

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **6028**



Introduced by Representative **WOWO FORTES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines has been one of the most dynamic economies in the world albeit being a third-world country that has various developmental issues. These issues must be resolved by both long-term solutions and short-term interventions. It has been reported that Filipinos, especially since we are still in the process of recovering from the difficulties brought on by the pandemic, do not have the financial capacity to meet the demands of a personal emergency or whenever we face a crisis situation.

The Crisis Intervention Division under the Program Management Bureau of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) currently implements the Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation (AICS) program. The AICS is one of the social protection programs of the DSWD that acts as a stop-gap mechanism providing psychosocial, emotional, financial, and material assistance for individuals and families in crisis situations or difficult circumstances. The program prioritizes the poor, marginalized, vulnerable, and disadvantaged individuals and families in need.

The continued increase of beneficiaries of AICS required additional manpower who will ensure the provision of timely and appropriate services. While the DSWD has engaged services, and additional workforce, most of them are still under a Contract of Service status. In other words, no security of tenure has been granted to the workforce of the Department who provide frontline services despite various dangers, hazards, and other security concerns. It is noteworthy that despite the constant risks and threat in their work, these frontliners continue to serve individuals and families in crisis situations.

With the passage of the bill, a separate office for the program which is proposed to be called the Crisis Intervention Office (CIO) will be established in order to have more focused management and supervision as well as nationalize systems and mechanisms.

Hence, this bill aims to address the need for the sustained implementation of the program that adheres to the demand for the delivery of services through its institutionalization. Through the program's institutionalization, Filipinos who are in dire need of help and are dealing with extreme circumstances shall be definitely responded.

In view of the foregoing and on behalf of the Filipino nation, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


ATTY. WOWO FORTES
Representative
Second District, Province of Sorsogon

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HOUSE BILL NO. **6028**

Introduced by Representative **WOWO FORTES**

**AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE CRISIS INTERVENTION PROGRAM OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT (DSWD) AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

SECTION. 1. *Title.* - This Act shall be known as the Crisis Intervention Program Act (CIP Act)".

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policies and Objectives.* – It is the policy of the State to promote a just and dynamic social order alleviating the plight of the poor through policies that provide adequate social services and raise the standard of living for the improved quality of life for all. Towards this end, the State shall provide assistance through programs, projects, and services that support the recovery of eligible clients.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* –

- a) *Authorized Representatives* refers to any person of legal age who represents a beneficiary who, for valid reason/s, cannot be physically present in processing and claiming the assistance requested.
- b) *Beneficiary* refers to individuals and/or families who are indigent, vulnerable, disadvantaged, or are otherwise in crisis situation who are in need of social welfare and development intervention based on the assessment of the Social Workers.
- c) *Client* refers to any individual or group, who may be the beneficiary or the authorized representative, who seeks assistance through DSWD.
- d) *Communities* - for the purpose of this law, this refers to a social group of any size whose members reside in a specific locality that is in crisis and in need of social welfare and development intervention.
- e) *Crisis Situation* refers to a condition whereby an individual or group of persons faced with a stressful situation, resulting to the impairment of psychosocial functioning, and thereby needing a series of interventions to prevent further exposure to vulnerabilities, exploitation, and abuse.
- f) *Financially incapacitated patient* refers to a patient/beneficiaries who is not classified as indigent but demonstrates a clear inability to pay or spend for necessary expenditures for one's medical treatment, such as patients with catastrophic illness or any illness, which is life or limb-threatening and requires

prolonged hospitalization, extremely expensive therapies or other special but essential care that would deplete one's financial resources, as assessed and certified by the medical social worker;

- g) *Groups* - refer to a cluster of individuals who belong to the same organization, classification and/or sector that is formed due to one common purpose or request, for the purpose of this law;
- h) *Guarantee Letter* - refers to the document issued by the DSWD to ensure that the service provider gets paid for the goods or services availed by the client;
- i) *Social Welfare and Development Worker* refers to those employed in government social welfare and development agencies;
- j) *Vulnerable, Disadvantaged and Marginalized* refers to an individual or group who belongs to sectors such as but not limited to farmer-peasant, artisanal fisherfolk, cultural communities, women, persons with disability, senior citizens, victims of calamities and disasters, youth and students, children, and urban poor; that has limited resources or opportunities in accessing health care, education, justice system, and other basic government services and those who have high risk of exposure to possible risks in relation to involvement in harmful practices.

