



Senate

Office of the Secretary

**NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)**

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SENATE

S.B. No. 580

RECEIVED BY:

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR RISA HONTIVEROS

**AN ACT
CREATING THE COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER EDUCATION AND TRAINING
PROGRAM, INCREASING COMPENSATION AND OTHER BENEFITS FOR
BARANGAY HEALTH WORKERS (BHWs) APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article X.III, Section 11 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution lays down the national health policy in this wise: "The State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which shall endeavor to make essential goods, health and other social services available to all the people at an affordable cost."

Barangay Health Workers (BHWs) play a critical part of this health and human development agenda, providing front-line health services at the community level and acting as health educators, community organizers and primary care providers within their local villages. Given the dearth of doctors and nurses in rural areas, BHWs are often the first line of defense against illnesses, the information source for maternal and neonatal care as well as family planning, and also the first responders during periods of calamity.

According to latest available data, there are more than 219,000 active BHWs in the country spread out across 42,028 barangays. While some barangays have a sufficient number of BHWs, the barangays in far-flung rural areas have only one or two volunteers - toiling every day to provide for the health needs of the barangay residents. Yet, these BHWs are considered only volunteers, and the law does not prescribe a fixed allowance for them. Nor do they enjoy security of tenure or retirement benefits.

This Act seeks to correct that not only by prescribing a fixed monthly compensation for BHWs, but also by introducing a Community Health Worker

Education and Training Program that will provide training and development programs for BHWs to develop their skills and acquire knowledge. The aim of this Act is two-fold: to hone and develop deserving BHWs into skilled medical professionals, and second, to ensure a continuous supply of grassroots public health workers to respond to the health needs of their communities.


The immediate passage of this measure is earnestly sought.


RISA HONTIVEROS
Senator

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

1 Section 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Bibong BHW Act of
2 2022”.

3 Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policies.* – It is the policy of the State to adopt an
4 integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which shall endeavor to
5 make essential goods, health and other social services available to all the people at
6 affordable cost. In furtherance of this, the State shall endeavor to provide accessible
7 and quality health services through barangay health workers as front-liners in
8 community-based health interventions.

9 Sec. 3. *Coverage.* – The provisions of this Act shall be applicable to all barangay
10 health workers under Republic Act No. 7883. For the purposes of this Act, the term
11 barangay health worker shall refer to a person who has undergone training program
12 under any accredited government or non-government organization primarily to render
13 health care services, pursuant to Republic Act No. 7883.

14 Sec. 4. *Six Month Education and Training Program for Community-based Health*
15 *Workers.* – The Department of Health in coordination with the University of the
16 Philippines, shall develop a competency-based education and training curriculum for all
17 barangay health workers. The curriculum shall train the community health workers as
18 healthcare provider, community organizer, health service manager, trainer and
19 educator, and researcher. It shall include basic orientation and training on health
20 programs and institutionalized health service delivery system, primary healthcare, basic
21 community organizing, local health research, social health insurance navigation, basic

1 local resource generation and mobilization, training needs analysis, basic report writing
2 and communication skills, and program planning and development. Courses on basic
3 dental care reproductive health, STI and HIV/AIDS prevention, nutrition, physical
4 therapy, basic life support, traditional and herbal medicine and reflexology shall also be
5 offered. Such program shall be credited as units earned in higher education institutions
6 with stepladder curricula that will entitle BHWs to upgrade their skills and knowledge for
7 community work or to pursue further training as midwives, pharmacists, nurses or
8 doctors.

9 *Sec. 5. Accreditation and Competency Assessment.* – The Department of Health
10 in coordination with local governments and the Civil Service Commission, shall conduct
11 a competency assessment test upon completion of the Education and Training Program,
12 provided that this requirement shall be waived for those who have served as Barangay
13 Health Workers for five (5) or more years. Only those who have passed the assessment
14 test or have served as BHWs for five years or more will be accredited. The Provincial
15 Health Board, with the participation of TESDA, PhilHealth and accredited training NGOs,
16 is hereby mandated to carry out the accreditation of Barangay Health Workers.

17 *Sec. 6. Program Cost and Cost Sharing for Local Government Units.* – The basic
18 Education and Training Program shall be offered free of charge. Local governments
19 shall adopt a cost-sharing financing scheme with the National Government through the
20 DOH for the implementation of the basic course on Barangay Health Work depending
21 on the income level of the concerned local government units.

22 *Sec. 7. Compensation and Other Incentives.* – All accredited Barangay Health
23 Workers shall be entitled to a monthly basic pay of six thousand pesos (Php6,000.00).
24 They shall likewise be entitled to the incentives and benefits provided under the Magna
25 Carta for Public Health Workers and shall be covered by all existing statutory benefits
26 such as PAG-IBIG, GSIS and Philhealth. In addition, they shall be given burial and
27 disability assistance in case of death or if the BHW is afflicted by illness which results to
28 disability, especially if such occurs in the duration of his service. A regular adjustment in
29 monetary and other non-monetary incentives shall be made to help improve the living
30 condition of Barangay Health Workers.

31 A BHW who has served less than five (5) years upon the passage of this Act will be
32 given a pro-rated amount based on years of service. S/he will be given first priority in
33 enlisting for the Education and Training program.

34 *Sec. 8. Compensation based on Philhealth Utilization.* – Consistent with Republic
35 Act 11223 or the Universal Health Care Act, Philhealth is directed to develop a
36 compensation package for accredited BHWs based on Philhealth utilization for programs

1 including but not limited to social health insurance navigation, maternal neo-natal child
2 health care and nutrition, primary care packages, rehabilitation and recovery of senior
3 citizens and Persons with Disability (PWD), provided that compensation received from
4 Philhealth will be over and above the monthly basic pay.

5 Sec. 9. *Mandatory Continuing Community-based Health Education.* – The DOH, in
6 cooperation with TESDA, will formulate a module for Mandatory Continuing Community-
7 based Health Education (MCCHE). Each accredited BHW will be required to undergo an
8 MCCHE at least every three (3) years of active service, or as warranted by the DOH,
9 consistent with the BHWs' expanded role under the Universal Health Care Act.

10 Sec. 10. *Implementing Agencies.* – Within one (1) year from the effectivity of this
11 Act, the TESDA and DOH, with the participation of various health union representatives
12 shall formulate, finalize and launch the BHW education training program, assessment,
13 and national certification program. The Department of Interior and Local Government
14 (DILG), DOH, LGUs, and other appropriate government agencies, with the participation
15 of various health union representatives, shall provide the Implementing Rules and
16 Regulations necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act. The Implementing Rules
17 and Regulations shall be published in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general
18 circulation.

19 Sec. 11. *Funding Source.* – An initial allocation of Fifty Million Pesos
20 (P50,000,000.00) shall be included in the General Appropriations to support the policies
21 and objectives under this Act. Congress shall provide subsequent appropriations in the
22 annual budget of the Department of Health from sin tax revenues.

23 Sec. 12. *Separability Clause.* – Should any provision of this Act be declared
24 unconstitutional, the remaining parts not affected thereby shall remain valid and
25 operational.

26 Sec. 13. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders, circulars, issuances, rules
27 and regulations and parts thereof which are inconsistent with this act are hereby
28 repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

29 Sec. 14. *Effectivity.* – This act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
30 publication in the Official Gazette or in any two (2) newspaper of general circulation in
31 the Philippines.

Approved,