

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



TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 9190

AN ACT

**AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7719, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE
NATIONAL BLOOD SERVICES ACT OF 1994 TO AUTHORIZE MILITARY
BLOOD OPERATIONS, WALKING BLOOD BANK PROGRAMS, AND TACTICAL
COMBAT CASUALTY CARE TRAINING FOR THE ARMED FORCES OF THE
PHILIPPINES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

Introduced by **Rep. Jose Manuel "JM" F. Lagdameo**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Republic Act No. 7719, or the National Blood Services Act of 1994, has served the country well as the cornerstone of the nation's blood safety framework. However, it was designed for peacetime civilian healthcare settings and does not account for the possibility and reality of military combat, where laboratory facilities may be unavailable, the nearest licensed blood bank may be hours away, and attending medical personnel are often combat medics rather than licensed physicians. This legal gap creates a serious inconsistency: the very law designed to protect public health may also expose an AFP combat medic to criminal prosecution for administering a life-saving transfusion under battlefield conditions where compliance with DOH requirements is impossible.

This gap affects not only battlefield operations but also everyday military readiness. Under the current law, there is no clear legal basis for the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to conduct Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC) and Walking Blood Bank (WBB) training involving live blood collection skills, procure blood collection materials for unit-level readiness programs, or maintain pre-screened donor registries outside DOH-licensed facilities. In short, the AFP cannot legally prepare for a capability it also cannot legally employ.

From 2024 to 2025, AFP personnel participated in the US Navy's Valkyrie Program and in the first-ever US-AFP Blood Program Subject Matter Exchange under USINDOPACOM. The AFP now has the training, and this bill provides the legal framework to match it.

This bill amends Republic Act No. 7719 to formally authorize the AFP, through the AFP Health Service Command, to conduct combat blood operations and establish a Military Blood Program. It legalizes TCCC and WBB skills training at the unit level, authorizes the

procurement of blood collection materials, expands the existing emergency provision to cover military field conditions, mandates pre-deployment donor screening, and creates a joint AFP-DOH regulatory mechanism to govern military blood operations and provides that AFP medical personnel acting in good faith within prescribed standards shall not be subject to criminal or civil liability for adverse outcomes arising from such operations. Civilian blood safety standards under Republic Act No. 7719 remain fully intact and unchanged. Rather, the bill creates a separate, narrowly tailored framework applicable only to AFP operations in combat and contingency conditions.

The men and women of the AFP who serve in the most remote and dangerous areas of the country deserve a legal framework that reflects their operational reality. This bill does not diminish what Republic Act No. 7719 has established; it builds upon it by giving Filipino soldiers the lawful authority to save one another's lives when it matters most.

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


JOSE MANUEL "JM" F. LAGDAMEO
Representative
2nd District, Davao del Norte

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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 referred to as the “*Military Blood Operations Act*”.

SEC. 2. Section 2 of Republic Act No. 7719 is hereby amended as follows:

“Section 2. *Declaration of Policy.* — In order to promote public health, it is hereby declared the policy of the State:

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(m) TO EXTEND THE NATIONAL BLOOD SERVICES FRAMEWORK TO COVER THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES, RECOGNIZING MILITARY BLOOD READINESS AS A COMPONENT OF NATIONAL HEALTH POLICY, AND TO PROVIDE THE LEGAL BASIS FOR BLOOD OPERATIONS IN SUPPORT OF COMBAT CASUALTY CARE.

SEC. 3. Section 3 of Republic Act No. 7719 is hereby amended as follows:

Section 3. *Definitions.* — For purposes of this Act, the following terms shall mean:

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(K) AFP – MEANS THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES;

(L) AFP-HSC – MEANS THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES HEALTH SERVICE COMMAND, THE MEDICAL COMMAND OF THE AFP RESPONSIBLE FOR THE HEALTH SERVICE SUPPORT TO MILITARY PERSONNEL, AND THE IMPLEMENTING AUTHORITY FOR THE AFP MILITARY BLOOD PROGRAM UNDER THIS ACT.

