



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. No. 6864

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AN ACT

ESTABLISHING PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS AND SAFEGUARDS FOR THE BETTER NORMAL IN THE WORKPLACE, PUBLIC PLACES AND COMMUNITIES TOWARD A SUSTAINABLE RECOVERY FROM THE CORONA VIRUS DISEASE-19 (COVID-19) PANDEMIC


Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

- 1 SECTION I. **Title.** - This Act shall be known as the "Better Normal for the
- 2 Workplace, Communities and Public Spaces Act of 2020".



1 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** - It is the policy of the State to protect and
2 promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among
3 them. The State shall also protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced
4 and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature.

5 Towards this end, the State, in order to help save lives as well as jumpstart
6 the economy, shall:

- 7 a) Adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to public health and
8 environmental policies and regulations during a pandemic, thus, ensuring
9 the overall well-being of individuals, communities, industrial and natural
10 ecosystems. Consideration shall be paid to valuing the services provided
11 by ecosystems and biodiversity in generating the direction and
12 prescriptions for a better normal and in assessing their success;
- 13 b) Institute appropriate public health, safety, and security measures to stem
14 the transmission of the corona virus disease-19 (COVID-19) or similar
15 diseases that may result in any kind of pandemic;
- 16 c) Regulate, institute, and establish standards and protocols that would
17 simultaneously protect the vulnerable from COVID-19 and prevent its
18 transmission;
- 19 d) Pursue the restoration of livelihood opportunities and sources of income
20 for all, especially the poor, in the event of widespread disease outbreak
21 and the resulting slowdown of economic activity, and building adaptive
22 capacity and resilience for future shocks;
- 23 e) Pursue universal broadband access for all to ensure a better normal in
24 recognition of the crucial role of a strong information and communications
25 technology (ICT) system to close the digital divide and that the need for
26 modern and innovative ICT cuts across all sectors of society;
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- 1 f) Ensure that pandemic recovery will lead to a greener, resilient, inclusive,
2 and sustainable future, hence, recovery needs should be addressed with
3 long-term sustainability goals; and
- 4 g) Give importance to other aspects of well-being of the people based on
5 the Gross National Happiness indicators, namely, equitable and
6 sustainable socio-economic development, the preservation and
7 promotion of cultural values, the conservation of the natural environment,
8 and the establishment of good governance.

9 In adopting the whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach and
10 recognizing the need for innovation and more forward-thinking systems and
11 approaches, the State shall give priority to the needs of the underprivileged, sick,
12 elderly, persons with disability, indigenous peoples, women and children.

13 **SEC. 3. Objectives.** - This Act shall have the following objectives:

- 14 a) Define and allocate roles, responsibilities, and obligations across key
15 sectors of the society that shall be heavily involved in the implementation
16 of specific and applicable measures, namely, the national government and
17 its instrumentalities, local government, private sector, and individual
18 Filipino citizens;
- 19 b) Identify standards and protocols in the management of physical spaces,
20 both publicly-owned and -managed, or privately-owned but are designated
21 communal spaces, and prescribe the allowed and prohibited activities
22 therein as well as behaviors expected and required of the citizens while
23 utilizing such physical spaces;
- 24 c) Facilitate the development of the necessary systems and infrastructure
25 and the enhancement of existing ones so as to ensure that the ICT needs
26 of the better normal are accessible to all, making it possible for people
27 and organizations to practice appropriate behavior and decisions as well



1 as for relevant government agencies to implement relevant, effective, and
2 timely information dissemination;

3 d) Establish systems of accountability for failure to comply with the
4 obligations and expectations prescribed under this Act;

5 e) Provide inclusive operational parameters, guidelines, and
6 recommendations for a better way of life until such time that the threat of
7 COVID-19 virus and other similar diseases that caused the occurrence of
8 a pandemic is effectively contained;

9 f) Mitigate, if not contain, the transmission of the virus and undertake
10 measures to prevent the overburdening of the public healthcare system;

11 g) Continue health promotion and behavior-enhancing measures in all levels
12 of government and the private sector; and,

13 h) Accelerate transformational change to restore the balance between
14 human, socio-economic and natural ecosystems, and reduce risk and
15 vulnerability to future crises caused by climate change, natural hazards
16 and man-made disasters.

17 **SEC. 4. *Scope of the Act.*** - This Act shall provide the strategies and
18 measures that shall be implemented so that economic and social activities can
19 proceed in a manner that ensures public health, safety, and security during an
20 epidemic or pandemic, and until such time that the same and its immediate impacts
21 are declared eradicated by the authorized National Government agency or agencies
22 of the government.

23 The organization, operation, and activities in workplaces, communities, and
24 public spaces shall be governed by the provisions of this Act.

25 **SEC. 5. *Definition of Terms.*** - As used in this Act:

26 a) *Agro-ecology* refers to the application of ecological and social principles in
27 the formulation and implementation of policies and programs on food and



1 agricultural systems, to maximize the benefits from the synergy between
2 plants, animals, humans and the environment to achieve a resilient and
3 sustainable food supply system;

4 b) *Better normal*, in the context of recovery from an epidemic or pandemic
5 refers to transformative behaviors and interventions informed by science,
6 that address the underlying vulnerabilities of people and communities that
7 the epidemic or pandemic has highlighted and fosters a just and equitable
8 transition to a climate-resilient, inclusive and sustainable future;

9 c) *Better Normal Workforce and Workplace Management Plan*, herein
10 referred to as the Management Plan, refers to the management plan of
11 all public and private sector entities that conforms to the prescribed
12 measures and protocols under this Act to mitigate the spread of the
13 COVID-19 virus and other kinds of viruses that may be transmitted
14 through contact in the workplace;

15 d) *Circular Economy Measures* refer to measures that place value on
16 products and materials, maintaining their use for as long as possible, thus
17 minimizing wastage and resource use, and keeping resources within the
18 economy when a product has reached the end of its life, to be used again
19 and again to create further value;

20 e) *Culture Mapping* refers to the approach used to identify, record, and use
21 natural and cultural resources and activities for building communities. It is
22 a set of activities and processes for exploring, discovering, documenting,
23 examining, analyzing, interpreting, presenting and sharing of information
24 related to people, communities, societies, places, built and natural
25 heritage, material products and practices associated with them;

26 f) *Government-managed public spaces* refer to a government or public
27 property used by the public under zoning or similar regulatory



1 arrangements, and other spaces used as National Government offices,
2 offices of LGUs, public zoos, public libraries, roads, streets, avenues,
3 alleys, public markets, parks, plazas, covered courts, promenades,
4 gymnasiums, arenas, amusement and recreation centers, among others,
5 that are publicly managed or owned by the government;

6 g) *Pandemic* refers to an outbreak of a disease that occurs over a wide
7 geographic area and affects an exceptionally high proportion of the
8 population;

9 h) *Privately-managed public spaces* refer to spaces within the perimeter or
10 premises of a privately-owned real estate or property used by the public
11 under zoning or similar regulatory arrangements, which include, among
12 others, shopping malls, hotels, open spaces and common areas in
13 subdivisions and condominiums;

14 i) *Privately organized gatherings* refer to those planned or spontaneous
15 human, political, social, cultural, economic, religious and sports
16 gatherings such as concerts, events, celebrations, parties, team-
17 buildings, seminars, conferences, trainings, conventions, religious mass
18 and sacraments, retreats, funerals, electoral campaigns, inductions,
19 ceremonies, film show makings, television shows, sports, and other
20 related forms of recreations.

