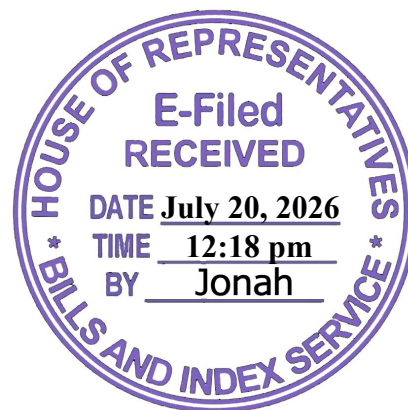


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City
TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 10111

Introduced by **REP. BERNADETTE "DETTE" G. ESCUDERO**

AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING TWENTY-FOUR-SEVEN (24/7) AVAILABILITY OF
ESSENTIAL FRONTLINE SERVICES THROUGH DIGITAL, VOICE, AND NON-
VOICE CHANNELS, AND EXTENDING FACE-TO-FACE FRONTLINE
TRANSACTIONS

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Technology has changed the way people work, transact, and access public services. Today, many Filipinos rely on the internet, mobile applications, and social media to communicate, request information, and avail of basic services. Government services must therefore keep up with the needs of a digital and fast-moving society. At present, several government agencies have already introduced online services, such as online filing of claims and applications, online requests for civil registry documents, and online clearance applications. This bill requires government offices to identify services that may be offered as "Zero Contact Services" or services that do not require face-to-face interaction and may be made available online. It further institutionalizes the twenty-four-seven (24/7) availability of essential frontline services through digital, voice, non-voice, automated, or other accessible service channels. While not all government transactions may be completed at any hour, essential services such as inquiries, appointment setting, status verification, submission of requirements legally allowed, complaints receipt, referrals that involves life and death situations should remain accessible to the public at all times, including nights, weekends, holidays, and non-working days.

The bill also recognizes that the traditional 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. working schedule may not be convenient for all citizens, especially students, workers, commuters, parents, senior citizens, persons with disabilities and those with urgent needs that requires government action and response. For this reason, we propose a system of extended face-to-face frontline service hours from Monday to Saturday, 7:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M.

By combining 24/7 essential service availability with extended face-to-face operating hours, this measure promotes a more responsive, inclusive, and people-centered government service system.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bernadette G. Escudero', written over the printed name.

HON. BERNADETTE "DETTE" G. ESCUDERO

Representative
1st District, Sorsogon

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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 "24/7 Frontline
2 Government Services Act".
3

4 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** It is hereby declared to the policy of the
5 State, in accordance with the Constitution, that science and technology are essential
6 for national development and progress. The State shall support indigenous,
7 appropriate, and self-reliant scientific and technological capabilities, and their
8 application to the country's productive systems and national life.

9 The State also recognizes innovative ways of adapting to the wide use of the
10 internet and social media to transform frontline services and make it more accessible
11 and convenient. The State further recognizes that frontline services have a crucial role
12 in the country's national life, development, and progress. It is hereby declared as a
13 policy of the State to provide 24/7 Frontline Services, extended hours for frontline
14 services, and an efficient response team for queries.
15

16 **SEC. 3. Definition.** As used in this Act, the following terms are defined, as
17 follows:

18 a) Frontline Services refer to processes or transactions between clients and
19 government offices or agencies involving applications, requests, renewals,
20 modifications, or extensions of any privilege, right, permit, reward, license,
21 concession, clearance, certification, benefit, or other similar government service acted
22 upon in the ordinary course of business of the agency or office concerned.
23

24 b) Essential Frontline Services refer to frontline services, or any component
25 thereof, which the covered agency determines to be necessary for continuous public

1 access, including but not limited to urgent assistance, appointment setting, application
2 status verification, submission of applications or requirements through digital means,
3 payment or payment verification, issuance of electronic certifications or clearances
4 where legally permissible, complaints handling, referral, and other services capable of
5 being delivered through digital, voice, or non-voice channels.

6
7 c) Twenty-Four-Seven or 24/7 Service Availability refers to the continuous
8 availability of essential frontline services at all times, including nights, weekends,
9 holidays, and non-working days, through digital platforms, automated systems, voice
10 response, non-voice response, or other accessible service channels.

11
12 d) Extended Face-to-Face Frontline Transactions refer to in-person transactions
13 made available by covered agencies from seven o'clock in the morning to seven o'clock
14 in the evening, including Saturdays, subject to reasonable staffing arrangements and
15 operational guidelines.

16
17 e) Voice Response Team refers to civil servants or authorized personnel
18 assigned by the office or agency to respond to public inquiries, requests for assistance,
19 referrals, and other matters relating to available frontline services through telephone,
20 hotline, or other voice-based communication channels.

21
22 f) Non-Voice Response Team refers to civil servants or authorized personnel
23 assigned by the office or agency to respond to electronic messages, online inquiries,
24 chat-based concerns, emails, text messages, or other non-voice communication
25 platforms widely used by the public.

