



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



TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **4603**

Introduced by **Representative GIRLIE E. VELOSO**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Republic Act No. 7305, otherwise known as the *Magna Carta of Public Health Workers*, was enacted in 1992 to recognize the vital role of health workers in the delivery of public health services and to grant them special rights and benefits commensurate with the risks and demands of their profession. Over the past three decades, however, evolving health systems, new global standards, and recent jurisprudence have revealed the need to update and harmonize its provisions with subsequent laws, civil service regulations, and fiscal policies, in order to ensure both fairness to workers and sustainability for government.

The original law contains provisions that are either too vague, outdated, or inadequate to respond to present realities. Allowances such as hazard, subsistence, and laundry benefits have not kept pace with the actual costs and risks borne by health workers. Definitions of coverage are too broad in some respects and too narrow in others, leaving vulnerable groups such as waste management staff exposed but excluding those under contract of service from even minimal risk protection. Procedures for administrative cases, professional development incentives, and budgetary mechanisms remain fragmented, leading to delays, uneven implementation, and inequities across agencies and local governments.

This bill seeks to strengthen and modernize the Magna Carta of Public Health Workers by clarifying definitions, updating benefits, introducing a tiered hazard allowance system, and mandating merit-based pathways for career development. It rationalizes subsistence and laundry allowances based on prevailing regional costs, institutionalizes recognition for postgraduate studies and research, and provides conditional risk protection to job order and contract of service personnel. It also sets clearer rules on administrative due process and budget preparation to ensure that entitlements are not merely declarative but backed by fiscal discipline.

By modernizing RA 7305, the bill protects health workers in a manner that is both just to them and fair to taxpayers. It ensures that frontline professionals and high-risk support staff are duly recognized for the hazards they face, while providing government with mechanisms to allocate resources responsibly and equitably. The reforms will strengthen retention, morale, and professionalism among health workers, address disparities in compensation and risk protection, and build a more resilient and responsive public health system that benefits the entire Filipino population.

This measure affirms that protecting public health workers is not only a matter of justice for those who serve, but also a strategic investment in the health and security of the nation.

In view of the foregoing, support for the enactment of this measure is earnestly requested.


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House Bill No. _____

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**AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE MAGNA CARTA OF PUBLIC HEALTH
WORKERS BY ENHANCING THEIR STATUTORY BENEFITS AND INCENTIVES,
AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7305**

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

1 **SECTION 1.** Section 3 of Republic Act No. 7305 is hereby amended to read as follows:

2 " Section 3. Definition. – For purposes of this Act, ‘public health workers’ shall mean all
3 personnel engaged in the actual delivery of health and health-related services in hospitals,
4 sanitaria, treatment and rehabilitation centers, health centers, rural health units, barangay
5 health stations, clinics, laboratories, and other facilities owned and operated by the
6 Government or its political subdivisions with original charters, including agencies attached to
7 the Department of Health.

8 The term shall include physicians, nurses, midwives, dentists, pharmacists, medical
9 technologists, nutritionists, social workers, and other allied health professionals, as well as
10 technical and support staff whose functions are directly related to patient care, the delivery
11 of health programs, or expose them to occupational health risks, such as laboratory support,
12 waste management, and sanitation services.

13 It shall cover those employed on a full-time or part-time basis in national government
14 agencies (NGAs), state universities and colleges (SUCs), government-owned and controlled
15 corporations (GOCCs), and local government units (LGUs), whether holding permanent,
16 temporary, or casual appointments, and whose salaries are charged against Personnel

Services (PS) appropriations under the Compensation and Position Classification Act (RA 6758), as amended."

SECTION 2. Section 9 of Republic Act No. 7305 is hereby amended to read as follows:

"Section 9. Discrimination Prohibited. — A Public Health Worker (PHW) shall not be subjected to discrimination on the basis of political or religious affiliation, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, civil status, age, disability, or ethnicity in the exercise of their profession."

SECTION 3. Section 11 of Republic Act No. 7305 is hereby amended to read as follows:

"Section 11. Administrative Charges. – Administrative charges against a national public health worker shall be heard by a committee or officer designated by the disciplining authority, its delegated officer, or officers under its jurisdiction, in accordance with Executive Order No. 292, its implementing rules, and other applicable civil service laws and regulations.

For local public health workers, administrative charges shall be heard by a committee or officer created or designated by the Provincial or City Health Board, in accordance with applicable rules and regulations.

The committee or hearing officer shall submit a recommendation to the appropriate disciplining authority within thirty (30) days from the conclusion of the investigation and hearings.

Where the provincial health officer or head of a health facility is an interested party, the members of the committee or the designated officer shall instead be appointed by the Secretary of Health."