(M) AFP-DOH BLOOD OPERATIONS MANUAL – MEANS THE JOINT OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES DOCUMENT PROMULGATED BY THE AFP-HSC AND THE DEPARTMENT UNDER SECTION 11-A OF THIS ACT, PRESCRIBING CLINICAL STANDARDS FOR PRE-DEPLOYMENT SCREENING, WBB OPERATIONS, AND COMBAT BLOOD OPERATIONS;

(N) COMBAT BLOOD OPERATION — THE COLLECTION, TESTING, AND TRANSFUSION OF BLOOD CONDUCTED BY THE AFP IN FIELD CONDITIONS DURING MILITARY OPERATIONS WHERE ACCESS TO LICENSED BLOOD SERVICE FACILITIES IS NOT FEASIBLE.

(O) FRESH WHOLE BLOOD OR FWB — WHOLE BLOOD COLLECTED ON AN EMERGENCY BASIS FROM A PRE-SCREENED WBB DONOR FOR IMMEDIATE TRANSFUSION TO A CASUALTY IN HEMORRHAGIC SHOCK, WHICH HAS NOT UNDERGONE FULL TRANSFUSION-TRANSMITTED INFECTION TESTING PRIOR TO TRANSFUSION;

(P) LOW TITER O WHOLE BLOOD OR LTOWB — WHOLE BLOOD FROM A BLOOD GROUP O DONOR WHOSE ANTI-A AND ANTI-B ANTIBODY TITERS ARE WITHIN THE THRESHOLDS PRESCRIBED IN THE AFP-DOH BLOOD OPERATIONS MANUAL, SUITABLE AS A UNIVERSAL BLOOD PRODUCT IN MILITARY FIELD SETTINGS WHERE CROSS-MATCHED BLOOD IS UNAVAILABLE;

(Q) TACTICAL COMBAT CASUALTY CARE OR TCCC — THE STANDARDIZED, EVIDENCE-BASED PRE-HOSPITAL TRAUMA CARE PROTOCOL FOR COMBAT SETTINGS, INCLUDING

HEMORRHAGE CONTROL, AIRWAY MANAGEMENT, AND BLOOD TRANSFUSION, AS ADOPTED AND UPDATED BY THE AFP-HSC;

(R) TRANSFUSION-TRANSMITTED INFECTION (TTI) — ANY INFECTIOUS DISEASE THAT MAY BE TRANSMITTED FROM A BLOOD DONOR TO A RECIPIENT THROUGH BLOOD TRANSFUSION OR BLOOD PRODUCT ADMINISTRATION, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO THOSE LISTED UNDER SECTION 3(H) OF THIS ACT, AS WELL AS HEPATITIS C AND SUCH OTHER INFECTIONS AS MAY BE ADDED BY THE DEPARTMENT, IN COORDINATION WITH THE AFP-HSC, CONSISTENT WITH PREVAILING INTERNATIONAL BLOOD SAFETY STANDARDS

(S) WALKING BLOOD BANK OR WBB — A PRE-IDENTIFIED, PRE-SCREENED POOL OF VOLUNTARY BLOOD DONORS WITHIN AN AFP UNIT, FROM WHOM FWB, PREFERABLY LTOWB MAY BE COLLECTED IN COMBAT EMERGENCIES WHEN TESTED BLOOD PRODUCTS ARE UNAVAILABLE;

SEC. 4. Section 4 of Republic Act No. 7719 is hereby amended as follows:

Section 4. *Promotion of Voluntary Blood Donation.* — In order to ensure adequate supply of human blood, voluntary blood donation shall be promoted through the following:

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(d) *Establishment of Blood Services Network.* — Blood centers shall be strategically established in every province and city nationwide within the framework of a National Blood Transfusion Service Network spearheaded by the Department, in coordination with the PNRC. The collection of blood in various areas in the community, such as schools, business enterprises, barangays, and military camps shall be promoted.

MILITARY BLOOD DONATION PROGRAMS IN AFP CAMPS AND UNITS SHALL, IN ADDITION TO CONTRIBUTING TO THE NATIONAL BLOOD SERVICES NETWORK, BE AUTHORIZED TO MAINTAIN INTERNAL PRE-DEPLOYMENT DONOR REGISTRIES FOR PURPOSES OF WBB OPERATIONS UNDER SECTION 9-A OF THIS ACT.