21 j) *Profiling* refers to the process of discovering core relations between data
22 and databases that can be used to identify and represent a subject
23 individual or a group of individuals;

24 k) *Public spaces* refer to streets, alleys, public parks, protected areas,
25 museums, cultural and heritage spaces, schools, buildings, malls,
26 restaurants, transportation terminals, public markets, areas used as
27 evacuation centers, government offices, public utility vehicles as well as



1 private vehicles covered by application-based transport network services,
2 and other recreational or leisure places such as cinema halls, theaters,
3 cockpits, and spas;

4 l) *Workplace* refers to a place where work is carried out for a business or
5 undertaking and includes any place where a worker goes, or is likely to
6 be, while carrying out a work-related task; and,

7 m) *Zoonotic Disease* refers to a disease that can be transmitted from animals
8 to people.

9 **SEC. 6. *Standards for Better Normal.*** – In order to stem the transmission of
10 COVID-19 and other infectious diseases, and protect the people from such diseases,
11 the following standards for the better normal shall be observed:

12 **A. Universal and Mandatory Health and Safety Measures**

13 1) Basic personal hygiene shall be strictly observed by the general public.
14 Massive health information drive shall be conducted by the Department of
15 Health (DOH) and LGUs up to the community level, in cooperation with the
16 private sector, on COVID-19 to instill public awareness on the risks of
17 infection and possible reinfection of the disease;

18 2) The general public shall wear face masks, earloop masks, indigenous,
19 reusable or do-it-yourself masks, face shields, handkerchiefs, or such other
20 protective material or equipment that effectively lessen the transmission of
21 the COVID-19 virus whenever they are in the workplace, public places, and
22 communities: *Provided*, That the government shall implement the free
23 distribution of masks to the general public to guarantee the full cooperation
24 of every citizen: *Provided, further*, That the government shall allocate funds
25 to ensure the free provision of personal protective equipment and other
26 medical commodities to COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 patients in both



1 public and private hospitals: *Provided, furthermore,* That the government
2 shall integrate circular economy strategies in the procurement of materials or
3 the development of mechanisms for hygiene and sanitation;

4 3) Hand washing facilities or sanitizing stations shall be established and
5 maintained by the owners, managers, or administrators of public spaces,
6 work places and other places frequented by the public;


7 4) Physical distancing measured at least one (1) meter between individuals shall
8 be strictly observed whenever in public spaces and in the workplace;

9 5) Temperature reading of persons shall be conducted by the owners,
10 managers, or administrators of workplaces and in all enclosed, semi-
11 enclosed, and open areas where two or more people shall gather;

12 6) The DOH, in coordination with other government agencies and the private
13 sector, shall conduct an information and educational campaign utilizing
14 traditional and online media to disseminate relevant medical and health
15 information, provide updates on local cases and initiatives of the government:

16 *Provided,* That all government agencies are directed to create a
17 communication plan for the better normal to articulate the policies and
18 interventions to be adopted by the agencies for the information and
19 compliance of their employees, including the placement of relevant on-site
20 signages and online information materials which will serve as reminders to
21 observe physical distancing, practice regular handwashing, and to frequently
22 clean and sanitize surroundings;

23 7) Local chief executives of LGUs which are considered as containment zones
24 or critical zones for the transmission of COVID-19 shall establish testing
25 centers and procure COVID-19 testing kits, personal protective equipment,
26 and such other necessary equipment and supplies to be used for the
27 conduct of mass-testing of the population in their respective jurisdictions,



1 including the establishment of drive-through testing centers, and other
2 contactless modes of testing for the detection of the COVID-19 or other
3 infectious diseases;

4 8) There shall be nationwide testing drive to prepare for any future waves of
5 infection surges or any other epidemic. The minimum rate of testing shall be
6 one percent (1%) of the population of the province or city, in the case of
7 independent cities, and shall target to finish testing residents within ten (10)
8 days;

9 9) The DOH, with assistance from LGUs and Department of the Interior and
10 Local Government (DILG), shall conduct tracing of individuals who have had
11 contact with or have been exposed to a person who has been confirmed
12 positive for the COVID-19 or similar infectious diseases. The DOH shall also
13 conduct contact tracing for individuals suspected of or probably afflicted with
14 the disease to ensure prompt containment of the disease;

15 10) The DOH shall establish and manage government-operated and -maintained
16 quarantine facilities for individuals who are suspected of being infected or
17 have tested positive for COVID-19 or other infectious diseases and who,
18 pursuant to the guidelines formulated by the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF)
19 for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases and/or as prescribed
20 under DOH regulations, should undergo mandatory quarantine, including
21 those who are not able to observe quarantine protocols in their respective
22 places of residences;

23 11) Local chief executives of LGUs shall continuously implement existing
24 measures, including quarantine measures, in dealing with residents or any
25 other individual in the locality manifesting COVID-19 symptoms, or who has
26 been classified as a suspect, probable, or a confirmed case of COVID-19
27 infection by authorized testing or medical facilities;



1 12)The National Government shall establish and implement infection
2 prevention and control protocol, biosafety and waste management
3 measures;

4 13)Local chief executives of LGUs shall continuously monitor the level of
5 transmission among residents in their jurisdiction; *Provided*, That the
6 standards provided in Republic Act (RA) No. 10173, also known as the
7 *Data Privacy Act of 2012*, as well as legal and ethical standards, and
8 existing DOH guidelines are observed and complied with;

9 14)The National Government shall recognize the vulnerabilities of certain
10 sectors of the population such as the elderly, pregnant, children and
11 persons deprived of liberty, and shall provide safeguards and assistance to
12 them, including access to mental and psychological health services; and

13 15)Government offices and the owners, managers, or administrators of
14 workplaces and other places frequented by the public shall implement
15 regular cleaning and disinfection of transport conveyances, terminals and
16 similar facilities including elevators and escalators, particularly frequently
17 touched surfaces thereat;

18 **B. Management of Spaces**

19 1) Public gatherings are prohibited subject to the exceptions as may be provided
20 under the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of this Act;

21 2) LGUs shall regulate public gatherings as well as the flow of people in
22 government-managed public spaces, subject to the guidelines set in the IRR
23 of this Act that will provide the limitations on such public gathering in order to
24 prevent disease transmission: *Provided*, That activities of agencies of the
25 National Government or their provincial or regional offices involved in the
26 delivery of services or distribution of all forms of public assistance or the



1 facilitation thereof shall in no way be impeded nor be required a permit from
2 any government authority: *Provided, further,* That gatherings under this
3 category shall observe the Universal and Mandatory Safety Measures
4 enumerated in paragraph (A) of this Section: *Provided, furthermore,* That
5 LGUs, in consultation with the private sector stakeholders, shall provide the
6 national, regional, and provincial agencies and their attached offices the
7 necessary assistance to carry out their activities requiring the presence or
8 participation of a significant number of the population: *Provided, finally,* That
9 exceptions to these prohibitions, intended for public purpose or interest, shall
10 be provided by the IRR of this Act;

11 3) Privately-organized gatherings in privately-managed spaces shall comply with
12 the Universal and Mandatory Safety Measures prescribed under this Act, the
13 guidelines set forth in the IRR of this Act, as well as minimum health
14 standards, safety protocols and best practices prepared by the private sector
15 as approved or accredited by the appropriate implementing agencies:
16 *Provided,* That such guidelines shall consider the nature of the gathering,
17 number of expected attendees, size of the venue, and other reasonable
18 parameters that will ensure compliance with physical distancing and other
19 measures to prevent transmission of the virus;

20 4) Land use planning and zoning shall be strictly observed in the implementation
21 of this Act; and,

22 5) Management of spaces shall likewise include the establishment of urban
23 gardens, and green spaces not only for people to enjoy a clean and healthy
24 environment, but also to enable them to grow their own sources of food and
25 nutrition.

