



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



TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **8550**

Introduced by **Representative GIRLIE E. VELOSO**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution of the Philippines recognizes the vital role of the State in protecting the welfare of children and ensuring conditions that allow them to grow, learn, and participate safely in society. Article II, Section 13 of the Constitution declares that the State shall promote and protect the physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being of the youth. This constitutional mandate is reinforced by Article XV, Section 3(2), which obliges the State to defend the rights of children to assistance, including protection from all forms of abuse, neglect, cruelty, exploitation, and other conditions prejudicial to their development. The Philippines is likewise a State Party to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which affirms that children's rights apply fully in the digital environment and that States must adopt appropriate legislative measures to protect children from harm while respecting their evolving capacities.¹ These constitutional and international obligations provide a clear legal basis for evidence-based regulation of children's participation in social media platforms.

Despite existing child-protection laws, significant gaps remain in addressing the specific risks posed by social media to younger children. Philippine law already penalizes cybercrime, online sexual exploitation, bullying, and gender-based harassment, but these statutes are largely reactive, intervening only after harm has occurred. They do not adequately address the threshold question of whether young children possess the developmental capacity to independently navigate algorithm-driven, highly interactive social media environments. Scientific and medical research consistently shows that children below approximately thirteen (13) years of age are still developing the cognitive, emotional, and self-regulatory capacities necessary to process complex social feedback, persuasive design, and social comparison mechanisms embedded in social media platforms.² Empirical studies further associate early and unsupervised exposure to social media with heightened vulnerability to cyberbullying, anxiety, depressive symptoms, and other adverse

¹ United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 25 (2021) on children's rights in relation to the digital environment. <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3906061>

² National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. Social Media and Adolescent Development. Washington, DC: National Academies Press. Accessible summary via U.S. National Library of Medicine: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK594759/>

mental health outcomes among younger adolescents.³ Surveys conducted among Filipino youth show that many children begin using social media platforms during their primary school years, often without adequate supervision or safeguards⁴. At the same time, cyberbullying and online harassment have emerged as serious concerns in Philippine schools, with studies indicating that a substantial proportion of Filipino students report experiencing some form of bullying or harassment in digital spaces⁵. In the absence of a clear preventive framework, children below thirteen are exposed to risks that existing laws address only after damage has already been done.

International practice reflects growing recognition of these developmental realities. A wide range of jurisdictions and regulatory frameworks adopt age-based safeguards that restrict independent social media participation below thirteen (13) years of age, while allowing guided and progressively autonomous use during adolescence. The United States' Children's Online Privacy Protection Act establishes thirteen as the minimum age for independent online participation without parental involvement, and European data-protection regimes similarly recognize a digital age of consent clustered around this threshold.⁶ The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child has emphasized that States should regulate digital environments in a manner that protects children from harm while respecting adolescents' rights to participation, expression, and access to information, consistent with their evolving capacities.⁷ These standards underscore that effective child protection in the digital sphere requires differentiation between younger children and adolescents, rather than blanket prohibitions or purely punitive approaches.

This bill seeks to address these gaps by establishing a clear, developmentally grounded, and constitutionally sound framework for children's participation in social media platforms. It introduces a minimum age for independent social media account registration, prohibiting personal accounts for children below thirteen (13) years of age, while allowing adolescents aged thirteen (13) to seventeen (17) to participate subject to safety-by-design protections. The measure places primary responsibility on social media platform operators to prevent underage access through reasonable and privacy-respecting measures, and to design systems that reduce risks of bullying, harassment, exploitation, and harmful exposure. It deliberately avoids criminalizing children or parents, instead prioritizing protective, rehabilitative, and educational responses consistent with Philippine child-protection and juvenile justice principles. The bill further harmonizes with existing laws by complementing, rather than supplanting, the Anti-Bullying Act, the Safe Spaces Act, the Cybercrime Prevention Act, and the Data Privacy Act.

³ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Surgeon General. Social Media and Youth Mental Health: The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory (2023). Available at: <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/sg-youth-mental-health-social-media-advisory.pdf>

⁴ UNICEF Philippines. Children and the Digital World in the Philippines. <https://www.unicef.org/philippines>

⁵ Department of Education. Implementation of the Anti-Bullying Act of 2013 (Republic Act No. 10627) and School-Based Bullying Reports. <https://www.deped.gov.ph>

⁶ Children's Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998 (United States); European Union General Data Protection Regulation, Article 8. <https://www.ftc.gov/legal-library/browse/rules/childrens-online-privacy-protection-rule-coppa>

⁷ Tobin, John & Cashmore, Judy. "General Comment No. 25 on Children's Rights in Relation to the Digital Environment." Human Rights Law Review, Oxford University Press (2024). <https://academic.oup.com/hrlr/article/24/3/ngac018/7692952>

By adopting this framework, the bill seeks to provide multiple benefits. It protects younger children from exposure to digital environments they are not yet developmentally equipped to navigate, while preserving adolescents' rights to expression, learning, creativity, and participation in public life. It strengthens prevention against cyberbullying and online harassment by addressing platform design and systemic risks, rather than relying solely on after-the-fact penalties. It provides legal clarity and certainty to schools, parents, and platform operators regarding their respective roles and responsibilities. Finally, it aligns Philippine law with internationally recognized, evidence-based standards, ensuring that child online safety measures are both effective and constitutionally defensible.

In sum, this measure affirms that child protection in the digital age must be preventive, proportionate, and grounded in science, law, and lived realities. By setting a clear minimum age for independent social media use, strengthening platform accountability, and supporting parents, schools, and communities, the bill advances the constitutional mandate to safeguard the welfare of Filipino children while respecting their rights and evolving capacities in an increasingly digital society.

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



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Introduced by **Representative GIRLIE E. VELOSO**

**AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE ONLINE SAFETY OF CHILDREN,
IMPOSING A MINIMUM AGE FOR SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT REGISTRATION,
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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 “Online Safety for Children
2 in Social Media Act.”

3 **SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy.** — It is hereby declared the policy of the State to:

- 4 (a) Recognize the digital environment as an integral domain of modern life that affects the
5 education, development, participation, and expression of children, consistent with the
6 Constitution of the Philippines and the State’s obligations under the United Nations
7 Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- 8 (b) Afford special protection to children, particularly those below thirteen (13) years of
9 age, from all forms of abuse, exploitation, discrimination, bullying, harassment, and
10 other harms, including those committed through information and communications
11 technologies;
- 12 (c) Adopt evidence-based and developmentally appropriate standards in regulating
13 children’s participation in social media platforms, recognizing that children below
14 thirteen (13) years of age generally lack the cognitive and emotional capacity to
15 independently navigate social media environments, while adolescents progressively
16 acquire the ability for reasoned judgment and responsible use;
- 17 (d) Complement and strengthen existing child-protection and online safety laws, including
18 Republic Act No. 7610, Republic Act No. 9775, Republic Act No. 10627, Republic Act
19 No. 11313, and Republic Act No. 10175, by providing preventive safeguards specific

1 to social media platforms, without diminishing the protections afforded under said
2 laws;

- 3 (e) Ensure that any regulation of children's online activities is narrowly tailored,
4 proportionate, and protective, so as to advance the best interests of the child while
5 respecting the evolving capacities of adolescents, and without unduly restricting their
6 constitutionally protected rights to freedom of expression, access to information, and
7 participation in social and civic life.

8 Toward this end, the State shall establish a minimum age for independent social media
9 account registration, require social media platforms to adopt child-centered and safety-by-design
10 measures, and promote age-appropriate digital literacy and online safety education, while
11 recognizing the primary role of parents and guardians in the upbringing, guidance, and supervision
12 of their children.

