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HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES GOVERNING THE OPERATIONS OF TOURIST ATTRACTIONS SUCH AS PARKS, NATURAL SITES, HISTORICAL LANDMARKS, AND MUSEUMS UNDER THE NEW NORMAL

WHEREAS, pursuant to Republic Act No. 9593 or the Tourism Act of 2009, the DOT is mandated to promulgate rules and regulations governing the operation and activities of all tourism enterprises;

WHEREAS, the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) *Omnibus Guidelines on the Implementation of Community Quarantine* (the "IATF-EID Omnibus Guidelines") defines the "New Normal" as emerging behaviors, situations, and minimum public health standards that will be institutionalized in common or routine practices and remain even after the pandemic while the disease is not totally eradicated through means such as widespread immunization;

WHEREAS, there is a need to provide guidelines to institutionalize updated health and safety protocols in the operations of Tourist Attractions such as Parks, Natural Sites, Historical Landmarks, and Museums under a New Normal Scenario;

NOW, THEREFORE, based on the foregoing, these Health and Safety Guidelines for Tourist Attractions such as Parks, Natural Sites, Historical Landmarks, and Museums Under the New Normal are hereby issued:

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 1. Short Title. – This Circular shall be known as the "*New Normal Health and Safety Guidelines for Tourist Attractions*".

Section 2. Definition of Terms. – For purposes of this Circular, the term:

- a. "Barangay Health Emergency Response Team (BHERT)" refers to a team established by DILG MC No. 2020-023 to help implement local prevention and mitigation, preparedness, and response measures for COVID-19 (DOH MC No. 2020-0020).
- b. "Confirmed COVID-19 case" refers to any individual who tested positive for COVID-19 through laboratory confirmation at the national reference laboratory, subnational reference laboratory, or a DOH-certified laboratory testing facility (DOH DM No. 2020-0189).
- c. "Contact Tracing" refers to the identification, listing, and follow-up of persons who may have come into close contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case (DOH DM No. 2020-0189).
- d. "Contact Tracing Form" refers to the form a person must fill out using a mobile application or other contactless means to provide contact information, following the template in Annex A-2 of the DTI-DOLE Joint Memorandum Circular No. 20-04-A.

- e. "Community Quarantine" refers to the restriction of movement within, into, or out of the area of quarantine of individuals, large groups of people, or communities designed to reduce the likelihood of transmission of COVID-19 among persons in and to persons outside the affected area (*IATF-EID Omnibus Guidelines*).
- f. "Health Declaration Form" shall refer to a form that a person must fill out, using a mobile application or other contactless means, to declare his or her current health condition and travel history for the past fourteen (14) days.
- g. "Historical Landmark" refers to a structure that has significant historical, architectural, or cultural meaning and that has been given legal protection from alteration and destruction.
- h. "Management" shall refer to the owner, proprietor, manager, supervisor, administrator or other officer with control and supervision of operations of the Tourist Attraction.
- i. "Minimum Public Health Standards" refers to guidelines set by the Department of Health (DOH), as well as sector-relevant guidelines to aid all sectors in implementing non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPI), which refer to public health measures that do not involve vaccines, medications, or other pharmaceutical interventions, which individuals and communities can carry out in order to reduce transmission rates, contact rates, and the duration of infectiousness of individuals in the population to mitigate COVID-19 (*IATF-EID Omnibus Guidelines*).
- j. "Museum" refers to an institutional establishment where a collection of valuable objects and artifacts on history and culture, arts and sciences are put on exhibition for the general public.
- k. "New Normal" refers to the emerging behaviors, situations, and minimum public health standards that will be institutionalized in common or routine practices and remain even after the pandemic while the disease is not totally eradicated through means such as widespread immunization (*IATF-EID Omnibus Guidelines*).
- l. "Natural Sites" refer to natural features, geological and physiographical formations and delineated areas that constitute the habitat of threatened species of animals and plants and sites of value from the point of view of science, conservation or natural beauty. It includes nature parks and reserves, zoos, aquaria and botanical gardens.
- m. "Parks" refer to an area of natural, semi-natural or planted space set aside for human enjoyment and recreation or for the protection of wildlife or natural habitats. Theme parks and other amusement parks shall be considered part of this definition.
- n. "Personal Protective Equipment" or PPE refers to clothing and accessories worn to minimize exposure to health and safety risks, such as masks, shields, and goggles.
- o. "Physical distancing" or "Social Distancing" refers to the strict maintenance of a distance of at least one (1) meter radius between persons in a public setting.
- p. "Probable COVID-19 case" refers to a suspect case who fulfills anyone of the following listed below:
 - a. Suspect case whose testing for COVID-19 is inconclusive; or

