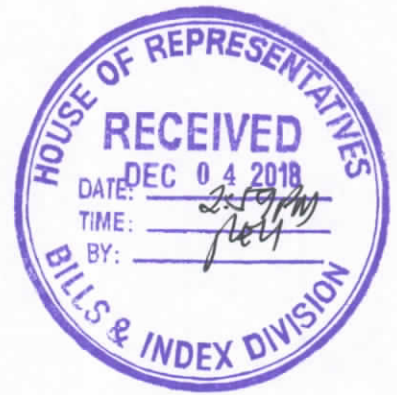


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Seventeenth Congress
Third Regular Session



HOUSE BILL No. 8717

Introduced by **Rep. MARLYN B. ALONTE**

AN ACT WAIVING GOVERNMENT FEES AND CHARGES ON THE ISSUANCE OF DOCUMENTS REQUIRED IN THE APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT OF FIRST TIME JOBSEEKERS

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Every year, hundreds of thousands of Filipino youth graduate from college and senior high school. Most of them are in the hopes of landing their first job so they could help augment their family's income as well as put into practice the skills and lessons learned in their many years of education.

2018 data from the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) showed that there are more than 700,000 higher education graduates as of June 8, 2018, while the Department of Education (DepEd) reported in May 2018 that there are some 600,000 senior high school graduates who might join the country's workforce.

When they start to look for jobs, these applicants will soon learn that the process is not a bed of roses. A run-down of pre-employment documents that one needs to prepare will make them realize the challenging and arduous journey of job hunting. Even more taxing is the process of obtaining these documents—long waiting time, payment fees, and many more.

To assist these first-time jobseekers and help relieve them of some of the difficulties of job hunting, this Bill seeks to waive government fees and charges for a specific list of documents required in the application for employment. Through this, first time jobseekers will be able to allocate more of their budget on other expenses for job hunting.

It will also serve as assistance from the government as certain agencies such as the Public Employment Service Office (PESO) in different provinces, cities and municipalities shall serve as a One Stop Shop for first time jobseekers to secure all necessary documents.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate approval of this Bill is hereby sought.


MARLYN B. ALONTE

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Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “First Time Jobseekers Assistance Act”.

SEC. 2. *Declaring of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to recognize the role of the youth in nation building. As such, it shall promote and protect their rights, interests and well-being, by, among others, expanding access to government services to enable young people, especially first time jobseekers, to find employment.

SEC. 3. *Coverage.* – The provisions of this Act shall apply to all first time jobseekers, which shall include the following:

(a) New graduates from all schools, colleges, and universities, and from accredited offering technical-vocational courses. For purposes of this Act, a new graduate is a Filipino who just finished a bachelor’s degree from any college or university, or completed institution in the Philippines, as well as high school graduates who have completed the K-12 program;

(b) An early school leaver;

- (c) A person not employed or engaged in education or training, who was not finished secondary education;
- (d) A student taking a leave of absence from institution offering college or tertiary education or from a technical-vocational course; or
- (e) Any person working part-time while enrolled in an academic institution.

SEC. 4. *Waiver of Fees and Charges.* – Government agencies and instrumentalities, including government owned and controlled corporation (GOCCs), local government units (LGUs) and government hospitals shall not collect fees or charges from a first time jobseekers: *Provided*, That such fee or charge is paid in connection with the application for and the granting of licenses, proofs of identification, clearances, certificates, or other documents usually required in the course of employment locally or abroad.

SEC. 5. *Covered Governmental Transactions.* – No fees and other charges shall ne collected from first time jobseekers when obtaining the following subject to the restrictions in Section 6:

- (a) Police Clearance Certificate;
- (b) National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) Clearance;
- (c) Barangay Clearance
- (d) Medical Certificate from public hospitals; *Provided*, That the fees and charges collected for laboratory testing and other medical procedures pursuant to the grant of a medical certificate shall not be included;
- (e) Birth and/or Marriage Certificate;
- (f) Tax Identification Number;
- (g) The Unified Multi-Purpose IC card (UMID); and
- (h) Other documentary requirements issued by the government that may required by employers for first time jobseekers.

