

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **5186**



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

AN ACT

**INSTITUTIONALIZING THE ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS IN CRISIS
SITUATIONS PROGRAM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND
DEVELOPMENT, PROVIDING PENALTIES FOR THE VIOLATION OF
CERTAIN UNLAWFUL ACTS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article II, Section 9 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution mandates the State to promote a just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and independence of the nation and free the people from poverty through policies that provide adequate social services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living, and an improved quality of life for all.

The Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation (AICS) is one of the social welfare services of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) that provides medical assistance, burial, transportation, education, food, or financial assistance for other support services or needs of a person or family.¹ Since 2014, the AICS has served as a social safety net or stop-gap measure to support the recovery of individuals and families suffering from unexpected life events or crises.

¹ "Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situations (AICS)", DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT, Accessed 16 Sep 2025, <https://aics.dswd.gov.ph/aics-program/>.

In 2022, DSWD Memorandum Circular No. 16 or the Revised Guidelines on the Implementation of AICS was released to streamline the availment of assistance. From January to December 2022, the AICS program served a total of 5,336,381 beneficiaries which is equivalent to 432.17% of the total target of only 1,234,784 beneficiaries. This had been the highest accomplishment of the DSWD in the past five years with an average of 2.4 million served clients per year from 2018 to 2022. In 2023, the AICS program was extended nationwide and was provided to 6,587,667 beneficiaries.² In 2024, a total of 7,165,725 beneficiaries were served by the AICS program.³ And for the first six months of 2025, a total of 953,560 Filipinos received medical assistance, 670,825 received cash assistance, and 282,735 were issued guarantee letters under the AICS program.⁴

During the 19th Congress, House Bill No. 11395, a bill seeking to institutionalize the grant of AICS, was passed on third and final reading in the House of Representatives on June 4, 2025. Given the time constraints, the bill did not prosper upon the *sine die* adjournment of Congress.

This proposed bill anew seeks to make the distribution of AICS permanent and establish an automated system for the processing and releasing of assistance which shall be funded by the DSWD's annual budget under the General Appropriations Act. It shall also penalize fraudulent acts such as coercing, inviting, or assisting a person seeking assistance in exchange for a portion of the financial aid which may send a guilty individual or organization to up to ten years in prison.

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

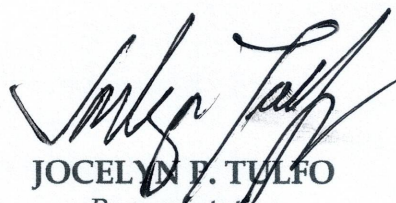
² PIA, "Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation (AICS): More accessible since 2022", *PHILIPPINE TELEVISION NETWORK, INC.*, Accessed 17 Sep 2025, <https://ptni.gov.ph/assistance-to-individuals-in-crisis-situation-aics-more-accessible-since-20221/>.

³ Reyes, Raymar, "2024 Annual Accomplishment Report", *DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT*, Accessed 17 Sep 2025, <https://aics.dswd.gov.ph/2025/01/2024-annual-accomplishment-report/>.

⁴ Argosino, Faith, "DSWD: Over 900,000 Filipinos have benefited from AICS", *INQUIRER.NET*, 16 Jul 2025, <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2082669/dswd-over-900000-filipinos-have-benefited-from-aics>.



RALPH WENDEL P. TULFO
Representative
2nd District of Quezon City



JOCELYN F. TULFO
Representative
ACT-CIS Partylist

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **5186**

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

AN ACT
**INSTITUTIONALIZING THE ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS IN CRISIS
SITUATIONS PROGRAM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND
DEVELOPMENT, PROVIDING PENALTIES FOR THE VIOLATION OF
CERTAIN UNLAWFUL ACTS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** - This Act shall be known as the "Assistance to
2 Individuals in Crisis Situations (AICS) Act".

