



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 9941



Introduced by **REPRESENTATIVE CHEENO MIGUEL D. ALMARIO**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The vulnerability of the Philippines to natural disasters is a recurring and destructive hazard to all of us. Based on the World Risk Index 2025, the Philippines topped the list as the most disaster-prone country out of the 193 countries assessed.

In the first half of 2026, our country experienced severe weather, such as the massive flooding and landslides caused by shear line in Caraga region,¹ as well as series of earthquakes in various areas, such as the recent 7.8 magnitude earthquake that struck the province of Sarangani and nearby provinces.² These natural disasters cause about millions worth of damages to infrastructure and livelihoods of our countrymen. Filipinos resiliency can only do so much.

Article XIII, Section 3, 1987 Constitution guarantees the right to humane conditions of work. This mandates the protection and promotion of the welfare of the workers. Moreover, the support of the State must continue to evolve beyond reactive post-disaster response and institutionalize legal protection for the workforce.

¹ <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2184753/shear-line-triggers-floods-landslides-across-caraga-region>.

² Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology, "Primer on the 08 June 2026 Magnitude (Mw) 7.8 Offshore Sarangani Earthquake," June 8, 2026, <https://www.phivolcs.dost.gov.ph/primer-on-the-08-june-2026-magnitude-mw-7-8-offshore-sarangani-earthquake/>.

As such, this bill seeks to institutionalize the grant employees, whether from government sector or from private sector, a five (5) - day special emergency leave with pay. The special emergency leave may be used by the employee for several valid purposes, such as urgent repair and clean-up of damaged house; recovery from disease or illness incurred by and/or aggravated by natural disaster or calamity; being stranded in affected areas, where there are no means of transportation to ensure safe transit to and from workplace, or caring for immediate family members affected by natural disaster or calamity.

Whether it is a string of six consecutive typhoons, a crushing 7.8 magnitude earthquake, or a toxic ash cloud from an active volcano, the Filipino worker is constantly on the frontlines of natural disasters. When weather disruptions or other natural disasters occur back-to-back, employees are forced to exhaust their standard yearly vacation or sick leave on initial events, leaving them completely defenseless against subsequent disasters. With the institutionalization of a 5 days special emergency leave, we are giving the Filipino workforce a humane shield to protect their homes, their health and their families first.

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



CHEENO MIGUEL D. ALMARIO
Representative
2nd District, Davao Oriental



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AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR A FIVE (5) DAY SPECIAL EMERGENCY LEAVE FOR ALL
WORKERS IN THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR DIRECTLY AFFECTED BY
NATURAL CALAMITIES OR DISASTER

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

Section 1. Title – This Act shall be known as the “**Special Emergency Leave Act.**”

Section 2. Declaration of Policy – It is the policy of the State to protect the rights of workers and promote their welfare. As such, the State should guarantee the workers’ right to humane conditions of work.

Towards this end, the State shall institutionalize the grant of this right to special emergency leave to employees or workers directly affected by natural calamities or disaster. This is to ensure that the workers will not be directly exposed to the dangers that may arise due to the calamities or disaster.

Section. 3. Applicability. – This Act shall apply to all government and private employees, officials, and workers, who have rendered at least six (6) months of service.

However, this Act shall not apply to the following:

- (a) Those already enjoying a similar benefit equivalent to at least five (5) days of special emergency leave;

- (b) Those employed in establishments with less than ten (10) employees;
- (c) Those government employees or workers whose primary functions involve the delivery of basic services during or on occasion of natural calamities or disaster

Section. 4. Grant of Special Emergency Leave – Employees directly affected by a natural calamity or disaster shall be entitled to a five (5) - day special emergency leave with pay.

This special emergency leave is available upon the declaration of a state of calamity or national calamity by the President of the Philippines or by the Local Sanggunian. However, in case of the specific area was not covered by the declaration of state of calamity but nonetheless severely affected by the natural disaster or calamity, the head of the office or employer in the exercise of his/her sound discretion, may grant special emergency leave to affected employee based on proof or evidence presented, or on news outlets.

Section 5. Availment of Special Emergency Leave – The employee can avail of the special emergency leave for five (5) consecutive working days or on a staggered basis.

The special emergency leave may be availed of by the affected employees within fifteen (15) days from the actual occurrence of the natural disaster or calamity.

The said leave is non-commutative and non-cumulative.

Section 6. Purpose of the Special Emergency Leave – The special emergency leave may be availed of for any of the following purposes:

- a) Urgent repair and clean-up of damaged house;
- b) Recovery from disease or illness of employees incurred by and/or aggravated by natural disaster or calamity;
- c) Navigating transit disruption, such as being stranded in affected areas, where there are no means of transportation that can ensure safe transit to and from workplace; or
- d) Care for immediate family members affected by natural disaster or calamity.

Section 7. Verification and Validation – The granting of the special emergency leave under this act shall be the duty of the head of office or employer, upon verification of the eligibility of the employee.

In assessing the eligibility of an employee or worker, the following shall be taken into consideration:

- a) Place of residence based on the latest available records of the affected employee or worker;
- b) Extent of damage caused by the calamity to the affected employee or worker;

- c) Declaration of State of Calamity by the National Government or the proper Local Government Unit;
- d) Medical Certificate of the employee and that of, if applicable;
- e) Availability of and access to public transportation during and/or after natural calamity or disaster;
- f) Access to primary or secondary roads;
- g) Other factors that may be taken into consideration by the head of office.

Section 8. Non-diminution of Benefits – The benefits granted under this Act shall not, in any manner, mean any reduction, diminution, discontinuation or elimination of other existing benefits already conferred and enjoyed by the employees or workers. Vested rights prior to the effectivity of this Act shall remain to be in full force and effect.

Section 9. The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act of the year following its enactment into law and thereafter.

Section. 10. All laws, decrees, orders, issuances rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 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,