SECTION 4. Section 18 of Republic Act No. 7305 is hereby amended to read as follows:

"Section 18. Night Shift Differential. — (a) Every public health worker shall be paid a night shift differential of twenty percent (20%) of his/her regular wage for each hour of work performed during night shifts customarily observed by hospitals, sanatoria, treatment and rehabilitation centers, birthing clinics, and other health facilities operating on a 24/7 basis, as well as during calamities, disasters, and public health emergencies.

(b) A public health worker required to render service beyond his/her regular schedule during the period from six o'clock in the evening to six o'clock in the morning shall be entitled to his/her regular wage, the corresponding overtime pay, plus an additional amount equivalent to twenty percent (20%) of such overtime rate for each hour worked.

The foregoing provisions shall be without prejudice to Republic Act No. 11701 and its implementing rules and regulations."

SECTION 5. Section 20 of Republic Act No. 7305 is hereby amended to read as follows:

"Section 20. Additional Compensation. – Notwithstanding Section 12 of Republic Act No. 6758, public health workers shall receive the following allowances: hazard allowance, subsistence allowance, longevity pay, laundry allowance and remote assignment allowance.

Such allowances shall not be considered as part of the basic salary and shall not be subject to income tax."

SECTION 6. Section 21 of Republic Act No. 7305 is hereby amended to read as follows:

"Section 21. Hazard Allowance. – All public health workers shall be entitled to a hazard allowance in recognition of the inherent risks of their service, subject to the following schedule:

- (a) Baseline Hazard Allowance. – A hazard allowance equivalent to ten percent (10%) of the monthly basic salary shall be granted to all public health workers, in recognition of the general occupational risks inherent in health service delivery.
- (b) Moderate Risk Assignment. – Public health workers who are frequently exposed to infectious, chemical, radiological, or occupational hazards in the normal course of duty, including those assigned in emergency rooms (non-trauma or general), outpatient departments, routine operating and delivery rooms, dialysis units, tuberculosis wards, diagnostic laboratories, or radiation-exposed clinics with protective protocols, or in other comparable work settings, shall receive a hazard allowance equivalent to fifteen percent (15%) to twenty percent (20%) of the monthly basic salary.
- (c) High-Risk Assignment. – Public health workers who are constantly and directly exposed to life-threatening hazards, or who are assigned to environments where the danger of contagion, violence, or disaster is inherent and severe, such as those deployed in intensive care units, isolation wards, trauma and emergency response teams, epidemic or outbreak response units, distressed or isolated stations, strife-torn or embattled areas, prison camps, mental health facilities handling high-risk cases, or laboratories dealing with highly infectious or toxic materials, as well as other duty stations of comparable danger, shall receive a hazard allowance equivalent to twenty-five percent (25%) or higher of the monthly basic salary, as determined by the Department of Health in consultation with the Department of Budget and Management.
- (d) Special Risk Allowance. – In the event of a declared public health emergency, epidemic, pandemic, or comparable crisis, public health workers directly involved in front-line response shall be entitled to an additional special risk allowance equivalent to not less

1 than five percent (5%) and not more than twenty percent (20%) of the monthly basic
2 salary, to be determined based on the severity of risk and subject to appropriations.

3 The classification of health facilities and determination of eligible positions under this
4 Section shall be prescribed and regularly updated by the Department of Health, in
5 consultation with the Department of Budget and Management, taking into consideration
6 both occupational risk and fiscal sustainability.

7 Job order and contract of service personnel who are assigned to high-risk health-related
8 work may likewise be provided with occupational risk protection, subject to review by the
9 Department of Health, the Civil Service Commission, and the Department of Budget and
10 Management to determine legal, fiscal, and administrative feasibility, and consistent with
11 existing laws, regulations, and available appropriations.”

12 **SECTION 7.** Section 22 of Republic Act No. 7305 is hereby amended to read as follows:

13 “Section 22. Subsistence Allowance. – Public Health Workers who are required to render
14 continuous service within the premises of hospitals, sanitarium, rural health units, main health
15 centers, health infirmaries, barangay health stations, clinics, and other health-related
16 establishments, in order to make their services available at all times, shall be entitled to free
17 meals or a subsistence allowance.

18 The subsistence allowance shall correspond to the reasonable cost of meals necessary for the
19 actual duty rendered, not exceeding the equivalent of three (3) meals per day. The amount
20 shall be based on prevailing regional meal costs, to be determined annually by the
21 Department of Health in consultation with the Department of Economy, Planning and
22 Development (DEPDev), Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), and the Department of
23 Budget and Management (DBM).

24 Where meals are provided in kind by the facility, or where the nature of duty does not
25 require continuous presence within the health facility, the allowance shall be correspondingly
26 reduced or not granted.”

