



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City



TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1254

Introduced by Rep. MARCELINO R. TEODORO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

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3 The 1987 Philippine Constitution affirms the State's duty to protect and promote
4 the right to health of the people and to ensure that health and other social services are
5 made available to all, especially the underprivileged. In pursuit of this mandate, the
6 government adopted the Primary Health Care Approach, empowering communities to
7 participate in health development through strategies such as organizing and training
8 Barangay Health Workers (BHWs).
9

10 However, the devolution of health services to local government units (LGUs)
11 under Republic Act No. 7160, or the Local Government Code of 1991, has significantly
12 weakened the implementation of primary health care. In many LGUs, primary health
13 services are not prioritized due to persistent funding constraints. While the importance
14 of BHWs in delivering basic health services is widely recognized, their welfare and
15 support remain inadequate.
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17 Although Republic Act No. 7883, entitled: "Barangay Health Workers Benefits
18 and Incentives Act of 1995", was enacted to address this gap, its implementation has
19 been hampered by limited resources at the local level. In effect, many BHWs continue
20 to serve as "uncompensated volunteers", lacking even the most basic support such as
21 transportation, subsistence, and hazard allowances. This undermines their critical role
22 in delivering promotive, preventive, curative, and palliative health care services to
23 underserved communities.
24

25 BHWs are integral to the success of universal health care at the grassroots.
26 They assist public health professionals and are often the first point of contact between
27 the health system and the community. Despite this, their contributions remain
28 undervalued. This bill seeks to correct this long-standing neglect by institutionalizing
29 the rights, benefits, and protections due to BHWs.

1 This measure aims to establish a “Magna Carta for Barangay Health Workers”
2 to ensure that all BHWs, whether accredited or registered, receive essential benefits,
3 including transportation allowance, hazard pay, subsistence allowance, and honoraria.
4 These are not perks, but necessary enablers for them to effectively fulfill their duties.
5 The bill also seeks to protect BHWs from political interference and to recognize their
6 invaluable contributions to public health and national development.

7
8 This measure reflects the State’s commitment to health equity, social justice,
9 and the fulfillment of its international obligations under the Sustainable Development
10 Goals (SDGs) and the Declaration of Astana on Primary Health Care. The passage of
11 this bill will help strengthen the foundation of community health systems and ensure
12 that our BHWs are no longer treated as invisible workers, but as indispensable
13 partners in building a healthier nation.

14
15 This bill was reported out by the Committee on Local Government during the
16 19th Congress. It was subsequently passed by the House of Representatives on third
17 reading early in the first regular session of the 19th Congress. The Senate likewise
18 passed their own version of the measure on third reading during the third regular
19 session of the same Congress. However, due to lack of material time, the Conference
20 Committee to discuss the differences of the two versions were not convened in time
21 of the sine die adjournment of the 19th Congress.

22
23 In view of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


MARCELINO R. TEODORO
Representative
First District, Marikina City



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HOUSE BILL NO. 1254

Introduced by Rep. **MARCELINO R. TEODORO**

AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR THE MAGNA CARTA OF BARANGAY HEALTH WORKERS

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

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** - This Act shall be known as the "*Magna Carta of*
2 *Barangay Health Workers*".
3

4 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** - It is hereby declared the policy of the State
5 to protect and promote the right to health of people and adopt an integrated and
6 comprehensive approach to health development, and pursuant thereto, it shall
7 endeavor to make essential goods, healthcare and other social services available to
8 all the people. In line with the country's commitment to accomplish health indicator
9 targets under United Nations sustainable development goals, the State shall adopt
10 policies that promote the welfare and well-being of barangay health workers who are
11 the forefront of the delivery of health care at the grassroots level, and effectively
12 harness their potential as partners in development.
13

14 **SEC. 3. Definition.** - As used in this Act, the term "*barangay health worker*"
15 refers to a person who has undergone training under any accredited government or
16 non-government organization (NGO), and who voluntarily renders primary healthcare
17 services in the community after having been accredited to function as such by the local
18 health board.

19 **SEC. 4. Coverage.** - This Act shall apply to all barangay health workers
20 (BHWs) as defined under Section 3 of this Act: *Provided*, That all incentives and
21 benefits granted under this Act shall extend only to duly accredited BHWs, who have

1 undergone at least two (2) years of 17 training: Provided, however, That duly
2 registered barangay health workers shall be entitled to a monthly honoraria and hazard
3 allowance as provided in Sec. 9 herein: *Provided, further*, That when the BHW
4 receives a fixed salary under a permanent appointment in any government office, by
5 election to another public office or by employment in the private sector, coverage
6 under this Act shall automatically cease and the BHW shall be covered under
7 applicable laws.