3
4 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** - It is the policy of the State to promote a just
5 and dynamic social order alleviating the plight of the poor through policies that
6 provide adequate social services and raise the standard of living for the improved
7 quality of life for all. To this end, the State shall provide assistance through projects,
8 programs, and services geared towards alleviating poverty and improving the quality
9 of life of every Filipino, especially the marginalized sector and disadvantaged
10 individuals and families.

1
2 **SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act:**
3

- 4 (a) *Assistive technology* refers to “assistive products” whose primary purpose is
5 to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of persons with
6 disabilities, to enhance overall well-being and help prevent impairments
7 and secondary health conditions. These include wheelchairs, prostheses,
8 hearing aids, visual aids, and specialized computer software and hardware,
9 or any advancement in technologies that increase mobility, hearing, vision,
10 or communication capacities;
11
- 12 (b) *Case management* refers to a process of assessing, planning, managing,
13 coordinating and advocating for services and other interventions used by
14 the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to improve the
15 capability of qualified beneficiaries in addressing their needs;
16
- 17 (c) *Case relief assistance* refers to an outright cash provided to individuals and
18 families that are currently in extremely difficult circumstances such as
19 victims of calamities/disasters, crimes, victims of violence against women
20 and their children, trafficking and repatriated overseas Filipino workers
21 and other similar circumstances;
22
- 23 (d) *Crisis situation* refers to a condition of an individual in a stressful situation
24 that impairs psychological functioning or participation in socio-economic
25 activities , including access to education, work, and health care, that
26 requires series of interventions to prevent further exposure to
27 vulnerabilities, exploitation or abuse;
28
- 29 (e) *Disability support assistance* refers to the monetary support to cover the
30 purchase of assistive products, technologies, provision of sign language

1 interpreter, personal assistant, maintenance medicines and hygiene needs,
2 life support equipment, and other needs of persons with disabilities;
3

4 (f) *Educational assistance* refers to financial assistance extended to all students
5 to help defray school expenses and/or cost of sending students/children to
6 school such as school fees augmentation, supplies, projects, allowance and
7 other related expenses and to eradicate barriers to quality education,
8 including those barriers faced by persons on account of their disabilities;
9

10 (g) *Financial assistance* refers to monetary support in the form of outright cash,
11 electronic fund transfer, coupon, check or voucher that has monetary value,
12 including funeral assistance, transportation assistance, medical assistance,
13 educational assistance, training assistance, food assistance, cash relief
14 assistance, and all other types of cash assistance that may be provided under
15 the Program;
16

17 (h) *Food assistance* refers to assistance to those in need due to human-induced
18 and natural calamities and those experiencing other forms of crisis or
19 displacement, eviction, demolitions or requiring interventions for sector-
20 specific support which include hot meals, food or meal allowance, or the
21 cash equivalent of the required hot meals and/or food packs;
22

23 (i) *Funeral assistance* refers to assistance to help defray funeral and related
24 expenses such as transfer of cadaver, burial site, and other related expenses
25 incurred by the family of the deceased, with consideration to context,
26 cultural, and religious backgrounds;
27

28 (j) *Guarantee letter* refers to a document duly approved and issued by the
29 DSWD, which ensures the payment of the amount appearing on the
30 document, that the beneficiary presents to any public or government owned

1 or controlled hospital or other institutions and to any similar private entity
2 that is willing to provide services;
3

4 (k) *Material and other in-kind assistance* refers to an assistance given to
5 individuals in crisis by providing them food and non-food items, non-
6 financial, and the likes, and may also include other professional assistance
7 available in the DSWD, such as psychosocial support and legal consultation;
8

9 (l) *Medical assistance* refers to out-of-pocket expense in the form of coupon,
10 stub, guarantee letter, promissory note or voucher that has monetary value,
11 given directly to recipients or beneficiaries to pay for hospitalization
12 expenses, other medical treatments or procedures, and which include
13 birthing procedure, as well as professional fees and consultation fees,
14 purchase of drugs, medicines, goods or other services prescribed by the
15 physician of a health facility for in-and-out-patients;
16