26 **C. Management of Public Transportation**



- 1) The appropriate government agencies shall monitor the implementation of the Universal and Mandatory Safety Measures in the management of public transportation terminals and facilities, including queuing or ticketing lines, ticketing offices, as well as the interiors of public utility vehicles, mass transportations, and private vehicles covered by application-based transportation network services, and by their respective drivers, conductors and passengers; *Provided*, That the government shall shoulder the costs of mandatory COVID-19 testing in the public transportation sector;
- 2) The operation of motorcycle taxis shall remain suspended to prevent the spread of the virus through shared helmets and close physical contact between passengers and drivers;
- 3) Passengers in all types of public transportation vehicles shall be required to sanitize their hands prior to boarding the vehicle, shall be seated a seat apart and wear face masks while inside the vehicle;
- 4) Contact-less payment mechanisms shall be promoted such as the use of money trays and automatic fare collection systems to minimize the risk of transmission of the COVID-19 virus;
- 5) Agencies and authorities tasked to manage transport hubs such as airports, ports, harbors, and similar facilities shall coordinate with the concerned LGUs in the implementation of the Universal and Mandatory Safety Measures herein provided and shall consider the following special measures:
 - i. Establishment of public health corridors in airports and ports;
 - ii. Mandatory body temperature reading for all arriving and departing passengers;
 - iii. Mandatory quarantine at home or in an authorized government facility for all arriving passengers;



- 1 iv. Mandatory collection of data for the maintenance of a database of
- 2 information for contact-tracing purposes only;
- 3 v. Thorough sanitizing and disinfection of all arriving and departing
- 4 vessels;
- 5 vi. Mandatory regular testing of all employees, personnel, staff, and crew
- 6 attached to vessels and those who have assisted passengers; and
- 7 vii. Mandatory conduct of rapid testing for arriving and departing
- 8 passengers.

9 6) The Department of Transportation (DOTr) shall craft and implement programs
10 that will help modes of public transport, such as jeepneys and public buses,
11 to transition to better normal in consideration of the health and safety
12 protocols without requiring them to commit to the government's public utility
13 vehicle (PUV) modernization program. The agency shall also ensure the
14 smooth operation of different modes of public and mass transport while
15 upholding existing health and safety protocols;


16 7) National Government authorities in coordination with the stakeholders of the
17 transport sector shall establish dedicated lanes along roads, avenues,
18 highways, and other transport infrastructure networks to give priority to
19 healthcare, emergency, peace and order, and supply-chain vehicles
20 transporting individuals, goods, equipment, or those used in the pursuit of
21 services deemed essential and critical: *Provided*, That pursuant to the
22 provisions of Section 21 (d) of RA No. 8749, otherwise known as the *Clean*
23 *Air Act*, the DOTr shall ensure that vehicles strictly comply with current
24 emission standards; and

25 8) To promote safe physical distancing and sustainable mobility, LGUs and
26 appropriate government development authorities having jurisdiction over



1 roadways or highways, in coordination with the Department of Public Works
2 and Highways (DPWH), and the Metro Manila Development Authority
3 (MMDA) in the case of the National Capital Region (NCR), shall immediately
4 create green lanes which are dedicated, protected and interconnected lanes
5 for personal mobility devices such as bicycles, e-bicycles, scooters, and
6 similar micromobile devices: *Provided*, That personal mobility users shall
7 observe safe physical distancing and speeds prescribed by the LGUs or
8 relevant regional development agencies. Bicycle racks and secure bicycle
9 parking sheds and spaces shall be established in government offices,
10 hospitals, public schools and higher education institutions, and other
11 facilities. Changing and shower rooms shall be promoted as well by public
12 facility managers to encourage more bicycle and micromobile commuting:
13 *Provided, further*, That the DOTr, DPWH and LGUs shall ensure that these
14 dedicated and interconnected lanes for bicycles and micromobility devices
15 are included in current and future road projects.

16 **D. Better Normal for Schools and Education Institutions**

- 17 1) To give priority to the health, well-being and safety of the education sector,
18 the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Commission on Higher
19 Education (CHED) are authorized to determine the start of the academic year
20 2020 to 2021 for all public and private schools, state universities and colleges
21 (SUCs), local universities and colleges (LUCs), private colleges and
22 universities, and other learning institutions;
- 23 2) All public and private education institutions including private and public
24 universities and colleges shall formulate, develop and adopt a flexible learning
25 approach which is designed to meet students' needs, capabilities of faculty
26 members and conditions on the ground, ensuring accessibility and inclusivity
27 and without prejudice to the adoption of measures for online learning;
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- 1 3) The DepEd shall develop, implement and promote a flexible learning program
2 for K-12 students in all public and private schools, taking into consideration
3 the capability of the school and its teachers in delivering such program, and
4 the accessibility of learning materials, either physical or electronic, to the
5 students. The flexible learning program shall be geared towards limiting
6 physical contact among the school population and minimizing the impact on
7 the potential for learning and instruction between learners and teachers and
8 upgrading or improving the quality of electronic and digital content to be
9 made available in cases where online or distance learning modalities are
10 pursued: *Provided*, That students shall not be penalized for their inability to
11 access and participate in electronic or digital means of learning due to
12 limitations in connectivity, unavailability of equipment or other circumstances
13 caused by the COVID-19 pandemic: *Provided, further*, That, television (TV)
14 and radio programs done in partnership between DepEd, National Council for
15 Children Television, National Commission for Culture and the Arts and it's
16 attached agencies, Film Development Council of the Philippines, Philippine
17 Sports Commission, Early Childhood Community Development Center,
18 higher education institutions (HEIs) and pertinent cooperatives and
19 organizations, and with the assistance of licensed TV and radio broadcast
20 stations shall serve as alternative platforms for learning;
- 21 4) The CHED shall monitor the implementation of flexible learning programs for
22 all HEIs, SUCs and LCUs. HEIs shall continue to exercise academic freedom
23 and levels of autonomy in the governance of their own academic affairs:
24 *Provided*, That students shall not be penalized for their inability to access or
25 participate in electronic or digital means of learning due to limitations in
26 connectivity or unavailability of equipment;



- 1 5) The National Government shall allocate funding for the research, training of
2 faculty, curriculum development, monitoring and evaluating, benchmarking,
3 and the development of systems for learning continuity during times of crisis
4 such as the occurrence of a pandemic. Such funding shall be made available
5 by the National Government, from the existing budgetary allocation for the K-
6 12 and other similar programs, and made available to HEIs, including those
7 organized as stock corporations, local research institutes, academic
8 organizations, LGUs, school boards, and individual researchers through an
9 application process to be prescribed by the DepEd and the CHED: *Provided,*
10 That for the benefit of learners who have hearing impairment, the full
11 participation of deaf linguistics organizations and deaf cooperatives shall be
12 required in the development of learning materials;
- 13 6) Subject to consultation with the DepEd, CHED, and the Technical Education
14 and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), all face-to-face classes and group
15 school activities, including sports, athletics, cultural, and academic meets,
16 exhibitions, competitions as well as extra-curricular field or exposure trips and
17 student exchanges shall remain suspended unless otherwise officially
18 declared permissible by competent authorities without prejudice to the
19 academic freedom and levels of autonomy enjoyed by HEIs in the
20 management and conduct of their academic affairs;
- 21 7) Digital learning shall be promoted by the National Government in coordination
22 with telecommunications companies, private sector content providers and
23 stakeholders, and internet service providers;
- 24 8) Public and private education institutions including private colleges and
25 universities and other accredited learning and training institutions shall
26 prioritize the establishment of online platforms for the Continuing Professional



1 Development (CPD) and Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (MCLE)
2 programs; and

- 3 9) Subject to existing rules and regulations, meaningful inclusion and effective
4 participation of students and the learning community must be ensured in all
5 aspects of pandemic response and recovery plan in education: *Provided,*
6 That mechanisms to uphold autonomy of student councils or governments,
7 and support for uninterrupted operations of campus press shall be in place.

8 **E. Management of Cultural and Heritage Spaces**

9 Digital platforms shall be used to consolidate resources and cultural
10 forms in public spaces, whether generated by the private or the public sector,
11 to create an archive of oral histories, visual ethnographies, philosophical
12 discourse, and technical and creative capacity-building programs geared
13 towards bolstering various creative industries, that shall be made available to
14 the public for virtual appreciation and learning, most especially in the K-12
15 system. Online promotion or streaming of cultural programs, performances,
16 exhibitions and enhancement of existing public arts and monuments shall be
17 highly encouraged and geared towards sustainability.

18 **F. Better Normal for Private Commercial and Industrial Workplaces**

- 19 1) The National Government, in coordination with the LGUs, and in partnership
20 with accredited or duly-recognized organizations that pertain to each sector,
21 shall maintain databases on all private commercial, industrial, and other
22 businesses operating in their areas of jurisdiction. The database shall include
23 information such as the number of employees, working hours, workspace
24 conditions, office floor areas, and other information necessary to ensure
25 compliance with physical distancing and other protocols prescribed by this
26 Act to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 virus;



- 1 2) All private commercial, industrial, and other forms of businesses shall be
2 required to submit a Management Plan to the concerned LGU which shall
3 determine the said business's compliance with the necessary safeguards and
4 the Universal Safety Measures provided under this Act, as well as industrial
5 safeguards and safety measures provided for by the implementing agencies:
6 *Provided*, That the review of all Management Plans shall be conducted
7 promptly upon submission to allow establishments to resume operations as
8 soon as possible: *Provided further*, That the Management Plan shall integrate
9 circular economy strategies in the procurement of materials or the
10 development of mechanisms for hygiene and sanitation: *Provided*,
11 *furthermore*, That LGUs are authorized to conduct periodic inspection of
12 private commercial, industrial and other businesses operating within their
13 territorial jurisdiction to ensure compliance of these businesses with the
14 Universal and Mandatory Safety Measures and other standards and protocols
15 prescribed under this Act and its IRR;
- 16 3) All private commercial, industrial and other businesses shall implement their
17 Management Plan and shall incorporate alternative work arrangements such
18 as work-from-home schemes, including rotational work or shifting in
19 schedules, in applicable industries to lessen by at least fifty percent (50%) the
20 number of employees required to report to their workplaces physically. For
21 the private sector, the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), in
22 consultation with the private sector, shall standardize the template for and the
23 required contents of the said Management Plan. The LGUs shall be in charge
24 of monitoring the implementation of this provision;
- 25 4) All private commercial, industrial and other businesses shall shoulder all
26 expenditures in complying with the mandates of this Act, and such
27 expenditures shall not in any way be charged to employees. There shall be



1 no diminution of salaries, wages, benefits and other remunerations
2 guaranteed by the Labor Code and other relevant laws to employees by
3 reason of employer's compliance with this Act;

4 5) The relevant provisions of the Labor Code notwithstanding, being late or
5 being absent for work due to heavy traffic, unavailability of public transport or
6 of shuttle or transportation service due to reasons related to the
7 implementation of this Act shall not be a cause for disciplinary action against,
8 or termination of, the employees. Private commercial and industrial
9 businesses are hereby mandated to adopt a flexible working schedule in
10 keeping with the policy of maintaining a minimum of eight (8) hour work per
11 day, or forty-eight (48) hour work per week, which shall be incorporated in
12 their Management Plans; and

13 6) The DOLE shall ensure the conduct of health and safety audits of all
14 workplaces, including special economic zones, in line with RA No. 11058,
15 otherwise known as *An Act Strengthening Compliance with Occupational*
16 *Safety and Health Standards and providing penalties for violations thereof.*

17 **G. Better Normal Governance Measures**

18 1) Various forms of electronic governance or e-governance mechanisms shall
19 be established to facilitate continuous and efficient transactions between and
20 among government agencies, and the private sector, as well as in the
21 delivery of socio-economic services including the utilization of online payment
22 system, appointment-based transactions, the Philippine national public key
23 infrastructure, electronic business permits and licensing systems, electronic
24 procurement system, electronic management systems for human resources,
25 records, accounting, as well as other ICT- enabled systems and solutions for
26 effective and efficient e-governance.



- 1 An internet based electronic payment facility and gateway, such as e-
2 money and similar platforms, shall be utilized in collecting taxes, fees, tolls,
3 imposts, and other revenues and in paying for goods, services, and other
4 disbursements. Government offices and government-owned and -controlled
5 corporations (GOCCs) that are already partially applying this kind of digitized
6 payment mechanism must improve the current system used in order to
7 accommodate the increase in the number of transactions. The government
8 shall establish online payment systems and may partner with payment
9 solutions providers;
- 10 2) Government agencies involved in business registration such as the
11 Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Securities and Exchange
12 Commission (SEC), Cooperative Development Authority (CDA), Bureau of
13 Internal Revenue (BIR), Social Security System (SSS), Home Development
14 Mutual Fund (Pag-Ibig Pag-IBIG Fund), Philippine Health Insurance
15 Corporation (Philhealth), LGUs, and other permit and license issuing
16 agencies shall be integrated to facilitate the efficient delivery of business
17 registration-related services;
- 18 3) The *Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas* shall accelerate the adoption by all payment
19 service providers of the National Quick Response (QR) Code standard to
20 hasten the interoperability of QR-driven payment services and eliminate the
21 need for merchants and clients to maintain several accounts;
- 22 4) A government online procurement system that encompasses all procurement
23 processes involving bidding, contract agreements, and payment for services
24 or supplies, and which shall contain a tracking and customer service
25 mechanism shall also be developed; and



1 5) Where applicable, the relevant provisions of RA No. 11032, otherwise known
2 as the *Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery*
3 *Act of 2018*, shall supplement the provisions of this Act.

4 H. Other Aspects of Better Normal

- 5 1) The government shall provide important information related to health
6 emergencies to persons with disabilities (PWDs) and institutionalize assistive
7 mechanisms for them such as requiring sign interpretation in TV news
8 broadcasts and live streamed public information programs and content. In
9 relation thereto, a system of standards for assistive mechanisms for PWDs
10 shall be planned, financed, implemented, and monitored. For purposes of this
11 Act, individuals who assist PWDs such as sign language interpreters shall be
12 recognized as front liners providing essential services;
- 13 2) The government must likewise provide sufficient support for culture bearers
14 and masters, and those engaged in craftmaking such as weaving and
15 carving;
- 16 3) Emergency cash subsidies shall be given to artists, cultural workers,
17 freelancers and the self-employed, such as those working in the audiovisual,
18 entertainment, and live events sector, and other creative industries such as
19 architecture and allied arts, dance, dramatic arts, literary arts, music, visual
20 arts, contemporary arts or expressions, audiovisual and multimedia, and
21 scholars, critics, curators, and cultural workers;
- 22 4) The local chief executives of LGUs, in coordination with the private sector,
23 shall implement, monitor and maintain a planned schedule for people
24 traveling to and from their respective workplaces or residences located in the
25 LGU and if possible or applicable, the charter of various means of
26 transportation for the use of residents and workers to and from their
27 respective destinations;



- 1 5) There shall be a continuous implementation of alternative work arrangements
2 in the public and private sectors based on the nature of work of an employee,
3 the workplace and its location or place, and its distance to and from the
4 residences of employees;
- 5 6) The implementation of RA No. 9003, also known as the *Ecological Solid*
6 *Waste Management Act of 2000*, in relation to the proper disposal and
7 management of wastes resulting from activities related to the implementation
8 of this Act shall be strictly monitored: *Provided*, That the National
9 Government shall implement regulations on the manufacture and importation,
10 use, recycling of all single-use plastics used in trade or commerce in
11 business enterprises, as well as by retailers and consumers: *Provided*,
12 *further*, That the government shall conduct a research and develop single-use
13 plastic packaging alternatives and provide incentives to plastic industries that
14 will shift to other manufacturing activities;
- 15 7) Adaptation measures such as the establishment of multi-hazard early
16 warning systems that reach out the last mile, capacity building of national
17 experts, construction of rainwater harvesters in government owned- and
18 managed buildings and spaces, and the establishment of seedbanks and
19 vegetable gardens in available open spaces in local communities, rooftops of
20 government-owned and -managed buildings shall be implemented;
- 21 8) To prevent the transmission and spread of zoonotic diseases among
22 humans, all government agencies and offices and LGUs shall ensure that the
23 protection of biological diversity is integrated and mainstreamed into
24 programs and projects;
- 25 9) The National Government, through relevant government agencies such as
26 the DICT, DTI, DILG, in accordance with their respective mandates, and with
27 the support of the private sector, shall plan for and undertake universal



