

News Release
Department of Labor and Employment
Bureau of Working Conditions
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It's never late to invest to end TB

The DOLE's guidelines for the implementation of policy and program on Tuberculosis (TB) prevention and control in the workplace may be found in DOLE Department Order No. 73, Series of 2005. Under the said Department Order, all establishments, workplaces, and worksites in the private sector are mandated to formulate their own workplace policy and program on TB prevention and control. The components thereof shall include prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, compensation, restoration to work, and social policies, among others.

As an employer, one can help in the fight against TB by religiously reviewing and updating its TB workplace prevention and control policy and program. Citing the 2016 National TB Prevalence Survey, the Department of Health reported that only 19% of those with TB symptoms sought treatment and care while the difference thereof opted for self-medication.¹

As we commemorate World TB Day on March 24, employers are encouraged to revisit their existing policy and program to accommodate prevailing issues and challenges in TB prevention and control.

Every 24th of March, World TB Day is observed to raise public awareness about the impact of tuberculosis (TB), particularly its devastating health, social, and economic consequences. It also aims to enhance efforts to end the global TB epidemic.²

This year's theme of World TB Day – *Invest to End TB. Save Lives.* – “conveys the urgent need to invest resources to ramp up the fight against TB and achieve the commitments to end TB made by global leaders.”³

TB was identified by the World Health Organization (WHO) as one of the world's deadliest infectious killers. It estimates that over 4,100 people die due to TB and close to 28,000 people are afflicted by it.⁴

As stated in the 2021 WHO Global TB Report, the global shortfall in TB notifications in 2020 compared with 2019 may be attributed to 16 countries – accounts for 93% of the global drop. However, India, Indonesia, and the Philippines were identified as the worst-affected countries.⁵

The general public is reminded that TB is curable and treatment thereof is free in public health facilities nationwide.

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¹ Department of Health, *DOH, partners aim to get TB care back on track*, <https://doh.gov.ph/doh-press-release/DOH-PARTNERS-AIM-TO-GET-TB-CARE-BACK-ON-TRACK>, (accessed 17 March 2022).

² World Health Organization, *World Tuberculosis Day 2022*, <https://www.who.int/campaigns/world-tb-day/2022>, (accessed 17 March 2022).

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ World Health Organization, *Global tuberculosis Report 2021*, <https://www.who.int/teams/global-tuberculosis-programme/tb-reports/global-tuberculosis-report-2021>, (accessed 17 March 2022).