17 (m) *Persons with disabilities* refer to those who have long-term physical, mental,
18 intellectual or sensory impairments that hinder their full and effective
19 participation in society on an equal basis with others, including cancer
20 patients and persons living with cancer and cancer survivors under
21 Republic Act No. 11215, otherwise known as the "National Integrated
22 Cancer Act" and persons with rare disease under Republic Act No. 10747,
23 otherwise known as the "Rare Diseases Act of the Philippines";
24

25 (n) *Target beneficiaries* refers to individuals or families who are indigent,
26 financially incapacitated, stateless persons, repatriates, deportees,
27 transients, vulnerable, disadvantaged, or internally displaced persons or in
28 crisis situations based on the assessment of the social workers of the DSWD;
29 and
30

- 1 (o) *Transportation assistance* refers to the monetary support to cover the actual
2 cost incurred on land, sea, and air travel, including travel insurance and
3 such other related expenses as facilitated by the social workers of the
4 DSWD.

5
6 **SEC. 4. *Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation (AICS).*** – To effectively
7 respond to the individuals in crisis situation, each qualified target beneficiary shall
8 receive financial, medical, transportation, food, material assistance, to include
9 disability support services including other professional assistance available in the
10 DSWD, such as psychosocial support or intervention for dysfunctional families and
11 their children who need trauma care and management, and legal consultation, based
12 on the assessment of the social workers of the DSWD.

13
14 **SEC. 5. *Types of Assistance.*** – The following are the types of assistance that the
15 target beneficiaries may receive under the Program based on the assessment and
16 recommendation of the social workers, authorized personnel, or any other personnel
17 authorized by the DSWD, duly approved by their authorized officials:

18
19 (a) Financial assistance – as defined in Section 3, paragraph (g);

20
21 (b) Material assistance – a service providing food and non-food items to clients
22 who need immediate material support, such as food packs or vouchers,
23 hygiene or sleeping kits and assistive devices and technologies, subject to
24 its availability;

25
26 (c) Psychosocial support service – a service provided by trained or professional
27 psychosocial support workers to help meet the psychosocial, emotional, and
28 social needs of beneficiaries and their families. It is a set of interventions
29 that intends to positively improve a person's behavior to reduce the impact

1 of stress brought about by a crisis through behavioral modification
2 interventions;

3
4 (d) Referral service – a service provided when the requested support is not
5 within the range of services of the Program through coordination and/or
6 endorsement of the beneficiary's case within the DSWD's available
7 programs, projects and services and to other agencies such as to Department
8 of Education, Commission on Higher Education, Technical Education and
9 Skills Development Authority, Department of Health (DOH), Public
10 Attorney's Office, Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, Philippine
11 Amusement and Gaming Corporation, local government units (LGUs) and
12 other government agencies, civil society organizations, and
13 international/non-government organizations; and
14

15 (e) Such other services that the DSWD may deem appropriate.
16

17 In order to fully meet the medical needs of individuals in crisis situations,
18 particularly persons with disabilities or people with special needs. The DOH may
19 provide the initial costing per type of disability for the effective assessment of social
20 workers of the DSWD.
21

22 Appropriate documentation as provided for in the DSWD AICS Guidelines
23 shall support all disbursements of funds. The DSWD may provide additional
24 assistance or discontinue existing ones as it may deem appropriate.
25

26 **SEC. 6. Modes of Delivery of Services.** – The DSWD shall adopt different modes
27 in order to deliver efficiently, expeditiously and effectively the financial or material
28 assistance, psychosocial support, and referral service to the clients and communities
29 needing assistance from the government such as following:
30

- 1 (a) Service delivery within the Central or Field Offices;
2 (b) Setting up of an off-site or satellite venues; and
3 (c) Extension office of the DSWD for the Program.
4

5 *Provided, That the DSWD shall procure and/or construct a secure office system,*
6 *information and communication technology equipment, and all necessary capital*
7 *outlay expenditures such as vehicles, and vaults, among others, needed to efficiently*
8 *and effectively implement the Program.*
9