The Secretary shall set the standards for the scientific and professional establishment and operation of blood banks/centers and collection units. The

Department shall provide training programs and technical assistance to enable communities, schools, industrial and business sites, barangays, military camps and local government units to implement their own voluntary blood donation programs. **THE AFP-HSC SHALL SERVE AS REGISTRAR AUTHORITY FOR MILITARY PRE-DEPLOYMENT DONOR RECORDS AND SHALL COORDINATE WITH THE DEPARTMENT ON STANDARDS FOR REGISTRY MAINTENANCE.**

THE WBB DONOR REGISTRY SHALL BE MAINTAINED IN STRICT COMPLIANCE WITH THE DATA PRIVACY ACT OF 2012 AND ITS IMPLEMENTING RULES, AND SHALL CONTAIN ONLY SUCH INFORMATION AS IS NECESSARY FOR THE SAFE OPERATION OF THE WBB PROGRAM. ACCESS TO DONOR REGISTRY RECORDS, INCLUDING BLOOD TYPE, TTI SCREENING RESULTS, AND TITER LEVELS, SHALL BE RESTRICTED TO THE UNIT MEDICAL OFFICER AND, ON A STRICT NEED-TO-KNOW BASIS FOR WBB ACTIVATION PURPOSES ONLY, THE COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE UNIT.

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SEC. 5. Section 9 of Republic Act No. 7719 is hereby amended as follows:

Section 9. *Regulation of Blood Services.* — It shall be unlawful for any person to establish and operate a blood bank/center unless it is registered and issued a license to operate by the Department: *Provided*, That in case of emergencies, blood collection and transfusion under the responsibility of the attending physician shall be allowed in hospitals without such license under certain conditions prescribed by the Department. No license shall be granted or renewed by the Department for the establishment and operation of a blood bank/center unless it complies with the standards prescribed by the Department. Such blood bank/center shall be under the management of a licensed and qualified physician duly authorized by the Department.

PROVIDED, THAT IN COMBAT, MASS CASUALTY, CONTINGENCY, HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE, OR DISASTER RESPONSE SITUATIONS DURING MILITARY OPERATIONS, BLOOD COLLECTION AND TRANSFUSION UNDER THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ATTENDING AFP MEDICAL CORPS PHYSICIAN OR, IN THE ABSENCE THEREOF, THE MOST SENIOR AFP-HSC-CERTIFIED MEDICAL PERSONNEL PRESENT, SHALL BE ALLOWED OUTSIDE OF LICENSED BLOOD SERVICE FACILITIES.

PROVIDED, FURTHER, THAT COMBAT BLOOD OPERATIONS CONDUCTED PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 9-A AND 9-B OF THIS ACT SHALL BE EXPRESSLY EXCLUDED FROM THE CRIMINAL PENALTIES PROVIDED HEREIN.

PROVIDED, FURTHER, THAT NO CIVIL LIABILITY SHALL ATTACH TO AFP MEDICAL PERSONNEL ACTING IN GOOD FAITH IN THE PERFORMANCE OF COMBAT BLOOD OPERATIONS, PROVIDED THEY ACTED WITHIN THE SCOPE OF AUTHORITY AND STANDARDS PRESCRIBED UNDER THIS ACT;

PROVIDED, FINALLY, THAT AFP MEDICAL PERSONNEL CONDUCTING PRE-DEPLOYMENT SCREENING OR COMBAT BLOOD OPERATIONS UNDER THIS ACT SHALL BE DEEMED TO SATISFY THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE CLINICAL LABORATORY LAW WITH RESPECT TO SUCH ACTIVITIES, PROVIDED THEY ARE ACTING UNDER THE DIRECT SUPERVISION OF A PRC-LICENSED PATHOLOGIST OR MEDICAL TECHNOLOGIST ASSIGNED TO THE AFP-HSC, OR USING AFP-HSC-APPROVED POINT-OF-CARE TESTING KITS IN FIELD CONDITIONS WHERE LABORATORY SUPERVISION IS NOT FEASIBLE.

