

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



23 JAN 31 P 4 :09

SENATE
S.B. No. 1821

RECEIVED BY: _____

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be a stylized 'J' or similar character, written over a horizontal line.

Introduced by: **Senator Raffy T. Tulfo**

AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING THE ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS IN CRISIS
SITUATION (AICS) PROGRAM AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

As a developing nation, the Philippines faces a range of challenges that require both short and long-term solutions. To help families struggling with basic needs and unexpected expenses like medical or funeral costs, the country needs safety net programs to support the people.

One of the most pressing issues in the Philippines is poverty, with 17.6 million Filipinos living below the poverty line as of 2018. The hunger rate in the country is alarmingly high, with 13.6 percent of Filipinos, or 3.4 million people, experiencing hunger between April and June of 2021. The average family income in the Philippines, which is around P26,000 per month or P313,000 per year, is considered, without a doubt, insufficient.

This bill seeks to establish the Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation (AICS) program which would involve making the program a permanent and ongoing part of the government's social welfare and protection efforts. This bill also ensures that individuals and families affected by crisis situations, such as natural disasters,

economic hardships, or health emergencies, have access to the support and resources they need to recover and rebuild their lives.

Fortunately, the Department of Social Welfare and Development launched the Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation Program even before the pandemic to offer prompt assistance to the marginalized sector should they encounter challenging circumstances. Thus, this measure aims to institutionalize the aforementioned program in order to develop a long-term national program that is financially and administratively equipped to meet Filipinos' requirements in the event of an emergency.

With enough safeguards to protect the rights of our citizens, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



Raffy T. Tulfo

Senator

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



23 JAN 31 P 4 :09

SENATE
S. No. 1821

RECEIVED BY: _____

Introduced by: **Senator Raffy T. Tulfo**

**AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS IN
CRISIS SITUATION (AICS) PROGRAM AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR**

*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 "Assistance to Individuals
2 in Crisis Situation (AICS) Act".

3 Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared a policy of the State to provide
4 immediate relief to all individuals in extreme and difficult situations. Priority attention
5 shall be given to the poor, vulnerable, and marginalized sectors of the society. Such
6 assistance to be given to the individuals and families who need immediate intervention
7 will allow them to access basic services in order to fully recover from their dire situations.

8 Sec. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act, the following terms are defined,
9 as follows:

10 a) *Burial Assistance* - refers to the assistance to defray funeral and related
11 expenses;

12 b) *Cash assistance* - for other support services refers to an assistance
13 provided to individuals and families in extremely difficult circumstances in

1 which the need does not fall on other types of assistance;

2 c) *Crisis Situation* - refers to a condition whereby an individual or group of
3 persons are faced with a different and stressful situation, resulting to the
4 impairment of his/her psychosocial functioning, and thereby needing
5 series of interventions to prevent further exposure to vulnerabilities,
6 exploitation, and abuse;

7 d) *Educational Assistance* - refers to the assistance given to eligible students
8 to help defray school expenses and/or cost of sending students/children
9 to school;

10 e) *Food assistance* - refers to the assistance to beneficiaries amounting to
11 at least P80.00 per meal per individual for meals;

12 f) *Medical Assistance* - refers to assistance to help shoulder hospitalization
13 expenses, cost of medicines, other medical treatment or procedures, or
14 professional fees;

15 g) *Target beneficiaries* - refers to individuals and/or families who are
16 indigent, vulnerable, disadvantaged, or are otherwise in crisis situation
17 based on the assessment of the Social Workers; and

18 h) *Transportation Assistance* - refers to the assistance for the purchase or
19 payment of transport tickets and/or expenses to enable the beneficiaries
20 to return to their home provinces permanently or seek further medical
21 interventions in another place, or to attend to emergency concerns or
22 critical situations of family members or other individuals in need.

23 *Sec. 4. The Assistance to Individuals in Crisis (AICS) Program.* – The Assistance
24 to Individuals in Crisis (AICS) Program shall provide integrated services to individuals
25 and families in crisis or difficult situations in the form of psychosocial intervention or
26 direct financial and material assistance.

27 The AICS Program shall provide its target beneficiaries with transportation
28 assistance, medical assistance, burial assistance, educational assistance, food assistance,
29 cash assistance, psychosocial intervention, or referral for other services, subject to
30 screening, verification, and assessment of the beneficiaries' needs by social workers;

1 *Provided*, that in providing educational assistance, working students in public education
2 institutions shall be prioritized.

3 *Sec. 5. Conditions for Eligibility to Receive AICS Assistance.* – The client seeking
4 assistance shall present to the social worker assigned the following documents as may be
5 necessary to the type of assistance applied for:

- 6 a) Any valid identification card;
- 7 b) Police blotter;
- 8 c) Police certification;
- 9 d) Medical case study report, medical certificate, or medical abstract;
- 10 e) Hospital billing statement or statement of account;
- 11 f) Medical prescriptions;
- 12 g) Death certificate;
- 13 h) Funeral contract;
- 14 i) School enrolment assessment form or certificate of registration;
- 15 j) School identification card;
- 16 k) Travel documents; or
- 17 l) Any other supporting documents as may be required in the implementing rules and
18 regulations of this Act.

