invitations for speaking engagements or receiving of awards from foreign governments/institutions or international agencies/organizations as defined under international law, whether fully or partially funded by the government, upon the endorsement of the Department of Foreign Affairs.
- 2.3.3 Personal or Private Trip refers to a foreign travel pursued for a personal or private purpose such as medical reason, emergency, and/or a special occasion. A special occasion is when the presence of a local government official or employee is deemed indispensable and other personal considerations such as attendance to a gathering of an organized association of Filipinos abroad or commemoration of a special event or festival celebration, social visit and the like.  
A personal or private trip shall be undertaken while on an **Official Leave of Absence**.

## 2.4 Approving Authority

The Secretary of Interior and Local Government shall approve requests for foreign travel of the following:

- Provincial Governor, Mayor of Highly Urbanized City and Independent Component City, and Municipality of Pateros, regardless of the nature, purpose and duration of such travel;
- Mayor of Component City and Municipality, Vice Governor, Vice Mayor, Member of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan, Panlungsod and Bayan, and Barangay Elective Official including Sangguniang Kabataan, on official time only, or on official business, or while on leave of absence with a travel duration exceeding three (3) calendar months, or during a period of emergency or crisis;
- Local Government Department Head, on official time only, or on official business, or while on leave of absence with a travel duration exceeding three (3) calendar months, or during a period of emergency or crisis; and
- Local government employee below department head including barangay appointive officials and employees, on official time only, or on official business.

## 2.5 Entitlements

### 2.5.1 Payment of International Airfare

In case the LG official or employee authorized to travel abroad is not provided with transportation by the host country or sponsoring organization, he/she shall be allowed to claim for transportation expenses for the economy class.

### 2.5.2 Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) shall be granted based on the daily rates established by the International Civil Service Commission of the United Nations, and are apportioned to the following percentage: (a) hotel/lodging = 50%, (b) meal expenses = 30%, and (c) incidental expenses = 20%).

When the country of destination is not listed therein, the DSA for the nearest country shall be adopted. When the city of destination is not listed therein, the "elsewhere" rate established for the country shall be adopted.

The DSA shall only start upon arrival at the country of destination and shall cease upon departure therefrom.

### 2.5.3 Clothing Allowance

#### 2.5.3.1 Clothing allowance shall be granted to the local government official and employee on foreign travel in tropical countries or temperate countries for the period coinciding with the summer and spring seasons, regardless of the nature of travel, if the travel will last for more than one (1) month. The clothing allowance shall be granted on a pro-rated basis, as follows;

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| More than one (1) month but less than three (3) months | USD200.00 |
|--|-----------|

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Three (3) months and more than but less than six (6) months | USD300.00 |
|---|-----------|

|                         |           |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| Six (6) months and more | USD400.00 |
|-------------------------|-----------|

Provided, however, that the clothing allowance in connection with study trips to tropical countries shall not exceed USD300.00.

#### 2.5.3.2 When the travel to temperate countries, regardless of the nature of travel, coincides with the autumn or winter seasons, the clothing allowance shall be granted as follows:

|                       |           |
|-----------------------|-----------|
| Two (2) weeks or less | USD200.00 |
|-----------------------|-----------|

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| More than two (2) weeks but less than one (1) month | USD300.00 |
|---|-----------|

|                        |           |
|------------------------|-----------|
| One (1) month and more | USD400.00 |
|------------------------|-----------|

2.5.3.3 Grantees provided by donor institutions with clothing allowance at rates equal to or higher than those indicated above shall no longer be granted said allowance by the government agency concerned.

2.5.3.4 When the clothing allowance granted by the donor is less than the rates indicated above, the local government official or employee concerned may be given the difference.

2.5.3.5 The clothing allowance may be granted more than once every 24 months. In no instance, however, shall the total clothing allowance exceed USD400.00 within a 24- month period.

2.5.4 Pre-Departure Expenses not exceeding PhP3,500.00 shall be allowed to cover miscellaneous expenses for taxicab fare, passport processing, immunization and medical laboratory fees, photographs, portorage, airport terminal fees, and other related expenses. if any, and other related expenses.