SEC. 6. A new section 9-A is hereby inserted after Section 9 of Republic Act No. 9368 to read as follows:

SECTION 9-A. MILITARY COMBAT BLOOD OPERATIONS. — THE AFP, THROUGH THE AFP-HSC, IS AUTHORIZED TO CONDUCT BLOOD COLLECTION, TYPING, TESTING, AND TRANSFUSION OPERATIONS UNDER COMBAT, CONTINGENCY, MASS CASUALTY, HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE, AND DISASTER RESPONSE CONDITIONS DURING MILITARY OPERATIONS SUBJECT TO:

(A) AFP MILITARY BLOOD PROGRAM — THE AFP-HSC SHALL ESTABLISH THE AFP MILITARY BLOOD PROGRAM WHICH SHALL OPERATE AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE NATIONAL BLOOD SERVICES NETWORK WHILE MAINTAINING INDEPENDENT COMBAT BLOOD CAPABILITY. THE PROGRAM SHALL BE LED BY AN AFP-DOH BLOOD PROGRAM OFFICER OF AN APPROPRIATE RANK AND MEDICAL QUALIFICATION, DESIGNATED BY THE AFP SURGEON GENERAL;

(B) PRE-DEPLOYMENT SCREENING — ALL AFP PERSONNEL DEPLOYING FOR A PERIOD EXCEEDING THIRTY (30) DAYS

SHALL UNDERGO PRE-DEPLOYMENT WHOLE BLOOD DONOR SCREENING TYPING WITHIN ONE HUNDRED TWENTY (120) DAYS PRIOR TO DEPLOYMENT. SUCH SCREENING SHALL INCLUDE: (1) ABO AND RH BLOOD TYPING (2) ANTI-A/ANTI-B ANTIBODY TITER TESTING FOR PERSONNEL WITH TYPE-O BLOOD (3) INFECTIOUS DISEASE TESTING FOR TTI, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO, HIV, HEPATITS-B, HEPATITIS-C, SYPHILIS, AND MALARIA), AND (4) SUCH OTHER TESTS AS MAY BE PRESCRIBED BY THE AFP-DOH BLOOD OPERATIONS MANUAL IN FORCE AS OF THE DATE OF TESTING. FOR THE AVOIDANCE OF DOUBT, SCREENING RESULTS COLLECTED WITHIN THE PRECEDING ONE HUNDRED TWENTY (120) DAYS SHALL REMAIN CURRENT FOR PURPOSES OF SUBSEQUENT DEPLOYMENTS WITHIN THAT PERIOD;

(C) WBB PROTOCOL — PRE-SCREENED AFP PERSONNEL SHALL CONSTITUTE A UNIT WBB REGISTRY. UPON ACTIVATION BY THE AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL UNDER PARAGRAPH (D) OF THIS SECTION, THE UNIT MEDICAL OFFICER SHALL: (1) SELECT THE MOST SUITABLE DONOR FROM THE WBB REGISTRY, WITH PREFERENCE FOR LTOWB DONORS; AND (2) PROCEED WITH COLLECTION AND TRANSFUSION OF FWB. PROVIDED, THAT THE WBB SHALL BE ACTIVATED ONLY WHEN TESTED PRODUCTS ARE UNAVAILABLE AND THE CASUALTY'S LIFE IS IMMEDIATELY THREATENED. PROVIDED, FURTHER, THAT WHERE NO REGISTRY DONOR IS AVAILABLE, AND THE CIRCUMSTANCES WARRANT, A NON-REGISTRY AFP VOLUNEER MAY BE USED SUBJECT TO RAPID POINT-OF-CARE INFECTIOUS DISEASE SCREENING IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE GUIDELINES OUTLINED IN THE AFP-DOH BLOOD OPERATIONS MANUAL;

(D) ACTIVATION AUTHORITY — WBB MAY BE ACTIVATED BY: (1) A LICENSED PHYSICIAN; (2) A MEDICAL TECHNOLOGIST OR OTHER AFP MEDICAL SERVICES CORPS OFFICER DESIGNATED BY THE AFP-HSC FOR THIS PURPOSE; OR (4) IN THE ABSENCE OF THE FOREGOING, THE MOST SENIOR COMBAT MEDIC PRESENT WHO HOLDS A CURRENT AFP-HSC CERTIFICATION IN TCCC AND WBB PROCEDURES

AFP MEDICAL PERSONNEL CONDUCTING COMBAT BLOOD OPERATIONS OR PRE-DEPLOYMENT SCREENING UNDER THIS ACT SHALL BE DEEMED IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE CLINICAL LABORATORY LAW, THE PRC MODERNIZATION ACT, AND ALL OTHER APPLICABLE PROFESSIONAL REGULATORY LAWS, ONLY