13 **SECTION 3. Definition of Terms.** — For purposes of this Act, the following terms are
14 defined as follows:

- 15 (a) Child refers to any person below eighteen (18) years of age, or a person eighteen (18)
16 years of age or over who, by reason of a physical or mental disability or condition, is
17 unable to fully take care of himself or herself, or to protect himself or herself from
18 abuse, neglect, cruelty, exploitation, or discrimination.
- 19 (b) Child Below Thirteen (13) Years of Age refers to a child who has not yet reached his
20 or her thirteenth (13th) birthday.
- 21 (c) Social Media Platform refers to any online service, website, or application that:
22 1. allows users to create personal accounts, profiles, or identifiers;
23 2. enables users to generate, upload, share, or interact with user-generated content;
24 and
25 3. facilitates social interaction, networking, or community-building among users.
- 26 For purposes of this Act, the term Social Media Platform does not include online
27 services that are primarily:
- 28 i. designed and operated for formal education or learning management, and are
29 administered by, or under contract with, recognized educational institutions or
30 education authorities;
- 31 ii. intended for electronic banking, financial services, government transactions,
32 public utilities, or essential services; or
- 33 iii. limited to closed, private, or intra-household communication systems where
34 public dissemination of user-generated content is not a principal feature.
- 35 (d) Age-Restricted Social Media Platform refers to a social media platform accessible in
36 the Philippines which, by its nature, design, content, or terms of service, is not
37 primarily directed to children below thirteen (13) years of age.
- 38 (e) Account refers to any personal user identity, profile, handle, or set of login credentials
39 that enables access to the features or functionalities of a social media platform.
- 40 (f) Operator refers to any natural or juridical person who owns, manages, operates,
41 controls, or otherwise provides a social media platform that is accessible to users in

the Philippines, whether directly or through an affiliate, subsidiary, or authorized representative.

- (g) Parent or Guardian refers to a child's biological parent, adoptive parent, step-parent, legal guardian, or any person exercising parental authority or substitute parental authority under existing laws.
- (h) Bullying and Cyberbullying shall have the same meaning as provided under Republic Act No. 10627 and its implementing rules and regulations, including acts committed through electronic, digital, or online means.
- (i) Gender-Based Online Sexual Harassment shall have the same meaning as provided under Republic Act No. 11313 and its implementing rules and regulations.
- (j) Educational or Institutional Account refers to an account created, maintained, or controlled by a school, learning institution, religious organization, or child-protection institution, strictly for educational, pastoral, or protective purposes, and not as a personal, independent, or commercial account of the child.
- (k) Age Assurance Measures refer to reasonable, proportionate, risk-based, and privacy-preserving processes or technologies used to estimate, verify, or otherwise determine whether a user is below or above an age threshold relevant to this Act.

SECTION 4. Minimum Age for Independent Social Media Account Registration.

— No operator of an age-restricted social media platform shall permit the creation, registration, or continued operation of a personal social media account for a child below thirteen (13) years of age who:

- (a) is physically present in the Philippines; or
- (b) is a Filipino citizen, regardless of place of residence, where the platform is directed to, or has substantial usage in, the Philippines.

For purposes of this Act, the prohibition under this section applies only to personal and independent social media accounts, and shall not extend to permitted uses expressly provided in this Act.

SECTION 5. Duty of Social Media Platform Operators to Prevent Underage Access. — To give effect to the prohibition under Section 4, operators of age-restricted social media platforms shall take reasonable, proportionate, and privacy-respecting measures to:

- (a) prevent the creation of personal social media accounts by children below thirteen (13) years of age; and
- (b) identify, suspend, disable, or otherwise restrict personal social media accounts that belong to children below thirteen (13) years of age.

In determining compliance with this Act, due regard shall be given to the nature, scale, design, and risk profile of the platform, and to the reasonableness of the measures adopted, rather than to the mere existence of isolated or inadvertent non-compliant accounts.

SECTION 6. Knowledge and Due Diligence Standard. – An operator shall be deemed to have knowledge that an account belongs to a child below thirteen (13) years of age where such knowledge arises from, or ought reasonably to arise from:

- (a) age, profile, or identity information voluntarily provided to the platform;
- (b) reports or notifications from users, parents or guardians, schools, or child-protection authorities;
- (c) content moderation systems, safety tools, or platform review processes; or
- (d) any other circumstance in which a reasonable operator, exercising due diligence, would have identified the account as belonging to a child below thirteen (13) years of age.