2.5.5 Expenses of local government unit concerned for Study Trip shall be limited only to Pre-Departure expenses since donor countries/organizations/institutions shall pay for airfares, school/training fees, accommodations, health insurance, and stipend. In cases where airfares and clothing allowance will not be shouldered by the donors, the LGU concerned may pay for the same, subject to the provisions of the memoranda of agreement or any similar document that may be entered into by and between the donor and the LGU.

### **3.0 Administrative Requirements**

See attached Annex "A"

### **4.0 Filing of Application for Travel Authority**

The application for Travel Authority, complete with all the required documents, must be filed at least ten (10) working days, for official purpose (official time only and official business) and at least ten (10) calendar days, for personal or private purpose, both prior to the date of departure, thru the Foreign Travel Authority (FTA) On-Line System at [www.blgs-pcmd.com](http://www.blgs-pcmd.com).

### **5.0 Other Rules and Regulations**

5.0.1 In keeping with the policy to promote a high standard of ethics in public service, every local government official and employee shall refrain from accepting an invitation to travel abroad, directly or indirectly funded, fully or partially, by any contractor or supplier of goods, equipment and services, unless such travel is to be undertaken for the purpose of product inspection as part of a duly perfected contract.

5.0.2 As an important pillar of the Philippine relations with China, every local official or employee shall strictly observe the One-China Policy mandated in Presidential Executive Order No. 313, s.1987, Office of the President Memorandum Circular No. 148, s. 1992, and as reiterated in DILG Memorandum Circular No. 2008-150 dated October 2, 2008.

- 5.0.3 For a trip relating to a: (a) sister city or twinning relationship; and (b) trade and investment, tourism promotion or environmental purposes, and (c) other non-study trips, a maximum duration of the trip of two (2) calendar days (exclusive of travel time) and a maximum of three (3)- member delegation to represent the local government unit may be allowed, provided that: 1) the responsibility of each member is clearly defined and clearly related to his work or job in his official station; and 2) there is a clear added value of the trip in relation to an existing or planned scheme of the local government unit to further good governance and development. Provided further that, the size of the delegation must be kept to the barest minimum without sacrificing effective representation of the LGU, meaning, where two (2) or more officials or employees perform or act in the same capacity during the activity proper, reduction of the members of the delegation is called for. In the event that, two (2) or more tasks can be handled by one (1) person, there is no need for a local government unit to send additional participant(s) to handle such tasks separately.
- 5.0.4 For a trip relating to Study Tours or Lakbay Aral, and Benchmarking Programs, an endorsement from the Executive Director of the Local Government Academy, shall form part of the requirement. A maximum duration of the trip of five (5) days (exclusive of travel time) and a maximum of five (5) participants per trip may be allowed. In the event, the number of participants exceed five (5), approval from the Office of the President is required.
- 5.0.5 All forms of travel junkets are prohibited. Likewise, the conduct of strategic planning workshops or team building activities abroad is not allowed.
- 5.0.6 In accordance with the Commission on Audit Circular No. 2012-003 dated October 29, 2012, the following expenditures shall not be allowed:
- 5.0.6.1 Excessive allowances to participants;
  - 5.0.6.2 Payment for rent of expensive halls or rooms in luxury hotels and restaurants; and
  - 5.0.6.3 Payment of accommodation expenses in five star hotels.
- 5.0.7 No government official or employee shall be allowed to depart for any travel abroad, even if such travel is personal or private purpose, unless such official or employee has duly accomplished the requisite leave forms and has obtained a travel authorization from appropriate authorities.
- 5.0.8 Travel abroad of a Local Chief Executive while on leave of absence or for a private purpose shall not exceed: (a) ten (10) consecutive days except in highly meritorious cases, and prolonged absences must be properly explained or justified; and (b) thirty (30) cumulative days for one (1) year.
- 5.0.9 A Mayor of a Component City or Municipality or Punong Barangay who intends to pursue a personal or private trip that does not extend to more than three (3) months, or when such trip is to be undertaken during a period where there is no emergency or crisis, shall notify the Provincial Governor, or in the case of the Punong Barangay, the City or Municipal Mayor, in writing, with the duly accomplished leave application filed for the approval, or appropriate action of, the Provincial Governor or City or Municipal Mayor concerned. In the event that the leave application is approved, the said approved leave application shall serve as the Travel Authorization relative to such personal or private trip. Provided that, when the application for leave of absence is not acted upon within five (5) working days after receipt thereof, such application for leave of absence shall be deemed approved, as provided for in Section 47, Approval of Leaves of Absence, of the Local Government Code of 1991.

