

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5652



Introduced by: Kababaihan Kabalikatan para sa Kapakanan at Kaunlaran ng Bayan (4K) Party-list
Representative Iris Marie D. Montes

AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING THE ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS IN CRISIS SITUATION
(AICS) PROGRAM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND
DEVELOPMENT (DSWD), AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article II, Section 9 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution provides that:

"The State shall promote a just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and independence of the nation and free the people from poverty through policies that provide adequate social services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living, and an improved quality of life for all."

The Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation (AICS) is a social safety net or a stop-gap mechanism under the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to support the recovery of individuals and families from unexpected crisis such as illness or death of a family member, and other crisis situations.

The AICS is part of DSWD's menu under protective services for the poor, marginalized and vulnerable/disadvantaged individuals, which has been implemented by the DSWD for decades as part of its technical assistance and resource augmentation support to local government units (LGUs) and other partners.

It is being implemented by the Crisis Intervention Unit (CIU) of the DSWD, a special unit operating as an action center to immediately respond to cases of individuals and families in crisis situations. The CIU provides integrated services such as immediate rescue and protection provision of direct financial and material assistance, augmentation during disaster and referrals for immediate medical, legal, psycho-social services.

The CIU also operates through the DSWD Social Welfare and Development Teams in the different provincial clusters in the region which accepts target clienteles categorized as either walk-in, rescued and referred clients such as individuals and families with no adequate means to provide for medical, transportation, burial and other immediate needs, abandoned, abused and exploited adults and children.

Although the LGUs have been empowered under Republic Act No. 7160, also known as the Local Government Code of 1991, to deliver basic social protection and welfare services, the DSWD continuously implements social welfare and development, social protection, and anti-poverty programs and projects such as the AICS, which together with other programs and services is set to be transferred to the LGUs in compliance with the Supreme Court's Mandanas Ruling that directs the increase of National Tax Allotment share of LGUs vis-a-vis with the transfer or devolution of essential services from the national government agencies to LGUs.

In view of the importance of social safety net or a stop-gap mechanism to provide immediate financial relief in times of emergencies to indigents, vulnerable, and disadvantaged, this bill seeks to institutionalize the AICS program of the DSWD to help remedy the country's need for a social protection program that was highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The bill also seeks the creation of a Crisis Intervention Program Management Office (CIPMO) to ensure the efficient and responsive implementation of the AICS program throughout the country.

To ensure AICS program's continuity and consistent implementation, its institutionalization would not only strengthen the government's capacity to respond promptly to the needs of individuals in distress but would also serve as a concrete manifestation of the State's commitment to social justice and poverty alleviation.

In view of the foregoing, the passage of this measure is earnestly sought.


IRIS MARIE D. MONTES
Kababaihan Kabalikatan para sa Kapakanan
at Kaunlaran ng Bayan (4K) Party-list

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INSTITUTIONALIZING THE ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS IN CRISIS SITUATION (AICS) PROGRAM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT (DSWD), AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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 “Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation (AICS) Program Act”.

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to value the dignity of every human person and guarantee full respect for human rights. Towards this end, it shall provide adequate and sustainable assistance and services to indigent, vulnerable, and disadvantaged individuals geared towards alleviating poverty and an improved quality of life for every Filipino.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act, the following terms shall mean:

a. *Beneficiaries* refer to individuals and/or families who are indigent, vulnerable, disadvantaged or are otherwise in crisis situation based on the assessment of the social welfare;

b. *Crisis situation* refers to a condition whereby an individual or group of persons are faced with a different and stressful situation resulting to the impairment of his/her psychosocial functioning thereby needing series of interventions to prevent further exposure to vulnerabilities, exploitation and abuse; and

c. *Financial and/or material assistance* refers to the provision of monetary support in the form of outright cash and/or guarantee letter, coupon, check or voucher that has monetary value, which covers, but not limited to, assistance to burial, transportation, medical, educational, other support services and allied assistance or physical aid such as food, clothing, and general assistive devices;

SEC. 4. *Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation (AICS).* – The Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation (AICS) program, a social safety net or a stop-gap mechanism under the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) that supports the recovery of individuals and families from

unexpected crisis such as illness or death of a family member, and other crisis situations, is hereby institutionalized.

It shall serve as part of the protective services for the poor, marginalized and vulnerable/disadvantaged individuals and assistance and resource augmentation support to local government units (LGUs).

SEC. 5. *Beneficiaries of the AICS Program.* – Only qualified beneficiaries of the AICS Program shall receive financial and/or material assistance based on the assessment of the DSWD social workers in accordance with the parameters that shall be established in the program guidelines by the DSWD.

SEC. 6. *Type, Kind and Amount of Financial Assistance.* – The type, kind and amount of financial assistance to be provided to beneficiaries shall be based on the assessment and recommendation of the social workers or authorized personnel, duly approved by the authorized official or officials of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

Appropriate documentation as provided for in the DSWD AICS guidelines shall support all disbursements of funds. Social Case Study Report is required for those whose assistance is higher than Ten thousand pesos (P10,000.00).

SEC. 7. *Creation of Crisis Intervention Program Management Office (CIPMO).* – A Crisis Intervention Program Management Office (CIPMO) shall be created under the DSWD to ensure the efficient and responsive implementation of the AICS program.

The CIPMO shall be adequately staffed by social workers and support staff. The Secretary of Social Welfare and Development, in coordination with the Civil Service Commission (CSC) and the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), shall ensure the creation of appropriate plantilla positions and staffing pattern and appoint or assign such other personnel as may be necessary for its effective operation.

The DSWD shall include in its budget, to be submitted to the DBM, the budget for the personnel services requirement of the CIPMO. Such budgetary requirements shall be included in the General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within six (6) months from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of the DSWD, in coordination with the Department of Health and other relevant agencies, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to carry out the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 9. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary to implement this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act of the year following its enactment into law and thereafter.

SEC. 10. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, presidential decrees or issuances, executive orders, letter of instructions, administrative orders, rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby amended, repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 11. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,