Where an account is restricted, suspended, or disabled pursuant to this section, the operator shall provide a clear and accessible mechanism for review or dispute, through which the account holder or the parent or guardian of the account holder may contest the determination.

Such mechanism shall be made available in a manner reasonably accessible to users in the Philippines, shall allow the submission of information necessary to verify the age of the user, and shall ensure that any review is conducted promptly, fairly, and in accordance with the safety and privacy standards under this Act and other applicable laws.

SECTION 7. Permitted Uses and Exclusions. – Nothing in Sections 4, 5, and 6 of this Act shall be construed to prohibit:

- (a) the creation or use of educational or institutional accounts: Provided, That such accounts are created, maintained, and controlled by schools, learning institutions, religious organizations, or child-protection institutions, and are used strictly for educational, pastoral, or protective purposes, in accordance with existing data privacy and child-protection laws; or
- (b) access to content through shared or family devices, where no personal social media account is created, registered, or maintained in the name of, or for the exclusive use of, a child below thirteen (13) years of age.

SECTION 8. Adolescent Access and Safeguards. – Children aged thirteen (13) to seventeen (17) years may create and maintain personal social media accounts, subject to the safety-by-design obligations, default privacy protections, reporting mechanisms, and parental support tools required under this Act and other applicable laws.

Nothing in this Act shall be construed to prohibit adolescents from engaging in lawful expression, educational activities, creative work, or civic participation through social media platforms, subject to reasonable regulation for their protection.

SECTION 9. Prohibition on Circumvention. – No operator shall design, promote, implement, or maintain platform features, settings, or practices that are intended to circumvent or undermine the minimum age requirement or protective measures established under this Act.

SECTION 10. Safety-by-Design Obligations of Social Media Platform Operators. – All operators of social media platforms with users in the Philippines shall incorporate child-centered and safety-by-design measures into the design, operation, and governance of their services, consistent with this Act and existing laws.

Where an operator engages an agent, service provider, or other third party to collect, process, maintain, or review personal data for purposes of age assurance, moderation, safety review, or compliance under this Act, the operator shall ensure, through appropriate contractual or other lawful arrangements, that such entity maintains the confidentiality, security, and integrity of the data.

SECTION 11. Default Privacy and Safety Protections for Minors. – Operators shall provide default privacy and safety settings for users below eighteen (18) years of age which, at a minimum:

- (a) limit the public visibility and discoverability of user profiles;
- (b) restrict unsolicited direct messaging, contact, or interaction from adults or unknown users, subject to reasonable exceptions for verified educational or institutional use;
- (c) limit profiling, behavioral tracking, and targeted advertising directed at minors, consistent with data privacy laws; and
- (d) provide clear, accessible, and effective tools for blocking, muting, and reporting abusive, harassing, or inappropriate content or conduct.

Any modification of default settings by or on behalf of a minor shall be clear, informed, and reversible, and shall not be designed to nudge or coerce minors into reduced privacy or safety.

SECTION 12. Bullying, Harassment, and Online Abuse Safeguards. – Operators shall establish and maintain accessible, age-appropriate, and user-friendly mechanisms for reporting:

- (a) bullying and cyberbullying, as defined under Republic Act No. 10627;
- (b) gender-based online sexual harassment, as defined under Republic Act No. 11313; and
- (c) other forms of abusive, exploitative, or harmful conduct involving minors.

Such mechanisms shall ensure:

- 1. timely review of reports by trained personnel or systems;
- 2. appropriate and proportionate moderation actions, including content removal, account restriction, or suspension, consistent with due process and platform policies; and
- 3. the availability of clear guidance and referral information on how affected users may seek assistance from parents or guardians, schools, law enforcement authorities, or child-protection agencies, as appropriate.

1 **SECTION 13. Age Assurance and Verification Measures.** – Operators shall
2 implement reasonable, proportionate, and risk-based age assurance measures to support
3 compliance with the minimum age requirements under this Act.