- 5.0.10 A Vice Governor, City Vice Mayor or Municipal Vice Mayor who intends to pursue a personal or private trip that does not extend to more than three (3) months, or when such trip is to be undertaken during a period where there is no emergency or crisis, shall notify the Local Chief Executive concerned, in writing, with the duly accomplished leave application filed for the approval, or other appropriate action of, the Local Chief Executive. In the event that the leave application is approved, the said approved leave application shall serve as the Travel Authorization relative to such personal or private trip. Provided that, when the application for leave of absence is not acted upon within five (5) working days after receipt thereof, the application for leave of absence shall be deemed approved, as provided for in Section 47, Approval of Leaves of Absence, of the Local Government Code of 1991.
- 5.0.11 A Sanggunian Member who intends to pursue a personal or private trip that does not extend to more than three (3) months, or when such trip is to be undertaken during a period where there is no emergency or crisis, shall notify the concerned Presiding Officer, the Vice Governor in the case of Sanggunian Panlalawigan Member, the City Vice Mayor in the case of the Sanggunian Panlungsod Member, or the Municipal Vice Mayor in the case of the Sanggunian Bayan Member, in writing, with the duly accomplished leave application filed for the approval, or other appropriate action of, the Presiding Officer. In the event that the leave application is approved, the said approved leave application shall serve as the Travel Authorization relative to such personal or private trip. Provided that, when the application for leave of absence is not acted upon within five (5) working days after receipt thereof, the application for leave of absence shall be deemed approved, as provided for in Section 47, Approval of Leaves of Absence, of the Local Government Code of 1991.
- 5.0.12 All personal or private trips of all local elective and appointive officials with the rank of local government department head, with the period of travel extending to more than three (3) months, or during a period of emergency or crisis, shall be subject to the approval of the Secretary of Interior and Local Government or his authorized representative. However, if the personal or private trip of a local government department head does not extend to more than three (3) months, or is not to be undertaken during a period of emergency or crisis, a travel authority from the Secretary is not required. Provided that, the concerned local official shall first secure a written permission from local authorities who are empowered by law, rules or regulations to act on such matter, with the duly accomplished leave application filed for the approval, or appropriate action of, competent local authorities. Provided further, that when the application for leave of absence is not acted upon within five (5) working days after receipt thereof, the application for leave of absence shall be deemed approved, as provided for in Section 47. Approval of Leaves of Absence, of the Local Government Code of 1991.
- 5.0.13 A provincial, city, municipal or barangay appointive official or employee, except for a local government department head, who intends to pursue a personal or private trip, regardless of the duration of such trip, shall first secure a written permission from local authorities who are empowered by law, rules and regulations to act on such matter, with the duly accomplished leave application filed for the approval, or

appropriate action of, competent local authorities. In the event that the leave application is approved, the said approved leave application shall serve as the Travel Authorization relative to such personal or private trip. Provided that, when the application for leave of absence is not acted upon within five (5) working days after receipt thereof, the application for leave of absence shall be deemed approved, as provided for in Section 47, Approval of Leaves of Absence, of the Local Government Code of 1991.

