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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 5185



INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVES RALPH WENDEL P. TULFO AND JOCELYN P. TULFO

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A COMPREHENSIVE AND RESPONSIVE CIVIL REGISTRATION AND VITAL STATISTICS SYSTEM, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In 1930, the Law on Registry of Civil Status or Act No. 3753 established a civil register for the purpose of recording the civil status of persons. Presently, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) serves as the central statistical authority of the Philippine government on primary data collection and is mandated to carry out, enforce, and administer civil registration functions in the country, pursuant to Republic Act No. 10625, otherwise known as the "Philippine Statistical Act of 2013".

However, both Acts fell short in creating a civil registration and vital statistics system which encompasses the complete process of collecting information on the occurrence and characteristics of vital events (*e.g.*, birth, death, cause of death, marriage, adoption, etc.) and generating vital statistics through the compilation, analysis, evaluation, presentation, and dissemination of data.

This proposed legislative measure seeks to provide for a comprehensive and responsive Civil Registration and Vital Statistics System which shall standardize and

modernize registration procedures to establish the identity of an individual for administrative and legal purposes. In order to establish the most precise identity of an individual for the benefit of the general public, efficient and simplified procedures in recording vital events shall be applied in civil registration. Aside from ensuring the efficient gathering and easier retrieval and recording of statistics, this System shall also provide equal access that is affordable, available, and able to protect the rights of all citizens, especially children.

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

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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 "Comprehensive and Responsive Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Act".

SEC. 2. ***Declaration of Policy.*** – The State shall promote and maintain an efficient, responsive, inclusive, and accessible civil registration and vital statistics system. Towards this end, standardization and modernization of registration procedures is necessary to establish the identity of an individual for administrative and legal purposes. Moreover, efficient and simplified procedures in recording vital events must be applied in civil registration in order to establish the most precise identity of an individual for the benefit of the general public.

The State declares the registration of all births, deaths, and marriages without discrimination as a national State policy. As such, the State shall provide and maintain

a legal framework on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) that is accessible, available, affordable, and protects the rights of all citizens, especially children. Such a framework will also endure the easy gathering, retrieval, and recording of statistics.

The enactment of this policy reaffirms the commitment of the State to the international standards and recommendations, according to the principles of the universal human right to be recognized as a person before the law (UDHR Art. VI), to children's right to nationality, registration after birth (UN CRC Art. VII), the right to identity (UN CRC Art. VIII), the right to be protected from discrimination based on race, sex, color, language, religion, national or social origin (ICCPR Art. XXIV), the right to nationality of persons with disabilities (CRPD Art. XVIII), the right of adolescents to birth registration (UNCRC GC 20, Art. VIII), the right of children in street situations to be proactively supported to obtain legal identity documents, and the right of all children at all ages to free, accessible, simple, and expeditious birth registration (UN CRC GC 21, Art. XV), and the right of all Filipino migrant workers to be recognized as a person of the law (ICMW, Art. XXIV) on CRVS.

The State shall endeavor to facilitate the realization of the people's rights and support good governance, health, and development through the universal and responsive CRVS system. In this light, the State shall work towards reaching the following goals from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Declaration of Civil Registration in Southeast Asia:

Goal 1: Universal civil registration of all births, deaths, marriages, and other vital events based on accurate data;

Goal 2: Entitlement of all individuals to legal documentation of civil registration of their births, deaths, marriages, and other vital events, as necessary, to claim identity, civil status, and ensuing rights;

Goal 3: Production and dissemination of accurate, complete, and timely vital statistics (including the cause of death) are processed based on registration records.

Goal 4: Free, accessible, simple, and expeditious birth registration is provided to all children at all ages.

Goal 5: The civil registration documents are used as main tools for child protection in relation to education, health, and other social services, justice, inheritance, and family reunification.

SEC. 3. ***Coverage.*** – This law shall embrace all acts, events, and judicial and administrative issuances affecting the civil status and vital statistics of persons in the Philippines and all Filipino citizens abroad, including all children with at least one Filipino parent.

SEC. 4. ***Definition of Terms.*** – As used in this Act, the following terms are defined as follows:

(a) *Barangay Civil Registration System (BCRS)* refers to a scheme to facilitate extensive civil registration at the barangay level involving all barangay officials assisting the Local Civil Registrars (LCR) in civil registration work, as provided in Section 394 (d) (5) RA 7160, otherwise known as the Local Government Code of the Philippines;

(b) *Birth Attendant* refers exclusively to persons with midwifery skills such as licensed doctors, midwives, and nurses who have been trained to proficiency in the skills necessary to manage normal deliveries and diagnose, manage, or refer obstetric complications;

(c) *Child* refers to any person below 18 years age or older who is unable to fully take care of himself/herself from abuse, neglect, cruelty, exploitation or discrimination because of a physical or mental disability or condition;

(d) *Children in Need of Special Protection (CNSP)* refer to all persons below 18 years of age, or those 18 years old and over but are unable to take care of themselves because of physical or mental disability condition; who are vulnerable to or are victims of abuse, neglect, exploitation, cruelty, discrimination, and violence (armed conflict, domestic violence, and other analogous conditions prejudicial to their development). CNSP includes:

1. Sexually/physically-abused children;
2. Children in commercial sexual exploitation;
3. Children in conflict with the law;
4. Children involved in armed conflict;
5. Working children or victims of child labor;
6. Children in various circumstances of disability;
7. Children directly affected by HIV/AIDS and other sexually-transmitted disease (STDs);
8. Street children;
9. Children in substance abuse;
10. Mentally challenged children;
11. Abandoned children/children without primary caregiver;
12. Displaced children/refugee children;