8
9 **SEC. 5. Registration.** - All BHWs shall be registered with the local health board
10 in the city or municipality in which they render service. Registered BHWs shall be given
11 appropriate proof of said registration.

12
13 The municipal and city health offices shall regularly update and maintain the
14 BHW Registry with the assistance of the BHW Federation. The BHW Registry shall be
15 subject to the approval of the municipal or city health board. The local health offices
16 shall submit a copy of the updated and duly approved registry to the Provincial Health
17 Office for consolidation and validation with the assistance of the Provincial BHW
18 Federation, which shall also be subject to the approval of the Provincial Health Board.
19 The Provincial BHW Registry shall be posted in the municipal or city bulletin board
20 and barangay health centers.

21
22 The Provincial BHW Registry shall be submitted on or before April 30 of every
23 year to the Department of Health (DOH) at the regional and national levels for
24 consolidation. The DOH is hereby mandated to maintain a national registry of BHWs.

25
26 In order to qualify for registration, a Barangay Health Worker must:

- 27
28 (a) Have rendered basic community health care services continuously and
29 satisfactorily for at least six (6) months immediately preceding the date of
30 the filing of application for registration in the barangay as recommended by
31 the Rural Health Midwife (RHM) or public health nurse assigned to the
32 barangay and by the head of the barangay health workers association and
33 certified by the Sangguniang Barangay;
34 (b) Have completed the basic orientation and training for BHWs as prescribed
35 by the DOH and conducted by an accredited government agency, or DOH-
36 recognized academic institution, or (NGO);
37 (c) Be at least eighteen (18) years of age at the date of the filing of the
38 application for registration; and
39 (d) Be physically and mentally fit.

40
41 It shall be the duty of the municipal and city health offices, in cooperation with
42 the Provincial Health Office and the DOH, to provide BHW applicants basic orientation
43 and training within six (6) months from the date of approval of their application.

44
45 **SEC. 6. Accreditation.** - To further professionalize the health care services
46 rendered by the BHWs and ensure the health and welfare of the community, a duly
47 registered BHW must be accredited by the municipal or city health board.

48 The municipal or city health board shall issue a certificate of accreditation to
49 qualified BHWs. In order to qualify for accreditation, the applicant BHW must:

- 1 (a) Be registered in accordance with Section 5 hereof;
2 (b) Have satisfactorily undertaken the role of a BHW in the locality as
3 provided for in Section 7 hereof, for at least two (2) years of continuous
4 and satisfactory service immediately prior to the filing of application for
5 accreditation; and
6 (c) Have completed a regular training program on health care service and
7 community-based health program in order to upgrade and develop the
8 skills and competency required of a BHW. The training program shall be
9 institutionalized by the DOH, in cooperation with local government units
10 (LGUs).

11
12 It shall be the duty of the municipal or city government, as the case maybe, in
13 cooperation with the provincial government and DOH, to provide the applicant BHWs
14 the necessary support and opportunities for accreditation.

15
16 A BHW must complete the regular training program on health care service and
17 community-based health program within five (5) years from registration.

18
19 The municipal and city health boards or through their registration and
20 accreditation committee shall act on the applications for accreditation of BHWs not
21 than later thirty (30) days from the date of application.

22
23 The DOH shall also maintain an updated roster of accredited BHWs that is
24 accessible to the general public.

25
26 **SEC. 7. Roles, and Duties and Responsibilities of Barangay Health**
27 **Workers.** - As one of the key partners in a reformed health care delivery system, the
28 DOH and LGUs shall support BHWs as they perform the following roles:

- 29
30 (a) Advocate - to support, promote and champion current health programs,
31 projects, and activities to improve access to quality health services
32 towards the improved health status of the community;
33 (b) Educator - to guide and advise the community on the current DOH and
34 health priorities of LGUs such as the importance of a birth plan and
35 facility-based delivery in reducing maternal and infant deaths; newborn
36 screening for the early detection of congenital metabolic disorders which
37 may leads to mental retardation and even death, among others;
38 (c) Disseminator - to maintain regular communication with local professional
39 health workers on health events and updates and concerns relevant to
40 the community and inform the same to the community for appropriate
41 action, if necessary;
42 (d) Linker - to facilitate access to any group or association of the community
43 with a relevant network of or specific health and non-health service
44 providers;
45 (e) Record Keeper - to maintain updated records of health data, health
46 activities and events in the community; and
47 (f) Health Care Service Provider – to assist and provide basic health care
48 services as may be needed in the community in any health event.

