

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 11041

Introduced by:

HON. CHRISTOPHERSON “COCO” M. YAP

AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING AND EXPANDING THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND
EMPLOYMENT GOVERNMENT INTERNSHIP PROGRAM, PROVIDING INTERNSHIP
OPPORTUNITIES IN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, LOCAL GOVERNMENT
UNITS, AND OTHER GOVERNMENT INSTRUMENTALITIES, GRANTING A STIPEND
TIED TO THE PREVAILING REGIONAL MINIMUM WAGE, AND PROVIDING FUNDS
THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The lack of work experience remains one of the biggest barriers faced by Filipinos seeking employment. While the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) Government Internship Program (GIP) gives people a chance to gain skills and practical experience, its regular age requirement of 18 to 30 years old leaves many capable Filipinos behind. Not everyone gets their first opportunity while they are young. For many, the need for a first job comes later in life.

This measure seeks to expand the GIP to Filipinos aged **18 years old and above** who have no substantial prior work experience. This recognizes that first-time jobseekers are not limited to young people. Adults who have never had stable employment, displaced workers, persons returning to the workforce, and older Filipinos who still want to work deserve a fair chance to learn, gain confidence, and become employable.

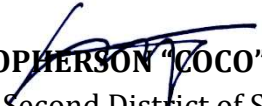
The bill keeps the internship temporary and focused on training and skills development. It does not create a permanent position in government, guarantee employment, or allow interns to replace regular government employees. Instead, it gives participants meaningful exposure to actual workplaces in national government

agencies, local government units, and other government instrumentalities, while helping them develop skills that can open doors to future employment.

To make the opportunity meaningful and accessible, interns shall receive a daily stipend equivalent to the highest prevailing regional minimum wage in their region of assignment. The measure also provides for government-funded accident insurance, proper supervision and training, fair and transparent selection, protection from discrimination and abuse, and employment facilitation after the internship. These safeguards ensure that interns are not merely given work but are given a genuine opportunity to grow.

Every Filipino who wants to work deserves a chance to prove what they can do, regardless of when that opportunity comes in their life. Age should not be a barrier for a qualified person who is willing to learn, work, and build a better future. By expanding the GIP, the government can give more Filipinos the experience, skills, and confidence they need to enter the workforce.

In view of the foregoing, **ug sa ngalan sa SERBISYONG TINUORAY**, the undersigned respectfully requests the immediate passage of this measure.


CHRISTOPHERSON "COCO" M. YAP
Representative, Second District of Southern Leyte

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AN ACT

INSTITUTIONALIZING AND EXPANDING THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT GOVERNMENT INTERNSHIP PROGRAM, PROVIDING INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES IN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS, AND OTHER GOVERNMENT INSTRUMENTALITIES, GRANTING A STIPEND TIED TO THE PREVAILING REGIONAL MINIMUM WAGE, AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. — This Act shall be known as the “*Expanded DOLE Government Internship Program Act.*”

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. — It is the policy of the State to promote the right of every Filipino to decent, productive, and meaningful work; facilitate access to employment; strengthen employability; and provide practical work experience to persons who have not previously entered the labor market.

The State recognizes that lack of work experience is a significant barrier to employment. Accordingly, the Government shall establish and maintain an inclusive internship program that provides qualified Filipinos with supervised work experience, workplace orientation, skills development, and employment facilitation in national and local government agencies and other qualified government entities.

The Program shall be implemented without discrimination on the basis of age, sex, gender, civil status, disability, ethnicity, religion, political belief, or socioeconomic status, subject to the qualifications and limitations provided in this Act.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms. —

For purposes of this Act:

- (a) **Beneficiary or Intern** refers to a qualified Filipino accepted into the Government Internship Program established under this Act;
- (b) **DOLE** refers to the Department of Labor and Employment;
- (c) **Government Internship Program or GIP** refers to the supervised, temporary, and non-career internship program administered by the DOLE under this Act;
- (d) **Host Agency** refers to a national government agency, local government unit, government-owned or controlled corporation, government financial institution, public school, public hospital, public employment service office, or other government instrumentality authorized to participate in the Program;
- (e) **Internship Agreement** refers to the written agreement among the DOLE, the Host Agency, and the Intern specifying the period of engagement, duties, stipend, supervision, insurance coverage, and other program conditions;
- (f) **Prevailing Regional Minimum Wage** refers to the highest applicable minimum wage rate prevailing in the region where the Intern is assigned, as determined under applicable wage orders and labor regulations; and
- (g) **No Prior Work Experience** refers to the absence of substantial previous employment or work experience, as may be defined and verified under the implementing rules and regulations of this Act. Volunteer work, school-based activities, apprenticeships, training, and internships shall not by themselves disqualify an applicant.

SECTION 4. Establishment of the Expanded Government Internship Program. —

There is hereby established an Expanded DOLE Government Internship Program, which shall provide qualified Filipinos with opportunities to acquire practical work

experience and develop employment-related competencies through supervised service in Host Agencies.

The Program shall build upon and strengthen the existing DOLE-GIP. Under the existing guidelines, internship engagements generally run for a minimum of three (3) months and a maximum of six (6) months.

