

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



23 JAN 17 P4 :47

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SENATE
Senate Bill No. 1682

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

AN ACT TO IMPROVE AND TO PROMOTE QUALITY DELIVERY OF HEALTH SERVICES IN BARANGAYS, ENCATING THE "BARANGAY HEALTH WORKERS AND SERVICES REFORM ACT OF 2023"

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Everyone has the right to achieve the highest attainable level of health. This is the fundamental premise of primary health care which is one of the top health campaigns of our government. Its implementation and success greatly rely on the participation of barangays and communities.

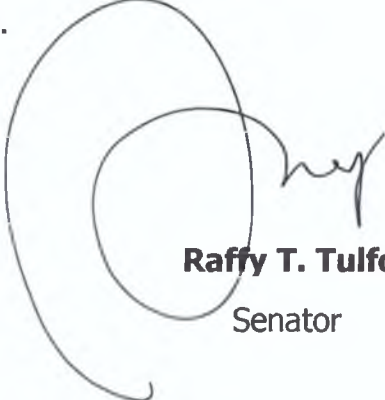
In support of that, at present, we have the Barangay Health Workers also known as Barangay Health Volunteers who are accredited to function as such by the local health board in accordance with the guidelines promulgated by the Department of Health. They are constantly on the frontline of providing maternal, newborn, and child health care in the neighborhood. They often assist midwives in providing birthing services. However, despite their essential function, they are only classified as "volunteers" under the Republic Act (RA) 7883 entitled, "The Barangay Health Workers' Benefits and Incentives Act of 1995".

On average, each volunteer is expected to work with around 20 families in their community. However, there are just now one or two volunteers serving an entire barangay due to a lack of trained individuals, particularly in certain isolated locations.

A significant reason behind this alarming shortage of barangay health workers is linked to the compensation they get in comparison to the services they render. Local Government Units (LGUs) vary in the rates and benefits they provide to these community workers. The allowance ranging from Five Hundred Pesos (P500.00) to Six Thousand Pesos (P6,000.00) is typically their only source of living, sans fixed income, benefits and incentives. This rate is hardly enough to make both ends meet for their families. The meager and inconsistent pay received by barangay health workers does not accord them any respect. There is also no security of tenure as they can be terminated capriciously at the instance of perceived adverse political leanings. Thus, the present system allows them to be politicized. We must put an end to this unscrupulous practice.

This bill, therefore, aims to revise the existing law to improve the working condition and compensation of our barangay health workers.

Thus, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



Raffy T. Tulfo
Senator

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AN ACT TO IMPROVE AND TO PROMOTE QUALITY DELIVERY OF HEALTH SERVICES IN BARANGAYS, ENACTING THE "BARANGAY HEALTH WORKERS AND SERVICES REFORM ACT OF 2023"

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 "*Barangay Health*
2 *Workers and Services Reform Act of 2023*"

3 Sec 2. *Statement of Policy.* — It is hereby declared the policy of the State to
4 promote a just and dynamic social order that will ensure prosperity and independence
5 of the nation and free the people from poverty through policies that provide adequate
6 social services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living, and an improved
7 quality of life for all. The State recognizes that quality healthcare services promote
8 social justice in all phases of national development.

9 The State further protects and promotes the right to health of the people and provides
10 conditions of health empowerment, where each individual has access to information
11 and services that will bring about health and well-being. Primary Health care is
12 recognized as the major strategy towards health empowerment, emphasizing the need
13 to provide accessible, available and affordable quality health services through
14 community-based participatory strategies.

1 To this end, the government and all its instrumentalities recognize the economic and
2 social rights of barangay health workers to just compensation, consistent with the
3 principle of equal: pay for equal work and work of equal value.