49
50 The BHW shall perform the following duties and responsibilities:

- 1
2 (a) Height and weight monitoring, and reporting the same to the barangay;
3 (b) Monitoring and following up of defaulted cases of immunization, family
4 planning, tuberculosis compliance to treatment and others, and reporting
5 the same to the barangay;
6 (c) Reporting to the barangay any incidence of disease or any health cases
7 in the community;
8 (d) Communicating and coordinating with the community to participate in
9 barangay health center activities;
10 (e) Gathering of data about overall status of health of the community;
11 (f) Administering first aid;
12 (g) Conducting health visits;
13 (h) Conducting birth planning for pregnant women;
14 (i) Conducting health education;
15 (j) Strengthening referral systems;
16 (k) Collecting sputum;
17 (l) Identifying people with disease and sickness;
18 (m) Community health profiling;
19 (n) Psychosocial debriefing for stress and post-calamity initiatives;
20 (o) Responding in natural calamities and disasters; and
21 (p) Coordinating closely with the local government health officer in the
22 implementation of health programs in the locality.

23
24 **SEC. 8. Number of Barangay Health Workers (BHWs).** - Subject to relevant
25 laws, and in coordination with relevant government agencies and respective local
26 government units, the number of BHWs in every barangay shall be guided by and
27 based on the particular need of the barangay for BHW services.

28
29 The DOH shall determine the ideal ratio of barangay health workers to the
30 number of households: Provided, That the total number of barangay health workers
31 nationwide shall not be less than one percent (1%) of the total population.

32
33 The residents of the barangay must be given preference in the employment of
34 BHWs.

35
36 **SEC. 9. Incentives and Benefits.** - All accredited BHWs who are actively and
37 regularly performing their duties and responsibilities shall be entitled to the following
38 incentives and benefits:

- 39
40 (a) *Monthly Honoraria* in the amount of not less than Three thousand pesos
41 (P3,000.00), subject to adjustment based on the prevailing market value;
42
43 (b) *Hazard Allowance* in an amount to be determined by the local health board
44 of LGU concerned, which in no case shall be less than One thousand pesos
45 (P1,000.00) per month, subject to existing laws, rules, and regulations;
- 46 (c) *Subsistence Allowance* equivalent to the meals they take in the course of
47 their duty, which shall be computed in accordance with prevailing conditions
48 as determined by the LGU concerned, which in no case shall be less than

1 One hundred pesos (P100.00) per day: *Provided*, That the accredited BHW
2 shall render service within the premises of isolated barangay health stations
3 in order to make it available at any and all times;
4

5 (d) *Transportation Allowance* of not less than One thousand pesos (P1,000.00)
6 per month, subject to auditing rules and regulations, on the condition that
7 the availment of transportation services are in line with the performance of
8 the BHW's official duties and responsibilities;
9

10 (e) *One-time Gratuity Cash Incentive* of not less than Ten thousand pesos
11 (P10,000.00) in recognition of the BHW's loyalty and dedication and for
12 having continuously and satisfactorily served for at least fifteen (15) years;
13

14 (f) *Discount Privileges for BHWs.* - All BHWs shall be entitled to twenty percent
15 (20%) discount on all the items enumerated under Section 4(a) of Republic
16 Act No. 9994, otherwise known as the Expanded Senior Citizens Act of
17 2010: *Provided*, That the privileges shall not be claimed if the BHW is
18 eligible for a higher discount as may be granted by the commercial
19 establishment and/or other existing laws.
20

21 The commercial establishment may claim the discount granted under this
22 section as tax deduction based on the cost of goods sold or services
23 rendered: *Provided*, That the discount shall be allowed as deduction from
24 the gross income for the same taxable year that the discount is granted:
25 *Provided further*, That the total amount of the claimed tax deduction net of
26 VAT, if applicable, shall be included in their gross sales receipt for tax
27 purposes and shall be subject to proper documentation and to the
28 provisions of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, as amended.
29

30 (g) *Training, Education, and Career Enrichment Programs.* - The DOH shall, in
31 coordination with the Department of Education (DepEd), Commission on
32 Higher Education (CHED), Technical Education and Skills Development
33 Authority (TESDA), DOH-recognized academic institutions, other
34 concerned agencies and non-government organizations, provide
35 information on and opportunities for 27 education and career enrichment for
36 accredited BHWs, such as the following:
37

- 38 1) Educational programs which credit the years of primary health care
39 service of the BHW towards higher education completion in institutions
40 with stepladder curricula, thus allowing them to upgrade their skills and
41 knowledge for community work or to pursue further training as midwives,
42 pharmacists, nurses or doctors;
- 43 2) Continuing education, study and exposure tours, grants, field immersion,
44 scholarships; and
- 45 3) Special training programs such as traditional medicine, disaster
46 preparedness and other programs that address emergent community
47 health problems and issues.