The Program shall include the following components:

- (a) Pre-internship orientation and basic workplace preparation;
- (b) Supervised assignment to a Host Agency;
- (c) Practical training in administrative, technical, public service, digital, and other non-highly technical functions;
- (d) Life skills, workplace ethics, labor rights, occupational safety and health, and career development training;
- (e) Employment counseling, job referral, and registration with appropriate public employment services; and
- (f) Evaluation and certification of competencies acquired during the internship.

SECTION 5. Coverage and Qualifications. — A person may qualify as a Beneficiary if he or she:

- (a) Is a Filipino citizen;
- (b) Is at least eighteen (18) years old at the time of application;
- (c) Is unemployed or not engaged in regular employment at the time of application;
- (d) Has no prior substantial work experience, as defined in the implementing rules and regulations;
- (e) Is at least a graduate of senior high school, high school under the former curriculum, the Alternative Learning System, or a technical-vocational program, or possesses an equivalent qualification appropriate to the internship assignment; and
- (f) Meets the documentary, medical, and other reasonable requirements prescribed by the DOLE.

The DOLE may give priority to applicants belonging to disadvantaged or vulnerable groups, including low-income individuals, displaced workers, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, victims of armed conflict, rebel returnees, persons affected by disasters, and residents of geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas.

No applicant shall be disqualified solely because he or she is a senior citizen, provided that the applicant is physically and mentally capable of performing the duties stated in the Internship Agreement and satisfies the other requirements of this Act.

SECTION 6. Duration of Internship. — The Internship Agreement shall be for a minimum period of three (3) months and a maximum period of six (6) months.

An Intern may be admitted only once under the Program, unless the implementing rules allow a subsequent engagement for a different assignment designed to provide additional competencies and the following conditions are met:

- (a) The Intern received a satisfactory performance evaluation;
- (b) The subsequent assignment will provide substantially different or additional competencies; and
- (c) The subsequent engagement will not be used to evade the regular hiring rules of the Host Agency.

The total period of engagement under the Program shall not exceed twelve (12) months, unless otherwise authorized by the DOLE for exceptional circumstances stated in the implementing rules and regulations.

SECTION 7. Stipend. — An Intern shall receive a daily stipend equivalent to the Prevailing Regional Minimum Wage in the region where the Intern is assigned.

The stipend shall be paid for each authorized day of attendance and actual service, subject to the rules on attendance, lawful absences, holidays, and other circumstances provided in the implementing rules and regulations.

The stipend shall not be lower than the applicable statutory minimum wage rate for the region. The DOLE shall ensure that the amount of the stipend is periodically adjusted whenever the applicable regional minimum wage is increased.

The stipend shall be treated as program assistance and shall not, by itself, be considered a salary, wage, or compensation arising from a regular employer-employee relationship with the DOLE or the Host Agency. This provision shall not excuse the Government or the Host Agency from complying with labor standards, occupational safety and health requirements, and other applicable laws.

SECTION 8. Insurance and Other Program Support. — Every Intern shall be provided government-funded group personal accident insurance or an equivalent insurance coverage for the duration of the Internship Agreement.

Subject to the availability of appropriations, the DOLE may provide or facilitate:

- (a) Transportation or communication assistance for qualified indigent Beneficiaries;
- (b) Reasonable accommodation and support services for persons with disabilities;
- (c) Personal protective equipment and other equipment necessary for the assignment;
- (d) Training materials and certification expenses; and
- (e) Other forms of assistance necessary to ensure meaningful and safe participation in the Program.

SECTION 9. Host Agencies. —

The following may participate as Host Agencies:

- (a) National government agencies and their attached agencies;
- (b) Provinces, cities, municipalities, and barangays;
- (c) Government-owned or controlled corporations;
- (d) Government financial institutions;
- (e) Public schools, state universities and colleges, public hospitals, and other public educational or health institutions;
- (f) Public Employment Service Offices; and
- (g) Other government instrumentalities authorized by the DOLE.

A Host Agency shall:

- (a) Submit a work program specifying the number of Interns requested, the assignments, required qualifications, work schedule, training objectives, and designated supervisors;
- (b) Execute an Internship Agreement or Memorandum of Agreement with the DOLE;
- (c) Provide a safe, accessible, and non-discriminatory work environment;
- (d) Assign a qualified supervisor to orient, guide, and evaluate each Intern;
- (e) Assign only duties that are appropriate to the Intern's qualifications and training objectives;
- (f) Prohibit the assignment of Interns to hazardous, unlawful, or highly technical work without the necessary qualifications, training, and safeguards;
- (g) Maintain accurate attendance and performance records;

- (h) Ensure that Interns are not used to displace regular employees or fill permanent plantilla positions; and
- (i) Submit periodic reports to the DOLE.

SECTION 10. Nature of Internship. — Participation in the Program shall not create a permanent, temporary, casual, contractual, or career civil service appointment.

An Intern shall not acquire security of tenure, eligibility for automatic appointment, or a vested right to employment in the DOLE or the Host Agency by reason of participation in the Program.

