

Good News
Department of Labor and Employment
Bureau of Working Conditions
04 September 2020

DOLE-DTI issues clarification on the expanded testing for COVID-19

On August 17, 2020, Advisory No. 20-01 series of 2020 or the Clarification on the Expanded Risk-Based Testing for COVID-19 of At-Risk Individuals was promulgated by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) as part of DOLE COVID-19 Mitigating Measures.

The DOLE-DTI clarificatory advisory consistent with the Department of Health (DOH) Department Memorandum Nos. 2020-0258 and 2020-0258-A was issued to further explicate Section III.D paragraphs 1 and 2 of the DTI-DOLE Joint Memorandum Circular (JMC) No. 2020-04-A series of 2020 or the “DTI and DOLE Supplemental Guidelines on Workplace Prevention and Control of COVID-19” which states that the real time reverse transmission-polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) shall be the recognized test for the identified priority workers pursuant to Section II of DOH DM No. 2020-0258-A.

The clarificatory advisory identified the sub-groups of workers and employees, the nature of their work, and how often should they get tested. Following the expanded testing strategy: Sub-group H “are all workers and employees in the hospitality and tourism sectors in El Nido, Boracay, Coron, Panglao, Siargao and other tourist zones, as identified and declared by the Department of Tourism MAY be tested once every four (4) weeks”, Sub-group I “are workers and employees of manufacturing companies and public service providers registered in economic zones located in Special Concerns Areas MAY be tested every three (3) months”, and Sub-group J1 “Frontline and Economic Priority Workers, defined as those 1. who work in high priority sectors, both public and private, 2. have high interaction with and exposure to the public, and 3. who live or work in Special Concern Areas, MAY be tested every three (3) months”.

Also included is Section IV.14 of DOH DM 2020-0258-A stating that “all testing facilities shall utilize the appropriate PhilHealth benefits and/or any benefit provided by Health Maintenance Organizations or Private Health Insurance for COVID-19 testing to reimburse the cost of testing”.

The DOLE shall continue to provide guidance and technical assistance to the private institutions and its workers on COVID-19 related information.

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