4 Such measures shall:

- 5 (a) be designed to minimize the collection, processing, retention, and exposure of personal
6 data;
- 7 (b) avoid requiring the submission or storage of excessive or sensitive identity documents
8 from children;
- 9 (c) be transparent to users and parents or guardians as to their purpose, general operation,
10 and limitations; and
- 11 (d) be implemented in a neutral manner and shall not be designed to default users into a
12 particular age declaration, or to encourage, induce, or facilitate the falsification of age
13 information.

14 Nothing in this section shall be construed to require a specific technology or method of
15 age assurance: Provided, That the measures adopted are effective, privacy-respecting, and
16 proportionate to the risks addressed.

17 Personal data collected or processed for age assurance, age verification, dispute resolution,
18 or compliance with this Act shall be retained only for as long as reasonably necessary for the
19 specific purpose for which such data was collected or processed. Thereafter, such data shall be
20 deleted, destroyed, or anonymized using reasonable measures consistent with Republic Act No.
21 10173 and other applicable laws. Operators shall maintain policies governing the retention and
22 deletion of such data.

23 The Department of Information and Communications Technology, in coordination with
24 the National Privacy Commission, shall issue guidelines under the Implementing Rules and
25 Regulations to ensure that age assurance methods remain consistent with privacy and data
26 protection principles.

27 **SECTION 14. Transparency and Public Accountability.** – Operators shall make
28 publicly available, in clear, accessible, and age-appropriate language, information on:

- 29 (a) community standards and policies relating to bullying, harassment, abuse, and
30 exploitation involving minors;
- 31 (b) general measures adopted to enforce minimum age requirements and to protect
32 children and adolescents; and
- 33 (c) aggregated and anonymized information, subject to data privacy laws, regarding reports
34 of child-related harms and the actions taken in response.

35 Disclosure under this section shall not require the publication of proprietary information or
36 personal data protected by law.

SECTION 15. Local Representation and Lawful Presence. – Operators of social media platforms with users in the Philippines shall designate and maintain a duly authorized local representative or agent in the Philippines for purposes of compliance with this Act and coordination with government authorities. Such representative may be:

- (a) a domestic juridical entity;
- (b) a foreign juridical entity duly registered or authorized to do business in the Philippines; or
- (c) a natural or juridical person duly authorized by the operator to receive service of process and act on its behalf, including law firms or professional service entities acting as compliance agents.

The designated local representative shall be authorized to act on behalf of the operator in matters relating to compliance, monitoring, and enforcement under this Act.

SECTION 16. Coordination with Authorities and Service of Process. – The designated local representative shall be authorized to:

- (a) receive and respond to lawful orders, notices, subpoenas, and requests issued by competent Philippine authorities;
- (b) coordinate with the lead and partner agencies designated under this Act in relation to investigations, compliance monitoring, and enforcement actions; and
- (c) facilitate the timely implementation of lawful measures required under this Act, consistent with due process and existing laws.

In addition to the local representative required under Section 15, operators shall maintain a clearly accessible and reliable electronic or online coordination mechanism for reporting, notices, and communication, provided that such mechanism shall not substitute for the requirement of local representation.

Service of lawful orders, notices, or processes upon the designated local representative shall be deemed valid and binding service upon the operator for purposes of this Act.

Coordination under this section shall be undertaken in accordance with the Constitution, the Rules of Court, Republic Act No. 10173, Republic Act No. 10175, and other applicable laws, and shall respect due process, privacy, and lawful limitations on government authority.

