



Republic of the Philippines

**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

DILG-NAPOLCOM Center, EDSA corner Quezon Avenue, West Triangle, Quezon City

<http://www.dilg.gov.ph>

**OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES ON THE CONDUCT OF, OR PARTICIPATION ON,  
STUDY TOURS OR *LAKBAY-ARAL* ACTIVITIES**

Memorandum Circular No. \_\_\_\_\_

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**1.0 Background**

- 1.1. Pursuant to the recently issued DILG-DBM Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2, s. 2016, providing policies and guidelines on study tours or lakbay aral activities of local government units, no such activity shall be conducted or participated in by LGU officials and personnel without prior authorization from DILG or its appropriate bureau/office/unit.
- 1.2. In view of the foregoing, the following policies and guidelines are hereby prescribed for the guidance and compliance of all concerned.

**2.0 Purpose**

- 2.1. The purpose of the policy is to provide detailed operational guidelines for LGUs and appropriate DILG offices relative to LGUs' conduct of, or participation on, study tours or lakbay aral activities.

**3.0 Legal Compliance**

- 3.1. Presidential Administrative Order No. 103, s. 2004, providing for the adoption of austerity measures and adherence to prescribed limits on personal services expenditures.
- 3.2. Commission on Audit Circular No. 2012-003, s. 2012, providing guidelines for the prevention and disallowance irregular, unnecessary, excessive, extravagant and unconscionable expenses.
- 3.3. DILG-DBM Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2, s. 2016, providing policies and guidelines on study tours or lakbay aral activities of local government units

**4.0 Scope/Coverage**

All Provincial Governors and Vice Governors, City and Municipal Mayors and Vice Mayors, Punong Barangays, Members of Local Sanggunians, DILG Regional Directors and Field Officers, ARMM Regional Governor, and all others concerned

**5.0 Policy Content and Guidelines**

**5.1. General Guidelines**

- 5.1.1. All lakbay aral activities where LGU officials and functionaries are invited to attend, with the use of public funds, shall require authorization from this Department, through the Local Government Academy (LGA) for international activities, or the respective DILG Regional Directors for regional or inter-regional activities.

- 5.1.2. Only lakbay aral activities with activity designs clearly showing comprehensive information on the following shall be authorized:
- 5.1.2.1. Venue, which must be identified as a best practice destination<sup>1</sup>;
  - 5.1.2.2. Rationale or learning agenda, which must seek to improve or develop the knowledge, skills and service delivery of participant LGUs, and ensure that such activities are part of the LGU's CapDev program, which was formulated based on an assessment of actual capacities;
  - 5.1.2.3. Benefits, which the LGU may gain after undergoing the activity ascertaining that such activities directly address or respond to actual CapDev needs or gaps identified based on the assessment of actual capacities, and shall include a program for replication or adoption of participant LGUs ensuring that such activities will contribute to the improvement of any of the capacity pillars identified under the System on Capacity Assessment for Local Governments (SCALOG) or the Capacity Development Agenda; and
  - 5.1.2.4. Such other pertinent information useful for evaluation purposes.
- 5.1.3. In order to maximize the learning process and to ensure a smooth flow of operations and delivery of services in the LGU, the size of delegation for the Lakbay Aral shall not exceed twenty (20) participants at a given time.
- 5.1.4. LGUs may participate in CSO- or academe-initiated or sponsored Lakbay Aral activities; provided that in the case of CSOs, they must be accredited by an NGA or LGU. The CSO concerned shall include in its invitation its Certificate of Accreditation.
- 5.1.5. The amount of registration fee for NGA- or CSO-initiated activities, if any, per participant, shall not exceed the rate prescribed under existing policies on the matter, and shall cover the costs of meals, training materials and use of facilities only.
- 5.1.6. In accordance with Commission on Audit (COA) Circular No. 2012-003 dated October 29, 2012<sup>2</sup>, the following expenditures in relation to lakbay aral shall not be allowed:
- 5.1.6.1. Excessive allowances to participants;
  - 5.1.6.2. Payment for rent of expensive halls or rooms in luxury hotels and restaurants; and
  - 5.1.6.3. Payment of accommodation expenses in five star hotels.
- 5.1.7. DILG Field Officers are prohibited from facilitating Lakbay Aral, which include the following logistical coordinative procedures: hotel and accommodation services, transportation services and catering and food services.

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<sup>1</sup> Lakbay Aral activities anchored on good practices may be held outside of the geographical island or region; provided that it is drawn from the list of publicly recognized best practice destinations from the Local Government Academy, Galing Pook Foundation, or other national government agencies; provided further that such best practices have high replicability potential in the LGU concerned.

<sup>2</sup> Updated Guidelines for the Prevention and Disallowance of Irregular, Unnecessary, Excessive, Extravagant and Unconscionable Expenditures



- 5.1.8. All existing budgeting, accounting and auditing laws, rules and regulations shall be strictly observed in the conduct of any Lakbay Aral activities.