10 *Provided, further, That the DSWD may also establish an automated system for*
11 *processing and releasing the requested assistance. For this purpose, the*
12 *appropriations needed for the payment of the necessary cash-out fees or other service*
13 *fees charged by partner financial institutions shall form part of the DSWD annual*
14 *budget under the General Appropriations Act.*
15

16 **SEC. 7. *Integrated Program Delivery System.*** – To improve the delivery of
17 service to the eligible beneficiaries under the Program, there shall be an establish
18 Integrated Program Delivery System.
19

20 In keeping with the principle of equitable access, and ensuring that access to
21 the AICS is maximized, a mechanism for real-time data sharing between the DSWD
22 and the LGUs shall be institutionalized, subject to the statutory limitations under the
23 Data Privacy Act of 2012. Under this mechanism, concerned agencies such as the
24 Philippine Statistics Authority, DOH-Malasakit Centers, and LGUs may share
25 information from a centralized database in order to identify the assistance given to the
26 Program's eligible beneficiary, for purposes of assistance augmentation and to
27 prevent a possible abuse of the assistance given to those in crisis situations.
28

29 **SEC. 8. *Crisis Intervention Office/ Division/ Unit.*** – To ensure effective and
30 efficient delivery of services to the clients, there shall exist a Crisis Intervention Office

(CIO) at the Central Office, Crisis Intervention Divisions at the field offices, and Crisis Intervention Units at the Social Welfare and Development satellite offices of the DSWD that shall ensure that the Program, as enterprise information system, provided herein, is properly implemented, monitored, and evaluated nationwide. The office shall monitor and evaluate the implementation of AICS Program and prepare the monitoring and evaluation report for submission to the Secretary of the DSWD. The monitoring and evaluation report must be available and accessible to any stakeholder at the national, regional, and local levels.

SEC. 9. *Personnel Complement.* – The Secretary of the DSWD, in coordination with the CIO Director at the Central Office and Regional Offices, shall determine the additional positions required for the implementation of the program in accordance with the revised compensation and position classification system subject to the evaluation and approval of the Department of Budget and Management and in compliance with the civil service laws, rules and regulations, and other pertinent laws.

SEC. 10. *Program Monitoring and Evaluation.* – The DSWD shall conduct monitoring and evaluation to assess the responsiveness of the Program through the use of applicable indicators, frameworks, models, and tools, including a client/stakeholder's feedback mechanism, among others, and the establishment of standard reporting templates and procedures in consonance to applicable laws, rules, and regulations.

SEC. 11. *Program Transparency and Reporting.* – The DSWD shall annually publish a full report of the Program covering the implementation of the previous fiscal year and/or timely post and update periodically on the DSWD website a report of financial disclosures and information about beneficiaries based on geographical area and sectoral category subject to provisions of Republic Act No. 10173, or the "Data Privacy Act of 2012."

1 **SEC. 12. *Unlawful Acts.* -**

2
3 (a) It shall be unlawful for the officials or employees of LGUs, their agents,
4 representatives or relatives within the fourth civil degree of consanguinity
5 or affinity to interfere, in any manner, in the implementation or delivery of
6 AICC services or funds to qualified beneficiaries;

7
8 (b) Likewise, it shall be unlawful for any individual or organization to commit
9 the following acts:

10
11 (i) Defraud the government by issuing or presenting falsified or
12 misleading documents, or using false pretenses or other fraudulent
13 acts to acquire the assistance provided under this Act;

14
15 (ii) Coerce, invite, encourage or assist persons to seek assistance from
16 the DSWD for purposes of acquiring from beneficiary a portion of
17 the assistance, before or after the receipt of assistance;

18
19 (iii) Mislead an individual or group to join, pay or cooperate with a
20 group falsely representing connection or affiliation with DSWD or
21 falsely promising priority in the processing of assistance.