48 (h) *Health Benefits.* - During their incumbency, all BHWs are entitled to the
49 following health benefits:
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- 1) Free medical care, including surgery and surgical expenses, medicines, x-ray and other laboratory fees, when confined in any public hospital or health institution;
- 2) Emergency assistance not exceeding the amount of five thousand pesos (P5,000.00) chargeable against the fund of the barangay concerned, for expenses incurred in the nearest private hospital or clinic in case of extreme emergency where there is no available public hospital; and
- 3) Mandatory and immediate membership in the Philippine Health Insurance 10 Corporation (Philhealth) as indirect contributors.

- (i) *Insurance Coverage.* - All BHWs shall be granted insurance coverage and benefits from the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) which shall be borne by the LGU concerned. For this purpose, the GSIS shall design an insurance benefit package suited to the needs and status of BHWs;
- (j) *Sick and Maternity Leaves.* - All BHWs shall be entitled to sick and maternity leaves as prescribed by the Local Health Board: *Provided*, That, the BHWs shall continue to receive their monthly honoraria while on leave, for such period in accordance with existing laws and practices;
- (k) *Cash Gift.* - All accredited BHWs are entitled to cash gift of not less than the minimum monthly honoraria to be given every December from the general fund of the barangay or from such other funds appropriated by the national government for the purpose;
- (l) *Disability Benefit.* - An accredited BHW who sustains injury or sickness in the course of the performance of their duties shall be entitled to Two thousand pesos (P2,000.00) for every year of service;
- (m) *Civil Service Eligibility.* - A second grade eligibility shall be granted to accredited BHWs who have rendered five (5) years continuous service as such: *Provided*, That, should a BHW become a regular employee of the government, the total numbers of years served as such shall be credited to the BHWs service in computing the retirement benefits;
- (n) *Free Legal Services.* - Legal representation and consultation services shall be immediately provided by the Public Attorney's Office to an accredited BHW in cases of coercion, interference, and in other civil and criminal cases filed by or against BHWs arising out of or in connection with the performance of their duties as such;
- (o) *Preferential Access to Loan.* - The DOH in coordination with other concerned government agencies shall provide, within One hundred eighty (180) days after the effectivity of this Act, a mechanism that shall provide BHWs organized access to loan services. The agencies providing loan services will set aside one percent (1%) of their 5 loanable funds for organized BHW groups that have community-based income generating 6 projects in support of health programs or activities.

1 Notwithstanding the limitations under this section, all registered BHWs shall
2 be entitled to monthly *honoraria* and hazard allowance.

3
4 The LGUs concerned shall also endeavor to provide other health benefits
5 to BHWs not otherwise provided by law.
6

7 **SEC. 10. Annual Review.** - The local health boards shall conduct an annual
8 review of the BHW program, performance, as well as the benefits, incentives and
9 allowances enumerated in the immediately preceding Section taking into
10 consideration the current consumer price index as published by the Philippine
11 Statistics Authority.
12

13 **SEC. 11. Discrimination Prohibited.** - Discrimination against any BHW by
14 reason of gender, civil status, creed, religious, or political beliefs and ethnic groupings
15 in the exercise of their functions and responsibilities is hereby prohibited.
16

17 **SEC. 12. Protection of BHWs.** - No accredited BHW shall be removed except
18 for a valid cause as determined by the Local Health Board (LHB). The LHB shall
19 resolve termination cases against BHWs judiciously and not later than ninety (90) days
20 from the receipt of a complaint: *Provided*, That if a BHW is found to be unjustly
21 removed from service, the BHW shall be entitled to reinstatement without loss of
22 benefits and incentives from the time of termination up to the time of reinstatement.
23

24 **SEC. 13. Grievance Mechanism.** - The LHB shall establish a grievance
25 mechanism as a means of processing complaints of BHWs against alleged acts of
26 discrimination and unjust removal from the service. The decisions rendered by the
27 LHB shall be final and executory.
28