(e) *Circuit Registrar* refers to the Clerk of Court of a Shari'a Circuit Court performing as Circuit Registrar of Muslim marriages, divorces, revocations of divorces, and conversions with the respective court's jurisdictions, as provided in Title VI,

Book Two of Presidential Decree No. 1083 otherwise known as Code of Muslim Personal Laws;

(f) *Civil Registration* refers to the continuous, permanent, universal, and compulsory documentation of occurrences and characteristics of vital events in the life of a person, including any modification thereof during his lifetime and until his death, as provided for by this Act;

(g) *Civil Register* refers to the various civil registry books and related certificates and documents where registrable acts, events, and judicial and administrative issuances concerning the civil status of a person are recorded and kept in the archives of the Civil Registrar's Offices, Philippine Consulate Offices, Shari'a District and Circuit Courts, and the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA);

(h) *Civil Registrar (CR)* refers to the head of the Local Civil Registry Office (Civil Registrar's Office), the Consul General (CG) in the Philippine Consulate Offices, or the Clerk of Court in Shari'a District and Circuit Court;

(i) *Civil Registrar General (CRG)* refers to the head of the PSA who is also the National Statistician of the government of the Philippines;

(j) *Consul General (CG)* refers to the head of a Philippine Consulate Office acting as Civil Registrar of all civil registry documents involving Filipinos in a foreign country;

(k) *Civil Registry Document* refers to a certificate or any document relating to the civil status of a person which is recorded and kept in the archives of the Civil Registrar's Offices, Philippine Consulate Offices, Shari'a District and Circuit courts and the PSA;

(l) *District Recorder* refers to the Clerk of Court of the Shari'a District Court performing civil registration-related functions as District Recorder of Muslim marriages, divorces, revocation of divorces, and conversions with the respective court's territorial jurisdiction, as provided in Title VI, Book Two of Presidential Decree No. 1083 otherwise known as the Code of Muslim Personal Laws;

(m) *Foundling* refers to any person who is abandoned and whose parentage is unknown;

(n) *Legal Instrument* refers to any legal documents that would be officially issued pursuant to this Act;

(o) *Live Birth* refers to a complete expulsion or extraction from its mother of a product/s of conception, irrespective of the duration of the pregnancy, which after such separation, breathes or shows any other evidence of life, such as beating of the heart, pulsation of the umbilical cord, or definite movement of voluntary muscles, whether or not the umbilical cord has been cut or the placenta is attached;

(p) *Local Archive Authority (LAA)* refers to the LCR or the authorized representative of the LCRO of each Local Government Unit who has the duty to establish, keep and maintain the local archives, to include its mandatory digitization of all civil registry documents for the herein provided Digital Linkages and Interconnection of All Participating LCROs;

(q) *Local Civil Registrar (LCR)* refers to the head of the Civil Registrar's Office;

(r) *National Statistician* refers to the head of the PSA acting as the CRG for the purpose of this Act;

(s) *Out-of-Town Reporting* occurs when the certificate of live birth or death is presented to the civil registrar of a city or municipality which is not the place of birth or death, not for registration but to be forwarded to the civil registrar of the city or municipality where the birth or death occurred and where it should be registered; and

(t) *Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA)* refers to the central statistics authority of the Republic of the Philippines headed by the National Statistician.

SEC. 5. *Duties and Functions of the Civil Registrar General (CRG).* - The Office of the Civil Registrar General (OCRG) shall have the following duties and functions:

(a) *Policy-making Functions.*

1. Prepare and promulgate the implementing rules and regulations pertaining to civil registration laws and all subsequent issuances relative thereto, in close collaboration with the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and Philippine Association of Civil Registrars (PACR);
2. Issue circulars and memoranda pertaining to civil registration enhancements as part of the functions of the OCRG;

(b) *Provision of Technical Support to Local Civil Registry Offices.*

1. Provide technical supervision to the City/Municipal Civil Registrar (C/MCRs) and other Local Civil Registry Officers; and

2. Provide ways and means to assist Civil Registrars for the reconstruction of Local Archives as the need arises; and

(c) *National Civil Registry Depository.* Act as the national central depository of all civil registry documents submitted to the OCRG for archiving from all civil registry offices of the Philippines, for backup database and statistical analysis purposes only.

SEC. 6. ***Duties of the City/Municipal Civil Registrar.*** – The appointment of C/MCRs shall be mandatory for city and municipal governments.

The C/MCR shall be responsible for the civil registration programs in the local government unit (LGU) concerned, pursuant to this Act, other existing laws, rules, and regulations.

The C/MCR shall develop plans and strategies and, upon approval thereof by the mayor, implement the same, particularly those which pertains to civil registry programs and projects.

The C/MCR shall:

(a) As much as practicable, assist in the preparation, and accept and register all registrable events and documents occurring within his or her jurisdiction affecting the civil status of persons;
(b) File registrable certificates and documents presented to him or her for entry;
(c) Compile copies of every document registered and transmit to CRG within the first ten (10) calendar days of the succeeding month;
(d) Issue certified transcripts or copies of any certificate or document registered, upon payment of the prescribed fees;

(e) Classify, digitize, index, and preserve all registered documents in accordance with the appropriate archiving procedures;

(f) Administer oaths, free of charge, for civil registry purposes;

(g) File, keep, and preserve in a secure place the civil registry book as required by law;

(h) Receive all registrable documents and transcribe in the corresponding civil register all documents accepted for registration;

(i) Receive applications for the issuance of a marriage license and, after determining that the requirements and supporting certificates and publication thereof for the prescribed period have been complied with, issue the license upon payment of the authorized fee for the local treasurer;

(j) Conduct community education campaigns on vital registration and assist in the preparation of demographic and other statistics for the LGU concerned;

(k) Recommend to the legislative bodies and collaborate with administrative agencies in the formulation of systems, procedures, policies, rules, and regulations on civil registration;

(l) Submit status reports to the CRG on the condition of civil registry documents filed in his civil registry office whenever there are substantial changes in the status of his/her files, in case of fire, flood, earthquake, and other natural and/or man-made calamities;

(m) Reconstruct destroyed civil registry records upon compliance with the requirements following the procedures established by the CRG;

(n) Make civil registry forms available at all times in the civil registry office;

(o) Exercise the powers granted to Civil Registrars under Republic Act No. 9048 as amended by Republic Act No. 10172 on the correction of clerical or typographical and change of first name or nickname, the day and month in the date of birth or sex of a person where it is patently clear that there was a clerical or typographical error or mistake in the entry.

SEC. 7. ***Civil Registry Books.*** – The Civil Registrar shall keep, update as mandated by law, and preserve the following books in their offices:

(a) Register of Births – the records of birth in the civil registry;

(b) Register of Births of Person Without Known Parents or Facts of Birth – the records of abandoned children in the civil register;

(c) Register of Deaths – the records of death of a deceased in the civil register;

(d) Register of Marriages – the records of solemnized marriage in the civil register;

(e) Register of Court Decrees or Orders – the records of court decree or order concerning the status of a person in the civil register;

(f) Register of Legal Instruments – the records of legal instruments executed affecting the vital events of a person in the civil register;

(g) Register of Applications for Marriage License – the records of application of marriage license in the civil register;

(h) Register of Conversion to Islam – the records of conversion to Islam religion of a person in the civil register;

(i) Register of Muslim Filipino Marriages – the records of marriage of a Muslim Filipino in the civil register;

(j) Register of Muslim Filipino Divorces – the records of divorce of a Muslim Filipino in the civil register;

(k) Register of Indigenous Cultural Communities/Indigenous Peoples (ICC/IPs) Marriage Dissolutions – the records of ICCs/IPs dissolution of marriage in the civil register; and

(l) Register of ICCs/IPs Revocation of Marriage Dissolutions – the records of ICCs/IPs revocation of marriage dissolutions.

SEC. 8. ***Registrable Acts and Events.*** – The Registrable Acts and Events shall refer to any of the following:

(a) Birth;
(b) Death;
(c) Application for Marriage License;
(d) Marriage;
(e) Court Orders or Decrees; and
(f) Legal Instruments.

The Registrable Orders or Decrees of Courts and other competent authorities shall refer to any of the following:

(a) Adoption;
(b) Rescission of Adoption;
(c) Annulment of Marriage;
(d) Declaration of Nullity of Marriage;
(e) Declaration of Presumptive Death;
(f) Compulsory Recognition of Illegitimate Child;
(g) Voluntary Recognition of Minor Illegitimate Child;
(h) Appointment of Guardian;
(i) Termination of Guardianship;
(j) Judicial Determination of Filiation;
(k) All forms of naturalization;
(l) Cancellation of Naturalization;
(m) Judicial Determination of the Fact of Reappearance, if Disputed;
(n) Separation of Property;
(o) Revival of Former Property Regime;
(p) Repatriation;

(q) Foreign Court Orders Decided Abroad; and

(r) Other orders/decrees that pertain to the civil status and vital statistics of a person.

The civil registrar shall properly enter the registrable events and court orders or decrees.

SEC. 9. ***Free Registration of Vital Civil Registry Events.*** **-** The registration of birth, death, and marriage is hereby declared a national policy. Therefore, no fees shall be imposed and collected in the registration of these events, whether or not these are registered on time.

The first copies of civil registration certificates shall be free. For issuance of succeeding copies of civil registry documents, a minimal fee prescribed by the CRG may be collected.

For registration of registrable judicial and administrative issuances or orders, and legal instruments, a standard fee shall be collected.

SEC. 10. ***Registration and Certification of Birth.*** **-** The declaration of the physician, midwife, nurse, birth attendant, finder, or, in default thereof, the declaration of either or both parents or any person who has knowledge of the facts of birth of the newborn child shall be sufficient for the registration of birth in the civil register.

The duly accomplished Certificate of Live Birth (COLB) containing the above declaration shall be submitted for registration to the Civil Registrar's Office in the city or municipality where the birth occurred within thirty (30) calendar days from date of birth by the aforementioned persons, declaring the following when available:

(a) Full name of the child;
(b) Sex;
(c) Date of birth;
(d) Place of birth or where found;
(e) Name of mother;
(f) Citizenship of the mother;
(g) Name of father;
(h) Citizenship of the father;
(i) Date and place of marriage of parents; and
(j) Such other data as may be identified in the implementing rules and regulations of this Act.

Birth and other civil registry records of persons when any or some of the following information is absent/missing shall equal acceptability, and shall be respected before all government, public, private, commercial, and business transactions where these are presented:

(a) Usual middle initial or middle name;
(b) Citizenship, if stateless;
(c) Names of parents, if unknown;
(d) Date of marriage, if inapplicable;
(e) When an individual has only one birth name; or
(f) Any analogous circumstances.

The fetus is considered born if it is alive at the time it is completely delivered from the mother's womb, and shall be considered as live birth and shall be registered in the Register of Births.

The fetus is not deemed born if it dies within twenty-four (24) hours after its delivery from the mother's womb. But for statistical purposes, a COLB shall be prepared in duplicate, wherein a copy shall be forwarded to the Office of the Civil Registrar-General and the other for Civil Registrar's file.

