



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10705



Introduced by REP. RODOLFO “OMPONG” M. ORDANES

**AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE PROGRAMS AND BENEFITS FOR
RETURNING SENIOR OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) have long been recognized as modern-day heroes for their significant contributions to the Philippine economy through remittances. Many OFWs dedicate a substantial part of their lives to working abroad, often under challenging conditions, to provide a better future for their families.

As they age, returning senior OFWs face unique and often overlooked challenges that require targeted support and assistance. Sub-chapter 3.2 of the Philippine Development Plan 2023–2028 focuses on strengthening social protection for Filipinos. During the planning period, the government aims to increase social protection expenditure as a percentage of GDP from 2.7% in 2021 to 5.25% by 2028. OFWs and senior citizens are among the key sectors identified for expanded social protection coverage.

In response to these challenges, the proposed legislation seeks to honor the sacrifices and contributions of senior OFWs by creating comprehensive programs and benefits tailored to their needs as they return to the Philippines. This proposed Act aims to support their reintegration into society and provide essential health and economic assistance, enhancing their well-being during their transition home.

This proposed legislation is a testament to the Philippine government's unwavering commitment to honoring and supporting its senior OFWs. Providing the necessary programs and benefits ensures their dignified transition back to the Philippines and

appropriately acknowledges their contributions. This proposed Act not only improves the quality of life for returning senior OFWs but also strengthens the socio-economic fabric of the nation.

In light of the foregoing, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



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

1 SECTION 1. ***Title.*** – This Act shall be known as the “*Returning Senior OFW Act.*”

2 SECTION 2. ***Declaration of Policy.*** – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to
3 acknowledge the fundamental rights of senior citizens, ensuring their equal access to
4 government services, discounts, and privileges, in recognition of their invaluable contribution
5 to society. It is likewise the policy of the State to afford full protection to labor, local and
6 overseas, organized and unorganized, and promote full employment opportunities for all.
7 Towards this end, it shall be the State’s responsibility to protect the Overseas Filipino Workers
8 (OFWs).

9 The State shall promote inclusivity, equity, and accessibility to goods and services so
10 that senior OFWs, through standardized benefits and incentives, are afforded adequate social
11 services, decent standard of living, and improved quality of life.

12 SECTION 3. ***Definition of Terms.*** -As used in this Act, the following terms and phrases
13 are defined as follows:

- 14 a. Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) refers to a Filipino who is to be engaged, is
15 engaged, or has been engaged in remunerated activity in a country of which he or
16 she is not an immigrant, citizen, or permanent resident or is not awaiting

1 naturalization, recognition, or admission, whether land-based or sea-based
2 regardless of status; excluding a Filipino engaged under a government-recognized
3 exchange visitor program for cultural and educational purposes. For purposes of
4 this Guidelines, a person engaged in remunerated activity covers a person who has
5 been contracted for overseas employment but has yet to leave the Philippines,
6 regardless of status, and includes “Overseas Contract Workers”. The term “OFW”
7 is synonymous to “Migrant Worker”.

- 8 b. Senior OFW refers to OFW who is a Senior Citizen or at least sixty (60) years old.
- 9 c. Health Care Voucher as used in this Act refers to assistance to qualified Senior
10 OFWs beneficiary in the form of a voucher that has monetary value to be utilized
11 for the healthcare needs of the Senior OFW beneficiary.
- 12 d. Health care provider refers to any of the following:
 - 13 (1) A health facility which may be public or private, devoted primarily to the
14 provision of services for health promotion, prevention, diagnosis, treatment,
15 rehabilitation and palliation of individuals suffering from illness, disease, injury,
16 disability, or deformity, or in need of obstetrical or other medical and nursing
17 care;
 - 18 (2) A health care professional who may be a doctor of medicine, nurse, midwife,
19 dentist, rehabilitation therapist, occupational therapist or other allied
20 professional or practitioner duly licensed to practice in the Philippines;
 - 21 (3) A community-based healthcare organization, which is an association of
22 members of the community organized for the purpose of improving the health
23 status of that community; or
 - 24 (4) Pharmacies or drug outlets, laboratories and diagnostic clinics.