- b. Suspect who tested positive for COVID-19 but whose test was not conducted in a national or subnational reference laboratory, or a DOH-certified laboratory testing facility;
 - c. Suspect case who died without undergoing any confirmatory testing (*DOH DM No. 2020-0189*).
- q. "Theme Park" refers to an amusement park with defined and designed space that features themed rides and attractions.
- r. "Tourist Attraction" refers to a place of interest where tourists visit, typically for its inherent and/or exhibited natural or cultural value, historical significance, natural or man-made features, offering leisure and education.

Section 3. Scope and Application. This Memorandum Circular shall apply to all Tourist Attractions which shall include, but is not limited to Parks, Natural Sites, Museums, and Historical Landmarks, operating in areas where a Community Quarantine is no longer in place.

II. OPERATIONS UNDER A COMMUNITY QUARANTINE

Section 4. Suppletory Application to Administrative Order No. 2020-009.– For Tourist Attractions in areas declared to be under Community Quarantine, Administrative Order No. 2020-009 or the *Guidelines on Tourist Attractions under MGCQ* shall primarily govern, and this Memorandum Circular shall apply in a suppletory character.

III. EMPLOYEE MANAGEMENT

Section 5. Health Declaration Form. All tourism establishments are required to secure online platforms or other contactless means for Health Declaration Form (HDF) to be filled out by their employees upon entering the building premises or workplace. If based on the HDF, the employee meets any of the following conditions, he/she shall be denied entry and shall be directed to consult a doctor or stay at home:

- a. Employee is experiencing fever, cough and/or colds, body pains, or sorethroat;
- b. Employee had a face-to-face contact with a Probable or Confirmed COVID-19 case within one (1) meter and for more than fifteen (15) minutes for the past fourteen (14) days;
- c. Employee provided direct care for a patient with Probable or Confirmed COVID-19 case without using PPE for the past fourteen (14) days; or
- d. Employee travelled outside the Philippines in the last 14 days; (*DTI- DOLE JMC No. 20-04-A*)

Section 6. Body Temperature Check. The Management must ensure the monitoring of body temperature of all employees every time they report to work. Unwell employees or those with mild-flu like symptoms shall be directed to consult a doctor or to stay at home.

Section 7. Personal Protective Equipment. The Management must provide all its employees their respective PPEs while they are on duty.

Section 8. Regular Briefing of Safety and Health-Related Information. The Management shall conduct regular briefings to all employees that will highlight the importance of personal hygiene, proper handwashing/hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, proper use of PPEs, strict observance of physical distancing, use of contactless greeting, and other safety protocols while interacting with visitors. Likewise, other related information shall be disseminated by installing a safety bulletin board or display of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials in the working premises.

Section 9. Employee Testing. The Management shall ensure that its employees undergo RT-PCR (Reverse Transcription-Polymerase Chain Reaction) test, as may be required under applicable issuances of the DOH, Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), or the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). *(DTI-DOLE JMC No. 20-04-A)*

IV. VISITOR HANDLING POLICY

Section 10. No Mask and No Face Shield, No Entry Policy. A “*No face mask and no face shield, no entry policy*” shall apply to all visitors, except for those below two (2) years old. Children with ages between two (2) to eight (8) years old must use face masks under adult supervision to ensure that they can breathe safely and avoid suffocation. Face masks and face shields shall be worn properly at all times except when eating and drinking.

Section 11. Mandatory Screening. All visitors must be screened prior to entry to the Tourist Attraction through:

- a. Body temperature check using a thermal scanner or thermometer gun;
- b. Completion of Health Declaration and Contact Tracing Form using a mobile application or other contactless means.

