



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. No. 10615

INTRODUCED BY HONORABLE SHAHANI, MENDOZA, CUA, FUENTES,
JOAQUIN, ALVAREZ (G.), DUAVIT, SARENAS, SINGSON, BUNYE,
VERGARA, VERCELES JR., ANGARA-CASTILLO AND VILLAR JR. PER
COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 698

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE BENEFITS AND PRIVILEGES TO SOLO PARENTS AND THEIR CHILDREN AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

1 SECTION 1 *Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Solo Parents
2 Welfare Act of 2000.”

3 SEC. 2. *Purpose.* – This Act aims to promote the family as the
4 foundation of the nation, strengthen its solidarity and ensure its total
5 development. Towards this end, it shall develop a comprehensive program
6 of services for solo parents and their children to be carried out by the
7 Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), the Department
8 of Health (DOH), the Department of Education, Culture and Sports
9 (DECS), the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG),
10 the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), the Technical Education
11 and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), the National Housing
12 Authority (NHA), the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and
13 other related governmental and nongovernmental agencies.

14 SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – For purposes of this Act, the
15 following terms shall be defined as follows:

16 (a) “Family is ” a one-parent family.

1 (b) "Solo parent is " any individual who falls under any of the
2 following categories:

3 (1) Parent left alone with responsibility of parenthood due to
4 death of spouse;

5 (2) Parent left alone with responsibility of parenthood because of
6 incarceration of spouse for more than a year due to criminal conviction;

7 (3) Parent left alone with responsibility of parenthood due to
8 physical/psychological and/or mental incapacity of spouse;

9 (4) Parent left alone with responsibility of parenthood due to legal
10 separation or declaration of nullity of marriage or annulment as decreed by
11 a court of competent jurisdiction: *Provided*, That based on the best interest
12 of the child, he/she is entrusted with the custody of the common and/or
13 adopted children;

14 (5) Survivor of sexual assault as a woman who gives birth as a
15 result of rape: *Provided*, That court determination of rape may not be a
16 requirement;

17 (6) Parent left alone with responsibility of parenthood due to
18 abandonment of spouse;

19 (7) Unmarried mother/father who has preferred to keep and rear
20 her/his child/children instead of having others care for them or giving them
21 up to a welfare institution; and

22 (8) Any family member who assumes the responsibilities of head
23 of family as a result of death, desertion, disappearance or prolonged
24 absence of parents or solo parent.

25 A change in the status or circumstances of the parent claiming
26 benefits under this Act shall terminate his/her eligibility for these benefits,
27 unless it can be proven that he/she is left alone with the responsibility of
28 parenthood.

29 (c) "Children" are those living with and dependent upon the solo
30 parent for support who are unmarried, unemployed and below eighteen

(18) years of age or those over but are incapable of self-support because of a physical and/or mental disability or condition.

(d) "Parental responsibility with respect to their minor children" consists of the rights and duties of the parents as defined in Article 220 of Executive Order No. 209 as amended, otherwise known as the "Family Code of the Philippines."

(e) "Parental leave" consists of leave benefits granted to a solo parent to enable him/her to perform parental duties and responsibilities where physical presence is required.

(f) "Flexible work schedule" is the right granted to a solo parent employee to vary his/her arrival and departure time without affecting the core work hours as defined by the employer.

SEC. 4. *Criteria for Support.* – Any solo parent whose income in the place of domicile falls below the poverty threshold as set by the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) and subject to the assessment of the DSWD worker in the area shall be eligible for assistance: *Provided, however,* That any solo parent whose income is above the poverty threshold shall enjoy the benefits mentioned in Sections 6, 7, 8 and 9 of this Act.

SEC. 5. *Comprehensive Package of Social Development and Welfare Services.* – A comprehensive package of social development and welfare services for solo parents and their families will be developed by the Department of Social Welfare and Development, Department of Health, Department of Education, Culture and Sports, Commission on Higher Education, Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, Department of Labor and Employment, National Housing Authority and Department of Interior and Local Government, in coordination with local government units and a nongovernmental organization with proven track record in providing services for solo parents.

The DSWD shall coordinate with concerned agencies the implementation of the comprehensive package of social development and

1 welfare services for solo parents and their families. The package will
2 initially include:

3 (a) Livelihood development services which include trainings on
4 livelihood skills, basic business management, value orientation and the
5 provision of seed capital or job placement.

