

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Constitution Hills, Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10101



Introduced by REP. FAUSTINO "BOJIE" G. DY III and REP. YSABEL MARIA J. ZAMORA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Volunteerism is an expression of the Filipino value of bayanihan. From responding to typhoons and earthquakes, to feeding programs and medical missions, to youth-led environmental and educational drives, millions of Filipinos give their time, skills, and resources to the service of others without expecting payment. Volunteer work has long served as a critical complement to government programs, particularly in disaster response, public health, education, peacebuilding, and community development.

Despite the indispensable contributions of volunteers, there remains no comprehensive legal framework recognizing and protecting the rights, duties, and welfare of Filipino volunteers. Volunteers are often deployed without adequate orientation, insurance coverage, or sufficient safeguards against abuse, harassment, and exploitation. Their hours of service are rarely formally recognized for academic or professional purposes. There is no consistent national standard governing the treatment of volunteers across government agencies, civil society organizations, faith-based groups, the private sector, and international partners.

While Republic Act No. 9418, otherwise known as the Volunteer Act of 2007, recognized the role of volunteerism in nation-building and established the Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency (PNVSCA), a more comprehensive framework is now needed to fully protect the rights of volunteers, institutionalize their participation in development, and align Filipino volunteer action with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

This measure establishes a National Magna Carta of Volunteers. It defines who qualifies as a volunteer, classifies the categories of volunteer service, declares their basic rights, sets out their duties and responsibilities, and provides protection against abuse, exploitation, and discrimination. It mandates pre-deployment orientation, basic insurance coverage, grievance mechanisms, and standardized certification of service. It aligns volunteer action with the

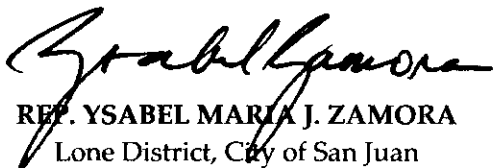
Sustainable Development Goals and integrates volunteer participation into national and local development planning.

This measure establishes standards of rights and protections that shall be afforded to all volunteers in the Philippines, regardless of the organization to which they belong. It strengthens the role of PNVSCA as the lead coordinating agency and recognizes the contribution of civil society organizations, including the United Nations Association (UNA) of the Philippines, in advancing the volunteer agenda.

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



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HOUSE BILL NO. ____

Introduced by REP. FAUSTINO “BOJIE” G. DY III and REP. YSABEL MARIA J. ZAMORA

AN ACT

**RECOGNIZING AND PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF FILIPINO VOLUNTEERS,
ESTABLISHING THEIR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, ALIGNING VOLUNTEER
ACTION WITH THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS, STRENGTHENING
SAFEGUARDS AGAINST ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

*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 “Volunteer Welfare and
Recognition Act of 2026.”

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to recognize
volunteerism as an act of citizenship and a vital force for nation-building, peacebuilding, disaster
response, sustainable development, and the protection of human rights.

Toward this end, the State shall:

- a. Recognize and uphold the rights of every Filipino volunteer;
- b. Protect volunteers from abuse, exploitation, harassment, and discrimination;
- c. Ensure that volunteer service is rendered under safe, dignified, and ethical conditions;
- d. Promote volunteerism as a complement to, and not a substitute for, the functions of
government and the private sector;
- e. Align volunteer action with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
(SDGs) and the Philippine Development Plan;

- f. Mainstream the participation of women, youth, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, the elderly, and other marginalized sectors in volunteer work; and
- g. Institutionalize a national system of recognition, certification, and support for volunteers.

