



ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 2020- 007

GUIDELINES GOVERNING THE OPERATIONS OF TRAVEL AND TOUR AGENCIES, AND TOUR GUIDES UNDER COMMUNITY QUARANTINE

WHEREAS, pursuant to Republic Act 9593 or the *Tourism Act of 2009*, the DOT is mandated to promulgate rules and regulations governing the operation and activities of all tourism enterprises which include Travel and Tour Agencies and Tour Guides;

WHEREAS, the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) *Omnibus Guidelines on the Implementation of Community Quarantine* provides that Category IV industries, which include travel and tour agencies, shall be allowed to operate under a Modified General Community Quarantine (MGCQ) at a maximum of fifty percent (50%) operational capacity;

WHEREAS, under IATF-EID Resolution No. 51, Series of 2020, Travel Agencies are allowed to resume operations in areas under General Community Quarantine (GCQ), provided that the operation shall be limited at skeleton workforce and primarily to do administrative work such as the processing of refunds and payments to suppliers;

WHEREAS, there is a need to ensure that the operations of Travel and Tour Agencies, and Tour Guides in areas under Community Quarantine are in accordance with Minimum Public Health Standards and capacity limitations set by the IATF;

NOW, THEREFORE, in view of the foregoing, these Guidelines on the Operations of Travel and Agencies and Tour Guides Under a Community Quarantine are hereby issued.

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 1. Short Title. – This Order shall be known as the “*Guidelines on Travel and Tour Agencies, and Tour Guides Under a Community Quarantine.*”

Section 2. Definition of Terms. – For purposes of these Guidelines, the term:

- a. “Confirmed COVID-19 case” refers to any individual who tested positive for COVID-19 through laboratory confirmation at the national reference laboratory, subnational reference laboratory, or a DOH-certified laboratory testing facility. (*DOH DM No. 2020-0189*)
- b. “Contact Tracing” refers to the identification, listing, and follow-up of persons who may have come into close contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case. (*DOH DM No. 2020-0189*)
- c. “Community Quarantine” refers to the restriction of movement within, into, or out of the area of quarantine of individuals, large groups of people, or communities designed to reduce the likelihood of transmission of COVID-19 among persons in and to persons outside the affected area. (*IATF-EID Omnibus Guidelines*)
- d. “Enhanced Community Quarantine” or ECQ refers to the implementation of temporary measures imposing stringent limitations on movement and transportation of people, strict regulation of operating industries, provision of food and essential services, and heightened presence of uniformed personnel to enforce community quarantine protocols. (*IATF-EID Omnibus Guidelines*)

- e. "General Community Quarantine" or GCQ refers to the implementation of temporary measures limiting movement and transportation, regulation of operating industries, and presence of uniformed personnel to enforce community quarantine protocols. (*IATF-EID Omnibus Guidelines*)
- f. "Interzonal Movement" refers to the movement of people, goods, and services across areas under different community quarantine classifications. (*IATF-EID Omnibus Guidelines*).
- g. "Intrazonal Movement" refers to the movement of people, goods and services between localities under the same community quarantine classification, without transiting through an area placed under a different classification. (*IATF-EID Omnibus Guidelines*)
- h. "Minimum Public Health Standards" refer to guidelines set by the Department of Health (DOH), as well as sector-relevant guidelines to aid all sectors in implementing non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPI), which refer to public health measures that do not involve vaccines, medications, or other pharmaceutical interventions, which individuals and communities can carry out in order to reduce transmission rates, contact rates, and the duration of infectiousness of individuals in the population to mitigate COVID-19. (*IATF-EID Omnibus Guidelines*)
- i. "Modified Enhanced Community Quarantine" or MECQ refers to the transition phase between ECQ and GCQ, when the following temporary measures are relaxed and become less necessary: stringent limits on movement and transportation of people, strict regulation of operating industries, provision of food and essential services, and heightened presence of uniformed personnel to enforce community quarantine protocols. (*IATF-EID Omnibus Guidelines*).
- j. "Modified General Community Quarantine" or MGCQ refers to the transition phase between GCQ and the New Normal, when the following temporary measures are relaxed and become less necessary: limiting movement and transportation, the regulation of operating industries, and the presence of uniformed personnel to enforce community quarantine protocols. (*IATF-EID Omnibus Guidelines*)
- k. "New Normal" refers to the emerging behaviors, situations, and minimum public health standards that will be institutionalized in common or routine practices and remain even after the pandemic while the disease is not totally eradicated through means such as widespread immunization. (*IATF-EID Omnibus Guidelines*)
- l. "Operational Capacity" refers to such a number of employees or workers who can be permitted or required to physically report to work on-site in a particular office or establishment. (*IATF-EID Omnibus Guidelines*)
- m. "Skeleton Workforce" refers to the operational capacity which utilizes the smallest number of people needed for a business or organization to maintain its basic functions. (*IATF-EID Omnibus Guidelines*)
- n. "Tour Guide" shall refer to an individual who guides tourists, both foreign and domestic, for a fee, commission, or any other form of lawful remuneration. (*1995 DOT Rules and Regulations to Govern the Accreditation of Tour Guides*)
- o. "Tour Operator" shall refer to any person or entity engaged in the business of inbound and/or local tour operation such as organizing and/or conducting tours as well making online reservations, arranging and booking for transportation and accommodation for a fee,

commission, or any form of remuneration. (*DOT MC 2015-06 or the "Revised Rules and Regulations to Govern the Accreditation of Travel and Tour Agencies"*)

- p. "Travel Agency" shall refer to any person or entity engaged in the business of providing travel-related services, such as transportation or accommodation reservations/bookings, documentation of travel papers, sale and/or issuance of tickets and selling of outbound tours for a fee, commission, or any form of remuneration. (*DOT MC 2015-06 or the "Revised Rules and Regulations to Govern the Accreditation of Travel and Tour Agencies"*)
- q. "Travel and Tour Agency" shall refer to a primary tourism enterprise regularly engaged in both Tour Operator and Travel Agency services. (*DOT MC 2015-06 or the "Revised Rules and Regulations to Govern the Accreditation of Travel and Tour Agencies"*)

Section 3. Coverage. – This Order shall apply to all Travel and Tour Agencies, and Tour Guides in the Philippines in areas under Community Quarantine.

II. OPERATIONS UNDER ENHANCED COMMUNITY QUARANTINE (ECQ) AND MODIFIED ENHANCED COMMUNITY QUARANTINE (MECQ)

Section 4. Operations under ECQ and MECQ. The operations of Travel and Tour Agencies, and Tour Guides in areas declared to be under ECQ and MECQ shall be strictly prohibited. (*IATF-EID Omnibus Guidelines*).

III. OPERATIONS UNDER GENERAL COMMUNITY QUARANTINE (GCQ)

Section 5. Operations of Travel and Tour Agencies under GCQ. Travel and Tour Agencies may operate in areas declared to be under GCQ, *provided* that the operations shall be limited to a Skeleton Workforce and shall only be for the purpose of doing administrative work such as the processing of refunds and payments to suppliers. (*IATF-EID Resolution No. 51*).

Section 6. Conduct of Tours under GCQ. The conduct of tours in areas declared to be under GCQ shall be strictly prohibited. (*IATF-EID Omnibus Guidelines*).

IV. OPERATIONS UNDER MODIFIED GENERAL COMMUNITY QUARANTINE (MGCQ)

Section 7. Operation of Travel and Tour Agencies under MGCQ. Travel and Tour Agencies may operate in areas declared to be under MGCQ, *provided* that operations shall be at fifty percent (50%) Operational Capacity only, with alternative work arrangements for persons below twenty-one (21) years old, those who are sixty (60) years old and above, those with immunodeficiency, comorbidity, or other health risks, and pregnant women. (*IATF-EID Omnibus Guidelines*).

Section 8. Work Arrangements. For purposes of complying with the 50% Operational Capacity, the management of the Travel and Tour Agency may adopt flexible work arrangements such as but not limited to:

- a. work from home scheme,
- b. reduction of work hours; and
- c. rotation of workers.

Section 9. Conduct of Tours under MGCQ. Tour Guides may conduct tours in areas declared to be under MGCQ, *provided* that participants shall be limited to fifty percent (50%) of the seat or venue capacity and subject to restrictions on tourism activities imposed by the local government units (LGUs). (*IATF-EID Omnibus Guidelines*).

Section 10. Restricted individuals. Subject to subsequent changes in rules and regulations by the IATF-EID, persons below twenty-one (21) years old, those who are sixty (60) years old and above, those with immunodeficiency, comorbidity, or other health risks, and pregnant women are prohibited from participating in tourism activities.

Section 11. Interzonal and Intrazonal Movement. The rules on Interzonal and Intrazonal movement under the IATF-EID Guidelines shall be observed. For this purpose, tours may be conducted in areas under MGCQ, provided that reservations or bookings shall only accommodate visitors from areas under MGCQ, and not from areas under other stricter forms of Community Quarantine. Such movement may be subject to the regulations of the LGU concerned, or in the case of Boracay Island, the Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force. *(IATF-EID Omnibus Guidelines)*

V. OTHER PROVISIONS

Section 12. Supplementary Application of DOT Memorandum Circular No. 2020-008. As regards health and safety protocols and standards in the operation of Travel and Tour Agencies, and Tour Guides, the relevant provisions DOT Memorandum Circular No. 2020 - 008 shall apply by analogy or in supplementary character, and insofar as they are not inconsistent with any provision herein.

Section 13. Compliance with other relevant issuances. Travel and Tour Agencies, and Tour Guides shall comply with the relevant issuances and guidelines from the Department of Health, Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), and other sector-relevant agencies, relating to Minimum Public Health Standards.

Section 14. Penalties. Any violation of this Order may subject the Management of the Travel and Tour Agency or the Tour Guide to the appropriate fines and penalties including revocation of its DOT accreditation, in accordance with relevant laws, rules, and regulations.

Section 15. Separability. If any provision of this Order is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain valid and subsisting.

Section 16. Effectivity. This Order shall take effect immediately and shall remain effective until otherwise superseded, amended, or repealed accordingly.

For guidance and strict compliance.

28 September 2020

BERNADETTE ROMULO-PUYAT
Secretary