TO THE EXTENT THAT THEIR ACTIVITIES ARE CONDUCTED WITHIN THE SCOPE OF AUTHORITY, TRAINING, AND STANDARDS PRESCRIBED BY THIS ACT AND THE AFP-DOH BLOOD OPERATIONS MANUAL;

(E) MANDATORY REPORTING — ALL WBB ACTIVATIONS AND COMBAT BLOOD OPERATIONS SHALL BE DOCUMENTED AND REPORTED TO AFP-HSC WITHIN 72 HOURS OF THE OPERATION, OR AS SOON AS OPERATIONAL CONDITIONS REASONABLY PERMIT, USING THE STANDARD COMBAT BLOOD OPERATION REPORT PRESCRIBED BY THE AFP-DOH BLOOD OPERATIONS MANUAL. WHERE A DONOR TESTS POSITIVE FOR ANY TTI FOLLOWING THE OPERATION, THE AFP-HSC SHALL IMMEDIATELY NOTIFY THE DONOR AND THE RECEIPT'S ATTENDING PHYSICIAN AND INITIATE APPROPRIATE FOLLOW-UP PROTOCOLS;

(F) STANDARDS — THE AFP-HSC AND DOH SHALL JOINTLY PROMULGATE THE AFP-DOH BLOOD OPERATIONS MANUAL PRESCRIBING DETAILED STANDARDS FOR PRE-DEPLOYMENT SCREENING, DONOR REGISTRY MANAGEMENT, WBB ACTIVATION PROCEDURES, FIELD COLLECTION, RAPID POINT-OF-CARE TESTING, TRANSFUSION, POST-TRANSFUSION FOLLOW-UP, AND THE MINIMUM BLOOD TYPE COMPOSITION OF UNIT WBB DONOR POOLS. THE MANUAL SHALL BE PROMULGATED WITHIN ONE (1) YEAR FROM THE EFFECTIVITY OF THIS ACT AND SHALL BE REVIEWED AND UPDATED EVERY TWO (2) YEARS, UPON SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN MILITARY OPERATIONAL DOCTRINE, OR UPON SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN BLOOD BANKING TECHNOLOGY, WHICHEVER COMES FIRST.

(G) LIABILITY PROTECTION — AFP MEDICAL PERSONNEL AND AFP-HSC-CERTIFIED COMBAT MEDICS ACTING IN GOOD FAITH IN THE PERFORMANCE OF COMBAT BLOOD OPERATIONS UNDER THIS SECTION SHALL NOT BE SUBJECT TO CRIMINAL OR CIVIL LIABILITY FOR ANY ADVERSE OUTCOME ARISING FROM SUCH OPERATIONS, PROVIDED THEY ACTED WITHIN THE SCOPE OF AUTHORITY, TRAINING, AND STANDARDS PRESCRIBED UNDER THIS ACT AND THE AFP-DOH BLOOD OPERATIONS MANUAL. NOTHING IN THIS SECTION SHALL BE CONSTRUED TO SHIELD WILLFUL MISCONDUCT OR GROSS NEGLIGENCE.

SEC. 7. A new section 9-B is hereby inserted after the new Section 9-A of Republic Act No. 9368 to read as follows:

SECTION 9-B. MILITARY MEDICAL TRAINING AND PROCUREMENT AUTHORIZATION. — NOTWITHSTANDING THE LICENSING REQUIREMENTS UNDER SECTION 9, THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES BY AFP PERSONNEL ARE HEREBY AUTHORIZED WITHOUT REQUIRING A LICENSE TO OPERATE, SUBJECT TO STANDARDS JOINTLY PRESCRIBED BY THE AFP-HSC AND THE DEPARTMENT:

(A) TCCC AND WBB SKILLS TRAINING — AFP MEDICAL OFFICERS AND TRAINED COMBAT MEDICS WHO HAVE COMPLETED AFP-HSC ACCREDITED TCCC AND WBB TRAINING ARE AUTHORIZED TO CONDUCT UNIT-LEVEL TCCC AND WBB TRAINING THAT INCLUDES BLOOD COLLECTION SKILLS SUCH AS VENIPUNCTURE, BLOOD BAG PREPARATION, BLOOD TYPING, AND ACTUAL OR SIMULATED WHOLE BLOOD COLLECTION PROCEDURES, CONDUCTED ON VOLUNTEER AFP PERSONNEL. PROVIDED, THAT ACTUAL WHOLE BLOOD COLLECTION DURING TRAINING MAY ONLY BE CONDUCTED UNDER THE DIRECT SUPERVISION OF A PRC-LICENSED AFP MEDICAL CORPS PHYSICIAN IN A STRUCTURED TRAINING PROGRAM ACCREDITED BY THE AFP-HSC. THE AFP-HSC SHALL REVIEW AND UPDATE TCCC AND WBB TRAINING STANDARDS EVERY TWO (2) YEARS, UPON SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN MILITARY OPERATIONAL DOCTRINE, OR UPON SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN BLOOD BANKING TECHNOLOGY, WHICHEVER COMES FIRST;

(B) PROCUREMENT OF BLOOD COLLECTION MATERIALS — AFP UNITS, THROUGH THEIR ORGANIC OR SUPPORTING MEDICAL LOGISTICS CHANNELS, ARE AUTHORIZED TO PROCURE THE FOLLOWING MATERIALS FOR USE IN MILITARY BLOOD READINESS PROGRAMS AND TCCC TRAINING

- (1) BLOOD COLLECTION SETS INCLUDING BLOOD COLLECTION BAGS USING ANTICOAGULANT SOLUTIONS PRESCRIBED BY THE AFP-DOH BLOOD OPERATIONS MANUAL, COLLECTION NEEDLES, NAD ADMINISTRATION SETS;**
- (2) BLOOD TYPING REAGENTS, ANTI-A AND ANTI-B ANTIBODY TITER TESTING KITS, RAPID INFECTIOUS DISEASE SCREENING KITS; AND**

**(3) SUCH OTHER RELATED MATERIALS THAT MAY BE
PRESCRIBED BY THE AFP-DOH BLOOD OPERATIONS
MANUAL**

SUCH PROCUREMENT SHALL BE CHARGED AGAINST THE AFP MEDICAL READINESS BUDGET LINE APPROPRIATED FOR THIS PURPOSE. THE AFP IS FURTHER AUTHORIZED TO SOURCE SPECIALIZED BLOOD BANKING EQUIPMENT AND POINT-OF-CARE TESTING DEVICES THROUGH GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT AGREEMENTS OR OTHER INTERNATIONAL PROCUREMENT MECHANISMS, WHERE SUCH ITEMS ARE NOT LOCALLY AVAILABLE;

(C) PRE-DEPLOYMENT DONOR SCREENING — PRE-DEPLOYMENT DONOR SCREENING UNDER SECTION 9-A(B) MAY BE CONDUCTED AT ANY AFP-HSC CERTIFIED GARRISON HOSPITAL, FIELD OFFICE, OR BASE MEDICAL FACILITY, AND SHALL NOT BE LIMITED TO THE AFP-HSC CENTRAL FACILITY. THE AFP-HSC SHALL DESIGNATE REGIONAL MILITARY BLOOD PROGRAM OFFICERS AT EACH MAJOR AFP UNIFIED COMMAND TO OVERSEE PRE-DEPLOYMENT SCREENING, WBB REGISTRY MAINTENANCE, AND BLOOD PROGRAM COMPLIANCE WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY. RESULTS SHALL BE MAINTAINED IN THE UNIT WBB DONOR REGISTRY UNDER THE AFP-HSC AS REGISTRAR AUTHORITY;

(D) ACCREDITATION OF AFP MEDICAL FACILITIES FOR WBB OPERATIONS. — AFP GARRISON HOSPITALS, FIELD HOSPITALS, AND BATTALION AID STATIONS DESIGNATED BY AFP-HSC AS WBB TRAINING OR SCREENING CENTERS SHALL BE DEEMED ACCREDITED FOR SUCH SPECIFIC PURPOSE UPON ISSUANCE OF A CERTIFICATION BY THE AFP SURGEON GENERAL IN COORDINATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT, WITHOUT REQUIRING A SEPARATE LICENSE TO OPERATE FOR WBB ACTIVITIES, SUBJECT TO COMPLIANCE WITH THE JOINT STANDARDS UNDER SECTION 11-A OF THIS ACT. THIS PROVISION SHALL NOT BE CONSTRUED TO EXEMPT AFP MEDICAL FACILITIES FROM EXISTING HOSPITAL LICENSING REQUIREMENTS WITH RESPECT TO THEIR GENERAL MEDICAL OPERATIONS.