SEC. 3. Definition of Terms. – As used in this Act, the term:

- (a) "Volunteer" refers to any natural person who voluntarily renders time, service, skills or expertise without expectation of compensation for the benefit of others, the community, or society at large through a government agency, civil society organization, faith-based group, academic institution, private entity, or international organization recognized under Philippine law;
- (b) "Volunteerism" refers to the voluntary rendering of time, service, skills, or expertise for the common good;
- (c) "Volunteer Service Organization (VSO)" refers to any government agency, non-government organization, people's organization, civil society organization, faith-based group, academic institution, private entity, or international organization that recruits, deploys, supervises, or otherwise engages volunteers;
- (d) "PNVSCA" refers to the Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency, the lead coordinating agency for volunteerism under Republic Act No. 9418;
- (e) "Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)" refers to the seventeen (17) goals adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- (f) "Pre-deployment orientation" refers to the briefing or training provided to a volunteer prior to deployment, covering the nature of the assignment, expected duties, safety protocols, code of conduct, and grievance procedures;
- (g) "PSEA" refers to the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, a set of standards and protocols adopted by the United Nations and applied to volunteers, personnel, and partners;
- (h) "Vulnerable sectors" refers to children, women in crisis situations, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, the elderly, internally displaced persons, and other groups requiring special protection.

SEC. 4. Categories of Volunteers. – Volunteers under this Act shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following:

- (a) Individual Volunteers, persons who render service on their own initiative, whether short-term or long-term;
- (b) Sectoral Volunteers, persons who serve under the program of a specific sector, such as women, youth, the elderly, persons with disabilities, or indigenous peoples;
- (c) Professional and Technical Volunteers, persons who render pro-bono services using their licensed or specialized expertise, including but not limited to lawyers, doctors, nurses, engineers, teachers, and accountants;
- (d) Youth and Student Volunteers, persons who are aged fifteen (15) to thirty (30) years, who render service through schools, youth organizations, or community-based programs;
- (e) Community-Based Volunteers, persons who render service at the barangay or local level, including barangay health workers, barangay nutrition scholars, and similar volunteers recognized under existing laws;
- (f) International Volunteers, persons whether Filipino citizens deployed abroad or foreign nationals deployed in the Philippines, subject to applicable laws and treaties.

SEC. 5. Legal Status of Volunteers. – The relationship between a volunteer and a Volunteer Service Organization shall not be construed as an employer-employee relationship. Volunteers shall not be entitled to wages, salaries, or benefits under the Labor Code of the Philippines solely by reason of their volunteer service.

However, nothing in this Act shall be construed to:

- (a) Diminish or impair any right or benefit to which a volunteer may be entitled under any other law, contract, or agreement;
- (b) Authorize the use of volunteer service to displace, replace, or undercut the lawful employment of regular workers; or
- (c) Exempt any Volunteer Service Organization from liability for injury, harm, or damage arising from its negligence or willful act.

SEC. 6. Rights of Volunteers. – Every volunteer shall have the following rights:

- (a) Right to recognition and respect, including the right to a written acknowledgment of service rendered;
- (b) Right to a clear written assignment, stating the nature, scope, duration, and expected outcomes of the volunteer engagement;

- (c) Right to pre-deployment orientation, including briefing on safety protocols, code of conduct, and grievance procedures;
- (d) Right to safe, healthful, and dignified conditions of service;
- (e) Right to refuse any assignment that poses an unreasonable risk to life, health, or ethical integrity, without fear of reprisal;
- (f) Right to protection against all forms of abuse, exploitation, harassment, and discrimination;
- (g) Right to access training, capacity-building, and professional development opportunities relevant to the assignment;
- (h) Right to information regarding the objectives, timelines, and outcomes of the project to which the volunteer is assigned;
- (i) Right to data privacy and the protection of personal information, in accordance with Republic Act No. 10173;
- (j) Right to a certificate of service upon completion of the assignment; and
- (k) Right to access grievance and redress mechanisms established under this Act.

SEC. 7. Duties and Responsibilities of Volunteers. – Every volunteer shall observe the following duties and responsibilities:

- (a) Render service with diligence, competence, and good faith;
- (b) Comply with the lawful policies, protocols, and instructions of the Volunteer Service Organization;
- (c) Observe confidentiality of sensitive information obtained in the course of service;
- (d) Disclose any actual or potential conflict of interest;
- (e) Refrain from using volunteer service or affiliation for personal gain, partisan political activities, or unauthorized solicitation;
- (f) Respect the laws of the Republic of the Philippines, the customs and traditions of host communities, and the dignity of beneficiaries;

- (g) Account for the proper use of resources, equipment, and funds entrusted to the volunteer; and
- (h) Submit reports and documentation as may be required by the Volunteer Service Organization.