All cases of birth on board a vessel or airplane en route to the Philippines shall be recorded in the civil register of the city or municipality where the mother habitually resides if either or both of the parents is/are a citizen/s of the Philippines. When the parents are both foreigners but not residents of the Philippines, the birth may be recorded in any civil registry office in the Philippines, if they so desire.

Abandoned children or foundlings whose parents, guardians, or relatives are unknown, or children committed to an orphanage or a child-caring institution with unknown facts of birth and parentage, shall be registered by the finder or charitable institution concerned within thirty (30) days from the date of finding or commitment of the child with the C/MCR of the place where such person was found. The CRG shall issue a COLB to these children.

All LCR/PSAs in partnership with LGUs shall provide mobile birth registration services, especially in all Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas (GIDA) under their jurisdiction.

SEC. 11. ***Delayed Registration of Birth.*** - A person who has not been registered with the Civil Registrar's Office at the place of birth or where found shall apply for delayed registration within the prescribed period of thirty (30) calendar days upon discovering that no entry of birth has been recorded in the Register of Births.

For delayed registration, resort to out-of-town registration of birth may be allowed where the place of application for registration is other than the place of birth of the

person seeking to be registered. The LCR/PSA and PSA shall issue a COLB free of charge regardless of delay. A person who has not been registered before the office of the C/MCR and PSA where he or she was born within the prescribed period of thirty (30) calendar days shall apply on the basis of his or her nearest kin. The informant and affiant must show authentic proof of the identity of the person to be registered, the facts of his birth, his parentage, and other relevant data.

In the implementation of this Act, the LCR/PSA shall conduct regular review to assess the accessibility of registration and design, and implement programmatic interventions to address gaps in CRVS, with PSA as the central office for data management and standards.

The record of a person's birth shall be kept strictly confidential, and any treatment thereof shall be fully compliant with Republic Act No. 10173, otherwise known as the "Data Privacy Act of 2012".

SEC. 12. ***Culturally-Sensitive Registration System.*** - PSA, in collaboration with the National Commission for Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), National Commission on Muslim Filipinos (NCMF), Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), Philippine Association of Civil Registrars, National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), and distinguished anthropologists and selected elders and leaders of IPs, shall establish an Indigenous Peoples Civil Registration System (IPCRS) that is sensitive and appropriate to the unique cultural practices and identification systems of IPs: *Provided*, That the IPCRS shall be harmonized with existing laws and systems on civil registry.

In recording the birth of IPs delivered in the traditional customs and practices of the indigenous community, the report as to the circumstances of the birth by any of the

parents or by the tribal doctor or tribal midwife who attended to the delivery shall be conclusive upon the Local Civil Registrar, without need for further proof, and PSA.

The IPCRS shall take into account the various ethnic affiliations of the IPs in the country. For this purpose, the PSA Head, acting as the Civil Registrar General, instead of issuing separate forms for the IPCRS, shall cause the amendment of the existing civil registry forms, for uniformity of all civil registry documents to ensure acceptability by end-user agencies or institutions of the facts and information contained in said documents and ease of establishing filial bonds between or among parents or parents and child.

In the absence of any identifying document, the self-ascription or ascription by any of the parents or tribal leader or elder shall suffice to establish the identity of IPs when applying with the LCR/PSA for recording birth, marriage, or death.

SEC. 13. ***Mandatory Continuing Education and Training Program.*** – To ensure that the efficient and effective delivery of civil registration services meet the demand for quality civil registrars who shall perform civil registration functions, the CRG together with LGUs, shall conduct continuing education and training program for Civil Registrars, Consul Generals, District Recorders, and Circuit Registrars and their staff, in collaboration with relevant partners in government, academe, industry, and non-governmental organizations. Such training programs shall be initiated, conducted based on Training Needs Analysis, and evaluated regularly throughout the year to ensure constant upgrading of skills of the Civil Registrars, Consul Generals, District Recorders, and Circuit Registrars, and their staff.

SEC. 14. ***Barangay Civil Registration System.*** – The CRG shall establish a systematic civil registration procedure at the barangay level, to be called as the Barangay Civil Registration System (BCRS), where elected and appointed barangay officials shall be

mandated to assist in the facilitation of civil registration within their area or jurisdiction, subject to the provision of this Act.

The Barangay Captain shall submit to the Civil Registrar's Office of his/her city or municipality the names of the Barangay Secretary as Ex-Officio Barangay Civil Registration Officer (BCRO) and another deputized barangay official as Barangay Civil Registration Assistant (BCRA) who shall assist in the registration of all vital events of every individual within their area of jurisdiction.

The BCRO shall engage the barangays to support in the implementation of the law, including the provision of fiscal and budgetary support.

Proper networking, interconnection, and collaboration between the barangay and its respective Civil Registrar's Office shall be ensured in order to attain mandatory civil registration of all born Filipinos. The PSA, LGUs, a national professional organization of local civil registrars duly registered with the SEC, and other accredited government or private institutions shall conduct regular training and capacity building programs to upgrade the knowledge and skills in civil registration functions of all partners in the barangay.

SEC. 15. ***Free Delayed Registration Program and Certification of Birth.*** – LGUs are mandated to implement a Free Delayed Registration Program (FDRP) for persons whose births have not been registered and certified due to such factors as poverty, distance, or lack of literacy. The Sangguniang Barangay shall assist in the implementation of the program through the BCRS.

The OCRG, the DILG, and the NCIP shall jointly prepare a Free Delayed Registration Program for Indigenous Peoples (FDRIP) which shall be implemented by the LGUs and the NCIP regional or local offices in the localities concerned.

Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the OCRG shall issue implementing rules and regulation for the free delayed registration and certification of birth covering the foregoing.

