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MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 2020 - 003**HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES GOVERNING THE OPERATIONS OF TOURIST LAND TRANSPORT SERVICES UNDER THE NEW NORMAL**

WHEREAS, under Republic Act (RA) No. 11469 or the *Bayanihan To Heal as One Act*, the President is authorized to direct the operation of establishments to carry out the declared national policy of mitigating the transmission of COVID-19;

WHEREAS, under the Memorandum of the Executive Secretary dated 28 March 2020, the Department of Tourism (DOT) is directed to issue guidelines for the exercise of the President's mandate under the *Bayanihan To Heal as One Act*;

WHEREAS, pursuant to RA 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;

WHEREAS, the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases Omnibus Guidelines on the Implementation of Community Quarantine in the Philippines defines the "New Normal" as 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;

WHEREAS, there is a need to provide guidelines to institutionalize updated health and safety protocols in the operations of tourist land transport services under a New Normal Scenario;

NOW, THEREFORE, based on the foregoing, these Health and Safety Guidelines for Tourist Land Transport Services Under the New Normal are hereby issued:

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

SECTION 1. Short Title. – This Circular shall be known as "*The New Normal Health and Safety Guidelines for Tourist Land Transport Services*".

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

- (a) "Accreditation" shall refer to a Certification issued by the Department of Tourism (DOT) to a tourism enterprise that officially recognizes it as having complied with the minimum standards for the operation of tourism facilities and services.
- (b) "Driver" refers to a person employed to operate a motor vehicle, has knowledge of roads, routes with expertise in all the non-congested routes and the ability to get to destinations in a timely manner without sacrificing safety and security.
- (c) "New Normal" shall refer 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. These include actions that will become second nature to the general public as well as policies such as bans on large gatherings that will continue to remain in force.
- (d) "Passenger" refers to a traveler on a public or private conveyance other than the driver, pilot, or crew.

- (e) "Personal Protective Equipment" or PPE refers to clothing and accessories worn to minimize exposure to health and safety risks, such as protective clothing, masks, and goggles.
- (f) "Physical distancing" or "Social Distancing" refers to the strict maintenance of a distance of at least one (1) meter radius between persons (*Memorandum from the Executive Secretary dated 13 March 2020*).
- (g) "Tourist Land Transport Operator" shall refer to a person or entity which may either be a single proprietorship, partnership, or corporation, regularly engaged in providing, for a fee or lawful consideration, tourist transport services as hereinafter defined, either on charter or regular run.
- (h) "Transport Operator" or "Transport Owner" refers to the holder of a valid and existing Certificate of Public Convenience issued by the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB).
- (i) "Vehicle" refers to an instrument of conveyance used for transporting passengers or things by land, water, or air.
- (j) "Waste materials" refers to unwanted or unusable materials discarded after primary use, or is worthless, defective and of no use.

II. TRANSPORT OPERATOR/OWNER

SECTION 3. Monitoring of Body Temperature of All Employees. The transport operator must ensure the monitoring of body temperature of all employees every time they report to work. Unwell employees or those with mild flu-like symptoms shall be directed to see a doctor and to stay at home.

SECTION 4. Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). The transport operator must provide all its employees their respective Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) while they are on duty and they shall be given adequate training on the proper use thereof.

The Transport Operator/Owner must likewise ensure that Drivers are well provided with the following:

- (a) Facemask (surgical or cloth face mask);
- (b) Hand sanitizer or at least 70% alcohol;
- (c) Paper towels or tissue paper;
- (d) Appropriate disinfectants;
- (e) Disposable cloths and cleaning agents; and
- (f) Gloves, readily available in the vehicle for use of the driver when necessary.

SECTION 5. Dissemination of Safety and Health-Related Information. The Transport Operator/Owner must ensure that its employees are regularly updated on health concerns and other related information by installing a safety bulletin board and maintain display of safety and health related information in the working premises.

SECTION 6. Cleanliness Within the Premises. The Transport Operator/Owner must ensure cleanliness within its office premises, including the garage and areas.

SECTION 7. Annual Health Check-up. The Transport Operator/Owner must provide an annual health check-up for its drivers and staff. It is encouraged to provide health benefit options (insurance or plan) for all employees.

III. PASSENGERS

SECTION 8. No mask, No Boarding, and other Policies. Passengers not wearing masks shall not be allowed to board the vehicle. A passenger exhibiting flu-like symptoms shall be immediately transported to a healthcare facility or hospital for further evaluation.

SECTION 9. Passenger Limit and Physical Distancing Measures. Vehicles must comply with the following Social Distancing and Passenger Limit Guidelines set by the Department of Transportation (DOTr) and Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) to avoid possible contact:

- (a) Car / Sedan
 - (i) No passenger seated beside the driver
 - (ii) Two (2) passengers at the back row with one seat apart
 - (iii) No more than three (3) passengers, including the driver.
- (b) Vans
 - (i) Only two (2) passengers per row are allowed, except for the driver's row where only one (1) passenger may occupy the passenger's seat
 - (ii) A waterproof transparent barrier between the driver and the passengers must be installed.
- (c) Buses and coasters
 - (i) Only 50% of the total capacity is allowed
 - (ii) A waterproof transparent barrier between the driver and the passengers must be installed
 - (iii) Passengers must be seated one (1) seat apart
 - (iv) No standing passengers shall be allowed

The above measures may be revised subject to updated issuances by the DOTr and/or LTFRB.

SECTION 10. Passenger's Information. Passenger information such as name, address, and contact details shall be collected for contact tracing, subject to the provisions of Republic Act No. 10173 or the *Data Privacy Act*.

IV. VEHICLES

SECTION 11. Markings and Barriers. To ensure that the passenger limit and physical measures are complied with, vehicles must have markings that will guide passengers as to which seats are available for use. Non-permeable or acetate seat barriers may also be installed to limit contact between passengers.

SECTION 12. Safety Awareness Information. All vehicles must contain notices with appropriate information on the prevailing disease, as well as the policies enforced to reduce the risk and spread of the disease. Information materials on hand disinfecting and respiratory etiquette, proper use of face mask, emergency contact numbers, among others, must be provided to passengers.

SECTION 13. Thermometer Gun and Basic First-Aid and Sanitation Kits. Every vehicle must be equipped with a thermometer gun, basic first-aid kits, and sanitation kits for free use of passengers, which shall include the following:

- (a) 70% solution alcohol or alcohol-based hand sanitizer; and
- (b) Tissue paper and/or disposable wet wipes

SECTION 14. Disinfection and Sanitation of Vehicles. Deep cleaning and proper disinfection and sanitation of vehicles must be done before and after every use. Additional emphasis shall be

placed on frequently touched surfaces such as seats, arm rests, door handles, light and air controls, and the like.

SECTION 15. Ventilation. The vehicle should be well ventilated and air conditioning shall be on non-recirculated mode to maximize air changes that reduce potentially infectious particles in the vehicle.

SECTION 16. Waste Management. Waste materials on board shall be kept in a clean and hygienic condition. A separate trash bag for all gloves, facemasks, PPEs, wet wipes, and other sanitation disposables used by the passengers shall be available inside the vehicle. The disposal of wastes shall be in accordance with any special instructions relating to the material concerned. Used trash bags shall be disposed of immediately upon arrival at the destination.

SECTION 17. Emergency Directory. An emergency directory must be available in every vehicle with the emergency hotlines of the following:

- (a) Clinics and Hospitals located in the city / municipality within the route;
- (b) Police and Fire stations located in the city/municipality within the route; and
- (c) Such other emergency responders whether public or private located in the city/municipality within the route.

SECTION 18. Payment Options. Cashless and such other options that promote less physical contact is highly encouraged.

V. DRIVERS

SECTION 19. Personal Hygiene, Good Grooming and Other Conduct. Drivers must observe the following standards:

- (a) Wear clean clothes / uniform and closed shoes while on duty;
- (b) Wear appropriate personal protective equipment (face masks and gloves) properly at all times while on duty;
- (c) Avoid physical contact with the passengers and observe physical distancing at all times;
- (d) Frequently wash hands with soap. When soap and running water are unavailable, as alternative, may use 70% solution alcohol or alcohol-based hand sanitizer;
- (e) Practice good respiratory etiquette, cover nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing;
- (f) Frequently clean and disinfect the vehicle. If applicable, open the windows to air out the vehicle after every trip;
- (g) An itinerary or trip ticket must be accomplished for every trip for proper documentation and reference.

It is the duty of the Transport Operator/Owner to ensure that drivers comply with the above standards.

SECTION 20. Penalties. Any violation of these Guidelines may subject the tourism enterprise to the appropriate fines and penalties, including revocation of its DOT Accreditation, in accordance with relevant laws, rules, and regulations.

SECTION 21. Separability. If any provision of this Order is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain valid and subsisting.

SECTION 22. Repeal. All issuances, orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provision of this Circular are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 23. Effectivity. This Circular shall take effect immediately and shall remain effective until otherwise superseded, amended, or repealed accordingly.

For guidance and strict compliance.

06 June 2020.


BERNADETTE ROMULO-PUYAT
Secretary 