- 5.0.14 In case of political conflict or issues, or when a local chief executive concerned failed to act within the prescribed period under the Local Government Code of 1991, on a request for an authority to travel of any local official or employee, the Secretary of Interior and Local Government may issue a Department Authorization as part of his supervisory power, and in adherence to the Constitutional provision protecting the human right of a person to travel under Section 6, Chapter VIII, 1997 Philippine Constitution.
- 5.0.15 The Foreign Travel Authority On-Line System will be automatically closed at 5:00 pm every Friday and will be opened at 8:00 am every Monday, to give way for system maintenance.
- 5.0.16 The Department thru the Bureau of Local Government Supervision shall closely coordinate with the Bureau of Immigration in enforcing the provisions, and promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to accomplish the objectives of this Circular.

## **6.0 Recall of Authority**

The Travel Authority issued to any local government official or employee may be recalled by the Secretary, or his duly authorized representative, in case of emergency, and/or natural or human-induced disaster.

## **7.0 Grounds for Non-Processing or Disapproval of Request**

- 1. Incomplete administrative requirements shall not be processed and shall be returned to the concerned party without favorable action.
- 2. Any request submitted less than 10 working days prior to the date of departure shall be automatically denied for processing.
- 3. Any request submitted on holidays shall be processed only on the next working day, provided the period of submission is within 10 working days prior to the date of departure.
- 4. No post-travel authority shall be issued.

## **8.0 Submission of Reports**

- 8.1 The Bureau of Local Government Supervision shall submit a Quarterly Report to the Office of the President thru the Executive Secretary, in electronic copy, on the Lists of Travel Authorities issued to the following local government officials:
  - (a) Provincial Governor, Mayor of Highly Urbanized City and Independent Component City regardless of the nature, purpose and duration of such travel, and

- (b) Mayor of Component City and Municipality, Vice Governor, Vice Mayor, Member of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan, Panlungsod and Bayan, and Barangay Elective Official including Sangguniang Kabataan,

for travels undertaken on official time only, or on official business, or when the duration exceeds three (3) calendar months or during a period of emergency or crisis.

8.2 The following local authorities are required to submit to the Office of the President a Quarterly List of travel authorities, in electronic copy, cc: the Director, BLGS:

- (a) Provincial Governor, for travel authority issued to Component City and Municipal Mayors, and Vice Governor;
- (b) Component City and Municipal Mayor, for travel authority issued to Vice Mayor and Punong Barangays;
- (c) Vice Governor, for travel authority issued to the Members of Sangguniang Panlalawigan,
- (d) Vice Mayor, for travel authority issued to the Members of the Sangguniang Panlungsod and Bayan; and
- (e) Punong Barangay, for travel authority issued to the Members of Sangguniang Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan,

for travels undertaken while on leave of absence that does not exceed three (3) calendar months or not during a period of emergency or crisis.

8.3 The members of a delegation who participated in an international conference or convention shall submit a Report to the Office of the President thru the Secretary of Foreign Affairs, with appropriate recommendation, if any, on the conference or seminar attended or mission undertaken by the local official or employee, within 30 days after the closing of the conference or convention.

8.4 Local officials and employees shall submit a report, with appropriate recommendations, if any, on the conference or seminar attended or mission undertaken, to the head of agency within 30 days after his/her return to official station.

## **9.0 Sanctions**

9.1 Non-compliance with this Circular, as well as other applicable laws, rules and regulations, shall be sufficient ground for the outright denial or non-processing of requests for foreign travel authority, entitlement to travel expenses and allowances.

9.2 Failure to comply with the above directives may result in the filing of administrative actions for misconduct, insubordination and other related offenses under the Civil Service Commission Revised Rules on Administrative Cases in the Civil Service and/or relevant laws, rules and regulations.

## **10.0 Responsibilities of the DILG Regional Directors and the Chief Minister of Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), through the DILG BARMM Minister**

10.1 Cause the immediate and widest dissemination of this Memorandum Circular within their Region; and

10.2 Ensure that this Circular is effectively communicated to concerned local authorities.



### **11.0 Repealing Clause**

All DILG issuances which are inconsistent with this Memorandum Circular are hereby amended or repealed accordingly.

Any future reference relating to rules and regulations governing foreign travels of local government officials and employees shall be made in reference to this Memorandum Circular.