SECTION 17. Duties of Schools and Educational Institutions. – All public and private basic education institutions shall, within their respective mandates and consistent with existing laws and policies:

- (a) Integrate age-appropriate digital literacy, online safety, and anti-bullying education into the curriculum and school programs, consistent with Republic Act No. 10627,

1 Republic Act No. 11313, and the child protection and learner welfare policies of the
2 Department of Education;

3 (b) Refrain from requiring children below thirteen (13) years of age to create or maintain
4 personal social media accounts as a condition for class participation, academic
5 submission, assessment, or access to school-related activities;

6 (c) Ensure that any educational or institutional social media account involving learners
7 below eighteen (18) years of age is created, administered, and supervised by authorized
8 school personnel, and is operated in compliance with applicable child-protection, data
9 privacy, and education laws and regulations; and

10 (d) Maintain and strengthen guidance, counseling, and referral mechanisms to address
11 cyberbullying, online harassment, and the psychological or emotional impact of
12 harmful online content on learners, including coordination with parents or guardians
13 and appropriate authorities when necessary.

14 **SECTION 18. Role of Parents and Guardians.** – Parents and guardians shall be
15 recognized as primary partners in safeguarding children in the digital environment and shall be
16 encouraged and supported to:

17 (a) Guide and supervise their children's use of devices and online services, with particular
18 regard to children below thirteen (13) years of age;

19 (b) Make use of available parental control, screen-time management, and content-filtering
20 tools provided by social media platforms or device manufacturers, where appropriate
21 and practicable; and

22 (c) Report or seek assistance, as necessary, from schools, social media platforms, or
23 appropriate authorities in cases of online bullying, harassment, grooming, or
24 exploitation involving their children.

25 The State shall undertake public information, education, and capacity-building initiatives to assist
26 parents and guardians in understanding online risks and in fulfilling their supportive and
27 supervisory role under this Act.

28 **SECTION 19. Lead and Partner Agencies.** – The Department of Information and
29 Communications Technology (DICT) shall be the lead agency in the implementation of this Act.

30 In carrying out its functions, the DICT shall coordinate, as necessary and within their
31 respective mandates, with the following agencies, which shall act as partner agencies for purposes
32 of this Act:

33 (a) the Department of Education (DepEd), with respect to learner protection, digital
34 literacy, and school-related implementation;

35 (b) the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), with respect to child
36 protection, psychosocial support, and referral services;

37 (c) the National Privacy Commission (NPC), with respect to data protection, privacy
38 safeguards, and compliance with Republic Act No. 10173;

- (d) the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC), with respect to regulatory coordination involving telecommunications and network access, as applicable;
- (e) the Department of Justice (DOJ), with respect to legal interpretation, prosecution, and inter-agency coordination;
- (f) the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), with respect to coordination with local government units;
- (g) the Philippine National Police (PNP), particularly the Women and Children Protection Center, with respect to law enforcement and child-focused cybercrime response; and
- (h) such other agencies as may be necessary, consistent with their respective mandates.

SECTION 20. Enforcement and Administrative Sanctions. – Without prejudice to criminal, civil, or other administrative liabilities under existing laws, an operator that fails to comply with Sections 4 and 5 of this Act may, after due notice and hearing, be subject to the following administrative sanctions, which shall be remedial, proportionate, and graduated, taking into account the nature, gravity, duration, and recurrence of the violation, as well as the operator's good faith and efforts at remediation:

- (a) Administrative fines in an amount not less than Five Million Pesos (₱5,000,000.00) but not more than Fifty Million Pesos (₱50,000,000.00) per instance or category of violation, with due regard to the scale and economic capacity of the operator, including, where relevant, its global operations, solely for purposes of assessing proportionality; and
- (b) In cases of repeated, willful, and egregious non-compliance, and only as a measure of last resort, the imposition of graduated technical or access-related measures strictly necessary to secure compliance, upon recommendation of the lead agency, coordination with the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC), and pursuant to a lawful court order, which may include the temporary restriction of specific services, features, or functionalities of the platform within the Philippine jurisdiction.

The sanctions under this section shall be compliance-oriented and corrective, and shall not be construed as penalties on content, users, or lawful expression.

The imposition of administrative sanctions under this Act shall observe due process, including prior notice, opportunity to be heard, and the right to appeal, in accordance with existing laws, rules, and regulations.