29 **SEC. 14. Municipal, City, Provincial, and National Federation of BHWs.** -
30 There shall be an organization of accredited BHWs for the purpose of electing the
31 municipal, city, provincial, and national-level federation in order to ventilate, articulate,
32 and crystalize issues affecting health care delivery system and with utmost regard to
33 service to patients and the continuous operation of barangay health services in the
34 interest of public health, safety, or survival of patients.
35

36 The BHW federation for municipalities, cities, and provinces shall elect their
37 respective local federation boards of directors, and a set of national officers to
38 comprise the national board of directors to be headed by a president. A Secretary-
39 General shall be chosen from among the national federation members to manage the
40 day-to-day operation and activities of the federation. The respective boards of
41 directors may create such other positions as may be necessary for the management
42 of the affairs of the local and national federation.
43

44 **SEC. 15. Representation in the Local Health Board and Primary Health
45 Care Provider & Network.** - The President of the municipal or city federation of BHWs
46 shall be a member of the municipal or city local health board. The respective
47 presidents of the federation of BHWs of each city and municipality federation of a
48 province shall elect from among themselves their representative to the provincial
49 health board: *Provided*, That the BHW representatives to the local health boards shall

1 not be allowed to vote on the registration, accreditation, and disciplinary or removal
2 complaints of BHWs.

3
4 The BHWs shall also be part of the health care provider network, in the
5 implementation of health care services and programs.

6
7 **SEC. 16. Prohibition from Engaging in Partisan Political Activity.** - No BHW
8 shall engage in any partisan political activity.

9
10 **SEC. 17. Continuous Capacity Building for BHWs.** - The DOH shall conduct
11 continuous capacity building for BHWs that will enhance and upgrade their knowledge
12 and skills through various forms including online learning and multimedia in major
13 Philippine dialects.

14
15 The DOH shall, in coordination with TESDA and other concerned agencies,
16 assist the LGUs in the development of education modules or materials to promote the
17 collective experiences and learnings of BHWs as well as to promote traditional and
18 complementary medicine.

19
20 The LGUs shall endeavor to establish their own training centers for their BHWs
21 and other 26 health workers in coordination with the TESDA, NGOs, and other
22 agencies concerned.

23
24 The LGUs shall also implement a development program for BHWs that will
25 allow them to benefit from the ladderized training as provided under Republic Act No.
26 10968, otherwise known as the Philippine Qualification Framework Act, and Republic
27 Act No. 10647, otherwise known as the Ladderized Education Act of 2014, including
28 academic credits for health-related courses.

29
30 **SEC. 18. Observance of BHW Day.** - Every barangay shall commemorate
31 BHW Day during April 7 of every year in recognition of the service of Barangay Health
32 Workers, their heroic services in times of crises, and their indispensable role in
33 promoting health and wellness among the citizenry.

34
35 The DOH, in cooperation with the Department of the Interior and Local
36 Government (DILG) and all local government units shall hold simple ceremonies or
37 activities to highlight the indispensable role of BHWs in nation-building.

38
39 **SEC. 19. Penalty Clause.** - Any local government official who violates any
40 provision of this Act may be administratively and criminally charged in accordance with
41 law.

42
43 **SEC. 20. Appropriations.** - The amount necessary for the implementation of
44 this Act shall be charged against the National Tax Allotment of the LGUs, other local
45 funds, the special health fund under Republic Act No. 11223, otherwise known as the
46 "Universal Health Care Act".

47
48 **SEC. 21. Implementing Rules and Regulation.** - The DOH and the DILG
49 shall, in consultation with the DepEd, CSC, GSIS, and other concerned government
agencies and non-governmental entities, promulgate the rules and regulations to

1 implement this Act not later than One hundred eighty (180) days from the effectivity of
2 this Act.

3
4 **SEC. 22. Separability Clause.** - If any portion or provision of this Act is
5 declared invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions hereof shall remain in full force
6 and effect.

7
8 **SEC. 23. Repealing Clause.** - Republic Act No. 7883, otherwise known as the
9 "Barangay Health Workers' Benefits and Incentives Act of 1995" is hereby repealed.
10 All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, which are inconsistent with
11 this Act are hereby repealed or amended or accordingly.

12
13 **SEC. 24. Effectivity.** - This Act shall take effect fifteen days (15) after its
14 publication in the Official Gazette or in a national newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,