27 **SECTION 8.** Section 24 of Republic Act No. 7305 is hereby amended to read as follows:

28 “Section 24. Laundry Allowance. – Public Health Workers who are required to wear
29 uniforms regularly shall be entitled to a laundry allowance. The allowance shall not be less
30 than Eight Hundred Pesos (₱800.00) per month and shall be reviewed every five (5) years by
31 the Department of Health in consultation with the in consultation with the Department of
32 Economy, Planning and Development (DEPDev), Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), and
33 the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), taking into account prevailing regional
34 costs and economic conditions.”

SECTION 9. Section 34 (b) of Republic Act No. 7305 is hereby amended to read as follows:

“Section 34. Health Human Resource Development and Management. – The Department of Health shall establish, implement, and regularly review policies, programs, and mechanisms for health human resource development and management, which shall cover, among others, the following areas:

- (a) adequacy of facilities and supplies to render quality health care to patients and other client population;
- (b) opportunity for health workers to grow and develop their potentials and experience a sense of worth and dignity in their work. Public health workers who successfully complete relevant post-graduate studies in a degree course shall be given due recognition as an enhancement of their qualifications and shall be granted merit credits in accordance with civil service laws, rules, and regulations. Such recognition shall be considered in promotion, reclassification, or career advancement opportunities, subject to the availability of plantilla positions and the corresponding budgetary allocation;
- (c) mechanisms for democratic consultation in government health institutions;
- (d) staffing patterns and standards of health care to ensure that the people receive quality care. Existing recommendations on staffing and standards of health care shall be immediately and strictly enforced. The Department of Health and other hiring authorities shall, in consultation with the Civil Service Commission and the Department of Budget and Management, establish clear and transparent pathways for merit-based promotion and career development that duly recognize the completion of relevant post-graduate studies. For this purpose, the Department of Health and other hiring authorities shall regularly review and, when necessary, recommend adjustments to plantilla positions to the Department of Budget and Management, consistent with applicable laws, rules, and fiscal considerations;
- (e) ways and means of enabling the rank-and-file workers to avail of educational opportunities for personal growth and development. Public health workers who undertake approved research or training programs shall be entitled to reasonable allowances or grants as may be determined by the Department of Health in consultation with the Department of Budget and Management, subject to the availability of funds. The Department of Health shall, in consultation with the Civil Service Commission and accredited professional organizations, establish guidelines for recognizing research outputs and training certifications as merit credits for promotion, reclassification, or career advancement, consistent with civil service laws and rules. Scholarships, study leave, or other forms of support for advanced training and research may be granted to qualified public health workers, subject to existing government scholarship and training policies;

- (f) upgrading of working conditions, reclassification of positions and salaries of public health workers to correct disparity vis-a-vis other professions such that positions requiring longer study be upgraded and given corresponding pay scale; and
- (g) assessment of the national policy on exportation of skilled health human resource to focus on how these resources could instead be utilized productively for the country's needs.

There is hereby created a Congressional Commission on Health (HEALTHCOM) to review and assess health human resource development, particularly on continuing professional education and training and the other areas described above. The Commission shall be composed of five (5) members of the House of Representatives and five (5) members of the Senate. It shall be co-chaired by the Chairpersons of the Committee on Health of both Houses. It shall render a report and recommendation to Congress which shall be the basis for policy legislation in the field of health. Such a congressional review shall be undertaken once every five (5) years."

SECTION 10. Section 35 of Republic Act No. 7305 is hereby amended to read as follows:

"Section 35. Rules and Regulations. - The Secretary of Health after consultation with appropriate agencies of the government as well as accredited professional and health workers' organizations or unions, shall formulate and prepare the necessary rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act which shall take effect thirty (30) days after publication in a newspaper of general circulation."

SECTION 11. Section 38 of Republic Act No. 7305 is hereby repealed and a new Section 38 shall be inserted as follows:

"Section. 38. Budget Estimates. - For National Government Agencies (NGAs) including SUCs:

The amounts required for the payment of Magna Carta benefits shall be charged against the respective agency's appropriations or budget. The payment Magna Carta benefits of the public health workers in the government shall be charged to the appropriations authorized in the General Appropriations Act (GAA). Augmentation thereof from any available savings of the agency shall be subject to the approval of the DBM.

The Magna Carta benefits for contractual and casual personnel shall be charged against the respective agency lump sum appropriations from which their salaries or wages are drawn. For GOCCs and GFIs, the amounts required shall be charged against their respective corporate funds in the approved corporate operating budget."

1 **SECTION 12. Separability Clause.** - If any provision of this Act is declared
2 unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act or any provision not affected thereby shall
3 remain in force and in effect.

4 **SECTION 13. Repealing Clause.** - All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, and
5 their implementing rules, inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed,
6 amended, or modified accordingly.

7 **SECTION 14. Effectivity.** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication
8 in the Official Gazette and in a newspaper of general circulation.

9 Approved.