Only visitors who are cleared during temperature screening and have accomplished the Health Declaration Form shall be allowed to enter the Tourist Attraction. Those with body temperature exceeding 37.5 degrees Celsius or those exhibiting flu-like symptoms will not be allowed to enter, and will be referred to the doctor on duty, if any, to the nearest hospital, or to the Barangay Health Emergency Response Team (BHERT) in accordance with the DOH-prescribed protocol. Accomplished Health Declaration and Contact Tracing Forms shall be handled and processed with confidentiality and in accordance with the Data Privacy Act, and shall be disposed of after thirty (30) days from the date of accomplishment, unless a longer period is required by the authorities.

Section 12. Special Assistance. An express lane for senior citizens, Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), and pregnant women shall be provided.

Section 13. Contactless Transactions. Tourist Attractions shall implement guest services through digital means such as online reservations or appointments, online and mobile purchases of tickets, use of digital maps and menus, or any other contactless transactions.

Cashless or online modes of payment using payment applications shall be utilized by the Tourist Attractions. If online payment is not possible, Tourist Attractions shall create a method for no-contact payment schemes.

Section 14. Maximum Visitor Capacity. Maximum visitor capacity at a particular period shall be established to ensure physical distancing within the premises. Pre-registration and allocated time slots shall be followed for controlled visitor entry into the attraction to avoid overcrowding.

Section 15. Adjusted Operating Hours. Tourist Attractions may adjust or reduce their operating hours in order to minimize prolonged exposure of visitors.

Section 16. Physical Distancing. Strict observance of physical distancing by maintaining at least one (1) meter is mandatory. The Management shall deploy roving personnel to monitor the compliance of visitors on physical distancing and other health policies while inside the premises.

Section 17. Use of Wireless Devices. Tour Guides inside Tourist Attractions are highly encouraged to use wireless communication equipment such as microphones to minimize hand contact and to avoid clustering of visitors while on tour.

Section 18. Isolation Areas. The Management of the Tourist Attraction shall designate an isolation room or area where persons who start to feel unwell while at the premises may be brought to before referral to the doctor on duty, if any, to the nearest hospital, or to the Barangay Health Emergency Response Team (BHERT) in accordance with the DOH prescribed protocol.

V. EVENTS HANDLING

Section 19. Hosting of Events. Events hosted online through available and applicable platforms are highly encouraged. If not practicable, events and gatherings to be held within the Tourist Attraction premises must adhere to prevailing government issuances on mass gatherings.

Section 20. Arts and Cultural Activities. Museums may continue to be used by arts and culture practitioners for honing their craft such as rehearsals and filming (e.g. for digital broadcast), but these should not involve members of the public. In addition, precautions shall be taken to minimize risk of transmission.

Section 21. Trainings and Workshops. In-house or professional trainings and workshops for arts and culture practitioners and volunteers may continue within Museum premises, subject to the relevant provisions of these Health and Safety Guidelines.

VI. VENUE OR SITE HANDLING

Section 22. On-site Safety Standards. The following shall be complied with within the premises of the Tourist Attraction:

A. Control and Safety Measures

1. Tourist Attractions shall maximize the use of technology such as scanners, QR Codes, etc. to facilitate seamless access of visitors at entry and exit points. As much as practicable, strategic and clearly designated entrance and exit points shall be provided.
2. Properly marked and controlled registration, queueing, and waiting areas shall be installed to ensure physical distancing. In waiting areas and lounges, there shall be a distance of at least one (1) meter between tables, seats, and seat rows. If seats are fixed, alternate seats shall be marked out.
3. Control measures such as floor markers, demarcation lines, stanchions, or reminder signages shall be provided to create a logical traffic flow and avoid bottlenecks.
4. A *“Do’s and Don’ts for Visitors”* shall be displayed in conspicuous areas within the Tourist Attraction. Alternatively, posters, standees, audio visual media, audio announcements, and other notices reminding the public on hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, proper use of face mask and face shields, physical distancing, contactless greeting and other health and safety-related information may also be displayed or aired in conspicuous areas of the Tourist Attraction.
5. Barriers, such as acrylic glass, plexiglass, plastic shields and other forms of barriers shall be set up at the service counters, help desk, food and beverage outlets,

security checkpoints, etc. for additional protection. Such barriers shall be cleaned frequently.

6. Self-service stations or self-service food or drink areas shall be prohibited. Instead, food, condiments, and other items shall be provided directly to visitors upon request.
7. Facilities, attractions, and services where physical distancing is difficult or impossible to maintain and those that promote shared usage among visitors, such as playgrounds, gaming arcades, kiddie karts, bikes and other forms of electro mobiles, drinking fountains, and umbrellas shall be temporarily suspended. If not viable, such amenities shall be disinfected after each use and a sanitizer/alcohol station shall be in place beside them.
8. An emergency directory must be available in strategic areas with the emergency hotlines of the following:
 - a) Clinics and Hospitals located in the city or municipality within the Tourist Attraction;
 - b) Police and Fire stations located in the city or municipality where the Tourist Attraction is located; and
 - c) Such other emergency responders whether public or private located in the city or municipality of the Tourist Attraction.
9. Proper crowd management in the parking lots and outside the premises shall be imposed.
10. Wild animals raised at the Tourist Attractions, if any, shall be quarantined.

B. Sanitation and Disinfection Measures

1. Cleaning and sanitation of shared resources or equipment as well as deep cleaning and disinfection of the premises, especially frequently touched surfaces and items such as door handles, handrails, counters, toilet fixtures, baby changing facilities, etc. shall be conducted at least twice daily.
2. Public facilities and electronic screens inside Tourist Attractions shall be disinfected twice daily.
3. 70% solution alcohol or alcohol-based hand sanitizer dispensers and handwashing stations must be installed in easily accessible locations, such as entrances, exits, and communal dining areas.
4. Hand-washing sinks and toilet flushing facilities must be functional at all times.
5. Public restrooms must be supplied with the following provisions readily available and easily accessible to all the visitors:
 - a. Clean water;
 - b. Hand soaps; and
 - c. Tissue paper or paper towel.
6. Public restrooms must be cleaned and sanitized regularly every after two (2) hours or as may be necessary.
7. Foot pedal or sensor-operated trash bins with lid shall be provided in key locations of the Tourist Attraction. A separate trash bag or bin with cover for used PPEs, wet

wipes and other sanitation disposables shall likewise be provided and be disposed in accordance with any special instructions relating to the material concerned.

8. Indoor venues that cannot comply with strict disinfection measures and without good ventilation or good air quality are not allowed to open.
9. If one confirmed case of COVID-19 is detected in the Tourist Attraction, the building shall be disinfected with an appropriate disinfectant solution (0.5% bleach solution). The conduct of a comprehensive disinfection by trained personnel is recommended.

The building must be locked down for twenty-four (24) hours prior to disinfection to lessen transmission to sanitation personnel. During the disinfection process, all doors and windows should be opened to maximize ventilation. The building may only be opened twenty-four (24) hours after the disinfection process (DTI-DOLE JMC No. 20-04-A)

VII. OTHER PROVISIONS

Section 23. Compliance with Other Relevant Issuances. Tourist Attractions shall comply with other relevant IATF-EID, DOT, DTI, DOLE, or DOH issuances on health and safety standards for the New Normal, as well as rules and regulations imposed by the local government unit (LGU) having jurisdiction over the Tourist Attraction.

Section 24. Penalties. Any violation of the provisions of this Circular may subject the Management of the Tourist Attraction to the appropriate fines and penalties, including the revocation of the Tourist Attraction's DOT accreditation, if any, in accordance with relevant laws, rules and regulations.

Section 25. Separability Clause. If any portion or provision of this Circular is declared null and void or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in force and effect.

Section 26. Effectivity. This Circular shall take effect immediately and shall remain effective until otherwise superseded, amended, or repealed accordingly.

For guidance and strict compliance.

21 December 2020.


BERNADETTE ROMULO-PUYAT
Secretary