SEC. 4. *Crisis Intervention Program (CIP)* - The CIP is a comprehensive strategy of the national government to:

- a) Provide immediate assistance to individuals, families, and communities in crisis situations or difficulties; and/or
- b) Provide augmentation assistance to disaster-affected individuals, families, and communities to support their recovery.

Through this program, financial and/or material assistance, psychosocial support services, referral services, and other support services, as defined under Section 6, are provided to eligible clients based on their assessed needs.

SEC. 5. *Eligible Beneficiaries*. - All individuals, groups or communities who are in crisis situations or in difficult circumstances, especially those who are poor, vulnerable, marginalized, or disadvantaged sectors and financially incapacitated.

SEC. 6. *Types of Services* - The CIP shall cover different types of services to assist clients in crisis situations. These services shall include such as but not limited to:

- a) *Financial Assistance* - A service provided in a form of cash, guarantee letter, and other modes of delivery of service issued to qualified clients to cover medical, funeral, transportation, educational, food, and cash relief assistance.
- b) *Material Assistance* - A service providing food and non-food items to clients who need immediate material support, such as but not limited to food packs or vouchers, hygiene or sleeping kits, and assistive devices and technologies, subject to its availability.
- c) *Psychosocial Support Service* - A service provided by trained or professional psychosocial support workers to help meet the psychological, emotional, and social needs of beneficiaries and their families. It is a set of interventions that intends to positively improve a person's behavior to reduce the impact of stress brought about by a crisis through behavioral modification interventions.

- d) *Referral Service* - A service provided when the requested support is not within the range of the services of CIP through coordination and/or endorsement of the beneficiary's case within the DSWD's available programs, projects and services and to other agencies such as but not limited to the Department of Education (DepEd), Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), Department of Health (DOH), Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO), Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR), Local Government Units (LGUs), and other Government Agencies (GA), Civil Service Organizations (CSO), and International/Non-Government Organizations (I/NGO).

SEC. 7. *Process of Service Delivery* - The type and amount of services to be provided to the clients shall be determined, assessed, and recommended by the DSWD social worker and approved by the authorized official of the DSWD based on existing guidelines and Implementing Rules and Regulations.

SEC. 8. *Modes of Delivery of Services*. – The DSWD shall adopt different modes in order to deliver efficiently, expeditiously and effectively to provide the financial, or material assistance, psychosocial support, and referral service to the clients needing assistance from the government, such as, but not limited to the following:

- a) Service delivery within the Central or Field Offices;
- b) Setting up of an off-site or satellite venues; and
- c) Partnership with LGU, other Stakeholders and Service Providers.

Provided that the DSWD shall procure and/or construct a secure office system, Information and Communication Technology equipment, and all necessary capital outlay expenditures such as vehicles, and vaults, among others, needed to efficiently and effectively implement the program.

Provided further, the DSWD may also establish an automated system for processing and releasing the requested assistance. For this purpose, the appropriations needed for the payment of the necessary cash-out fees or other service fees charged by partner financial institutions shall form part of the DSWD annual budget under the General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 9. *System*. - The DSWD, in coordination with the Department of Information and Communication Technology (DICT) and Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), shall establish an online and offline system that would facilitate digital validation, processing, payment, and monitoring including those assisted through the established Malasakit Centers pursuant to Republic Act (RA) No. 11463. Pending such an establishment, DSWD may continue to utilize its existing system.

SEC. 10. *Lead Agency*. - The DSWD shall serve as the lead planning, implementing, and monitoring agency of this act in coordination with the appropriate government agencies such as but not limited to PSA, Department of Interior Local Government (DILG), DICT, LGUs, DOH, PCSO, Philippine National Police (PNP), Civil Service Commission (CSC) and other GAs, CSOs and I/NGOs to ensure the implementation of this Act.

