

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session
House Bill No. **3060**



Introduced by: Congressman **BIENVENIDO M. ABANTE, JR.**

AN ACT
INCREASING THE SALARIES OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE HEALTHCARE
WORKERS OR PROVIDERS, GRANTING THEM MANDATORY BENEFITS
AND ALLOWANCES DURING PANDEMICS, EPIDEMICS, AND OTHER
PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution provides: that the promotion of the general welfare is essential for the enjoyment by all the people of the blessings of democracy (*Sec. 5, Art. II*); the State shall 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 an improved quality of life for all (*Sec. 9, Art. II*); the State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them (*Sec. 15, Art. II*); and the State shall adopt an integrated approach to health development which shall endeavor to make essential goods, health, and other social services available to all the people at affordable cost (*Sec. 11, Art. XIII*).

We cannot put a price tag on the sacrifices and dedication of our selfless healthcare workers or providers, who have for a long time exhibited. This was tested to the limits in the COVID-19 pandemic, notwithstanding the reality that they are not well compensated. Unfortunately, the Regional Wages and Productivity Boards are restricted in issuing wage orders unless extraordinary economic circumstances arise.

This bill, therefore, seeks to recognize and compensate the hard work and the critical and sacrificial role, and invaluable kindness of our healthcare workers or providers in providing quality and prompt healthcare services for the promotion and protection of health for the general welfare of the people which is essential for the enjoyment of the blessings of democracy, especially in times of public health emergencies and calamities.

Healthy, dedicated, and efficient healthcare workers or providers mean healthy people and a healthy nation, the people being the most important asset of a nation.

In view hereof, the early approval of this bill is earnestly requested.



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

SECTION 1. Short Title. - This Act shall be known as the “**Healthcare Workers Act of 2025**”.

SEC. 2 Declaration of Policy. - It is hereby declared a policy of the State to recognize and compensate the critical and sacrificial role of healthcare workers or providers in providing quality and prompt healthcare services for the promotion and protection of health for the general welfare of the people which is essential for the enjoyment of the blessings of democracy especially in times of public health emergencies and calamities, and to alleviate their living conditions through policies and measures that provide a decent and humane standard of living and improved quality of life that ensure their well-being and economic security.

SEC. 3 Coverage. - This Act shall apply to all healthcare workers or healthcare providers in both the public and private sectors employed in or assigned to health facilities as the terms are defined in this Act, which includes medical and allied-fields practitioners, staff, aides in hospitals, sanitarium, rural health units, health centers, barangay health stations, clinics, laboratories, and other health-related establishments duly authorized or recognized by the Department of Health.

SEC. 4 Definition of Terms. - For purposes of this Act:

- (a) *Healthcare* pertains to the care, maintenance, or improvement of the health of persons through the prevention, diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation, and chronic management of disease, illness, injury, and other physical and mental ailments or impairments.
- (b) *Health facilities* shall refer to any public or private institution with healthcare as its core service, function, or business. For purposes of this Act, health facilities and other health-related establishments shall refer to those duly licensed, authorized, recognized, or designated by the Department of Health (DOH) to operate or function as such, such as public and private hospitals, clinics, and laboratories, including the DOH-Central Office, Central Centers for Health Development (CHD), Provincial/City/Municipal/Barangay or Rural Health Centers or Units.
- (c) *Healthcare workers or providers* shall refer to persons who are engaged in healthcare and health-related works as the term is defined in this Act which shall include, but not limited to, physicians, nurses, midwives, nutritionists, dietitians, pharmacists, social workers, laboratory technicians, paramedical technicians, psychologists, attendants, and other allied health professionals, including administrative and support personnel who are employed in or assigned to health facilities as the term is defined in this Act.
- (d) *Public health emergency* shall refer to an occurrence or imminent threat of illness or health condition of national scale, that:
- (1) Is caused by any of the following:
 - (i) Bioterrorism;
 - (ii) Appearance of a novel or previously controlled or eradicated infectious agent or biological toxin;
 - (iii) A natural disaster;
 - (iv) A chemical attack or accident; or
 - (iv) A nuclear attack or accident; or
 - (v) An attack or accidental release of radioactive materials; and
 - (2) Poses a high probability of any of the following occurrences:
 - (i) A large number of deaths in the affected population;
 - (ii) A large number of serious injuries or long-term disabilities in the affected population;
 - (iii) Widespread exposure to an infectious or toxic agent that poses a significant risk of substantial harm to a large number of people in the affected population;

- (iv) International exposure to an infectious or toxic agent that poses a significant risk to the health of citizens of other countries; or
- (iv) Trade or travel restrictions.

SEC. 5 *Wage Increase.* - The daily rate of all healthcare workers or providers employed in or assigned to health facilities and establishments, as the terms are defined under this Act, shall be increased by Two Hundred Fifty Pesos (P250.00) upon the effectivity of this Act. Nothing in this Act shall prevent or prohibit the respective Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Boards from granting additional increases to such healthcare workers or providers on the basis of their determination pursuant to Republic Act No. 6727, otherwise known as the “Wage Rationalization Act”, as amended.

