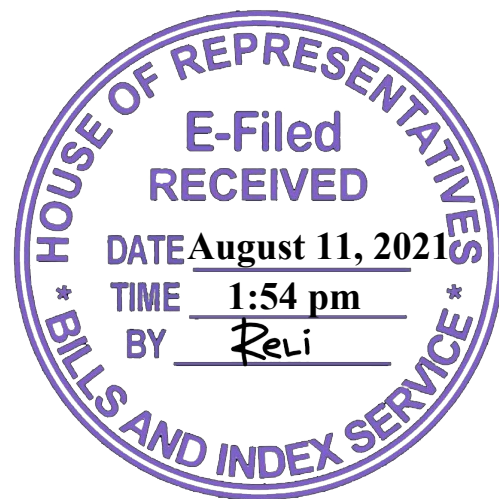


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

House Bill No. 9957



Introduced by the Honorable Precious Hipolito Castelo

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Last February 26, 2021, Republic Act No. 11525 or the COVID-19 Vaccination Program Act was passed into law. Said law provides for the government's strategy in carrying out the country's vaccination program, including plans and policies for vaccine sourcing, procurement, and inoculation procedures.

Under Section 12 of said law, it is provided that the DOH shall maintain a central database of vaccinations and mandate a uniform format for the vaccine card. Unfortunately, the delegation of printing of vaccine cards to LGUs and private entities made it logistically difficult to implement the issuance of uniform vaccine cards throughout the country. For every local government unit, there appears to be a different format and design for the vaccine cards.

As a result, there is no easy way to validate the authenticity of the vaccine cards issued by LGUs. While this may not be a glaring issue in the ultimate goal of achieving herd immunity, it may present a problem in the future especially when the presentation of vaccine cards becomes necessary for whatever purpose.

For instance, Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin, Jr. said last August 10 that Hong Kong does not recognize vaccination cards issued by LGUs in the Philippines since they are not connected to a single source and cannot be authenticated.¹ Since vaccination certificates are required from OFWs in Hong Kong, they cannot therefore be permitted entry despite being already inoculated against COVID-19.

Thus, this bill proposes the creation of a safe and secure database where vaccinated individuals may access their own e-vaccine cards at any time. The e-vaccine cards shall be in uniform format throughout the country regardless of where the original printed vaccine cards were issued.

The e-vaccine card will ensure the safe mobility of vaccinated individuals, locally and internationally, and will prevent the proliferation of counterfeit vaccine cards since authentication can be easily done through the database.

The immediate passage of this measure is earnestly sought.


PRECIOUS HIPOLITO CASTELO

¹ <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2021/08/11/2119077/hong-kong-rejects-pinoy-vax-cards-issued-lgus>

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

House Bill No. 9957

Introduced by the Honorable Precious Hipolito Castelo

AN ACT

PROVIDING FOR AN E-VACCINE CARD TO ALL VACCINATED INDIVIDUALS TO ENSURE THE SAFE MOBILITY OF VACCINATED INDIVIDUALS, LOCALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY AND TO PREVENT THE PROLIFERATION OF COUNTERFEIT VACCINE CARDS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11525, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. Section 12 of Republic Act No. 11525 is hereby amended to read as follows:

“SEC 12. *COVID-19 Vaccine Card.* – Subject to the provisions of Republic Act No. 10173 or the “Data Privacy Act of 2012”, the DOH shall issue a vaccine card to all persons vaccinated. To fast track the process, the DOH may delegate the processing and issuance of vaccine cards to LGUs and private entities, subject to guidelines to be promulgated by the DOH. The vaccine card shall contain the following:

- (a) Basic personal information such as full name, present and/or permanent address, and birthdate;
- (b) Manufacturer, brand name, and batch number or other identifier of the COVID-19 vaccine;
- (c) Date of vaccination;
- (d) Name of the hospital, health center, or health facility where the vaccine was received;
- (e) Name, signature, and license number of the duly licensed physician, nurse or other health worker administering the vaccine;
- (f) Date of the last RT-PCR testing and the name of the laboratory that conducted the last RT-PCR testing, if applicable; and
- (g) Such other information which may be determine as necessary by the Secretary of Health or the IATF-EID in line with the declared policy of this Act.

The issuance of a vaccine card is intended to be digital, but shall remain accessible through other means such as printed cards. The DOH, through the Department of Information and Communications Technology, shall develop the LGU-based digital systems and applications that will meet the objectives of the COVID-19 Vaccination Program while maintaining quality, safety, ease of use, and accessibility for all Filipinos: Provided, That the DOH shall maintain a central database of vaccinations, and mandate a uniform format for the vaccine card, the contents of which shall be updated accordingly to always conform with globally accepted standards: Provided further, That the vaccine cards shall not be considered as an additional

mandatory requirement for education, employment and other similar government transaction purposes.

THE CONTENTS OF THE COVID-19 VACCINE CARD SHALL BE DIGITALLY AVAILABLE TO FILIPINOS THROUGH A SAFE AND SECURE DATABASE. ANY VACCINATED INDIVIDUAL MAY ACCESS HIS OWN E-VACCINE CARD ONLINE AT ANY TIME AND THE E-VACCINE CARD MAY BE PRESENTED FOR ANY LEGAL PURPOSE IT MAY SERVE, SUCH AS, BUT NOT LIMITED TO:

- (A) INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL, AS MAY BE REQUIRED BY FOREIGN JURISDICTIONS;**
- (B) DOMESTIC TRAVEL, IN COMPLIANCE WITH IATF-EID RULES AND REGULATIONS.**

Individuals vaccinated against COVID-19 as indicated in the vaccine card shall not be considered immune from COVID-19, unless otherwise declared by the DOH based on reliable scientific evidence and consensus.

No fees shall be collected for the issuance, amendment, or replacement of a vaccine card. The amount needed for the initial implementation shall be charged against available funds for the purpose. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for its continued implementation shall be included in the annual General appropriations Act.

The falsification of a vaccine card shall be punishable under Act No. 3185, as amended, otherwise known as the "Revised Penal Code".

SEC. 2. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – Within thirty (30) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Health and the Department of Information and Communications Technology shall jointly issue such rules and regulations as may be necessary to implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 3. Separability Clause. – If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SEC. 4. Repealing Clause. – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with, the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

SEC. 5. Effectivity Clause. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,