Nothing in this Act shall prevent a Host Agency from hiring a former Intern in accordance with the Constitution, civil service laws, existing qualification standards, appropriations laws, and applicable rules on government appointment.

An Intern who is hired by the same Host Agency after completion of the Program shall undergo the applicable appointment and hiring process. Participation in the Program shall be considered relevant experience where allowed by applicable qualification standards.

SECTION 11. Prohibited Acts. — The following acts are prohibited:

- (a) Charging an applicant any fee as a condition for application, selection, admission, or continued participation;
- (b) Requiring an Intern to perform personal errands or duties unrelated to the approved work program;
- (c) Using Interns to replace regular employees, evade the creation of authorized positions, or perform continuing functions intended for regular personnel;
- (d) Discriminating against an applicant or Intern on any prohibited ground;
- (e) Falsifying attendance, payroll, performance, or beneficiary records;
- (f) Withholding, deducting, or diverting any portion of the stipend without lawful basis; and
- (g) Subjecting an Intern to harassment, abuse, exploitation, retaliation, or unsafe working conditions.

Any public officer or employee who violates this section shall be subject to appropriate administrative, civil, and criminal liability under existing laws, without prejudice to the termination of the Host Agency's participation in the Program.

SECTION 12. Administration of the Program. — The DOLE shall be the lead agency responsible for the administration, coordination, monitoring, and evaluation of the Program.

For this purpose, the DOLE shall:

- (a) Establish uniform national guidelines and standards;
- (b) Accredite and monitor Host Agencies;
- (c) Develop a transparent and accessible application and selection system;
- (d) Maintain a national registry and database of Beneficiaries, subject to the Data Privacy Act and other applicable laws;
- (e) Facilitate the payment of stipends;
- (f) Provide or coordinate orientation, training, and employment facilitation services;
- (g) Establish a grievance and complaints mechanism;
- (h) Monitor compliance with this Act and its implementing rules;
- (i) Publish an annual report on the Program; and
- (j) Coordinate with the Civil Service Commission, Department of Budget and Management, Department of the Interior and Local Government, Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, Public Employment Service Offices, and other relevant agencies.

The DOLE shall ensure that the selection and deployment of Interns are based on objective, transparent, and publicly available criteria.

SECTION 13. Local Government Participation. — Local government units may participate as Host Agencies or implementing partners, subject to the standards and monitoring requirements of the DOLE.

The DOLE may enter into agreements with local government units for the identification of applicants, conduct of orientations, supervision of assignments, payment of stipends, and submission of reports.

Participation by a local government unit shall not diminish the authority of the DOLE to investigate complaints or suspend the participation of a non-compliant Host Agency.

SECTION 14. Monitoring and Evaluation. — The DOLE shall establish a monitoring and evaluation system that shall measure, among others:

- (a) The number and profile of applicants and Beneficiaries;
- (b) Completion rates;
- (c) Skills and competencies acquired;
- (d) Timeliness and accuracy of stipend payments;
- (e) Compliance of Host Agencies;
- (f) Employment outcomes after completion of the internship; and
- (g) The accessibility of the Program to disadvantaged groups and persons aged above thirty (30) years.

The DOLE shall submit an annual report to Congress containing the results of the evaluation and recommendations for improving the Program.

SECTION 15. Funding. — The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the DOLE for the Government Internship Program and other applicable programs.

Thereafter, the amount necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

The DOLE may receive grants, donations, and assistance from government agencies, local government units, and lawfully authorized domestic or international sources, subject to existing budgeting, accounting, auditing, procurement, and public financial management laws.

No external assistance shall impair the Government's control over the Program or compromise the rights and welfare of Beneficiaries.

SECTION 16. Implementing Rules and Regulations. — Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of Labor and Employment, in consultation with the Civil Service Commission, Department of Budget and Management, Department of the Interior and Local Government, Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, representatives of local government units, public employment service offices, employers, workers, senior citizens, persons with disabilities, and other relevant stakeholders, shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations of this Act.

The implementing rules shall include:

- (a) The definition and verification of no prior substantial work experience;
- (b) The application, selection, and placement process;

- (c) Documentary and eligibility requirements;
- (d) Stipend computation and payment procedures;
- (e) Attendance, leave, and holiday rules;
- (f) Standards for supervision and performance evaluation;
- (g) Insurance coverage and claims procedures;
- (h) Accessibility and reasonable accommodation measures;
- (i) Grievance and complaint procedures;
- (j) Data protection and recordkeeping requirements; and
- (k) Penalties and administrative sanctions for violations by Host Agencies.

SECTION 17. Transitory Provision. — All existing DOLE-GIP beneficiaries and Internship Agreements at the time of the effectivity of this Act shall continue to be governed by the terms of their existing agreements, unless they elect to be covered by this Act and such coverage is legally and administratively practicable.

The DOLE shall review and revise existing guidelines, agreements, forms, and procedures to conform to this Act.

SECTION 18. Separability Clause. — If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 19. Repealing Clause. — All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules, regulations, issuances, or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SECTION 20. Effectivity. — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,