SEC. 8. Duties of Volunteer Service Organizations. – Every Volunteer Service Organization shall:

- (a) Issue a written assignment to every volunteer prior to deployment;
- (b) Conduct Pre-Deployment Orientation covering safety protocols, code of conduct, applicable laws, and grievance procedures;
- (c) Conduct a Pre-Deployment Risk Assessment for assignments involving field work, hazardous conditions, or vulnerable sectors;
- (d) Provide basic safety equipment, briefings, and logistical support appropriate to the assignment;
- (e) Maintain a record of all volunteers, including their assignments, hours rendered, and certifications issued;
- (f) Issue certificates of service upon completion of the assignment;
- (g) Establish and publish a grievance and redress mechanism;
- (h) Comply with the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) standards under this Act;
- (i) Comply with applicable laws on data privacy, child protection, and the Safe Spaces Act; and
- (j) Submit annual reports to PNVSCA in such form and manner as PNVSCA may prescribe.

SEC. 9. Pre-Deployment Orientation and PSEA Certification. No volunteer shall be deployed without first undergoing Pre-Deployment Orientation. The Pre-Deployment Orientation shall include, at a minimum:

- (a) The objectives, scope, and duration of the assignment;

- (b) Applicable safety, health, and security protocols;
- (c) The code of conduct of the Volunteer Service Organization;
- (d) The Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) standards;
- (e) Child protection protocols, if the assignment involves contact with minors;
- (f) The grievance and redress mechanism; and
- (g) The volunteer's rights and duties under this Act.

Volunteers deployed to assignments involving children, vulnerable sectors, or humanitarian field operations shall be required to complete a PSEA certification before deployment: Provided, That PNVSCA shall recognize PSEA certifications issued by the United Nations and other accredited bodies.

SEC. 10. Insurance and Welfare. – Every Volunteer Service Organization shall, prior to deployment, provide volunteers with reasonable insurance coverage commensurate with the risks of the assignment. At the minimum, this shall include:

- (a) Accident insurance covering injury or death sustained in the performance of the assignment;
- (b) Medical assistance for injury or illness directly arising from the assignment; and
- (c) Third-party liability coverage where the nature of the assignment so requires.

PNVSCA, in coordination with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), the Department of Health (DOH), and the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS), shall develop a National Volunteer Insurance Program to provide affordable group coverage for volunteers, particularly those engaged in disaster response, humanitarian work, and community-based programs.

SEC. 11. Protection Against Abuse, Exploitation, and Harassment. – The State adopts a policy of zero tolerance against abuse, exploitation, and harassment involving volunteers.

- (a) Volunteers shall be protected from physical, verbal, sexual, psychological, and online abuse, in accordance with Republic Act No. 11313, otherwise known as the *Safe Spaces Act*; Republic Act No. 7610, otherwise known as the *Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act*; Republic Act No. 9262, otherwise known as the *Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act of 2004*; and other applicable laws;

(b) Volunteer Service Organizations shall not retaliate against any volunteer who, in good faith, reports an act of abuse, exploitation, or harassment;

(c) Reports of abuse, exploitation, or harassment shall be acted upon promptly and confidentially; and

(d) Where a criminal act is involved, the Volunteer Service Organization shall cooperate with law enforcement and refer the matter for prosecution.

SEC. 12. Non-Discrimination. – No person shall be denied the opportunity to volunteer, nor be subjected to disparate treatment as a volunteer, on account of sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, civil status, ethnicity, indigenous origin, religion, political belief, disability, health status, or socioeconomic status, provided the person is able to perform the assignment with or without reasonable accommodation.

SEC. 13. Recognition and Certification of Service. – PNVSCA, in coordination with relevant agencies, shall establish a National Volunteer Service Recognition System, which shall include:

(a) A standardized Certificate of Volunteer Service to be issued by Volunteer Service Organizations;

(b) A National Volunteer Registry to record verified volunteer hours and certifications;

(c) A system of digital badges or service passports indicating competencies acquired through volunteer work;

(d) Annual National Volunteer Awards recognizing outstanding individual and organizational contributions; and

(e) Mechanisms for the conversion of verified volunteer hours into academic credit, training credit, or professional development units, in coordination with the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), the Department of Education (DepEd), the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), and the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC).