The Department of Information and Communications Technology shall exercise administrative and quasi-judicial authority for purposes of enforcing this Act, including the conduct of investigations, issuance of compliance orders, and adjudication of administrative cases. Proceedings shall observe the requirements of due notice, hearing, and reasoned decision in accordance with applicable administrative law principles and rules that may be issued under the Implementing Rules and Regulations.

Decisions of the Department shall be appealable to the Court of Appeals pursuant to Rule 43 of the Rules of Court, without prejudice to other remedies provided by law.

SECTION 21. Compliance Assistance and Corrective Orders. – Before the imposition of administrative fines under Section 20, the Department of Information and Communications Technology may issue compliance advisories, corrective directives, or remediation orders to allow operators a reasonable opportunity to address identified violations.

Nothing in this section shall prevent the Department from immediately imposing sanctions in cases involving repeated, willful, or egregious violations affecting the safety of children.

SECTION 22. Non-Liability of Children. – Under no circumstance shall a child be held criminally, civilly, or administratively liable, nor be subjected to punitive sanctions, solely by reason of:

- (a) misstating his or her age for purposes of creating, accessing, or maintaining a social media account; or
- (b) violating the minimum age requirement under Section 4 of this Act.

Any response to such conduct shall be protective and rehabilitative in nature, and shall prioritize child protection, guidance, counseling, and parental or guardian involvement, consistent with existing child-protection and juvenile justice laws.

SECTION 23. Relationship with Other Laws. – This Act shall be interpreted and applied in a manner consistent with, and complementary to, the following laws and their implementing rules and regulations:

- (a) Republic Act No. 7610, otherwise known as the Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act;
- (b) Republic Act No. 9775, otherwise known as the Anti-Child Pornography Act of 2009;
- (c) Republic Act No. 10627, otherwise known as the Anti-Bullying Act of 2013;
- (d) Republic Act No. 11313, otherwise known as the Safe Spaces Act;
- (e) Republic Act No. 10175, otherwise known as the Cybercrime Prevention Act of 2012; and
- (f) Republic Act No. 10173, otherwise known as the Data Privacy Act of 2012, and other applicable laws.

Nothing in this Act shall be construed to diminish, limit, supersede, or otherwise affect the rights, remedies, protections, or obligations provided under the foregoing laws.

SECTION 24. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – Within one hundred eighty (180) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), as lead agency, shall promulgate the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) necessary for the effective implementation of this Act.

1 In the formulation of the IRR, the DICT shall consult and coordinate, within their
2 respective mandates, with the Department of Education (DepEd), Department of Social Welfare
3 and Development (DSWD), National Privacy Commission (NPC), National Telecommunications
4 Commission (NTC), Department of Justice (DOJ), Department of the Interior and Local
5 Government (DILG), as well as relevant child protection organizations, digital rights organizations,
6 and industry stakeholders.

7 The IRR shall, at a minimum, provide for the following:

- 8 (a) Standards for age-assurance measures, ensuring that such measures are effective,
9 proportionate, and privacy-preserving, and consistent with the Data Privacy Act of
10 2012;
- 11 (b) Guidelines and criteria for assessing platform compliance with the safety-by-design and
12 child-protection obligations under this Act;
- 13 (c) Protocols for inter-agency coordination, including coordination among government
14 agencies, schools, and social media platforms, in the prevention, reporting, and
15 handling of online bullying, harassment, grooming, and child abuse; and
- 16 (d) Public information, education, and awareness measures to promote child online safety,
17 digital literacy, and responsible platform use among children, parents or guardians, and
18 educators.

19 **SECTION 25. Appropriations.** — The amount necessary for the implementation of this
20 Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA).

21 **SECTION 26. Separability Clause.** — If, for any reason, any section of this Act shall
22 be deemed unconstitutional or invalid, the other sections or provisions shall not be affected and
23 shall remain in force and in effect.

24
25 **SECTION 27. Repealing Clause.** — All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and
26 regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or
27 modified accordingly.

28 **SECTION 28. Effectivity Clause.** — This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days
29 from its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation,
30 whichever comes earlier.

31 Approved.