SEC. 16. ***Strict Confidentiality of Birth Records.*** – The record of a person's birth shall be kept confidential and no information relating thereto shall be issued except upon request of the following:

(a) The concerned person herself/himself, or any person authorized by him;
(b) Spouse;
(c) Any or both the parents, direct descendants, or the guardian, or institution legally in charge in case of a minor;
(d) The Court or appropriate public official whenever absolutely necessary in administrative, judicial, or other official proceedings to determine the identity of the child's parents or other circumstances surrounding the birth; and
(e) The nearest kin in case of a person's death.

SEC. 17. ***Registration and Certification of Death.*** – No human body shall be buried or cremated, unless the proper death certificate has been presented and recorded in the Civil Registrar's Office/PSA.

The physician who attended the deceased, or in his default, the health officer concerned, any member of the family of the deceased or any person having knowledge of the death shall immediately report the same to the local health authorities who shall issue a death certificate and shall order the same to be recorded before the Civil Registrar's Office of the city or municipality where the death occurred.

The death certificate which shall be issued by the attending physician of the deceased or, in his default, by the authorized health officer, shall indicate the following data, which shall be furnished by the person reporting the death to the civil registrar:

(a) Full name of the deceased;
(b) Sex;
(c) Age;
(d) Civil status;
(e) Nationality;
(f) Date of birth;
(g) Place of birth;
(h) Date of death;
(i) Place of death;
(j) Full names of the deceased's parents;
(k) Cause of death; and
(l) Such other relevant data that may be required.

The surname to be entered in the registry of death and the Death Certificate shall be the surname used prior to his/her death. In case the deceased is a legally married woman, informants shall register the death using the surname she chose as a legally married person.

The registration of death shall be made within thirty (30) calendar days from the time and date of death before the Civil Registrar's Office of the city or municipality where the death occurred, or the Philippine Consulate Office in the foreign country where the death happened.

In the absence of the city or municipal health officer or his authorized representative in the place of registration, or when it is a non-working day and the health officer or his

authorized representative is not expected to be in the office, the death shall be reported by the nearest kin of the deceased or by any person having knowledge of the death within forty-eight (48) hours after its occurrence, to the mayor or to the vice mayor or any member of the Sangguniang Bayan or to the municipal secretary, who shall issue and sign the medical certification of the Certificate of Death for burial, cremation, and registration purposes.

When the death is subjected to a medico-legal examination, or the cause of death is under investigation by the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) or other concerned government office and the body of the deceased is subjected to autopsy or examination of the medico-legal officers and no record of death had been registered, the head of the NBI or other investigative agency or the duly authorized representative shall cause the registration of such death through the City or Municipal Health Officer of the city or municipality where the death occurred. The medico-legal officer shall accomplish and sign the medical certification portion of the certificate of death, subject to the review of the City of Municipal Health Officer.

SEC. 18. ***Delayed Registration of Death.*** - A deceased person's facts of death that have not been registered within thirty (30) calendar days from the date of death shall be allowed delayed registration before the Civil Registrar's Office at the place of death.

In any case, out-of-town registration of death may be allowed.

SEC. 19. ***Registration of the Application for Marriage License.*** - An application for marriage license shall be filed by the contracting parties before the Civil Registrar's Office of the city or municipality where one of the parties resides. The CR shall enter all applications in the Register of Applications for Marriage License strictly in the order of receipt of applications. The CR shall record in said register the names of the applicants,

the date on which the marriage license was issued, and such other data as may be necessary.

No application shall be received by the CR unless supporting documents are attached thereto and no application shall be posted unless it is received by the CR. Registration of the application shall only take place after the completion of the posting period.

All applications for marriage license shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of Executive Order (E.O.) No. 209, otherwise known as the Family Code of the Philippines.

SEC. 20. ***Registration of Marriage.*** - All marriages shall be registered by the solemnizing officer before the Civil Registrar's Office of the place where they were solemnized.

a) In case of marriages solemnized while in transit:
   i. En route to, or within the Philippines, the marriage shall be registered at the place of residency of either party; or
   ii. Leaving the Philippines, the marriage shall be registered at the consulate of the Philippines in the place of destination of the parties, or in the absence thereof, to the nearest Philippine consulate from the place of destination.

b) In case of registration of traditional marriages and dissolution of marriages among and between IPs:

   The report of marriage among and between IPs solemnized in accordance with customary laws, rites, traditions, and practices by the person duly authorized to perform the ritual or ceremony and by the parties to the marriage shall be conclusive upon the LCR/PSA without need for further proof. For this purpose, the NCIP shall submit to the PSA a list of IPs recognized by each indigenous community to solemnize marriage according to its customary laws

or practices. The PSA shall issue a Certificate of Registration of Authority to Solemnize Marriage (CRASM) to such IPs for free.

In the case of indigenous communities whose traditional marriage ceremony does not require the presence of a solemnizing officer, as determined by the NCIP, the report by the contracting parties shall be conclusive upon the LCR/PSA without the need for further proof except personal confirmation, orally or in writing, by any of the parents or by a tribal leader or elder of the indigenous community to which any of the spouses belong. For this purpose, the NCIP shall furnish the PSA and the LCR/PSAs with a list of indigenous communities falling under this paragraph: *Provided,* That pending the submission of such list, the oral or written confirmation of the tribal leader or elder shall be conclusive upon the LCR/PSA.

The dissolution of marriage of IPs following customary indigenous laws and practices shall be directly recorded with the LCR/PSA without need of court intervention: *Provided,* That such facts and information shall be confirmed orally or in writing by a tribal leader or elder of the indigenous community to which any of the spouses belongs.

All marriages shall be registered within thirty (30) days from the date of the marriage. Marriages registered after the stipulated period shall be considered late registration and an administrative fee shall be imposed on the solemnizing officer. In no case shall double or multiple registration of marriages be allowed, except for cases provided by law.

SEC. 21. ***Multiple Registration.*** – In cases of multiple registrations of birth, marriage or death, the first duly registered document shall prevail, unless the Court orders otherwise.

For multiple marriages by and between the same parties, the first marriage shall prevail, and not the first registered marriage of such parties.

SEC. 22. ***Registration of Solemnizing Officers.*** **-** All solemnizing officers shall be registered with the Office of the CRG, except those who are not required to be so registered as provided for by law or existing rules.

The Mayor, with the assistance of the Civil Registrar's Office, shall determine documents pertaining to the existence of religious sects.

SEC. 23. ***Registration of Court Orders.*** **-** In case of court issuance or order concerning the status of a person, the Clerk of Court shall advise the successful petitioner to register such document before the Civil Registrar's Office which has jurisdiction on the issuing court.

In cases of legal separation, absolute nullity of void marriages and annulment of voidable marriages, the prevailing party shall cause the registration of the decree in the Civil Registrar's Office where the marriage was registered, the Civil Registrar's Office where the family court is situated, and in the PSA. Such party shall report to the Court compliance with this requirement within thirty (30) days from receipt of the copy of the decree.

In case a person other than the petitioner shall apply to register a court order before the Civil Registrar's Office, the LCR has the responsibility to verify the veracity of the court issuance or order, otherwise, registration thereof shall be refused.

The Civil Registrar's Office where the event was registered shall forward a certified true copy of the order to the Civil Registrar's Office where the vital event affected was originally registered. The Civil Registrar's Office where the vital event was originally

registered shall make proper annotations in the document and in the applicable registry book. The Civil Registrar's Office which has jurisdiction over the original registry shall send a certified true copy of the annotated document and the registered court order to the CRG.

Each corrected document shall be reported to the Office of the CRG during the usual reporting month.

All court orders shall be registered within thirty (30) days after its finality, otherwise it shall be considered as delayed registration.

All court orders shall be effected through annotations in the civil registry document except in an adoption case when the child shall be entitled to the issuance of an amended COLB.

SEC. 24. ***Registration of a child born abroad to at least one Filipino parent.*** - The parents shall cause the registration of the birth of their child to the Philippine Consulate which in turn shall issue a Report of Birth within thirty (30) calendar days from date of birth of a Filipino child declaring the following when available:

a) Full name of the child;
b) Sex;
c) Date of birth;
d) Place of birth or where found;
e) Name of mother;
f) Citizenship of the mother;
g) Name of father;
h) Citizenship of the father;
i) Date and place of marriage of parents; and

j) Such other data as may be required in the implementing rules and regulations of this Act.

SEC. 25. ***Registration of Persons without Known Parents.*** - All without known parents, guardians or relatives, or a person committed in an orphanage or charitable institution with unknown facts of birth and parentage, shall be reported by the finder to the Barangay Chairperson or any member of the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC) of the place where the person was found, or to the Philippine National Police Women and Children's Protection Desk (PNP-WCPD), whichever is nearer or convenient to the finder, stating the facts and circumstances surrounding the finding of the person. When the report is duly noted, the finder shall bring the child to the nearest Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) office in the region, for proper screening, assessment, and evaluation by an authorized social worker within fifteen (15) calendar days from the date of finding or commitment of the child. The finder shall execute a sworn statement before the Barangay Captain stating the facts and circumstances surrounding the finding of the person.

In case of foundlings found in Philippine Consulates, embassies and territories, the relevant Philippine Consulate shall be governed by Republic Act No. 11767, otherwise known as the Foundling Recognition and Protection Act.

The finder or charitable institution concerned shall cause the registration before the Civil Registrar's Office where such person was found within thirty (30) calendar days from the date of entrustment to the institution.

Any report made after the thirty (30) day period shall be considered late registration, and the concerned party shall be required to state in a sworn statement the circumstances that caused the late reporting to the civil registrar.

Should the foundling become adopted, the Local Civil Registrar shall stamp the simulated birth record "cancelled" with an annotation of the issuance of a new rectified certificate of birth in its place. The rectified birth certificate bearing the names of the biological parents of the child or the foundling certificate shall then likewise be stamped "cancelled" with the annotation of the issuance of a new birth record in its place, and shall be sealed in the civil registry records. Thereafter, the Local Civil Registrar shall record, register, and issue a new certificate of birth which shall not bear any notation that it is a new or amended issue, as stated in Sec. 12 of Republic Act No. 11222, otherwise known as the Simulated Birth Rectification Act.

SEC. 26. ***Registration of Adoption.*** **-** The decree of adoption shall be recorded in the civil register within thirty (30) days after the date of issue of the final judgment of the court.

After registration of the decree of adoption, the Civil Registrar's Office where the birth of the adopted was registered shall immediately issue an amended COLB.

Such COLB of an adopted child shall not bear any mark or annotation or any indication of the facts of adoption. It shall have the same entries as those appearing in the original records of birth, except for the following items of information.

a) Name of the adopted - The first name of the adopted child shall be the same as in the original COLB unless the order of adoption carried an order changing it to another name. The middle name of the adopted child shall be the same as the middle name of the adopter, except when the husband and the wife jointly adopted the child, in which case, the middle name of the adopted shall be the surname of the adopting mother.

The surname of the adopted child shall be that of the adopter. If the husband and wife jointly adopt the child, the adopted child shall use the surname of the adopting father;

b) Names of parents - The names of natural parents of the adopted child shall be substituted by the names of the adopting parents, to be indicated in the appropriate spaces in the COLB as the father or mother, as the case may be; and

c) Other information - Other information about the adopting parents such as citizenship and religion shall be indicated in the appropriate spaces of the amended certificate of live birth.

The birth order of the adopted and other information about the adopted shall follow the information given by the adopting parents, unless the court order states otherwise. In cases where legally married husband and wife jointly adopt the child, the date and place of marriage of the adopting parents shall be entered in the appropriate spaces of the amended certificate of live birth of the adopted child.

In all cases of adoption, no amendment or changes shall be affected in the civil registry books where the original birth records were duly registered, except for the marginal annotation by virtue of the adoption decree.

In case the adopted child has no known parents, the basis for the issuance of the amended COLB shall be the court order.

SEC. 27. ***Registration of Presumptive Death.*** - A judicial order or decree declaring a person presumably dead for purposes of remarriage shall be registered in the office of the local civil registrar of the place where the marriage was solemnized. It shall be

annotated and recorded. The registration shall be annotated in the marriage register as well as in the marriage certificate.

SEC. 28. ***Registration of Foreign Court Orders Decided Abroad.*** - All foreign court orders involving status of persons residing in the Philippines shall be registered before the Civil Registrar's Office where the affected document is registered. These foreign court orders, to be legal and binding in Philippine jurisdiction, must first be recognized by the appropriate embassy of such country here in the Philippines or Regional Trial Court which has the lawful jurisdiction over such case.

SEC. 29. ***Registration of Legal Instruments.*** - As a general rule, all legal instruments shall be registered in the civil registry of the place where they were executed except for the following:

a) Affidavit of Reappearance - where the parties to the subsequent marriage are residing;
b) Marriage Settlement - where the marriage is recorded; or
c) Admission of Paternity, Acknowledgment, Legitimation, Voluntary Emancipation of Minor, Artificial Insemination - where the birth of child was recorded.

SEC. 30. ***Registration of Affidavit of Reappearance.*** - A sworn statement of the facts and circumstances of reappearance of the absentee spouse shall be recorded in the civil registry office where subsequent marriage of the present spouse was recorded, at the instance of any interested person, with due notice to the spouses of the subsequent marriage and without prejudice to the fact of reappearance being judicially determined in cases where such a fact is disputed.

SEC. 31. ***Registration of Affidavit of Acknowledgment or Affidavit of Admission of Paternity.*** - it shall be the duty of parents or parent who executed the affidavit of

acknowledgment to send the original copy to the Civil Registrar's Office where the entries on the birth of the child were recorded for registration on the Register of Legal Instruments and for proper annotation in the Register of Births.

SEC. 32. ***Registration of Repatriation.*** – The instrument of repatriation and the oath of allegiance to the Constitution and the Government of the Philippines, shall be filed in the Civil Registrar's Office of the place where the instrument was executed: *Provided,* That if the Philippine citizenship is reacquired by naturalization, the order of the court or any mandated (omnibus) authority granting citizenship shall be recorded in the Register of Court Order.

SEC. 33. ***Registration of Muslim Filipinos, Indigenous Cultural Communities (ICCs) or Indigenous Peoples (IPs) and Children in Need of Special Protection (CNSP).*** – Muslim Filipinos, ICCs or IPs and CNSP, by reason of their socio-cultural, religious, and indigenous peculiarities, and vulnerabilities, shall be registered as follows:

a) Muslim Filipinos – civil registration of Muslim Filipinos shall be governed by P.D. No. 1083, E.O. No. 157, s. 1994, otherwise known as the Civil Registration System for Muslim Filipinos, and its implementing rules and regulations;
b) Indigenous Peoples – civil registration of indigenous cultural communities or indigenous peoples shall be governed by Republic Act No. 8371, otherwise known as the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act of 1997, and its implementing rules and regulations; or
c) CNSP – Civil registration of Children in Need of Special Protection shall be governed by the provisions of this Act, special laws, and implementing rules and regulations, in coordination with the DSWD and other concerned agencies.

SEC. 34. ***Civil Registry Documents as Public Documents.*** – The registry books making up the civil register, the office files in hard copies and its corresponding digital files of the Civil Registrar's Offices, certifications or certified copies from these files and

all other documents relating thereto shall be considered public documents and shall be *prima facie* evidence of the truth of the facts therein contained. These public documents, except those documents which are to be kept strictly confidential as provided for under this Act and other applicable laws shall be opened to the public during office hours and shall be kept in a secured place which shall be furnished to civil registrar at the expenses of the funds of the civil registrar's office, Philippine consulate office, or Shari'a court concerned.

The civil registrar shall not, under any circumstances, permit any document entrusted to his/her care to be removed from his/her office, except upon lawful order of the court, in which case the proper receipt shall be secured.

SEC. 35. ***Digital/Electronic Reporting of Births, Death, and Marriages.*** **-** There shall be a compulsory reporting of all occurrences of births, deaths, and marriages from all Barangays of the Philippines. As Barangay Registration Agents, all Barangay Secretaries or their authorized representatives are hereby mandated to report these events using appropriate and duly-inspected secure electronic devices and systems to the LCR/PSA and other government agencies mandated by law to monitor the status of registration of vital civil registry events and shall assist the subsequent registration thereof. Continuing skills training relevant to Digital/Electronic Reporting of Births, Death, and Marriages of Barangay Registration Agents shall be provided by the PSA, LGU, PACR, and other accredited government and private institutions and organizations. This training shall equip Barangay Registration Agents with the knowledge and skills needed to properly implement digital/electronic civil registration.

SEC. 36. ***Development of National Civil Registry Database (NCRD) Software.*** **-** The National Government through the National Computer Center in close coordination with the PSA, the PACR, and the DILG shall develop official software responsive to the NCRD implementation. Participation and assistance of international and local private

organizations having parallel objectives on the full development of digital civil registration may be sought in the development of this software. Among other features, this software shall include the highest degree of data security to ensure the integrity and confidentiality of its database.

SEC. 37. ***Digitization of all Civil Registry Files.*** **-** All registered documents in the LCR/PSA shall be digitized. In addition to the usual reports and forwarding of the printed hard copy files, digitized files shall also be submitted to the PSA as back up files of the National Civil Registry Database (NCRD), for digital archiving purposes.

SEC. 38. ***False Statements.*** **-** Any person who shall unknowingly make false statements in the furnished forms and present the same for entry in the civil registers shall be penalized in accordance with law unless it was done for the best interest of the child.

SEC. 39. ***Digitalization of Linkages and Interconnection of All Participating LCR/PSA.*** **-** All capable LCR/PSA shall be interconnected to facilitate retrieval, online certifications, and for local government revenue generation using LGU-linked NCRD digital files. Participating LCR/PSA are hereby authorized to issue certifications from NCRD for and on behalf of other LCR/PSA subject to pertinent laws, rules or regulations on the confidentiality of birth records.

SEC. 40. ***Penal Provisions.*** **-** Persons in authority who knowingly fail to perform their duties in relation to this Act shall be held administratively liable in accordance to law.

Any solemnizing officer without being authorized by the Civil Registrar General or who, upon solemnizing marriage, refuses to exhibit his authority to solemnize marriage when called upon to do so by the parties or parents, grandparents, guardians, or

persons having charge of the parties; or any bishop or officer, priest, minister, or imam, of any church, religion or sect, the regulations and practices whereof require bans or publication previous to the solemnization of marriage that is subsequently declared illegal, or any solemnizing officer in violation of this Act, shall be punished with imprisonment of not less than six (6) months but not to exceed three (3) years, a fine of not less than Fifty Thousand Pesos (PhP50,000.00) but not more than One Hundred Thousand Pesos (PhP100,000.00), or both, and the revocation of the authority to solemnize marriage, upon the discretion of the Court.

The attending physician, midwife, nurse, birth attendant, hospital administrator in-charge to cause the registration of live births but knowingly fails or withholds the delivery of copies of the certificate/s of live birth to the city or municipal civil registrar for registration, or any person who caused the failure of delivery, shall be penalized by imprisonment of not more than six (6) months and a fine of not less than Fifty Thousand Pesos (PhP50,000.00), or both, upon the discretion of the Court.

SEC. 41. ***Withholding of documents due to Non-payment of hospital fees.*** - In no case shall failure to settle hospital bills, in full or in part, be a ground for non-delivery or withholding of the certificate of live birth or certificate of death or documents required in the issuance of the said certificates.

SEC. 42. ***Use of Fees and Income Collected.*** - All fess that are remitted to the PSA by the National Treasury and all income that the PSA is allowed to retain under law shall, any provision of law contrary notwithstanding, be used primarily for operating expenses including capital outlay, upgrading of its current facilities, acquisition of office and space, and establishment of satellite offices in the provinces, and other activities or services the PSA in the performance of its mandate needs.

SEC. 43. ***Transitory Provisions.*** – The PSA shall carry out the reorganization of the civil registrars in such a manner that personnel of such office absorbed by the PSA shall continue to perform their respective duties and responsibilities in a holdover capacity so as not to unduly delay the production of statistics from ongoing censuses, surveys, and processing of administrative records.

SEC. 44. ***Appropriations.*** – There shall be an initial appropriation of One Hundred Fifty Million Pesos (PhP150,000,000.00) in the General Appropriations Act, which will be included in the PSA's budget for the initial development of software and the digitization of the Civil Registrar's Office files.

SEC. 45. ***Mandatory Review.*** – This Act shall undergo a mandatory review on its provisions every five (5) years to make the law more responsive to the needs of the times. The review shall be made by Congress, which shall conduct public hearings and record relevant testimonies of functionaries in the civil registration system, which shall be the basis of any amendment or modification of this Act.

SEC. 46. ***Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).*** – Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the PSA, shall promulgate the IRR for the effective implementation of this Act. The PSA may consult with the Department of Foreign Affairs, DILG, Department of Justice, DSWD, National Commission of Muslim Filipinos (NCMF), the Office of the Supreme Court Administrator, the University of the Philippines Law Center, a national professional organization of local civil registrars duly registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission, the National Privacy Commission, the Department of Health, the Office of Solicitor General, the NCIP, the Child Rights Network, the Commission on Human Rights, the Bureau of Immigration, the Council for the Welfare of Children, the National Council of Disability Affairs, the Commission on Filipinos Overseas, the Department of Education, the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, related child caring agencies, international agencies,

civil society organizations, related ministries of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao and such other agencies in the formulation of the IRR. Other relevant stakeholders may also be consulted in the crafting of the IRR.

SEC. 47. ***Separability Clause.*** – If any part or provision of this Act which shall be held to be invalid or unconstitutional, other parts or provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SEC. 48. ***Repealing Clause.*** – Republic Act No. 3753 or the Law on Registry of Civil Status is repealed. Sections 453, 454, and 479 of Republic Act No. 7160 or the Local Government Code of 1991 are also hereby repealed. All other laws, rules, regulations, orders, memoranda, or circulars inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed and modified accordingly.

SEC. 49. ***Construction.*** – In the interpretation of this law, the best interest of the child shall prevail.

SEC. 50. ***Retroactivity.*** – This Act shall have retroactive effect insofar as it does not prejudice or impair vested or acquired rights.

SEC. 51. ***Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in any newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,