(E) COMPLIANCE — ALL TRAINING, PROCUREMENT, AND SCREENING ACTIVITIES UNDER THIS SECTION SHALL ADHERE

TO AFP-HSC-PRESCRIBED CLINICAL STANDARDS CONSISTENT WITH INTERNATIONAL MILITARY BLOOD BANKING PRACTICE, AND SHALL BE SUBJECT TO PERIODIC REVIEW BY THE AFP SURGEON GENERAL THE AFP SURGEON GENERAL SHALL, IN COORDINATION WITH THE SECRETARY, CONDUCT A PERIODIC REVIEW OF THE AFP MILITARY BLOOD PROGRAM'S COMPLIANCE WITH THE STANDARDS PRESCRIBED UNDER THIS ACT, NOT LESS THAN ONCE EVERY TWO (2) YEARS, AND SHALL SUBMIT A REPORT THEREON TO THE SECRETARY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE AND THE SECRETARY;

(F) WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION. — AFP PERSONNEL WHO REPORT, IN GOOD FAITH, ANY VIOLATION OF THE STANDARDS, PROTOCOLS, OR PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED UNDER THIS ACT OR THE AFP-DOH BLOOD OPERATIONS MANUAL SHALL BE PROTECTED FROM RETALIATION, CONSISTENT WITH EXISTING AFP ADMINISTRATIVE AND DISCIPLINARY REGULATIONS AND APPLICABLE CIVIL SERVICE LAWS.

SEC. 8. A new section 9-C is hereby inserted after the new Section 9-B of Republic Act No. 9368 to read as follows:

SECTION 9-C. MILITARY BLOOD READINESS DRILLS. — ALL AFP UNITS MAINTAINING A WBB REGISTRY UNDER SECTION 9-A OF THIS ACT SHALL CONDUCT PERIODIC WBB ACTIVATION DRILLS AT INTERVALS PRESCRIBED BY THE AFP-HSC, BUT NOT LESS THAN ONCE EVERY SIX (6) MONTHS, OR UPON EACH CHANGE IN UNIT MEDICAL PERSONNEL, WHICHEVER IS MORE FREQUENT. RECORDS OF SUCH DRILLS, INCLUDING TIME-TO-ACTIVATION BENCHMARKS, SHALL BE MAINTAINED BY THE UNIT MEDICAL OFFICER AND SUBMITTED TO THE AFP-HSC AS PART OF UNIT MEDICAL READINESS REPORTING. THE AFP-HSC SHALL PRESCRIBE THE MINIMUM PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR WBB ACTIVATION DRILLS, INCLUDING TIME-TO-FIRST-TRANSFUSION BENCHMARKS, CONSISTENT WITH INTERNATIONAL MILITARY BLOOD BANKING DOCTRINE.

SEC. 9. Section 10 of Republic Act No. 7719 is hereby amended as follows:

Section 10. Importation of Blood Bank Equipment, Blood Bags and Reagents. — Upon the effectivity of this Act, equipment, blood bags and reagents used for the screening and testing of donors, collection and processing and storage of blood shall be imported tax-and duty-free by the PNRC, blood

banks and hospitals participating actively in the National Voluntary Blood Services Program **AND THE AFP FOR BLOOD COLLECTION AND TRANSFUSION MATERIALS, POINT-OF-CARE TESTING DEVICES, BLOOD TYPING REAGENTS, TITER TESTING KITS, AND RELATED EQUIPMENT FOR USE IN MILITARY BLOOD READINESS PROGRAMS UNDER SECTIONS 9-A AND 9-B OF THIS ACT.** This provision shall be implemented by the rules and regulations to be promulgated by the Department in consultation and coordination with the Department of Finance.