6 (b) Counseling service which includes individual, peer group or
7 family counseling with focus on the resolution of personal relationship and
8 role conflicts.

9 (c) Parent effectiveness service which is the provision and
10 expansion of knowledge and skills of the solo parent on early childhood
11 development, behavior management, health care, rights and duties of
12 parents and children.

13 (d) Critical incidence stress debriefing which is preventive stress
14 management strategy designed to assist solo parents in coping with crisis
15 situations and cases of abuse.

16 (e) Special projects of individual in need of protection which
17 projects consist of temporary shelter, counseling, legal assistance, medical
18 care, self-concept or ego-building, crisis management and spiritual
19 enrichment.

20 SEC. 6. *Livelihood Development Services.* – The DSWD and other
21 related governmental and nongovernmental organizations shall implement
22 coordinated livelihood skills programs for solo parents.

23 SEC. 7. *Flexible Work Schedule.* – The employer shall provide for
24 a flexible working schedule for solo parents: *Provided,* That the same
25 shall not affect individual and company productivity: *Provided, further,*
26 That any employer may request exemption from the above requirements
27 from the DOLE on certain meritorious grounds.

28 SEC. 8. *Work Discrimination.* – No employer shall discriminate
29 against any solo parent employee with respect to terms and conditions of
30 employment on account of his/her status.

1 SEC. 9. *Parental Leave.* – In addition to leave privileges under
2 existing laws, parental leave of at least seven (7) working days every year
3 shall be granted to any solo parent employee who has rendered continuous
4 service of at least six (6) months.

5 SEC. 10. *Family Counseling.* – The DSWD shall strengthen and
6 expand the scope of their financial and professional counseling services to
7 assist solo parents and their children in coping with economic and psycho-
8 social problems.

9 SEC. 11. *Educational Benefits.* – The DECS, CHED and TESDA
10 shall provide the following benefits and privileges:

11 (1) Scholarship programs for qualified solo parents and their
12 children in institutions of basic, tertiary and technical/skills education; and

13 (2) Nonformal education programs appropriate for solo parents
14 and their children.

15 The DECS, CHED and TESDA shall promulgate rules and
16 regulations for the proper implementation of this program.

17 SEC. 12. *Housing Benefits.* – Solo parents shall be given allocation
18 in housing projects and shall be provided with liberal terms of payment on
19 said government low-cost housing projects in accordance with housing law
20 provisions prioritizing applicants below the poverty line as declared by the
21 NEDA.

22 SEC. 13. *Medical Assistance.* – The DOH shall develop a
23 comprehensive health care program for solo parents and their children.
24 The program shall be implemented by the DOH through their retained
25 hospitals and medical centers and the local government units (LGUs)
26 through their provincial/district/municipal/city hospitals and rural health
27 units (RHUs).

28 SEC. 14. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – An inter-agency
29 committee headed by the DSWD, in coordination with the DOH, DECS,
30 CHED, TESDA, NHA, and DILG shall establish and formulate the
31 implementing rules and regulations of this Act in consultation with the

1 local government units, nongovernmental organizations and people's
2 organizations.

3 SEC. 15. *Additional Powers and Functions of DSWD.* – The
4 DSWD shall perform the following additional powers and functions
5 relative to the welfare of solo parents and their families:

6 (a) Conduct research necessary to: (1) develop a new body of
7 knowledge on solo parents; (2) define executive and legislative measures
8 needed to promote and protect the interest of solo parents and
9 their children; and (3) assess the effectiveness of programs designed for
10 disadvantaged solo parents and their children;

11 (b) Coordinate the activities of various governmental and
12 nongovernmental organizations engaged in promoting and protecting the
13 interests of solo parents and their children;

14 (c) Monitor the implementation of the provisions of this Act and
15 suggest mechanisms by which such provisions are effectively
16 implemented; and

17 (d) Perform such other functions as provided by law.

18 SEC. 16. *Appropriation.* – The amount necessary to carry out the
19 provisions of this Act shall be included in the budget of concerned
20 government agencies in the General Appropriations Act of the year
21 following its enactment into law and thereafter.

22 SEC. 17. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders or
23 parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby
24 repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

25 SEC. 18. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is held
26 invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions not affected thereby shall
27 continue to be in full force and effect.

28 SEC. 19. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15)
29 days following its complete publication in the *Official Gazette* or in at least
30 two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,