SEC. 6. *Proof of Eligibility* – First time jobseekers availing the benefits provided under this Act shall present a duly sworn and subscribed affidavit stating any of the following:

- (a) That he/she is a new graduate of an academic of technical-vocational institution indicating his/her date of graduation;
- (b) The he/she is an early school leaver indicating his/her date of last enrollment;
- (c) That he/she is a student taking a leave of absence from an institution offering college or tertiary education or from a technical-vocational course;

- (d) The he/she is working part-time while enrolled in an academic institution, or from an institution offering a technical-vocational education; or
- (e) The he/she is not engaged in education or training, and has not previously enrolled in any educational institution or has not finished secondary education.

In case of doubt in the application of this Act or in the evaluation of the document/s submitted, an interpretation most favorable to the applicant shall prevail: *Provided*, That any person found guilty of fabricating or falsifying any document required under this section shall be liable under Article 172 of the Revised Penal Code.

SEC. 7. – One-Time Eligibility. – Any first time jobseeker shall be entitled to the benefits provided under this Act only one (1) time within one (1) year from the date of graduation or the leave of absence or enrollment, as indicated in the certification required under Section 5 of this Act.

The concerned government agencies shall maintain an annual roster of all individuals who have been issued documents under this Act. This roster shall be submitted to the Department of Information and Communication Technology, which shall compile a database of all beneficiaries of this Act. The database shall be accessible to all the agencies that have granted the waiver of fees and charges to first time jobseekers.

SEC. 8.- One Stop Shop. – The Public Employment Service Office (PESO) in different provinces, cities and municipalities shall serve as a One Stop Shop for first time jobseekers to secure all documents necessary for their employment application. The PESO shall assist first time jobseekers in securing the required document, certification or clearance and in registering/enrolling first time jobseekers with relevant government agencies such as the Bureau of Internal Revenue, Social Security System, Home Development Mutual Corporation, Philippine Health Insurance Corporation, among others.

SEC. 9. – Exceptions. – The waiver of fees and charges provided under this Act shall not include those collected in connection with an application to take professional licensure examination conducted by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC), application for a Philippine passport from the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), authentication and red ribbon of documents from DFA, application for a Career Service Examination with the Civil Service, and application for a driver's license from the Land Transportation Authority (LTO).

SEC. 10. – *Non Authority to Charge Fees.* – This Act shall not be construed as an implied authority for all government agencies to impose or collect charges and fees in relation to the discharge of their functions, if no such authority is already granted under their respective charter or other relevant laws.

SEC. 11. – *Exclusion of Jobstart Program Applicant as Beneficiaries.* – the beneficiaries of the Jobstart program under Republic Act No. 10869 and other laws that give fee exemptions for the documents and/or transactions enumerated herein shall not be qualified from availing of benefits of this Act.

SEC. 12. – *Interpretation in Favor of the Application.* – In all cases, any ambiguity in the interpretation on the implementation of this act shall be in favor of the applicant.

SEC. 13. – *Inter-agency Monitoring Committee.* – An inter-agency monitoring committee is hereby created to monitor the compliance of the concerned government agencies granting the waiver of fees and charges as provided under this Act. The Committee shall recommend to the proper authorities the filing of an administrative complaint against any person who refuses to comply with the provision of this Act.

The Committee shall be composed of the following agencies:

- (a) Secretary of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) as chairperson;
- (b) Chairman of the Civil Service Commission (CSC) or any of his/her authorized representatives;
- (c) Secretary of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) or any of his/her authorized representatives;
- (d) Secretary of the Department of Finance (DOF) or any of his/her authorized representatives;
- (e) Secretary of the Department of Education (DepEd) or any of his/her authorized representatives;
- (f) Chairman of the Commission of Higher Education (CHED) or any of his/her authorized representatives; and
- (g) Chairman of the National Youth Commission (NYC) or any of his/her authorized representatives.

SEC. 14. – *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The CHED, in consultation with the DOLE, the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) and other relevant stakeholders, shall issue the relevant rules and regulations to effectively implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 15. – Separability Clause. – If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or otherwise invalid, the validity of the other provisions shall not be affected thereby.

SEC. 16. – *Repealing Clause*. – All laws, decrees, orders, ordinances, rules and regulations or part thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 17. – *Effectivity*. – This Ach shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved.