

Press Release
Department of Labor and Employment
Bureau of Working Conditions
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Making minimum public health standards work

Good health and safety measures make sense. Less COVID-19 cases translate to sustainable productivity in the workplace. Healthy and safe workplace also boost workers' morale and productivity. The current pandemic has highlighted the need for safety and health protocols, not just in the workplace, but in all places.

The recently issued DTI DOLE Joint Memorandum Circular (JMC) No. 20-04-A, entitled Supplemental Guidelines on Workplace Prevention and Control of COVID-19, was seen to help guide the employers and the workers as they resume economic activity during this quarantine. The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) renders its best efforts to make employers and workers commit to a safer, healthier, and more productive environment.

The monitoring efforts of the Department's labor inspectors is two-pronged. Firstly, labor inspectors look into the overall compliance of establishments in ensuring the protection of their workers. Secondly, to assist establishments towards full compliance and understanding of the importance of occupational safety and health, technical assistance is provided by sharing with them necessary information on the matter and showing them the ropes to compliance.

Health and safety at work is everybody's responsibility. It is a shared responsibility of both employers and workers to ensure workplace safety and health are not put at risk. Moreover, this is consistent with the vision of the DOLE where "Every Filipino worker attains full, decent and productive employment." The Bureau of Working Conditions (BWC) takes cognizance of the global and national legislations which declare occupational safety and health as a basic human right. The Bureau strives for better working condition in the formulation and implementation of COVID-19 workplace prevention and control programs. These were all considered by the DOLE and the Department of Trade and Industry when they co-drafted Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2020-04-A entitled *DTI and DOLE Supplemental Guidelines on Workplace Prevention and Control of COVID-19*.

Aside from enforcement, the DOLE, through the BWC, is taking active measures with its awareness campaign on the above-mentioned policy. Dissemination of information is one, fully understanding the policy is another. Relevant to this effort, the BWC has conducted several webinars, developed a dedicated web page for COVID-19 related queries, crafted a Frequently Asked Questions reference material, and posted informational videos in the BWC website and official Facebook page.

The DOLE is confident that its initiatives will help synergize and complement the efforts of other government agencies in its response to address the health and economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. These programs are seen to boost capabilities of different workplaces through good practice of occupational safety and health.

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