SEC. 10. A new section 11-A is hereby inserted after Section 11 of Republic Act No. 9368 to read as follows:

SECTION 11-A. JOINT MILITARY BLOOD REGULATIONS. — THE SECRETARY AND THE SECRETARY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE SHALL JOINTLY PROMULGATE RULES AND REGULATIONS, AND THE AFP-DOH BLOOD OPERATIONS MANUAL, GOVERNING BLOOD COLLECTION AND TRANSFUSION BY THE AFP UNDER COMBAT, CONTINGENCY, AND TRAINING CONDITIONS. SUCH JOINT REGULATIONS AND MANUAL SHALL PRESCRIBE, AT MINIMUM, STANDARDS FOR THE FOLLOWING:

- (1) PRE-DEPLOYMENT DONOR SCREENING, WBB OPERATIONS AND COMBAT BLOOD OPERATIONS;**
- (2) AFP-HSC CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR TCCC AND WBB INSTRUCTORS, EVALUATORS, AND PRACTITIONERS;**
- (3) MINIMUM BLOOD TYPE COMPOSITION OF UNIT WBB DONOR POOLS, WITH PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO THE IDENTIFICATION AND REGISTRATION OF LTOWB-ELIGIBLE DONORS;**
- (4) QUALITY ASSURANCE, ADVERSE EVENT DOCUMENTATION, AND REPORTING MECHANISMS;**
- (5) DATA PRIVACY AND SECURITY PROTOCOLS FOR THE WBB DONOR REGISTRY, CONSISTENT WITH THE DATA PRIVACY ACT OF 2012;**
- (6) SUCH OTHER MATTERS AS MAY BE NECESSARY FOR THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS ACT.**

THE JOINT REGULATIONS SHALL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE OPERATIONAL CONSTRAINTS OF MILITARY FIELD ENVIRONMENTS, INTERNATIONAL MILITARY BLOOD BANKING STANDARDS, AND THE PROVISIONS OF THIS ACT. THE JOINT REGULATIONS AND THE AFP-DOH BLOOD OPERATIONS MANUAL SHALL BE REVIEWED EVERY TWO (2) YEARS OR UPON SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN MILITARY OPERATIONAL DOCTRINE OR ADVANCES IN BLOOD BANKING TECHNOLOGY, WHICHEVER COMES FIRST.

IN THE EVENT OF DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN THE SECRETARY AND THE SECRETARY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE ON ANY MATTER UNDER THIS SECTION, THE MATTER SHALL BE ELEVATED TO THE [OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT] FOR RESOLUTION. EXISTING STANDARDS AND THE CURRENT AFP-DOH BLOOD OPERATIONS MANUAL SHALL REMAIN IN FORCE PENDING RESOLUTION.

SEC. 11. Section 12 of Republic Act No. 7719 is hereby amended as follows:

Section 12. *Penalties.* —

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Any person who shall establish and operate a blood bank without securing any license to operate from the Department or who fails to comply with the standards prescribed by the Department referred to in Section 9 hereof shall suffer the penalty of imprisonment of not less than twelve (12) years and one (1) day nor more than twenty (20) years or a fine of not less than Fifty thousand pesos (P50,000) nor more than Five hundred thousand pesos (P500,000), or both at the discretion of the competent court.

PROVIDED, THAT NO CRIMINAL LIABILITY SHALL ATTACH TO AFP MEDICAL PERSONNEL OR AFP-HSC-CERTIFIED COMBAT MEDICS ACTING IN GOOD FAITH IN THE PERFORMANCE OF COMBAT BLOOD OPERATIONS UNDER SECTIONS 9-A AND 9-B OF THIS ACT, WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THEIR AUTHORITY, TRAINING, AND THE STANDARDS PRESCRIBED UNDER THIS ACT AND THE AFP-DOH BLOOD OPERATIONS MANUAL: PROVIDED, FURTHER, THAT THIS EXEMPTION SHALL NOT APPLY TO WILLFUL MISCONDUCT OR GROSS NEGLIGENCE.

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SEC. 12. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The Department and Department of National Defense shall, within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, constitute a Joint Technical Working Group composed of representatives from the AFP-HSC, the Department of Health, and relevant professional medical organizations, along with other relevant agencies and in consultation with stakeholders, for the purpose of drafting the AFP-DOH Blood Operations Manual and the joint implementing rules and regulations required under this Act. The Manual and implementing rules and regulations shall be promulgated no later than one (1) year from the effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 13. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act shall be deemed unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not affected there shall remain in force and effect.

SEC. 14. *Repealing Clause.* – All Acts, Presidential Decrees, Executive Orders and Administrative Orders, Rules and Regulations and other such issuances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 15. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,