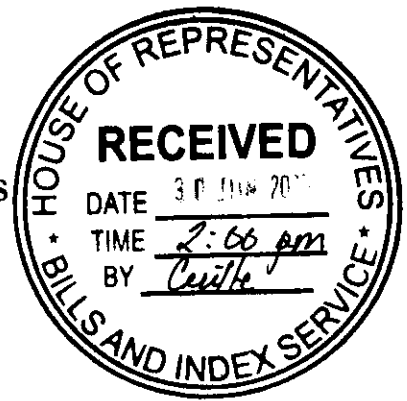


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
1st Regular Session

House Bill No. 454



Introduced by Representative OMAR S. DUTERTE

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) reiterates the gradual decrease in the country's unemployment rate with a hit-low record of 3.8% in 2024. The decrease in unemployment rate means an increase in the anticipated employment opportunities. In anticipation of this economic progression, the implementation of programs that support unemployed individuals becomes all the more critical.

Before gaining employment, job applicants are typically required by potential employers to submit various certifications and clearances that confirm their identity and background. However, for those with little to no income, obtaining these documents poses a significant barrier, as they come with associated costs.

This bill aims to extend pre-employment assistance to indigent individuals by establishing a mechanism for waiving fees for required certifications and clearances. Specifically, it mandates the issuance of these documents free of charge upon first request, and provides a 20% discount on subsequent issuances from government agencies. Through this initiative, financial burden on underprivileged Filipinos striving to secure employment are gradually, if not significantly, eased at the head start.

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


HON. OMAR S. DUTERTE

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TWENTIETH CONGRESS
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House Bill No. 454

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AN ACT
PROVIDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE TO INDIGENTS BY
IMPLEMENTING A SCHEME FOR CHARGING AND GRANTING DISCOUNT
ON FEES IN SECURING PRE-EMPLOYMENT CERTIFICATIONS AND
CLEARANCES FROM GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

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 “*Indigents Pre-Employment Assistance Act.*”

SEC 2. *Declaration of Policy.* It is the policy of the State to promote a just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and independence of the nation and free the people from poverty through policies that provide adequate social services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living and improved quality of life for all. Towards this end, the State shall provide a charging scheme and grant indigent job applicants a discount on fees when they secure pre-employment certificates and clearances from government agencies.

SEC 3. *Indigent Pre-employment Assistance.* An indigent job applicant shall not be charged for any processing or application fee for pre-employment certificates and clearances from government agencies needed as a requirement for the purpose of applying for employment, whether domestically or abroad. After the initial free issuance of pre-employment certifications and clearance, thereafter, the indigent job applicant shall be entitled to a twenty percent (20%) discount on fees charged by government agencies in processing the pre-employment certifications and clearances. These shall include but shall not be limited to the following documents, which shall be strictly issued solely for employment purposes only:

- a. Clearance from the barangay where the applicant resides;
- b. Clearance from the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI);
- c. Clearance from the Regional Philippine National Police (PNP) offices or units;
- d. Medical certificate for local employment from any government hospital licensed by the Department of Health (DOH), and medical certificate for foreign employment from any DOH-accredited medical facility for overseas workers and seafarers;
- e. Certificate of marriage from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA); and

- f. Certificate of live birth of the indigent job applicant and one (1) dependent from the PSA.

The free issuance and corresponding discount thereafter may be availed of by only one indigent job applicant and one dependent per household, to be counted every calendar year from each government agency.

SEC 4. *Identification of Beneficiaries.* For purposes of this Act, an indigent job applicant refers to a person who is seeking gainful employment and has no visible means of income or whose income is insufficient to the subsistence of the applicant's family, as identified and certified by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) based on the criteria set under the National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR).

SEC 5. *Penalties.*

- a. A public officer or employee, including the head of the government agency, who refuses or fails to provide the benefits granted to the indigent job applicant in violation of this Act shall suffer the penalty of imprisonment of not less than six (6) months but not more than one (1) year, or a fine of not less than Ten Thousand Pesos (PhP 10,000.00) but not more than Fifty Thousand Pesos (PhP 50,000.00), or both, at the discretion of the court;
- b. A job applicant or a dependent who misrepresents the status or falsifies any document to avail of benefits provided under this Act or abuses the assistance granted herein shall be punished with imprisonment of not less than six (6) months but not more than one (1) year, or a fine of not less than Five Thousand Pesos (PhP 5,000.00) but not more than Ten Thousand Pesos (PhP 10,000.00), or both, at the discretion of the court;
- c. Prosecution of a public officer or employee under this Act is without prejudice to any liability under other existing laws, civil service rules or regulations.

SEC 6. *Inter-Agency Coordinating and Monitoring Committee.* – An inter-agency coordinating and monitoring committee, herein after referred to as the Committee, shall be established to coordinate and monitor the implementation of this Act. The Committee shall be composed of the following:

- a. Lead Convener of the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC) as chairperson;
- b. Secretary of Labor and Employment as vice chairperson;
- c. Secretary of Social Welfare and Development or authorized representative;
- d. Secretary of the Interior and Local Government or authorized representative;
- e. Secretary of Justice or authorized representative;
- f. Chief of the PNP or authorized representative;
- g. Secretary of Health or authorized representative; and the

- h. National Statistician and Civil Registrar-General of the PSA or authorized representative,

The Committee shall submit an annual report to Congress on the implementation of this Act.

SEC 6. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* Within six (6) months from the effectivity of this Act, the Lead Convenor of NAPC, in consultation and coordination with the Secretaries of DOLE, DOH, DILG, DOJ, and DSWD, the National Statistician and Civil Registrar-General of the PSA, and the Chief of PNP shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC 7. *Separability Clause.* If any provision or part of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC 8. *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, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC 9. *Effectivity Clause.* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,