25 SECTION 4. **Coverage.** OFWs, as defined in Republic Act No. 11641, who are resident
26 senior citizens aged 60 years and above, returned to the Philippines irrespective of date, and
27 have served and completed at least one employment or service contract overseas.

28 SECTION 5. **Health Care Voucher Program for Senior OFWs.** - Senior OFWs who
29 are 71 years old and above shall be entitled for a one-time voucher with a monetary value of
30 Fifty Thousand Pesos (P50,000). This voucher shall be consumed solely for the health care
31 needs of the beneficiary both for product and services necessities which includes primary care,
32 medicines, diagnostics and laboratory, and preventive, curative, and rehabilitative services,
33 from the accredited providers. Further, the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) shall

1 formulate accreditation of health care providers, including the payment scheme for
2 remuneration of services rendered in favor of Senior OFWs and monitoring thereof.

3 SECTION 6. ***Employment Facilitation Program for Senior OFWs.*** - The government
4 shall encourage and provide incentives to local employers that employ senior OFWs, regardless
5 of employment status, to enable them to continue being economically productive and to share
6 their knowledge and expertise to the local economy. Private entities that shall employ senior
7 citizens as employees, upon the effectivity of this Act, shall be entitled to an additional
8 deduction from their gross income equivalent to thirty five (35%) of the total amount paid as
9 salaries, wages, benefits, and trainings provided to Senior OFWs, subject to the provision of
10 Section 34 of the NIRC, as amended: Provided, however, That such employment shall continue
11 for a period of at least six (6) months: Provided, further, That the annual income of the Senior
12 OFW does not exceed the latest poverty threshold as determined by the National Statistical
13 Coordination Board (NSCB) of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA)
14 for that year.

15 SECTION 7. ***Entrepreneurship Program for Senior OFWs.*** - The Department of
16 Migrant Workers (DMW) and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), shall
17 establish and sustain a dedicated entrepreneurship and training program for senior OFWs,
18 whether individual or group, who have developed an entrepreneurial mindset to enable them
19 to continue being economically productive upon their return to the Philippines, in collaboration
20 with NGAs, LGUs, Department of Trade and Industry, Technical Education and Skills
21 Development Authority (TESDA), Department of Tourism (DOT), Department of Finance
22 (DOF), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Department of Education (DepEd),
23 Commission on Higher Education (CHED), private companies and social organization, among
24 others.

25 SECTION 8. ***Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** - Within ninety (90) from the
26 effectivity of this Act, the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) shall, in coordination with
27 the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), Department of Labor and
28 Employment (DOLE), Department of Budget and Management (DBM), Department of Trade
29 and Industry (DTI), National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), National
30 Commission for Senior Citizens (NCSC), Technical Education and Skills Development
31 Authority (TESDA), Department of Tourism (DOT), Department of Finance (DOF),
32 Department of Education (DepEd), Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and other
33 concerned government agencies, as well as civil society organization, non-government

1 organizations and people's organizations, promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for
2 the effective implementation of this Act.

3 The intended guidelines must include the establishment of the corresponding
4 Reintegration Application System for the proper administration, operation, and maintenance
5 thereof. It shall likewise set the mechanism in the identification of beneficiaries of the programs
6 and benefits under this Act.

7 **SECTION 9. Implementing Guidelines for Programs.** DMW shall promulgate the
8 necessary implementing guidelines of the programs and services covered under this Act.

9 **SECTION 10. Appropriations.** - The amount necessary for the implementation of the
10 provisions of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act following its
11 enactment into law.

12 **SECTION 11. Separability Clause.** - If any section, clause, or term of this Act is held
13 to be illegal, invalid, or unconstitutional, such parts not affected by such declaration shall
14 remain in full force and effect.

15 **SECTION 12. Repealing Clause.** - All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules, and
16 regulations, or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended,
17 or modified accordingly.

18 **SECTION 13. Effectivity Clause.** This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days
19 following its complete publication in the Official Gazette or at least two (2) newspapers of
20 general circulation.

21 *Approved.*