22
23 **SEC. 13. *Penalties.* -**

24
25 (a) Any of the specified person who committed the unlawful act under Section
26 13 (a) of this Act shall be punished by imprisonment of six (6) months. If the
27 offender is an official or employee of LGU, the official or employee shall
28 also be held administratively liable;

1 (b) Any person, group or organization who commit the unlawful acts under
2 Section 13 (b) of this Act shall be punished by:

- 3
- 4 (i) For the First Offense, one (1) year suspension from availing any
5 assistance from the DSWD; and
- 6 (ii) For the Second Offense, imprisonment of not less than one (1) year
7 but not more than six (6) years.
- 8

9 If the offender is an organization, the president, manager, or any officer of the
10 organization who participated in the commission of the acts enumerated above or
11 benefited therefrom, or both, shall be held liable and shall be punished by
12 imprisonment of not less than six (6) years but not more than ten (10) years. This is
13 without prejudice to any action against the organization or corporation before
14 appropriate government agency.

15

16 Conspiracy to commit the foregoing unlawful acts shall be penalized by the
17 same penalty prescribed under this Section.

18

19 In all circumstances, the government shall be authorized to prosecute or to file
20 cases on behalf of the private individual defrauded and damaged by the
21 aforementioned acts.

22

23 Any person who was coerced, invited, encouraged or misled while committing
24 the crimes above, or any person who has witnessed or has knowledge or information
25 on the commission of the crime and has testified or is testifying or about to testify
26 before any judicial or quasi-judicial body, or before any investigating authority, may
27 be admitted into the witness protection program: *Provided*, That to become a state
28 witness for this crime, the said person shall not be the most guilty.

29

1 A public official or personnel who commits, abets, or aids in the commission of
2 any of the Unlawful Acts provided herein shall be liable under the Revised Penal Code
3 and other existing penal laws. Administrative sanctions shall be imposed without
4 prejudice to prosecution in the proper courts.

5
6 **SEC. 14. *Cash Equivalents.*** - It shall be mandatory for any public or private
7 entity that provides services under this Program to accept the guarantee letter,
8 coupon, check or voucher issued by the DSWD as full or partial payment of the
9 obligation of the qualified beneficiary.

10
11 The DSWD must, within three (3) months from the date of acceptance, pay the
12 public or private entity of the amount appearing on the guarantee letter, coupon, or
13 voucher.

14
15 **SEC. 15. *Joint Congressional Oversight Committee.*** - A congressional
16 oversight committee is constituted to monitor, set the overall framework, and review
17 the implementation of this Act. The committee shall determine the inherent
18 weaknesses in the law and recommend necessary remedial legislation or executive
19 measures.

20
21 The oversight committee is composed of five (5) Senators and five (5)
22 Representatives to be appointed by the Senate President and the Speaker of the House
23 of Representatives, respectively, and co-chaired by the Chairpersons of the Committee
24 on Social Justice, Welfare and Rural Development of the Senate and the Committee on
25 Social Services of the House of Representatives. The four (4) other members from the
26 Senate and House of Representatives shall be composed of three (3) members from
27 each of the aforementioned committees, and one (1) from the minority.

28
29 For purposes of determining remedial legislation, the oversight committee
30 shall, within two (2) years after the effectivity of this Act, conduct a review which shall

1 include a systematic evaluation of the impact of this Act, accomplishments of the
2 program, and the performance of the implementing agencies.

3
4 **SEC. 16. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – Within six (6) months from
5 the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of the DSWD shall, in consultation with the
6 Secretary of the DOH and the Commission on Audit, promulgate the necessary rules
7 and regulations to carry out the provisions of this Act.

8
9 **SEC. 17. *Appropriations.*** – The amount necessary for the initial implementation
10 of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of DSWD.
11 Thereafter, such amount necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall
12 be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

13
14 **SEC. 18. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision or part of this Act is held
15 invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall
16 remain in full force and effect.

17
18 **SEC. 19. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, presidential decrees or issuances,
19 executive orders, letter of instructions, administrative orders, rules, and regulations
20 or parts thereof contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are
21 amended, repealed, or modified accordingly.

22
23 **SEC. 20. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days. After its
24 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

25
26 *Approved,*