

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH (20th) CONGRESS
FIRST REGULAR SESSION

House Bill No. 240



Introduced by
Rep. ROBERT NAZAL

AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING THE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR SOLO PARENTS
PROGRAM (FASPP) OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND
DEVELOPMENT (DSWD) AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The State has the constitutional mandate to promote the family as the foundation of the nation, and in support of this policy, Republic Act No. 8972 or the Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2000, which was further amended by Republic Act No. 11861 in 2022, otherwise known as the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act, was enacted to develop a comprehensive program for social welfare and development of solo parents and their children.

Studies made by the Department of Health and the University of the Philippines – National Institute for Health which was funded by the World Health Organization indicate that at least 14 to 15 percent of the estimated ninety-five (95) million Filipinos are solo parents, as identified through the provisions of Expanded Solo Parent Act.¹

The law recognizes that solo parents are among the vulnerable members of the society. They solely bear parental burden and as such, they have special needs that span from psychological, emotional, and financial, that must be addressed by the State. Hence, the provisions for the benefits of qualified solo parents, as enshrined in RA 8972 and RA 11861.

While the aforesaid laws were comprehensive in their scope, the same were not all-encompassing given the changing realities for solo parents. Many solo parents continue to struggle with the rising cost of basic commodities, medical needs, and the challenges of sustaining the daily needs of their families, especially in the face of economic uncertainties and inflation.

¹ (Lu, 2023) Lu, B. (7 May 2023). *Upholding solo parents' welfare*. Retrieved from Philippine News Agency.

Thus, it is imperative for the State to institutionalize a financial assistance program that will directly support solo parents and their dependents, complementing existing benefits under the Solo Parents Welfare Act and ensuring immediate relief for urgent family needs.

This House bill seeks to establish and institutionalize the Financial Assistance for Solo Parents Program (FASPP) under the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to provide cash, food, medical, educational, and livelihood assistance to qualified solo parents and their dependents. Likewise, this is to ensure that the foregoing benefits are rightfully afforded to the eligible solo parents, which will make life bearable for solo parents in the ever-evolving Philippine society.

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



Rep. ROBERT NAZAL
Bagong Henerasyon Party-List

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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 "Financial Assistance for Solo Parents Program (FASPP) Act."

SECTION 2. DECLARATION OF POLICY.

The State shall protect and promote the welfare of solo parents and their dependents by providing adequate and timely financial, medical, educational, and livelihood assistance. The State shall adopt measures to uplift the standard of living of solo parent families, ensure access to basic services, and enable their full participation in economic and social development.

SECTION 3. DEFINITION OF TERMS.

As used in this Act, the following terms shall mean:

- A. FASPP - refers to the Financial Assistance for Solo Parents Program implemented by the DSWD providing various forms of assistance to qualified solo parents
- B. Solo Parent - refers to an individual who qualifies as a solo parent under Republic Act No. 11861 and its implementing rules and regulations

- C. Beneficiary – refers to a solo parent whose monthly income does not exceed Fourteen Thousand Pesos (Php 14,000.00), and is qualified to receive assistance under this Act, subject to assessment and submission of documentary requirements
- D. Dependent - refers to a child or a dependent qualified under the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act
- E. Certificate of Eligibility (CE) - refers to a document issued by the DSWD certifying that the solo parent is eligible to avail of assistance under the FASPP
- F. General Intake Sheet (GIS) - refers to the form used by DSWD social workers to record relevant information on the solo parent and dependents
- G. Social Case Study Report (SCSR) - refers to the document prepared by a professional social worker describing the socio-economic condition, assessment, and recommended interventions for the solo parent
- H. Service Providers - refers to entities providing goods and services covered by the FASPP, including but not limited to hospitals, clinics, educational institutions, pharmacies, and other relevant providers
- I. Guarantee Letter (GL) - refers to a document issued by the DSWD guaranteeing payment to service providers on behalf of the solo parent

SECTION 4. COVERAGE AND MODALITIES IN PROVIDING ASSISTANCE.