19 *Sec. 6. Rates of Assistance.* – The range of the rates of assistance per type,
20 including the frequency with which a beneficiary may avail the same, shall be as
21 follows:

TYPE	PARTICULARS	COST OF ASSISTANCE		FREQUENCY OF AVAILMENT
		MINIMUM	MAXIMUM	
Transportation Assistance	Land Travel	Actual cost based on ticket quotation		Once a year
	Sea Travel			
	Air Travel			
Medical Assistance	Hospitalization or	P1,000	P150,000	Once every

	hospital bill			three months
	Medicines (Out-patient)	P1,000	P10,000	
	Laboratory procedures (Out-patient)	P1,000	P10,000	
Burial Assistance	Funeral expenses	P5,000	P25,000	One client may avail two services at the same time
	Transfer of cadaver	P5,000	P25,000	
	Casualties during disaster/calamity		P10,000 per casualty	
Educational Assistance (2 children per family and 3 children for solo parent)	Elementary students	P1,000	P10,000	Once every school year
	High School students	P1,500		Once every semester
	Senior High School or College students	P3,000		
Food Assistance	Food subsidy for individuals/families	P1,000	P5,000	As needed, subject to assessment
Cash Assistance for other support services	Other needs	P1,000	P10,000	Once every applicable incident
Provision of PPE		P1,000	P2,000	One every three

				months
--	--	--	--	--------

1 SEC. 7. *Lead Agency.* – The DSWD shall serve as the central planning,
2 coordinating, implementing, and monitoring body of the Program.

3 In the implementation of this Act, the DSWD shall perform the following
4 functions:

- 5 a) Screen, verify, and assess the beneficiaries' situation and the identify the
6 appropriate intervention to fully serve their situation;
- 7 b) Provide the appropriate assistance to the beneficiaries from the array of benefits
8 enumerated in Section X of this Act;
- 9 c) Coordinate with different national and local agencies, including organizations from
10 the private sector to ensure full implementation of statutory commitments herein;
- 11 d) Submit an annual report to Congress on all aspects of the operations of the
12 programs, financial status, and other relevant data; and
- 13 e) Perform such other functions as may be necessary or incidental to the proper
14 implementation of this Act;

15 Sec. 8. *Advisory Council.* – An Advisory Council shall be created at the regional and
16 national levels to be headed by the DSWD.

17 The regional advisory councils and national advisory council (NAC) shall have, as
18 members, representatives from the DSWD, Department of Health (DOH), Department of
19 Education (DepEd), Department of Transportation (DOTr), Department of Labor and
20 Employment (DOLE), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), and Technical Education
21 and Skills Development Authority (TESDA). The regional advisory councils and NAC shall
22 also have, as additional members, two (2) representatives from accredited
23 nongovernmental organizations working or monitoring social welfare service programs.

24 The Advisory Councils shall have the following functions:

- 25 (a) Meet regularly to promote coordination across agencies to enhance the
26 implementation of the program and jointly address and resolve program
27 implementation issues;

- 1 (b) Recommend to the President measures and policies for the responsive delivery of
2 the commitments under this Act and integration with the general poverty reduction
3 strategy of government;
- 4 (c) Promulgate a grievance redress system and accept complaints and grievances
5 pertaining to the implementation of the AICS; and
- 6 (d) Review the monitoring and assessment reports of the Independent Monitoring
7 Committee and submit necessary policy recommendations to Congress to improve
8 and strengthen the program, if necessary.

9 *Sec. 9. Independent Monitoring Committee.* – An Independent Monitoring
10 Committee shall be created at the regional, and national levels, composed of
11 representatives from the private sector and civil society organizations (CSOs) to
12 complement the monitoring activities of the DSWD and provide feedback for appropriate
13 action. It shall submit a report on the results of its monitoring activities relative to the
14 implementation of the program to the respective regional advisory councils and the NAC.
15 A monitoring and evaluation report shall be submitted to the DSWD and to the Joint
16 Congressional Oversight Committee at regular intervals, as determined in the
17 implementing rules and regulations.

18 *Sec. 10. Annual Report of the Program.* – The DSWD shall annually publish a full
19 report of the AICS covering the implementation of the previous fiscal year. The said report
20 shall include financial disclosures, number of clients/beneficiaries served, and
21 recommendations to the President and to both chambers of Congress on how to further
22 enhance it. This report shall be submitted to Congress before the submission of the
23 President's Budget Message.

24 *Sec. 11. Program Transparency.* – The DSWD shall regularly and timely post and
25 update on its website a report of financial disclosures and information about beneficiaries
26 based on geographical area, social, economic, and cultural circumstances.

27 *Sec. 12. Joint Congressional Oversight Committee.* – Upon the effectivity of this
28 Act, a Congressional Oversight Committee, hereafter referred to as the AICS Oversight
29 Committee, is hereby constituted. This Committee shall set the overall framework to
30 review the implementation of this Act. It shall likewise determine inherent weaknesses in
31 the law and recommend necessary remedial legislation or executive measures.

32 The AICS Oversight Committee shall be composed of six (6) members with the

1 chairpersons of the Committee on Poverty Alleviation of the House of Representatives,
2 and the Committee on Social Justice, Welfare and Rural Development of the Senate as
3 Co-Chairpersons; and six (2) members from each House, to be designated by the Speaker
4 of the House of Representatives, and the Senate President, respectively.

5 For purposes of determining remedial legislation, the AICS Oversight Committee
6 shall, within six (6) years after the effectivity of this Act, conduct a review which shall
7 include a systematic evaluation of the impact of this Act, accomplishments of the program,
8 and the performance of its implementing agency.

9 *Sec. 13. Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within one (1) month from the
10 effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of Social Welfare and Development shall, in
11 coordination with appropriate government departments and agencies with the
12 participation of local government units, promulgate the necessary rules and regulations
13 to carry out the provisions of the Act.

14 *Sec. 14. Appropriation.* – The amount necessary to implement this Act shall be
15 included in the General Appropriations Act of the year following its enactment into law
16 and thereafter.

17 *Sec. 15. Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders and rules and regulations
18 contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or amended
19 accordingly.

20 *Sec. 16. Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication
21 in the Official Gazette.

Approved,