SEC. 14. Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals. – Volunteer programs supported, recognized, or coordinated under this Act shall be aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the Philippine Development Plan.

PNVSCA, in coordination with the Department of Economy, Planning, and Development (DEPDev), shall:

- (a) Integrate volunteer action into the monitoring and reporting for national SDG indicators;
- (b) Establish thematic clusters of volunteer programs corresponding to the SDGs;
- (c) Promote evidence-based and data-driven volunteer programming; and
- (d) Publish an annual report on the contribution of volunteer action to the SDGs.

SEC. 15. Role of Local Government Units. - Local government units (LGUs) shall support the implementation of this Act within their respective jurisdictions. For this purpose, LGUs shall:

- (a) Establish a Local Volunteer Coordinating Office or designate a Volunteer Focal Person;
- (b) Maintain a registry of accredited Volunteer Service Organizations operating within the LGU;
- (c) Mobilize and coordinate volunteers during disasters, public health emergencies, and other crises;
- (d) Integrate volunteer action into the local development plan and the local disaster risk reduction and management plan;
- (e) Assist in the verification of volunteer hours and the issuance of local certifications; and
- (f) Submit periodic reports to PNVSCA.

SEC. 16. Grievance and Redress Mechanism. – Every Volunteer Service Organization shall establish an internal grievance and redress mechanism accessible to all volunteers. The mechanism shall, at the minimum, observe the following:

- (a) Complaints shall be received and acted upon in writing or through any other accessible means;
- (b) The respondent shall be informed of the complaint and given an opportunity to be heard;

- (c) Complaints involving abuse, exploitation, or harassment shall be handled with confidentiality and without retaliation against the complainant;
- (d) Decisions shall be rendered within a reasonable period; and
- (e) An appeal mechanism shall be made available.

Where the complaint cannot be resolved at the level of the Volunteer Service Organization, or where the complaint involves the organization itself, the volunteer may file the complaint with PNVSCA, which shall act on the matter within thirty (30) days: *Provided*, That this shall be without prejudice to the right of the volunteer to seek redress before the courts or other competent bodies.

SEC. 17. Role of PNVSCA. – The Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency (PNVSCA) shall be the lead coordinating agency for the implementation of this Act. PNVSCA shall:

- (a) Promulgate the implementing rules and regulations of this Act, in consultation with concerned agencies and stakeholders;
- (b) Maintain the National Volunteer Registry;
- (c) Accredite Volunteer Service Organizations and monitor their compliance with this Act;
- (d) Develop standard pre-deployment orientation and PSEA training modules;
- (e) Coordinate with international volunteer organizations, including the United Nations Volunteers (UNV), the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA), and the United Nations Association of the Philippines (UNA Philippines);
- (f) Receive and act on complaints elevated under Section 16;
- (g) Submit an annual report to Congress on the state of volunteerism in the Philippines; and
- (h) Exercise such other powers and functions necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 18. Recognition of Civil Society Partners. – The State recognizes the contribution of civil society organizations, faith-based groups, academic institutions, and international partners in advancing the volunteer agenda. PNVSCA shall maintain working partnerships with such organizations, including the United Nations Association of the Philippines, in the formulation of

standards, the conduct of training, and the implementation of volunteer programs aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals.

SEC. 19. Appropriations. – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of PNVSCA and other concerned agencies. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

Volunteer Service Organizations may also source funding from:

- (a) Grants and donations from domestic and international sources, subject to existing laws;
- (b) Corporate social responsibility programs;
- (c) Local government appropriations; and
- (d) Other lawful sources.

SEC. 20. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, PNVSCA, in consultation with the DSWD, DOH, DepEd, CHED, TESDA, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), DEPDev, the Commission on Human Rights (CHR), and representatives of Volunteer Service Organizations, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 21. Separability Clause. - If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remaining provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 22. Repealing Clause. – All laws, decrees, executive orders, proclamations, rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly. Republic Act No. 9418 shall remain in full force and effect except insofar as its provisions are inconsistent with this Act.

SEC. 23. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least one (1) newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,