## 5.2. Roles and Responsibilities

### 5.2.1. Local Government Units

- 5.2.1.1. Request to the DILG Regional Office or the Local Government Academy, as the case may be, for the approval of a Lakbay Aral activity design;
- 5.2.1.2. Utilize the Innovations-Solutions Best Practice Bank or “Bank” of the LGA to request for proper matching of either an appropriate Lakbay Aral design or another local governance development strategy
- 5.2.1.3. Recommend to the LGA potential best practice destinations for validation;
- 5.2.1.4. Submit a Technical-cum-Financial Report and Re-entry Action Plan or ReAP (or Local Governance Improvement Plan) to the concerned DILG Regional Offices for regional and inter-regional activities authorized by said DILG Regional Office, or to the Local Government Academy, copy furnished the Office of the Secretary, for international activities authorized by the LGA, within two (2) weeks after the said activity. Said Re-entry Action Plan (or Local Governance Improvement Plan) should clearly state, among others, the programs/projects and activities that the LGU intends to replicate. The ReAP may also be used by COA as part of their audit references.

### 5.2.2. DILG Regional Office

- 5.2.2.1. Authorize the conduct of regional and inter-regional Lakbay Aral activities, provided that said activity satisfies the conditions enumerated in item 5.1.2;
- 5.2.2.2. Monitor the implementation of LGU ReAPs;
- 5.2.2.3. Submit to LGA success stories for inclusion in the Bank; and
- 5.2.2.4. Report to the Bureau of Local Government Supervision (BLGS), on a biannual basis, data on regional and inter-regional Lakbay Aral activities applied, authorized, denied, adopted and/or replicated.

### 5.2.3. Local Government Academy

- 5.2.3.1. Organize a “Best Practice Unit” that shall identify, validate and certify best practice destinations locally and internationally, provided that these destinations have commendable practices, processes, programs and facilities worthy of adoption or replication;
- 5.2.3.2. Maintain a database containing the list of locally and internationally certified best practice destinations, and list of success stories;
- 5.2.3.3. Coordinate with appropriate NGAs, CSOs and other units (e.g. Galing Pook Foundation) in order to gather best practice destinations information;
- 5.2.3.4. Train the DILG Regional Offices on the Innovations-Solutions Best Practice Bank Program;

- 5.2.3.5. Provide assistance in designing Lakbay Aral activities for LGUs that have identified areas for improvement and development;
  - 5.2.3.6. Develop template program designs and training modules, in coordination with its partner agencies, that shall serve as a menu of Lakbay Aral activities for LGUs;
  - 5.2.3.7. Transmit a copy of authorization of the international Lakbay Aral activity to BLGS, provided that said activity satisfies the conditions enumerated in item 5.1.2;
  - 5.2.3.8. Furnish the Bureau of Local Government Supervision (BLGS), on a biannual basis, data on international Lakbay Aral activities applied, authorized, denied, adopted and/or replicated; and
  - 5.2.3.9. Incorporate Lakbay Aral in the Local Governance Resource Center.
- 5.2.4. Bureau of Local Government Supervision
- 5.2.4.1. Monitor all Lakbay Aral activities from application to replication;
  - 5.2.4.2. Maintain a database of local and international Lakbay Aral activities applied, authorized, denied, adopted and/or replicated; and
  - 5.2.4.3. Endorse to the SILG the issuance of a Foreign Travel Authority, provided that there is an authorization from LGA of the international Lakbay Aral activity.

## **6.0 Penal Provisions**

Non-compliance with this Memorandum Circular is tantamount to dereliction of duty and shall be dealt with in accordance with pertinent laws, rules and regulations.

## **7.0 References**

- 7.1. Administrative Order No. 103, dated August 31, 2004
- 7.2. Commission on Audit Circular No. 2012-003, dated October 29, 2012
- 7.3. DILG Memorandum Circular Nos. 96-167, dated September 5, 1996; 2010-139, dated December 2, 2010; and 2011-59, dated April 25, 2011
- 7.4. DILG-DBM Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2, dated September 23, 2016

## **8.0 Repealing Clause**

Provisions of existing circulars/memoranda/guidelines issued by the DILG which are not consistent with the provisions of this MC are hereby repealed and/or modified accordingly, while the provisions of existing circulars/memoranda/guidelines which are not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

## **9.0 Effectivity**

This JMC shall take effect immediately.

## **10.0 Approving Authority**

**ISMAEL D. SUENO**

Secretary, DILG

## **11.0 Feedback**

For related queries, kindly contact the following concerned offices:

- 11.1. Local Government Academy at Tel. Nos. (02) 634 8430 or (02) 634 6416 or at email address at [lgamail@lga.gov.ph](mailto:lgamail@lga.gov.ph).
- 11.2. Bureau of Local Government Supervision at Tel Nos. (02) 928 9181 or (02) 925 0351 or at email address at [blgspcmd@gmail.com](mailto:blgspcmd@gmail.com).
- 11.3. Public Expenditure Management Bureau at Tel Nos. (02) 791 2000 loc. 2348 or at email address at [jmacaspac@dbm.gov.ph](mailto:jmacaspac@dbm.gov.ph).