SEC. 11. *Establishment of the Crisis Intervention Office / Division / Unit (CIO/D/U).* – To ensure effective and efficient delivery of services to the clients, there shall be an established CIO (formerly the Crisis Intervention Division) at the Central Office, Crisis Intervention Divisions (formerly Crisis Intervention Section) at the Field Offices, and Crisis Intervention Units at the Social Welfare and Development (SWAD) Satellite Offices of the DSWD that will ensure that the program, as Enterprise Information System. Provided herein, is properly implemented, monitored, and evaluated nationwide.

SEC. 12. *Personnel Complement.* - The CIO / D / U that implement the CIP shall be adequately operated by licensed social workers and other Social Welfare and Development workers. The CIO Director at the Central Office and the Regional Directors in the field offices shall assign/hire qualified personnel necessary for the effective implementation of CIP. For this purpose, appropriate organizational structure shall be developed and established at the level of the DSWD Central Office, Field Offices and Social Welfare and Development Satellite Offices.

Further, the DSWD is hereby authorized to create the required plantilla and staffing pattern necessary for the implementation of this Act in coordination with the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) and the Civil Service Commission (CSC). The DSWD shall include in their budgetary submission to the DBM the required budget for Personnel Services (PS) and Miscellaneous and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE). Such budgetary requirements shall be included in the General Appropriations Act (GAA).

SEC. 13. *Program Monitoring and Evaluation.* — The DSWD shall conduct monitoring and evaluation to assess the responsiveness of the CIP through the use of applicable indicators, frameworks, models, and tools, including a client/stakeholders feedback mechanism, among others; and the establishment of standard reporting templates and procedures in consonance to applicable laws, rules, and regulations.

SEC. 14. *Program Transparency and Reporting.* — The DSWD shall annually publish a full report of the CIP covering the implementation of the previous fiscal year and/or timely post and update periodically on the DSWD website a report of financial disclosures and information about beneficiaries based on geographical area and sectoral category subject to the provisions of Republic Act No. 10173 or the Data Privacy Act of 2012.

SEC. 15. *Unlawful Acts, Offenses, and Penalties.* - It shall be unlawful for any individual or organization to:

- a) Defraud the government by issuing or presenting falsified documents or using false pretenses or other fraudulent acts to acquire the assistance provided under this Act;
- b) Invite or encourage persons to seek assistance from the DSWD for purposes of exacting from the beneficiary a portion of the assistance, before or after the receipt of assistance.
- c) Misrepresent an individual or group to join, pay or cooperate with a group falsely representing connection or affiliation with DSWD or falsely promising priority in the processing of assistance.

Any person who commits any of the foregoing unlawful acts shall be penalized with the following:

- a) 1st Offense - the offender shall be provided with a written warning and will be brought to a police officer or barangay official for blotter.
- b) 2nd Offense - The offender shall be punished by one (1) year suspension from availing any assistance from the DSWD.
- c) 3rd Offense - The offender shall be punished by imprisonment not less than one (1) year but not more than six (6) years.

If the offender is an organization, the president, manager, or any officer of the organization who directly participated in the violation of the unlawful acts shall be held liable and may be punished by imprisonment of not less than six (6) years but no more than ten (10) years. This is without prejudice to any action against the corporation or organization before appropriate government agencies.

A public official or personnel who commits, abets, or aide in the commission of any of the acts provided herein shall be liable under the Revised Penal Code and other existing penal laws. Administrative sanctions shall be imposed without prejudice to prosecution in the proper courts.

SEC. 16. *Appropriations.* - The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the GAA and shall be prepared in consonance and prescribed budgetary parameters/expenditures covering PS, MOOE, and capital outlay.

SEC. 17. *Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR)* - Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DSWD, as the lead agency, together with the other national government agencies, such as but not limited to the DILG, DOH, PSA, the DICT and the different leagues of the LGUs in consultation with the other public and private stakeholders representing the poor, marginalized and vulnerable sectors of the society, shall promulgate the necessary implementing rules and regulations of this Act.

SEC. 18. *Separability Clause* - If, for any reason, any provision of this Act or any part thereof shall be held unconstitutional and invalid, the other parts or provisions of this Act, which are not affected thereby, shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 19. *Repealing Clause* - All laws, decrees, issuances, orders, letters of instructions, administrative orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof contrary to or inconsistent with any of the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SEC. 20. *Effectivity* - 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,