1 digitalization as well as promote and implement programs and innovations to
2 accelerate public access and connectivity including the progressive roll-out of
3 the National Broadband Program and the Free Public Internet Access
4 Program down to the barangay level;

5 10)The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), National Disaster Risk Reduction
6 and Management Council (NDRRMC), DILG through the Persons with
7 Disabilities Affairs Offices (PDAOs), and DOH shall gather, compile, update,
8 and publish online, disaggregated demographic and mapping data on deaf
9 and all other persons with disabilities nationwide in the context of the
10 pandemic;


11 11)The PSA, DTI, NDRRMC, DOLE, DOH, National Economic Development
12 Authority (NEDA) and other relevant agencies shall gather, compile and
13 update disaggregated demographic and mapping data on critically impacted
14 businesses, sectors, and industries in the context of the pandemic in order to
15 get a better census of the needs of the various sectors and industries; and,

16 12)In compliance with Section 10 of RA No. 11106, otherwise known as the
17 *Filipino Sign Language Act*, ensure the continued placement of TV insets in
18 news and public affairs programs through video remote interpreting on TV as
19 well as online streaming platforms, and promote as well deaf-produced/-
20 signed pandemic and quarantine related public information.

21 **SEC. 7. Role of LGUs.** - LGUs shall, in their respective territorial
22 jurisdictions, be primarily responsible for instituting localized policies and legislation
23 in accordance with the better normal measures prescribed under Section 6 hereof
24 and other related directives and issuances of the National Government. Local
25 governments must ensure that their policy-making process shall involve the
26 participation of all stakeholders. Consultations with the communities shall be
27 pursued as a matter of course to ensure that such policies respond properly to the



1 needs of the people. In this regard, the LGUs shall have the following
2 responsibilities:

- 3 a) Ensure the proper implementation of the provisions of this Act within
4 their respective territorial jurisdiction;
- 5 b) Enact the necessary and appropriate ordinance for the local
6 implementation of the provisions of this Act, including the promotion of low-
7 contact payment mechanisms such as the use of electronic money (e-money)
8 as a medium of exchange in collecting taxes, fees, tolls, imposts, and other
9 revenues and in paying for goods, services, and other disbursements:
10 *Provided*, That the LGU shall make the necessary arrangements with the
11 relevant government agencies and government-recognized regulating entities
12 to acquire e-money payment capability;
- 13 c) Require, by ordinance, merchants or business entities in their
14 localities to obtain and maintain e-money payment system capability that is
15 accessible by phone or other access devices, as a prerequisite for the
16 approval of application for or renewal of business permits;
- 17 d) Create a Better Normal Task Force to monitor the compliance of the
18 private businesses and offices with the provisions of this Act;
- 19 e) Orient the applicant thereof of the guidelines on the management of
20 spaces as provided in Section 6 (B) of this Act, which shall be observed
21 throughout the entire gathering;
- 22 f) In cooperation or with the assistance of the Land Transportation Office
23 (LTO), initiate information campaigns on public transportation schemes in
24 their localities in accordance with Section 6 (C) of this Act;
- 25 g) Establish the Inter-Local Government Unit Task Force as authorized
26 by and in accordance with the appropriate guidelines of the DILG;
- 

1 h) In coordination with the DICT, foster, support and facilitate the
2 effective roll-out of free wi-fi access points and other infrastructure needed for
3 the National Broadband Program. The LGUs shall likewise foster, support,
4 and facilitate the construction of common towers and other passive
5 telecommunication infrastructure in strategic locations for the use of
6 telecommunications service providers to propagate connectivity and provide
7 quality telecommunications services to their constituents in accordance with
8 existing laws, and the policies and standards set by the DICT;

9 i) In coordination with DOH, provide immediate assistance to all
10 reported COVID-confirmed residents and patients;

11 j) In coordination with the DOH, establish and maintain a functional local
12 epidemiology and surveillance unit pursuant to RA No. 11332, also known as
13 the *Mandatory Reporting of Notifiable Diseases and Health Events of Public*
14 *Health Concern Act*. In accordance with Section 6(A) of this Act, the LGU
15 shall specify the conduct of contact tracing systems for suspect, probable,
16 and confirmed COVID-19 cases, or other similar diseases, to avoid delay in
17 contact tracing and to ensure the prompt management and containment of
18 the disease. In all cases, the LGU shall ensure that disease surveillance and
19 contact tracing procedures are in accordance with the Data Privacy Act of
20 2012;


21 k) In coordination with the Department of Agriculture (DA), plan and
22 implement a resilient agro-ecology and local food supply system that: (1)
23 involves a shorter, more diversified food supply chain that is resilient to future
24 shocks; (2) ensures food access shall remain at, or swiftly returns to, pre-
25 pandemic levels, (3) mitigates the impact on vulnerable food systems actors,
26 including small-holder producers, informal traders, and low-income and
27 marginalized groups, (4) encourages a shift towards good agricultural and



1 climate-resilient practices, and (5) builds capacity towards family-farming
2 model to encourage food security. The plan shall promote permaculture and
3 the establishment of community food gardens, family farms, local food
4 production and shorter supply chains, the strengthening of urban-rural
5 linkages, and the promotion of diversity in the food supply chain and
6 channels of distribution as well as ensuring the integrity of sufficient wild
7 spaces nearby to preserve genetic stocks, revitalize monoculture areas and
8 ensure water security;

9 l) Establish and manage the use of cultural spaces to serve as venues
10 and facilities for keeping the creativity of the people alive, affording people to
11 exercise their freedom of expression, enhancing psycho-spiritual health, and
12 providing them opportunities for meaningful participation in community life,
13 even while observing the universal mandatory standards and protocols during
14 the time of a pandemic: *Provided*, That such cultural space must meet the
15 minimum criteria of facilities or landscapes that are open to the public:
16 *Provided further*, That cultural spaces are adaptable, do not compromise on
17 quality, able to enhance a sense of community, and are inclusive, accessible
18 and welcoming; and

19 m) The LGUs, in coordination with the cultural agencies such as the
20 NCCA, National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP) and the
21 National Museum, DepEd, CHED and SUCs, Department of Environment and
22 Natural Resources (DENR), Department of Tourism, DPWH, and the DOH,
23 shall conduct a comprehensive cultural heritage mapping of their areas,
24 including natural resources, built heritage structures, and tangible and
25 intangible heritage, including indigenous knowledge and resources, with the
26 end in view that the resulting database and documentation shall aid LGUs in
27 formulating localized policies and programs that will help prevent the




1 transmission of zoonotic diseases among the people and help protect their
2 health and well-being.

3 An application shall be developed as repository of the data retrieved
4 from cultural mapping activities.

5 **SEC. 8. *Role of the Private Sector* –**

6 a) All private businesses, offices and establishments shall submit a
7 Management Plan, to the concerned LGU where the entity conducts
8 operations or holds office not later than fifteen (15) days upon resumption of
9 their operations: *Provided*, That priority approval shall be granted by LGUs
10 to Management Plans that strictly comply with industry best practices,
11 minimum health standards, and safety protocols as accredited by DOH, DTI,
12 DOLE and other implementing agencies. Such Management Plan shall
13 contain, among others, the following information:

- 14 1) Total number of employees in the specific workplace, office, or branch
15 covered by the plan;
- 16 2) Overall strategy for the reporting of the workforce which may be on
17 rotational, staggered, tele-commuting, remote or on work-from-home
18 basis, including the relevant time specifications and periods as well as
19 the number of workers who shall be allowed ingress and egress;
- 20 3) Total number of workers at any given time in the workplace or office on
21 a daily basis;
- 22 4) Number of workers per area of space and the spacing mechanisms to
23 be implemented in compliance with physical distancing protocols, if
24 applicable;
- 25 5) Mechanisms for maintaining personal hygiene and cleanliness among
26 the employees and in workstations or areas including the availability
27 of handwashing or hand sanitizing implements;
- 

- 1 6) Physical changes in space management introduced or to be
2 introduced in the workplaces to protect employees and to implement
3 physical distancing such as plastic barriers between customers and
4 personnel or between and among customers or other individuals
5 within the workplace;
- 6 7) Signages, reminders, and other information, in accessible formats,
7 including Filipino sign language, and/or easy-to-understand text in the
8 appropriate written language, installed or posted in key areas of the
9 workplace to serve as constant reminders for workers to practice the
10 mandatory health, safety and sanitation practices;
- 11 8) Mechanisms for maintaining physical distancing in communally shared
12 areas in the workplace, such as cafeterias, restrooms, conference
13 rooms, prayer rooms, breastfeeding stations, including safeguards
14 against sharing of tools, implements, utensils, equipment, and
15 supplies;
- 16 9) Physical and personal protective equipment provided or to be provided
17 by businesses to their respective employees in order to inclusively
18 implement the practices mandated in this Act;
- 19 10) Mechanisms for managing employees exhibiting symptoms or
20 confirmed to have tested positive for COVID-19 infection, including
21 the company or business unit's system for contact tracing;
- 22 11) The Workers' Compensation Plan which provides how workers are
23 required to work and will be compensated while on quarantine;
- 24 12) Mechanisms to implement a circular economy in the workplace
25 such as the: i) reduction on the consumption of non-renewable
26 resources; ii) development or design of products that minimize waste;



1 iii) re-use of materials and expansion of the useful life of products; iv)
2 prevention of harmful emissions to soil, air and water; and iv) the
3 installation of segregation and recycling facilities;

4 13)Mechanisms for a healthier working environment such as but not
5 limited to the use of natural, non-toxic and low global warming
6 potential materials and equipment, improved indoor air quality and
7 ventilation with sustainable cooling technologies, and the more
8 efficient use of space; and

9 14)Measures to implement a “zero to landfill” policy such as setting
10 targets for reducing waste production; implementing sorting and
11 recycling for all office waste; ensuring that recycled waste is
12 composted or recycled; or observing sharing economy practices such
13 as reusing and recycling.

14 b. All private businesses, offices and establishments shall require all employees
15 to subject themselves to a thermal or temperature scan prior to being allowed
16 entry. Employees whose recorded body temperature render them suspect for
17 symptoms of COVID-19 shall be asked to undergo the necessary quarantine
18 protocols and given the appropriate medical advice, or subjected to the
19 appropriate health care in coordination with authorized medical facilities;

20 c. Private entities resuming their operations and requiring the physical presence
21 of their employee subject to their Management Plan shall provide shuttle or
22 transportation services under the conditions applicable to public
23 transportation operators: *Provided*, That private entities and owners of
24 buildings and establishments shall support employees and building
25 occupants who have opted to commute through bicycles and other
26 micromobility devices by installing bicycle racks, storage, and bicycle parking
27 spaces: *Provided*, further, That the installation of changing and shower rooms



1 to support green transport and promote safe and proper hygiene shall
2 likewise be promoted by business establishments;

3 d. There shall be an employee case management protocol to be observed on
4 the treatment of patients or of persons suspected to be afflicted with the
5 disease in accordance with prevailing DOH guidelines: *Provided*, That
6 patient-doctor confidentiality shall be suspended in order to aid contact
7 tracing and in the identification of possible COVID-19 patients;

8 e. Employers who opt to conduct testing may do so in a representative sample:
9 *Provided*, That the cost of testing is borne by the employer and not charged
10 to the Philhealth; and

11 f. In the provision of assistance and financing schemes, the lack of capacity of
12 micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the implementation of their
13 respective Management Plan shall be taken into consideration.

14 The implementation of mandatory public health standards and other
15 health-promoting practices committed by business owners in their respective
16 Management Plans shall be the joint responsibility of the owners or
17 management of establishments and their respective LGUs.

18 SEC. 9. *Specific Responsibilities of Particular National Government Offices,*
19 *their respective Attached Agencies, and GOCCs.* In addition to the duties and
20 mandates of National Government agencies already prescribed in the other sections
21 of this Act, the following agencies and offices are mandated to carry out the
22 following responsibilities, to wit:

23 A. Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA)

24 The PSA shall fast-track the implementation of the provisions of RA No.
25 11055, otherwise known as the *Philippine Identification System Act*, and RA No.
26 11315, otherwise known as the *Community-Based Monitoring System Act*, to



1 facilitate the profiling, contact-tracing, and distribution of forms of assistance under
2 the better normal period after the lifting of enhanced community quarantine
3 measures.

4 The PSA shall coordinate with the DILG, Department of Social Welfare and
5 Development (DSWD) and LGUs to cull information from the Community-Based
6 Monitoring System (CBMS) that may be utilized in fast-tracking efforts geared
7 towards the full implementation of the Philippine Identification System Act.

8 The PSA may likewise cull information contained in the existing databases of
9 the government on birth certificates, passports, voter's registration, GSIS, SSS,
10 PAGIBIG, Philhealth through data-sharing arrangements, subject to the rules and
11 procedures that shall be established by the National Privacy Commission (NPC) for
12 purposes of facilitating the implementation of the Philippine Identification System
13 Act.

14 To facilitate the integration of environmental concerns in national
15 development planning and policy-making, the PSA, in coordination with the DENR,
16 DA, NEDA, Department of Energy (DOE), and the Climate Change Commission,
17 shall enhance the Philippine Economic-Environmental Natural Resources
18 Accounting (PEENRA) System as part of the national income accounting system.
19 The DENR and the DA shall generate baseline information and build a database to
20 support ecosystem-based assessment and monitoring, continuing research and
21 development, technology development and transfer, and capacity building, for the
22 conservation and sustainable use of natural resources and ecosystems, especially
23 the coastal, marine, and forestry sectors.

24 The PEENRA shall be considered a scientific planning tool to avert
25 ecosystems and biodiversity loss with a view to preventing the transmission of
26 zoonotic diseases and pursuing anticipatory adaptation measures amid the impacts
27 of climate change. It shall include the provision for strategic climate financing for



1 localized climate adaptation investments supporting risk-based local planning,
2 energy transition to renewable and indigenous sources, resilient infrastructure, agro-
3 ecology, water and food security, technological innovation for critical sectors like
4 agriculture and fisheries, and capacity building for green enterprises.

5 The PEENRA system shall be based on a framework that includes the
6 accounting of environmental conditions and quality, environmental resources and
7 their utilization, depreciation of natural capital, environmental damages, and loss
8 and damage associated with climate change impacts.

9 B. Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT)

10 The DICT shall fast track the progressive and full implementation of the
11 National Broadband Program (NBP) by immediately establishing and implementing
12 a nationwide and comprehensive information and communications technology (ICT)
13 action plan that shall involve all stakeholders, including the major TELCOs, small
14 TELCOs, internet service providers (ISPs), and developers of technology and digital
15 applications, with the end in view of widening and improving connectivity not only
16 for the fight against COVID-19 but also for the long-term development needs of the
17 country. The NBP shall serve to enable the widespread accessibility to and
18 utilization of the internet for essential and significant public and private transactions,
19 including learning and instruction: *Provided*, That the NBP must be reliable and
20 sufficiently able to support a high volume of video streaming, in compliance with the
21 Filipino Sign Language Act.

22 Further, the DICT shall immediately formulate and implement an industry-
23 wide policy for the TELCOS, both major and small, ISPs, and technology
24 applications that aims to widen connectivity in all sectors of society, particularly the
25 poor, the unconnected, the underserved households in poor urban communities,
26 geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas (GIDAs), and the MSMEs:
27 *Provided*, That in relation to the widening of connectivity to all sectors of society, the



1 principle behind the NBP shall be adhered to. To achieve the goal of providing
2 connectivity to all sectors of the economy, incentives shall be provided to new
3 market that shall invest in unserved areas: *Provided, further,* That such incentives
4 shall result in affordable prices for internet usage: *Provided finally,* That the following
5 key policies shall be implemented:

- 6 a) Provision of incentives to TELCOs which serve the poor and underserved
7 MSMEs nationwide via WiFi technology by implementing a reduced
8 Spectrum User Fee (SUF) for WiFi such that a fair and reasonable scheme
9 is achieved consistent with existing rules and regulations governing the use
10 of WiFi;
- 11 b) Implement its departmental policies and initiatives for the propagation of
12 Common Tower and the sharing of Passive Telecommunication Infrastructure
13 in the telecommunications industry;
- 14 c) Implementation of the provision for fiber optic transmission rental from the
15 National Grid Corporation to new telecommunications industry players to
16 accelerate development therein;
- 17 d) Implementation of the spectrum sharing arrangement among and between
18 TELCOs, at intra-industry fee agreements regulated by NTC, to fully and
19 optimally utilize the usage of licensed frequencies that are presently assigned
20 to existing major TELCOs;
- 21 e) Full use of the Internet Bandwidth supply made available by the Luzon
22 Bypass infrastructure to provide connectivity to all government offices and to
23 the unserved and underserved areas of the country. For this purpose, the
24 DICT shall formulate a policy to implement effective measures to make the
25 internet Bandwidth supply available at a fair pricing scheme, to other TELCO
26 stakeholders, giving priority to new incoming players, particularly those that
27 serve the poor and underserved communities and GIDAs;



1 f) Undertake contracts and other arrangements with private sector,
2 including the middle and last mile providers, the GOCCs or LGUs for the
3 provision of internet bandwidth sourced separately from, or in conjunction
4 with, the Luzon Bypass Infrastructure, should it become necessary, to provide
5 connectivity to end-users through multi-year obligations;

6 g) Promulgate joint policies with the DILG that mandate a simplified and
7 streamlined permitting process for telecommunication and broadband
8 infrastructure; and

9 h) Promulgate and implement policies for effective cross-sector infrastructure
10 sharing, such as, but not limited to, coordinated or joint infrastructure
11 development, dark fiber leasing, and joint venture.

12 In pursuit of the above policy directives, the DICT shall undertake the
13 following:

- 14 i. Implement programs that shall facilitate the setting-up of online, internet-
15 based systems and platforms in offices of the public sector, including
16 schools, universities and even barangay halls, across all levels;
- 17 ii. Assist public sector offices and agencies in the upgrading of their
18 existing internet and other ICT infrastructure;
- 19 iii. Establish, in coordination with other government agencies, learning
20 modules and relevant ICT solutions and systems to assist public sector
21 employees, freelancers and self-employed individuals, and MSMEs in
22 the use of relevant technological and digital platforms that can assist in
23 the various cycles of their business model; and
- 24 iv. Direct the NTC to implement all relevant policy directives under this Act,
25 including, but not limited to, those pertaining to the enhancement of
26 connectivity, improvement of internet speed and quality of service, and
27 development of the digital infrastructure of the country.



1 The DICT in coordination with the DOH shall also promote research towards
2 the development and establishment of an online data tracking system or the creation
3 of a digital/phone-based application which is downloadable by the public for case
4 monitoring, mapping, and contact-tracing that shall be integrated with global
5 positioning system (GPS) activated by real-time technologies to monitor and track
6 individuals, alert the user of location-based risks and provide the user with updated
7 and constant reminders and information for their health and safety. Any technology
8 created for case monitoring, mapping and contact tracing shall be consistent with
9 the Data Privacy Act. The DICT shall leverage the existing systems used for case
10 monitoring, mapping and contact tracing. All systems, initiated by the public or
11 private sector, shall be interconnected to each other and shall be subject to the
12 policies and standards issued by the DICT.

13 The DICT shall take the lead in the establishment of e-government systems
14 and shall fast track its plans to build the necessary infrastructure to promote and
15 facilitate digitization of the government and interoperability of government services
16 and systems, especially those located in the provinces and rural areas. Under this
17 Act, government offices and agencies shall develop, introduce, and implement
18 solutions and systems to effectively facilitate government transactions through
19 various online channels or contact-less mechanisms. This includes the uploading of
20 pertinent government forms and their completion and/or submission thru websites or
21 online portals in order to minimize the need for face-to-face transactions or physical
22 travels or visits to government offices. Government agencies shall utilize creative
23 adaptive technology that allows full access of PWDs to government services and are
24 compliant with relevant existing laws and practices. This includes the establishment
25 of a system of standards for Filipino sign language interpreting.

26 C. Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)



1 The DTI in coordination with the DICT shall establish a digital application for
2 MSMEs to further enhance the conduct of e-commerce activities. The following
3 measures shall be undertaken to assist MSMEs:

4 a) Regulatory bodies and other concerned government agencies and
5 instrumentalities shall allow the immediate use of online platforms for
6 application, processing, approval and release of loans;

7 b) The use of video or teleconferencing, emails, and other online platforms shall
8 be allowed and shall be considered as compliance with government rules and
9 regulations, and the requirements of meetings such as service of meeting
10 notices, quorum and attendance requirements, and the registration of votes,
11 on matters before the body conducting the meeting.

12 c) The DTI shall provide special support programs that will assist MSMEs and
13 startups in achieving business recovery and resiliency including the following:

14 i. Capacity-building in digital skills;

15 ii. Support for digitalizing operations;

16 iii. Knowledge transfer and information-sharing with MSMEs; and

17 iv. Startup and MSMEs innovation aid.

18 The DTI, in coordination with the DICT and the DOH, shall also promote the
19 shifting, prioritization, or increase in government support or funding for the
20 manufacturing sector, including MSMEs engaged in the production of healthcare,
21 hygiene, and safety related goods, and the establishment of real-time online
22 information exchange between private hospitals and medical facilities in the supply,
23 demand, and procurement of the same: *Provided*, That concerned government
24 agencies shall promote and integrate circular economy strategies in the
25 procurement of materials or the development of mechanisms for hygiene and
26 sanitation in the implementation of this Act.



1 The provision of government support could come in the form of: (1) integrated
2 and uninterrupted supply chain networks; (2) reliable online market platforms; (3)
3 stable universal broadband; (4) digital IDs or digital signature infrastructure; and (5)
4 secured mobile payment channels, among others.

5 The DTI, NEDA, Presidential Communications Operations Office (PCOO),
6 cultural government agencies such as the NCCA and the FDCP, in partnership with
7 the private sector, shall formulate and implement a strategic marketing
8 communications plan that will renew public interest in and restore confidence in
9 industries classified as non-essential but heavily affected due to the implementation
10 of quarantine and other health measures to prevent the transmission of COVID-19.

11 D. Department of Health (DOH)

12 The DOH shall institutionalize and regulate telemedicine and e-prescription
13 activities, in accordance with relevant rules and regulations. It shall likewise explore
14 technological innovations for certain health services that might be compromised in
15 the new normal setting. It shall promote and support local research on COVID-19
16 testing and treatment, and the development, manufacture and distribution of a
17 vaccine.

18 To improve on public sanitation, the DOH shall execute all plans geared at
19 achieving zero open defecation and require all LGUs to report on their achievements
20 of this goal.