4 *Sec 3. Definition of Terms.* – For the purposes of this Act, the following terms
5 shall be defined as follows:

6 a.) *Barangay Health Workers (BHW)*, is a support health worker in the barangay
7 unit, as defined and covered by Republic Act (RA) 7305;

8 b.) *Magna Carta for Public Health Workers*, as used in this Act, shall refer to RA
9 7305,

10 c.) *Primary Health Care (PHC)*, is essential health care made universally
11 accessible to individuals and families in the community and country can afford
12 to maintain at every stage and at a cost that the community and country can
13 afford to maintain at every stage of their development in the spirit of self-
14 reliance and self-determination. It forms an integral part both of the countrys
15 health system, of which is the central function and main focus, and of the
16 overall social and economic development of the community, characterized by
17 partnership ad empowerment of the people by means acceptable to them, It is
18 the first level of contact of individuals, the family and community with the
19 national health system bringing health care as close as possible to where people
20 live and work, and constitutes the first element of a continuing health care as
21 close as possible to where people live and work, and constitute the first element
22 of continuing health care process

23 d.) *Public Health Worker (PHW)*, as used in this Act, shall mean all persons
24 who are engaged in health and health-related work where they are employed
25 in all hospitals, sanitararia, health infirmaries, health centers, rural health units,
26 barangay health stations, clinics and other health-related establishments owned
27 and operated by the Government or its political subdivisions with original
28 charters and shall include medical allied health professional administrative and
29 support personnel employed regardless of their employment status, as
30 pursuant to Section 3 of the Magna Carta of Public Health Workers.

1 Sec 4. *Barangay Health Center (BHC)*. – There shall be one Barangay Health
2 Center in every barangay unit, with the following basic and essential facilities and
3 provisions:

4 a.) Adequate lighting and ventilation;

5 b.) An adequate supply of portable water and electricity;

6 c.) Floor Area of at least twenty (20) square meters;

7 d.) Equipment including, but not limited to, blood pressure apparatus, dressing
8 kit, over-the-counter medicines, weighing scale for infants and adults,
9 thermometers, standard operating procedure manual from the Department of
10 Health (DOH), glucometer, and delivery kit;

11 e.) Examining Area which must be enclosed, with bed, cabinet, footstool, and
12 stool;

13 f.) Toilet with sink and running water; and,

14 g.) Consultation Area with table, cabinet, and two chairs.

15 Sec 5. *Functions of the Barangay Health Center*. – Each BHC shall have the
16 following functions.

17 a.) Delivers basic and primary care services for the community to include, but
18 are not limited to, immunization, prenatal check-up, and check-up of healthy
19 and ill infants;

20 b.) Coordinates efforts and actions of the different members of the health team;

21 c.) Keeps records of health indices, community profiles, and other data;

22 d.) Serves as an area of the congregation for meetings of the health team,

23 e.) Serves as training of future and present members of the health team: and

24 f.) Assists and coordinates with the respective Local Government Units (LGUs)
25 and appropriate offices on first aid and procedures in disaster risk reduction.

1 *Sec 6. Barangay Health Workers To Man Botika sa Barangay.* – When available
2 and offered in the community, especially in far-flung areas, the Barangay Health
3 Workers shall man and operate the 'Botika sa Barangay' project or service. They shall
4 likewise be given appropriate training by the Department of Health and Food and Drug
5 Administration in full consultation with the relevant professional organizations and
6 associations.

7 *Sec 7. Referral System.* — The BHC shall observe and follow the referral system
8 framework of Primary Health Care.

9 *Sec 8. Barangay Health Team Placement.* — The BHC shall be composed of a
10 nurse, a midwife, and a BHW. The operation and functioning of the BHC shall be
11 headed and supervised by a nurse.

12 Each BHC shall be manned by a health team proportionate to the existing population
13 in the Barangay:

14 a.) Nurse There shall be at least one nurse for every barangay with a
15 population not exceeding five thousand (5,000); b,) Midwife — There shall be
16 at least one midwife for every barangay with a population not exceeding two
17 thousand five hundred (2,500); c,) BHW - There shall be at least one BHW for
18 every barangay with a population not exceeding five hundred (500).

19 *Sec 9. BHW Qualifications.* — The following are the qualifications for the
20 Barangay Health Workers:

21 (a) Any person who has completed the Technical Education and Skills
22 Development Authority (TESDA) BHW program or undergone training
23 specific for BHW by TESDA — accredited institution: Provided, that he
24 or she has passed the training assessment and obtained the equivalent
25 national certification.

26 (b) All BI-IW, regardless of accreditation or registration status, who have
27 served for at least two (2) years from the effectivity of this Act must
28 undergo BHW assessment by TESDA — accredited assessors and pass
29 the equivalent national certification. Only those who obtained the
30 equivalent national certification shall be eligible for employment.

1 (c) The Local Government Selection and Promotion Board shall process the
2 hiring of the Barangay Health Team personnel, pursuant to existing Civil
3 Service rules, regulations, issuances, and orders on placement and
4 hiring.

5 (d) All existing BHWs who met the qualifications under Section 8
6 subparagraph of this Act shall be given preference in hiring and priority
7 in placement.

8 Sec 10. BHW Duties and Responsibilities — The following are the duties and
9 responsibilities of Barangay Health Workers:

- 10 (a) Height and weight monitoring, and reporting the same to the BHC;
11 (b) Monitoring and follow-up cases of immunization, family planning, and
12 tuberculosis compliance to treatment and others, and reporting the same
13 to the BHC;
14 (c) Reporting to the BHC any incidence of disease or any health cases in the
15 community;
16 (d) Communicating and coordinating with the community to participate in
17 BHC activities;
18 (e) Gathering of data about the overall status of health of the community;
19 (f) Administering first aid;
20 (g) Conducting health visits;
21 (h) Conducting of Birth Planning for Pregnant Women;
22 (i) Conducting Health Education;
23 (j) Strengthening referral systems.

24 The BHW performs the following duties and responsibilities assistive to the
25 Barangay Health Team:

- 26 (a) Sputum collection;
27 (b) Identifying people with disease and sickness;
28 (c) Health community profiling;
29 (d) Psychosocial debriefing for stress and post-calamity initiatives;
30 (e) Strengthening the health programs of the government;

1 (f) Responding in natural calamities and disasters

2 Sec 11. *BHW: Compensation.* — The entry pay level of a BHW shall be the
3 prevailing rate equivalent to Salary Grade One "SG 1"

4 Sec 12. *BHW Incentives and Benefits.* — A BHW shall be entitled to the same
5 incentives and benefits provided under the Magna Carta for Public Health workers.
6 Further, they shall be covered by the existing statutory benefits such as GSIS,
7 PhilHealth, and Pag-Ibig. Provided, that in addition, they shall be given burial and
8 disability assistance in case of death or if the BHW is afflicted by an illness which
9 results in disability. Provided, further, that a regular adjustment in monetary and other
10 non-monetary incentives shall be made to help improve the living condition of
11 Barangay Health Workers.

12 Sec 13. *Penal Provision.* — Any person who violates the provisions of this act
13 shall be criminally, civilly, and administratively liable.

14 Sec 14. *Implementing Agencies.* — Within one (1) year from the effectivity of
15 this act, the TESDA and DOH, with the participation of various health union
16 representatives shall formulate, finalize and launch the BHW training program,
17 assessment, and national certification program.

18 The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), the Department of
19 Health, the Civil Service Commission, the different local government leagues, and
20 other appropriate government agencies, with the participation of various health union
21 representatives, shall formulate and provide an effective mechanism for the selection
22 and hiring of BHWs.

23 The Department of Budget and Management (DBM), local government units, and
24 other appropriate government agencies shall allocate the necessary funds for
25 compensation of the barangay health team.

26 Sec 15. *Transitory Provision.* — Within one (1) year from the effectivity of this
27 act, the TESDA, DOH, DILG, and local government units, shall allocate funds from
28 their annual appropriations to immediately implement section 8 subparagraph (b) and
29 section 9 of this Act.

1 Sec 16. Implementing Rules and Regulations. — Within ninety (90) days from
2 the effectivity of this act, the TESDA, DOH, DILG, CSC, DBM, the local government
3 leagues, in coordination and participation of various health union representatives, shall
4 provide the Implementing Rules and Regulations necessary to carry out the provisions
5 of this Act.

6 The Implementing Rules and Regulations shall be published in the Official
7 Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation

8 Sec 17. *Separability Clause.* — Should any provision of this Act be declared
9 unconstitutional, the remaining parts not affected thereby shall remain valid and
10 operational.

11 Sec 18. *Repealing Clause.* Republic Act No. 7883. Otherwise known as the
12 "Barangay Health Workers Benefits and Incentives Act of 1995", is hereby repealed.
13 All other laws, decrees, orders, circulars, issuances, rules and regulations, and parts
14 thereof which are inconsistent with this act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified
15 accordingly.

16 Sec 19. *Effectivity.* — This act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
17 publication in the Official Gazette or in any two (2) newspapers of general circulation
18 in the Philippines.

Approved,