Financial and other assistance shall be provided through the DSWD and in partnership with local government units (LGUs), subject to eligibility and availability of funds, as follows:

- A. Implementation through the DSWD - Qualified solo parents who need financial assistance for good and services may avail of:
 - 1. Food Assistance - this is an outright cash assistance provided to meet the need for food and other nutritional requirements for sustenance of the solo parent's children;
 - 2. Medical Assistance - this is an outright cash or Guarantee Letter provided to cover hospitalization expenses and professional fees, cost of medicines and other medical treatment or procedures, such as common laboratory tests, and diagnostic imaging for any illness or condition, including postpartum complications. This assistance does not extend to other healthcare expenses that are unrelated to medical treatment or aftercare;

3. Educational Assistance for dependents - refers to an outright cash assistance or Guarantee Letter provided to cover school-related expenses of the solo parent's dependent(s), such as tuition and miscellaneous fees, purchase of school supplies, uniforms, books, payment of transportation expenses, and other incidental costs necessary for the dependent's continued attendance and completion of primary, secondary, or tertiary education, including technical-vocational education or skills training programs, subject to assessment by the DSWD social worker.
4. Livelihood Assistance - refers to an outright cash assistance or support package granted to a qualified solo parent for the purpose of initiating, sustaining, or expanding a small-scale livelihood project or income-generating activity. This assistance may cover the procurement of necessary tools, raw materials, training costs, or other inputs directly related to the livelihood undertaking, as determined by the assessment and recommendation of the DSWD social worker.
5. Cash Relief Assistance - this is an outright cash assistance provided to qualified beneficiaries for reasons other than for food, medical or funeral expenses, which upon the assessment of the DSWD social worker, may appear to be directly related to the effects of high inflation (i.e., difficulty in paying for house rental, electricity and water expenses, etc.).

Cash assistance may be granted outright in amounts from Five Thousand Pesos (PhP 5,000.00) up to Fifteen Thousand Pesos (PhP 15,000.00), subject to the DSWD's assessment. For amounts exceeding Fifteen Thousand Pesos (PhP 15,000.00), the same shall be provided through a Guarantee Letter approved by the Secretary of DSWD or his duly authorized representative.

The distribution of assistance is without prejudice to adoption of digital payment solutions once the necessary infrastructure is in place.

- B. Implementation through Local Government Units (LGUs) - The financial assistance that will be provided to qualified beneficiaries through the LGUs shall be called rice assistance. For this purpose, the DSWD shall enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with the local government units to provide the details of the transfer of funds and the requirements for its liquidation, in accordance with the existing budgeting, accounting and auditing rules and regulations.

The amount of rice assistance that can be provided to qualified beneficiaries shall be equivalent to half of the cost of twenty-five (25) kilograms of rice based on the suggested retail price from the Department of Agriculture (DA). The amount of each transfer to the LGU shall not exceed Thirty Million Pesos (PhP 30,000,000.00).

The financial assistance under this Act may complement any support provided by the LGU, government agencies, and non-government organizations. A beneficiary

who has received rice assistance through the LGU may still qualify to receive other financial assistance from the DSWD subject to the requirements under this Act, and professional assessment of the DSWD social worker.

SECTION 5. DOCUMENTARY REQUIREMENTS.

For purposes of assessment and evaluation, the solo parent shall submit the following:

- a. Solo Parent Identification Card (SPIC);
- b. Proof residency such as barangay certificate, utility bill or Voter's ID; and
- c. Affidavit of two (2) disinterested persons attesting that the children/dependents are under the parental care and support of the solo parent.

SECTION 6. IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS.

Within six (6) months from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of the DSWD, in consultation with relevant agencies and stakeholders, shall formulate and promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to effectively implement the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 7. APPROPRIATIONS.

The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the DSWD. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 8. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE.

If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 9. REPEALING CLAUSE.

All laws, executive orders, proclamations, rules, regulations, and other issuances or parts inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SECTION 10. EFFECTIVITY.

This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its complete publication in the *Official Gazette* or a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,