21 E. Local Water Districts and Water Utilities

22 Considering that water is a basic need in containing the transmission of
23 COVID-19 and similar diseases, the local water districts shall ensure the availability
24 of sufficient water supply in their areas of coverage. In the case of private water
25 utilities, such service providers shall review and recommend the appropriate
26 extension of concession agreements necessary to ensure sufficient water supply in
27 their service areas as well as to fast track sewerage systems as required under RA



1 No. 9275, otherwise known as the Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004. Such
2 service providers shall also be required to submit new master plans to reflect a
3 speedier full sewerage, septage and wastewater treatment coverage of the
4 metropolis.

5 F. Department of Public Works and Highways

6 The DPWH shall take full responsibility for the implementation of the National
7 Sewerage and Septage Management Plan, and shall provide sufficient funds for it.
8 All highly urbanized cities shall, in coordination with DENR, identify remaining
9 hotspots of fecal transmission and construct the necessary waste water
10 infrastructure using funds made available by the DPWH.

11 G. Department of Budget and Management (DBM)

12 The DBM shall undertake the formulation of the annual national budget in a
13 way that ensures the appropriate prioritization and allocation of funds to support
14 programs and projects to implement this Act for green, resilient and sustainable
15 communities.

16 H. Department of Finance (DOF)

17 The DOF shall streamline and rationalize the process for accessing
18 international green and climate finance for programs and interventions identified
19 under this Act to accelerate the implementation of technical cooperation projects
20 and grants supportive of the resilient and sustainable recovery objectives of this
21 Act.

22 SEC. 10. *Gender and Social Equity.* - In the implementation of this Act and its
23 implementing rules and regulations, special care and consideration shall be given to
24 integrating gender issues and eliminating all forms of discrimination in the following:

25 a) Implementation of alternative work arrangements in the public and private
26 sectors ensuring that DSWD and LGUs attend to possible heightened cases of



1 gender-based and domestic violence during intermittent mandatory lock-downs or
2 quarantines;

3 b) Social protection measures to be instituted for low-income and informal
4 female and male workers and daily wage earners that ensure restoration of
5 livelihoods and such other ameliorative measures that shall compensate for
6 temporary loss of incomes;

7 c) Sufficient and equal support for both women and men with disabilities,
8 cognizant that women with disabilities are most disadvantaged and excluded from
9 access to vital pandemic-related information and assistive acts;

10 d) Sufficient and equal provision of protective personal equipment to male and
11 female frontline health workers and employees in both health centers and public and
12 private firms and workplaces; and

13 e) Public reproductive health care services and the capacity of maternal
14 health clinics and midwives to address needs of child-bearers in terms of isolation
15 from infected patients, lactation and relactation assistance, and sufficient staffing
16 and facilities for life-saving procedures.

17 The needs of women in the health care and medical frontline professions shall
18 be considered in the procurement of personal protective equipment and such other
19 assistive measures such as access to clean restrooms, reasonable work shifts and
20 equity in wages.

21 Any sector that may be affected adversely by measures under this Act that
22 would lead to unemployment or industry collapse shall be assisted by the LGUs and
23 interlocal units in alleviating their economic status.

24 SEC. 11. *Prohibited Acts.*- The following acts and omissions are prohibited
25 under this Act:

26 a). Failure to wear a mask while in public spaces or in the workplace;



1 b) Failure to comply with the provisions on the management of spaces
2 required in Section 6 (B) of this Act except in subsections (1) and (3). In such
3 cases, the subject gathering shall either be ordered ceased, with the
4 maximum tolerance possible under existing laws, if such gathering does not
5 comply with Section 6 (A) of this Act;

6 c) Failure to implement and monitor the proper implementation of
7 Management of Public Transportation provided for under Section 6(C) of this
8 Act;

9 d) Failure to comply with Section 6(D)(2) of this Act and other issuances,
10 circulars, memorandum and directives of DepEd and CHED in relation to the
11 holding of classes during COVID-19 pandemic: *Provided*, That no penalty or
12 discrimination in whatever form shall be imposed on any student, teacher, or
13 member of the faculty for his or her inability to attend or hold online classes or
14 comply with the flexible learning approaches;

15 e) Failure to submit the Management Plan within the period required in
16 Section 8(a) of this Act; and

17 f) Failure of the employer, supervisor, manager or any person in charge to
18 abide by the Case Management Protocols as provided for in Section 8 of this
19 Act.

20 SEC. 12. *Penalties.* - Any person, natural or juridical, who violates the
21 provisions under Section 11 of this Act shall, upon conviction, suffer the following
22 penalties:

23 a) For violation of Section 11 (a) of this Act, a stern warning shall be issued
24 for the first offense, and for succeeding offenses, a mandatory rendition of
25 community service or performance of productive tasks, such as assisting in
26 information campaign to combat the COVID-19 pandemic;



1 b) Imprisonment of one (1) month and one day to two (2) months or a fine
2 ranging from One thousand pesos (P1,000.00) to Fifty thousand pesos
3 (P50,000.00), or both, at the discretion of the court for violation Section 11(b) to (g)
4 of this Act.

5 In case the violation is committed by a partnership, corporation, association or
6 any juridical person, the partner, president, director or manager who consents to or
7 knowingly tolerates such violation shall be directly liable and responsible;

8 c) Suspension of the entity's permit to operate for any violation of Section
9 11(e): *Provided*, That the place owner, administrator or manager of the entity shall
10 be given a period of fifteen (15) days to submit the required Management Plan:
11 *Provided further*, That failure to comply within the 15-day period shall be meted a
12 fine of Twenty thousand pesos (P20,000.00); and

13 d) Imprisonment of not less than two (2) months but not more than six (6)
14 months, or a fine of not less than Five thousand pesos (P5,000.00) but not more
15 than One hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00), or both imprisonment and fine, at
16 the discretion of the court, in case the offender is a government official or employee.

17 SEC. 13. *Appropriations.*- The amount necessary to effectively carry out the
18 provisions of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the
19 concerned government agencies. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for
20 the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General
21 Appropriations Act.

22 SEC. 14. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - Within fifteen (15) days
23 from the effectivity of this Act, a technical working group (TWG) shall be constituted
24 composed of the respective heads or the duly authorized representatives of the
25 following agencies:

26 a) Department of Interior and Local Government;

27 b) Department of Finance;



- 1 c) Department of Trade and Industry;
- 2 d) National Economic Development Authority;
- 3 e) Department of Labor and Employment;
- 4 f) Department of Information and Communications Technology;
- 5 g) Department of Budget and Management;
- 6 h) Department of Transportation;
- 7 i) Department of Education;
- 8 j) Department of Health;
- 9 k) Civil Service Commission;
- 10 l) Commission on Higher Education; and
- 11 m) the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) for the Management of Emerging
12 Infectious Diseases

13 Within fifteen (15) days after the TWG is constituted, it shall promulgate the
14 necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

15 SEC. 15. *Joint Congressional Oversight Committee.* -- A Joint Congressional
16 Oversight Committee composed of four (4) members of each House to be appointed
17 by the Senate President and the House Speaker, respectively, shall exercise an
18 oversight function over the implementation of this Act.

19 SEC. 16. *Sunset Clause.* — This Act shall expire after a three-year period
20 from the date of its effectivity, or sooner upon official declaration of the President of
21 the Philippines issued upon recommendation of the Inter-Agency Task Force for the
22 Management of Emerging and Infectious Diseases that the prevailing pandemic
23 caused by the COVID-19 virus or similar infectious diseases has already been
24 eradicated: *Provided,* That standards, protocols, and other measures prescribed by
25 this Act which are not rendered useless or impractical by the eradication of COVID-
26 19 may continue to be implemented.



1 SEC. 17. *Separability Clause.* — If any part or provision of this Act shall be
2 declared as unconstitutional or invalid, the other parts or provisions hereof which are
3 not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

4 SEC. 18. *Repealing Clause.* — All laws, executive orders, presidential
5 decrees, rules and regulations or parts thereof which are in conflict or inconsistent
6 with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified
7 accordingly.

8 SEC. 19. *Effectivity.* — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
9 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

10 Approved,