SEC. 6 *Grant of Health Emergency Allowance.* - In case of public health emergency the national government or the private employer, as the case may be, shall grant Health Emergency Allowance (HEA) to healthcare workers or providers employed in or assigned to health facilities as the terms are defined in this Act for every month of service during the state of emergency based on the risk exposure categorization as may be determined and defined by the Department of Health in the following amounts:

- (1) Those deployed in “low-risk areas” shall be given at least Two Thousand Pesos (P2,000.00);
- (2) Those deployed in “medium risk areas” shall be given at least Three Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (P3,500.00);
- (3) Those deployed in “high-risk areas” shall be given at least Five Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (P5,500.00).

SEC. 7 *Correction of Wage Distortion in Private Health Facilities.* - Where a wage distortion occurs as a result of the increase in the minimum wage under this Act, the employer and the union, or the employer and the workers in the absence of a union, shall negotiate to correct the distortion in accordance with the provisions of Article 124 of Presidential Decree No. 442 or the "Labor Code of the Philippines", as amended, and other existing laws, rules and regulations.

SEC. 8 *Non-Chargeability of Prior Increases in Private Health Facilities.* - No wage increase shall be credited as compliance with the increase prescribed herein unless expressly provided under valid collective bargaining agreements: Provided, that where such increase is less than the prescribed increase under this Act, the employer shall pay the difference. Such increases shall not include anniversary wage increases, merit wage increases, and those resulting from the regularization or promotion of employees.

SEC. 9 *Non-Diminution of Other Benefits.* - Nothing in this Act shall be construed to eliminate, or in any way reduce or diminish benefits or allowance in any form being enjoyed by healthcare workers or providers under Republic Act No. 7305 or the “Magna Carta of Public Health Workers” and other laws, decrees, issuances, and executive orders or any contract or agreement between workers and employers, as the case may be, at the time of the effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 10 *Prohibition Against Double Recovery of Benefits.* - Whenever other laws provide for the same benefits covered by this Act, the healthcare worker or provider shall have the option to choose which benefits will be paid to him/her. However, in the event that the benefits chosen are less than those provided under this Act, the worker shall be paid only the difference.

SEC. 11 *Establishment of a Grievance Mechanism.* - The DOH shall issue guidelines on the creation of an ad hoc Grievance Board, which shall be composed of three (3) members that will receive, investigate, adjudicate, and recommend actions to arrive at the settlement of complaints related to any violation of or non-compliance with the benefits provided for under this. The DOH shall likewise create Regional ad hoc Grievance Boards in its Regional Offices.

The Grievance Board shall be composed of the following:

One (1) grievance officer appointed by the DOH;

One (1) representative from the health professional organizations; and

One (1) arbitration officer from the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) exercising jurisdiction where the health facility concerned is located.

SEC. 12 *Inspection by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE).* - The DOLE shall conduct an inspection of payroll and other financial records kept by private health facilities to determine whether these healthcare workers or providers are paid the prescribed minimum wage increase and/or allowances provided in this Act and other benefits granted by law. In unionized healthcare facilities, the DOLE inspectors shall always be accompanied by the president or any responsible officer of the recognized bargaining unit or of the interested union in the conduct of the inspection. In non-unionized healthcare facilities, the inspection should be carried out in the presence of the healthcare workers' representative.

SEC. 13 *Penalties.* - Any person, corporation, partnership, association or entity violating any provision of this Act shall be punished by a fine of not less than Fifty thousand pesos (P50,000.00) but not more than One hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00)

plus moral damages for each affected healthcare worker or provider and the costs of litigation including attorney's fees, or imprisonment of not less than two (2) years nor more than four (4) years, or both at the discretion of the court: Provided, That if the violation is committed by a corporation, partnership, association or any other entity, the penalty of imprisonment shall be imposed upon the entity's responsible officers including, but not limited to, the president, vice president, chief executive officer, general manager, and managing director or partner. The employer concerned shall be ordered to pay an amount equivalent to double the unpaid benefits owing to the Healthcare worker or provider: Provided, That the payment of indemnity shall not absolve the employer from the criminal liability imposable under this Act: Provided, further, That any person convicted under this Act shall not be entitled to the benefits provided for under the Probation Law.

Failure on the part of any corporation, partnership, association, or any other entity to comply with the provisions of this Act shall be a ground for non-renewal of its business permits.

SEC. 14 *Construction in Favor of Healthcare Worker or Provider.* - All doubts in the implementation and interpretation of the provisions of this Act, including its implementing rules and regulations, shall be resolved in favor of the healthcare worker or provider.

SEC. 15 *Appropriations.* - The amount necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be charged against the available appropriations of the DOH and any sources available as may be identified by the DBM. Thereafter, the amount necessary for its continuous implementation, giving consideration to the possible occurrence of a state of national public health emergency, shall be included in the General Appropriations Act (GAA), subject to existing budgeting, accounting, and auditing rules and regulations.

SEC. 16 *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - Within sixty (60) days after the effectivity of this Act, the DOH, the DBM and the Department of Finance shall, in consultation with other government agencies and concerned stakeholders, promulgate the implementing rules and regulations to efficiently carry out the provisions of this Act: *Provided*, That the non-promulgation of such rules and regulations shall not prevent the immediate implementation of this Act upon effectivity thereof.

SEC. 17 *Separability Clause.* - If any part or parts of this Act shall be declared unconstitutional or invalid, other sections or provisions hereof not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SEC. 18 *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, executive orders, executive issuances or letters of instruction, rules, and regulations, or any part thereof, inconsistent with or

contrary to the provisions of this Act are hereby deemed repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SEC. 19 *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved.