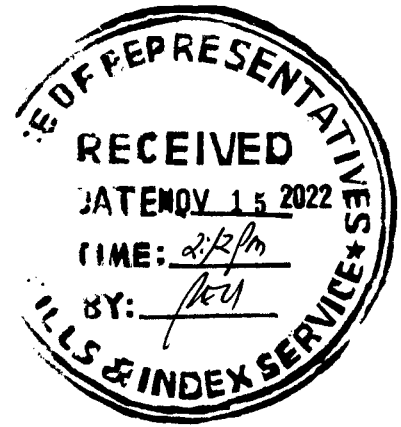


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 6147



Introduced by: **REP. RUTH MARIANO-HERNANDEZ**

AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING THE CRISIS INTERVENTION PROGRAM OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Social protection is defined as the set of policies and programs designed to reduce poverty and vulnerability by, among others, diminishing people's exposure to risks and enhancing their capacity to protect themselves against hazards and interruption or loss of income (Asian Development Bank, 2003).

One of the major social safety nets of the national government is the Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation (AICS), a program of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) aimed at providing integrated services to individuals and families in crisis or difficult situations. It is further a social protection strategy that grants immediate response to the effects of economic shocks and other adverse circumstances such as calamities, illness, or death of a family member. The program is geared to enable individuals, families, and communities to cope and recover from difficult situations, and restore them to normalcy. In a span of five years, from 2017 to 2022, an average of almost 50 percent annual increase in the number of beneficiaries is observed, through a corresponding increase also in funding appropriations, with a near 10 million clients served by the AICS program.

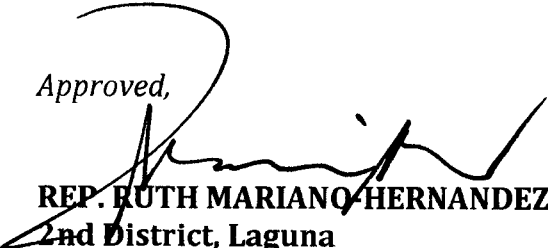
On the other hand, almost 20 million Filipinos live below the poverty threshold in 2021 (Philippine Statistics Authority, August 2022). While the poverty incidence rose largely due to health pandemic-induced economic slump, more Filipinos have been pushed into destitution.

Through the institutionalization of the Crisis Intervention Program, this bill seeks to reinforce the capacity of DSWD to implement the said program through the creation of a Crisis Intervention Office (CIO). This entails the enhancement of the organizational

structure of CIO and its field office counterparts and also, the provision of regular positions. Currently, 91.2 percent of the personnel implementing the AICS program are under contracts of service while 5.46 percent are classified as job orders. A meager 2.28 percent are permanent or regular employees. Moreover, an enterprise information system shall also be designed to enable unified crossmatching of clients nationwide.

With the need to strengthen and institutionalize the Crisis Intervention Program as a key driver for social development and as a social control mechanism, the urgent passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

Approved,



REP. RUTH MARIANO HERNANDEZ
2nd District, Laguna

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

Section 1. Short Title. - This Act shall be known as the "Crisis Intervention Program Act."

Section 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 projects, programs, and services geared towards alleviating poverty and improving the quality of life of every Filipino, especially the vulnerable, marginalized sector, and disadvantaged individuals, families, and communities.

Section 3. Definition of Terms.

- a) **Beneficiary** refers to the person who actually needs the assistance or on whose behalf the assistance is being sought through an authorized representative. The beneficiary is the ultimate recipient of the assistance.
- b) **Client** refers to any individual or group, who may be the beneficiary seeking assistance, or his/her or the group's authorized representative, in case of the beneficiary's inability to be physically present.
- c) **Cross Matching** refers to a process of counter-checking the information or data sets provided by the client who seeks assistance from DSWD.
- d) **Case Management** refers to a process in which the Social Workers of a DSWD office identify the problem of the client, assess and evaluate the need

of the client, and provide the necessary intervention within the scope and limitation of the program.

- e) **Crisis Situation** is a time in the individual's life when he/she experiences a breakdown or disruption in his/her usual or normal daily activities or family functioning. Such disruption prevents the individual from adequately performing his/her social roles and functions and may lead him/her into worsened life situations.
- f) **Institutionalization** refers to the act of establishing the Crisis Intervention Program (CIP) as a major function of DSWD and a regular program funded by its annual appropriation.
- g) **Vulnerable, Disadvantaged, and Marginalized** refers to an individual or group who belongs to sectors (e.g. farmer/peasant, artisanal fisherfolk, cultural communities, women, differently-abled persons, senior citizens, victims of calamities and disasters, youth and students, children, and urban poor) that have 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 or involvement in harmful practices such as gender-based violence and other forms of discrimination.
- h) **Poor** refers to households whose income falls below the poverty threshold, as defined by the National Economic and Development Authority, and cannot afford in a sustained manner their minimum basic needs of food, health, education, housing, and other essential amenities of life.

Section 4. Crisis Intervention Program (CIP). The CIP is a comprehensive strategy of the national government to provide immediate assistance to individuals, families, and communities facing crisis situations or difficulties, such as but not limited to, disasters or calamities, in order to mitigate its impact on their economic stability and provide appropriate support for their recovery. Through this program, financial and/or material assistance for food, non-food, medical, funeral, transportation, educational, psychosocial intervention or other assistance for support services are distributed to eligible beneficiaries by DSWD through the modes, as may be necessary and allowed.

Section 5. Eligible Beneficiaries. All individuals, groups, or communities who are in crisis or in difficult circumstances, especially those who are poor, marginalized, or disadvantaged.

Section 6. Enterprise Information System. The DSWD, in coordination with the Department of Information and Communication Technology (DICT) and Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), shall establish an enterprise information system (EIS) that would enable unified cross matching of clients nationwide, including those assisted through the established Malasakit Centers pursuant to Republic Act No. 11463 or Malasakit Centers Act. Pending the establishment of an EIS, DSWD may continue to utilize its existing system.

Section 7. Types of Assistance. The CIP shall cover the following different types of

financial assistance and/or material assistance through food, non-food, medical, funeral, transportation educational, psychosocial intervention, or other assistance for support services.

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

- a) Service delivery within DSWD central or field offices or in other designated areas for psychosocial intervention;
- b) Setting up of an onsite or satellite venues for service delivery;
- c) Partnerships with local government units (LGUs), stakeholders, and service providers.

Provided, That the DSWD may purchase vehicles, vault, and other information and communication technology (ICT) equipment needed to efficiently and effectively implement the program within or outside DSWD offices.

Provided further, That the DSWD may establish an automated system of processing and releasing the requested assistance. For this purpose, the appropriations for the payment of necessary cash out fees or other service fees charged by partner financial institutions for the automated processing and release of assistance shall be computed and requested by DSWD as part of its annual budget.

Section 9. Lead Agency. The DSWD shall serve as the central planning, implementing, coordinating, and monitoring body of the CIP through the Crisis Intervention Office, which shall also coordinate with the appropriate government agencies to ensure implementation of Section 13 of this Act.

Section 10. Crisis Intervention Office (CIO). The CIO is hereby institutionalized in the following DSWD offices for the proper and nationwide implementation of CIP:

- a) CIO (formerly Crisis Intervention Division) at the Central Office;
- b) Crisis Intervention Divisions at the Field Offices; and
- c) Crisis Intervention Units at the Social Welfare and Development (SWAD) Satellite Offices.

Section 11. Personnel Complement. The Crisis Intervention Office, Division, and Units implementing CIP shall be adequately manned by licensed social workers and other support staff. The CIO Director at the central office and the regional directors in the field offices shall assign persons necessary for the effective implementation of CIP, in accordance with the transitory provision of this Act.

Section 12. Program Transparency. The DSWD shall timely post and update on its website a quarterly report of financial disclosures and CIP implementation based on geographical area and social category. It is herein understood that the report and

disclosures necessary for CIP implementation transparency shall be made in accordance with Republic Act No. 10173 or Data Privacy Act of 2012.

Section 13. Prohibited Acts. It shall be unlawful for any individual or organization to commit the following acts:

- a) Defraud the government by issuing or presenting falsified documents, or by employing false pretenses or other fraudulent acts to acquire any assistance provided under this Act;
- b) Invite or encourage persons to seek CIP assistance for the purpose of acquiring or extorting from the beneficiary, against his/her will, a part or portion of the assistance during the application process, or before or after the receipt of assistance;
- c) Mislead an individual or a 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.

Section 14. Penalties. Any person who commits any of the prohibited acts shall, after due process, be penalized with the following:

- a) First Offense – the offender shall be given a warning and shall be barred for a period of three (3) months from availing any CIP assistance;
- b) Second Offense – the offender shall be barred for a period of six (6) months from availing any CIP assistance;
- c) Third Offense - the offender shall be barred for a period of one (1) year from availing any CIP assistance;
- d) Fourth Offense – the offender shall be barred for a period of two (2) years from availing any CIP assistance. The fourth time offender may also be prosecuted in accordance with applicable penal laws.

Any individual or organization who commits any of the prohibited acts as described in paragraphs b and c of Section 13 shall be prosecuted in accordance with applicable penal laws; *Provided*, That if the offender is an organization, the president, manager, or officer thereof, who participated, directly or indirectly, in the commission of the prohibited act shall also be prosecuted in accordance with applicable penal laws.

A finding of offense shall automatically forfeit the total amount of financial assistance, or the equivalent thereof for other material assistance, in favor of DSWD; *Provided*, That if the assistance has already been released to the beneficiary, the amount of the financial assistance, or the equivalent thereof for other material assistance, shall be refunded to the DSWD.

Section 15. Transitory Provision. The CIO shall propose the appropriate organizational structure, which shall be replicated at the regional and SWAD satellite office levels, as may be applicable.

The DSWD shall 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 DBM the required budget for personnel services and miscellaneous and other operating expenses (MOOE). Such budgetary requirements shall be included the General Appropriations Act (GAA).

Section 16. Appropriations. - The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be charged against those authorized in the current appropriations of DSWD and shall thereafter be included in the GAA for the succeeding years.

Section 17. Implementing Rules and Regulations. - Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DSWD as the lead agency, together with the appropriate national government agencies, and in consultation with public and private stakeholders representing the poor, marginalized, and vulnerable sectors of the society, as the DSWD may deem necessary, shall promulgate the necessary implementing rules and regulations of this Act.

Section 18. Separability Clause. - If any part or provision of this Act shall be held invalid or unconstitutional, the other parts or provisions hereof that are not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 19. Repealing Clause. - All laws, decrees, issuances, orders, or rules and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 20. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,