

MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 20-55

Series of 2020

SUBJECT: EASING OF CONTROL MEASURES IN MALLS AND COMMERCIAL CENTERS UPON STRICT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SEVEN COMMANDMENTS

WHEREAS, Executive Order No. 112, Series of 2020, approved the Inter Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Disease (IATF)'s Omnibus Guidelines for the Implementation of Community Quarantine in the Philippines ("**Omnibus Guidelines**") and provided that *"any amendment or modification of such Omnibus Guidelines may be approved by the [Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases] IATF without need of further approval of the President;"*

WHEREAS, the Omnibus Guidelines, as amended, provides for the categorization of industries from I-IV that *"are allowed to operate at an operational capacity provided herein,"* and that the *"lists of sectors and industries per category are illustrative. Specific industries under each category are reflected in a separate document issued by the DTI which shall contain the updated guidelines to implement the gradual increase of operational capacity without diminution of the current operational capacity previously allowed;"*

WHEREAS, Memorandum Circular (MC) Nos. 20-21, 20-22, and 20-33, Series of 2020, respectively, provide the COVID-19 transmission and protective measures for mall operators and commercial establishments, and the list of business establishments or activities under Category I-IV based on the categorization under the Omnibus Guidelines;

WHEREAS, based on the Pulse Asia Survey commissioned by the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA), 39% of Filipinos say that the Government should balance the COVID-19 and the economy, particularly in the National Capital Region, and 20% of Filipinos say that the Government should focus more on opening up the economy. Hence, NEDA recommended the shift of policy by revisiting the Government's objectives and resume social and economic activities subject to observance of minimum health standards;

WHEREAS, the health experts from diverse fields recommend the strict implementation of the Seven (7) Commandments, especially for public transportation. The 7 Commandments is identified to be the most comprehensive in the world;

WHEREAS, on 12 October 2020, the Cabinet approved the NEDA's proposal to change the Government's policy from total risk avoidance to risk management and the further re-opening of the economy to mitigate the adverse social and economic effect on the people;

WHEREAS, on 15 October 2020, the IATF Resolution No. 79 approved that (1) the *"age-based stay-at-home restrictions to include only those who are under fifteen (15) years of age, as well as those over sixty-five (65) years. Provided that local government units retain the authority to impose a higher age limit for minors depending on the COVID-19 situation in their respective jurisdictions;"* and (2) *business establishments and malls to hold such activities to spur consumer and economic activity, subject to the pertinent DTI guidelines;*

WHEREFORE, foregoing premises considered, the following guidelines are hereby prescribed to ease of some control measures for malls and commercial centers and expansion of the age group allowed to go out:

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

CERTIFIED TRUE PHOTOCOPY

SEC. 1. Ease of Some Control Measures for Malls and Commercial Centers. Subject to the minimum public health and safety standards and protocols set under relevant issuances and the strict implementation of the 7 Commandments as provided under Section 3 hereof, malls and commercial centers are allowed to:

- a. Set/regulate the air conditioning temperature lower than 24 degrees Centigrade;
- b. Turn on free WiFi for customers; and
- c. Conduct mall-wide sales promotion activities and marketing events, subject to strict physical distancing and the usual DTI-FTEB sales promo permit.

SEC. 2. Expansion of Age Group Allowed to Go Out. As approved by the IATF, persons between fifteen (15) years old and sixty-five (65) years old are allowed to go out of their residences, subject to strict compliance with the minimum health protocols and the 7 Commandments as provided under Section 3 hereof and provided that, local government units retain the authority to impose a higher age limit for minors depending on the COVID-19 situation in their respective jurisdictions.

SEC. 3. Strict Implementation of the 7 Commandments. The following 7 Commandments shall be strictly implemented as a condition for the easing of mall and commercial center operations and further re-opening of the economy --

1. Wearing of proper face masks;
2. Wearing of face shields;
3. No talking and no eating (in public transportation and similar setting like confined areas and crowded places);
4. Adequate ventilation (use of exhaust systems, air purifiers or keeping windows partially open);
5. Frequent and proper disinfection;
6. Symptomatic or COVID-19 positives must be isolated; and
7. Appropriate physical distancing.

SEC. 4. Compliance Monitoring. The DTI, through the FTEB and Regional or Provincial Offices, shall continue its strict compliance monitoring through its post-audit mechanism. Inspection by the DOLE, DOH, and the LGU's Health Office may also be conducted at any time.

SEC. 5. Complaints Handling. All feedback and complaints from the general public may be coursed through the DTI Consumer Care Hotline 1-384.

SEC. 6. Repealing and Separability. Provisions of relevant Memorandum Circulars that are inconsistent with this Circular are hereby superseded or amended accordingly. Moreover, if for any reason, any part or provision of this Circular be declared invalid, any part or provision not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 7. Effectivity. Given the presence of a public health emergency, this Circular shall take effect immediately upon compliance with the publication requirements.

Issued on 20 October 2020.


RAMON M. LOPEZ
Secretary

CERTIFIED TRUE PHOTOCOPY


JOEL R. CRUZ
Director, HRAS
Department of Trade & Industry