### **12.0 Effectivity**

This Memorandum Circular takes effect immediately and retroactive per OP Executive Order dated March 15, 2019..

### **13.0 Approving Authority**

  
**EDUARDO M. AÑO**  
Secretary



### **14.0 Feedback**

For related queries, kindly contact the Bureau of Local Government Supervision at Telephone Nos. 8763454 loc 4210 or at email address at [lad\\_blg@yahoo.com](mailto:lad_blg@yahoo.com)

**Administrative Requirements**

**A. For Study Trip**

1. Endorsement from:
  - i. the Local Chief Executive ( if applicant is a Component City and Municipal Mayor, Vice Governor, Vice Mayor, Punong Barangay and LG employees);
  - ii. the Presiding Officer (if applicant is a Sangguniang Panlalawigan Member, Sangguniang Panlungsod and Sangguniang Bayan, and Sangguniang Employees); and
  - iii. the Punong Barangay (Sangguniang Barangay Member and Barangay Employees including Sangguniang Kabataan)
2. Invitation Letter from the host country or sponsoring agency
3. Acceptance letter from CHED, TESDA, LGA, organizer, or donor, as applicable
4. A duly notarized Sworn Statement attesting that no administrative charge or criminal case has been filed or pending against the applicant or Oath of Undertaking, when the applicant has a pending case.
5. Clearance from Money and Property Accountabilities.

**B. For Non-Study Trip**

- Attendance to a Training, Seminar and/or Meetings
  1. Endorsement from:
    - i. the Local Chief Executive ( if applicant is a Component City and Municipal Mayor, Vice Governor, Vice Mayor, Punong Barangay and LG employees);
    - ii. the Presiding Officer (if applicant is a Sangguniang Panlalawigan Member, Sangguniang Panlungsod and Sangguniang Bayan, and Sangguniang Employees); and
    - iii. the Punong Barangay (Sangguniang Barangay Member and Barangay Employees including Sangguniang Kabataan)
  2. Invitation Letter from the host country, sponsoring agency, or organizer
  3. A duly notarized Sworn Statement attesting that no administrative charge or criminal case has been filed or pending against the applicant; or Oath of Undertaking, when the applicant has a pending case
  4. Clearance from Money and Property Accountabilities
- Attendance to an event that promotes Local Government Technical Exchange and Cooperation or Sister-City/Town Twinning relations
  1. Endorsement from:
    - i. the Local Chief Executive ( if applicant is a Component City and Municipal Mayor, Vice Governor, Vice Mayor, Punong Barangay and LG employees);
    - ii. the Presiding Officer (if applicant is a Sangguniang Panlalawigan Member, Sangguniang Panlungsod and Sangguniang Bayan, and Sangguniang Employees); and
    - iii. the Punong Barangay (Sangguniang Barangay Member and Barangay Employees including Sangguniang Kabataan)
  2. Invitation Letter from the host country, sponsoring agency, or organizer
  3. Copy or draft of the Memorandum of Agreement, or Memorandum of Understanding
  4. A duly notarized Sworn Statement attesting that no administrative charge or criminal case has been filed or pending against the applicant; or Oath of Undertaking, when the applicant has a pending case.
  5. Clearance from Money and Property Accountabilities

**C. For Personal or Private Trip of:**

- **Governors, Mayors of Highly Urbanized Cities and Independent Component Cities**
  1. **Duly Accomplished Application Form for Leave of Absence**
  2. **A duly notarized Sworn Statement attesting that no administrative charge or criminal case has been filed or pending against the applicant; or Oath of Undertaking, when the applicant has a pending case**
  3. **Clearance from Money and Property Accountabilities**
  4. **Medical Certificate for medical reasons**
  
- **Other Elected Officials and LGU Department Heads when the trip exceeds three (3) calendar months**
  1. **Approved Leave of Absence**
  2. **A duly notarized Sworn Statement attesting that no administrative charge or criminal case has been filed or pending against the applicant; or Oath of Undertaking, when the applicant has a pending case**
  3. **Clearance from Money and Property Accountabilities**
  4. **Medical Certificate for medical reasons**