26
27 g) Zero Contact Services refer to frontline services that may be delivered
28 without requiring face-to-face interaction between the client and the government
29 office or agency.

30
31 h) Frontline Service System or FSS refers to a single or integrated digital
32 platform, website, portal, application, or electronic system that allows the public to
33 access, request, monitor, submit requirements for, or complete frontline services
34 through the internet or other digital means.

35
36 **SEC. 4. Coverage** – The government offices with respective frontline services
37 that shall provide extended hours of operations from seven (7) o'clock in the morning
38 to seven (7) o'clock in the evening and extended days of operations including
39 Saturdays, are:

- 40 a) Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA)
- 41 b) National Bureau of Investigation (NBI)
- 42 c) Land Transportation Office (LTO)
- 43 d) Professional Regulation Commission (PRC)
- 44 e) Social Security System (SSS)
- 45 f) Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth)
- 46 g) Home Development Mutual Fund (PAGIBIG)
- 47 h) Government Service Insurance System (GSIS)
- 48 i) Philippine Postal Corporation (PhilPost)

- j) Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA)
- k) Philippine National Police (PNP)
- l) Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR)
- m) Such other government offices, agencies, government-owned or controlled corporations, and local government units as may be determined under the implementing rules and regulations. All covered agencies shall ensure that their Essential Frontline Services are available on a twenty-four-seven (24/7) basis through digital, voice, non-voice, automated, or other accessible service channels. Face-to-face frontline transactions of the covered agencies shall be made available from seven o'clock in the morning to seven o'clock in the evening, including Saturdays, subject to the guidelines issued pursuant to this Act.

Government offices, agencies, and local government units that offer Zero Contact Services shall establish, maintain, or integrate their services into a Frontline Service System. Offices whose frontline services necessarily require full face-to-face interaction shall not be required to create a separate FSS, but shall adopt alternative mechanisms to improve public access, scheduling, inquiry response, and transaction monitoring.

SEC 5. Availability of Frontline Services and Response Team. The Essential Frontline Services of covered agencies shall be available to the public twenty-four-seven (24/7). Such availability may be provided through digital platforms, automated systems, online portals, hotlines, voice response teams, non-voice response teams, or other service channels that allow continuous public access. For services that cannot be fully completed outside regular or extended office hours, the covered agency shall at least provide 24/7 access to inquiry response, appointment setting, status verification, submission or uploading of requirements where legally allowed, complaints receipt, and referral mechanisms. Face-to-face frontline transactions shall be available from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM, including Saturdays. This shall not prevent any agency from providing longer hours, Sunday operations, or additional service days when necessary and feasible.

SEC. 6. Working Arrangements. Covered agency of this Act shall adopt a working arrangement that ensures sufficient personnel, systems support, and operational capacity to implement the twenty-four-seven (24/7) availability of Essential Frontline Services and the extended hours for face-to-face frontline transactions.

Covered agencies are hereby authorized to adopt shifting schedules, flexible work arrangements, skeletal staffing, digital support teams, automated response systems, and other appropriate mechanisms to ensure continuous service delivery without unduly impairing employee welfare. Where additional personnel are necessary, the covered agencies may submit staffing plans and funding requirements to the Department of Budget and Management for evaluation and inclusion in the appropriate budgetary process, subject to existing civil service, budgeting, and auditing laws, rules, and regulations.

1 **SEC. 7. Zero Contact Services.** The offices of the government shall provide
2 a list of their frontline services that can be delivered without face-to-face interaction.
3 Services that require the submission of a written document shall not hinder the
4 implementation provided that submission of an electronic document will suffice. The
5 rules on Sec. 7 (7) of the Republic Act No. 8792 shall be observed in determining
6 whether electronic documents shall be accepted or not. The list for zero contact
7 services shall be released within two (2) months upon the effectivity of this Act.
8

9 **SEC. 8. Non-exclusivity of Frontline Service System** – Constituents who
10 choose to personally go to the office to avail themselves of the services shall not be
11 rejected due to the institution of FSS. No person shall be deprived of the services due
12 to failure to use the FSS. Covered agencies shall ensure that digitalization and 24/7
13 service availability shall supplement, and not replace, reasonable access to face-to-
14 face frontline transactions.
15

16 **SEC. 9. Information Dissemination.** The office shall disseminate the
17 information about their available Zero Contact Services on their official social media
18 page and site.

19 Moreover, the following shall be used to inform the constituents, but not limited
20 to, posters, signages, and infographics posted in the area where frontline services are
21 being delivered in the office.
22

23 **SEC. 10. Separability Clause.** If for any reason, any part or provision of this
24 Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not
25 affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.
26

27 **SEC. 11. Repealing Clause.** All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees,
28 rules and regulations or parts thereof contrary to or inconsistent with any provisions
29 of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.
30

31 **SEC. 12. Effectivity.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
32 publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) national newspapers of general
33 circulation.

Approved,