



Republic of the Philippines
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Elliptical Road, Diliman
1100 Quezon City

MEMORANDUM ORDER
NO. 44
SERIES OF 2020

TO : ALL OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE - CENTRAL OFFICE (DA-CO)

SUBJECT : INTERIM GUIDELINES ON RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, AND PLACEMENT IN DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE - CENTRAL OFFICE

Due to the global spread of the Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) which has hindered physical interactions due to its highly communicable character, the Civil Service Commission promulgated on July 8, 2020 **Memorandum Circular No. 14, series of 2020** Re: *Interim Guidelines on Appointments and Other Human Resource Actions for the Period of State of Calamity Due to COVID-19 Pandemic*.

Pursuant to the abovementioned Memorandum Circular, this Memorandum Order Re: Interim Guidelines on Recruitment, Selection, and Placement is hereby established for the guidance of all Department of Agriculture - Central Office officials and employees.

I. PURPOSE

These interim Guidelines are designed to minimize, if not eliminate, instances of physical interaction between concerned individuals, in compliance with the parameters set by the Department of Health (DOH), Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF), Civil Service Commission (CSC), and other competent authorities.

II. SCOPE AND COVERAGE

These interim Guidelines shall cover all positions in the first level, second level, and second level executive/managerial in the DA-CO.

DA Regional Field Offices, Bureaus, attached Agencies, and corporations shall formulate their own interim Guidelines pursuant to relevant issuances, and shall submit its Guidelines to the concerned CSC Field Office for record purposes.

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III. INTERIM GUIDELINES

A. PUBLICATION AND POSTING OF VACANT POSITIONS

1. As part of the standard protocol on requesting for publication of vacant positions in the CSC Bulletin of Vacant Positions, the DA-CO shall still submit the electronic copy of CS Form No. 9, Revised 2018 to the CSC DA Field Office (CSC DA FO) through electronic mail (e-mail).

The corresponding physical copy of CSC Form No. 9, Revised 2018 shall be submitted to CSC DA FO while observing minimum health standards and precautions such as the wearing of face masks and face shields and the maintenance of social distancing protocols.

2. The DA-CO Human Resource Management Officer (HRMO) shall ensure posting through virtual modes such as through the DA Official Website will be observed. To maximize the reach of the announcement of the vacant positions, the DA-CO shall post the list of vacant positions in three (3) conspicuous places within the DA-CO premises.

B. RECRUITMENT PROCESS

The Online Recruitment Tool and process used by the DA-CO shall still be operative but modified to eliminate exposure of applicants and concerned DA-CO employees to COVID-19.

1. **Electronic submission of required application documents**

1.1 The DA-CO HRMO shall ensure that qualified individuals who are interested to apply to vacant positions shall submit **only** through e-mail, the complete required application documents as published in DA-CO's Official Website as a compressed Portable Document Format (PDF) file containing clear scanned copies of the required documents arranged in the order the list of requirements were published.

1.2 Concerned Personnel Division staff shall process the PDF files of interested individuals, and shall only endorse applicants with complete documents to the next process.

2. **Registration of Applicants to the Online Recruitment Tool**

As part of the standard DA-CO recruitment procedure, a registry of DA-CO's applicant data must be maintained for efficient tracking of their application status. For this purpose, it must be ensured that applicants register their correct information on the Online Recruitment Tool.



3. Initial evaluation of the Applicants' Qualifications

3.1 In addition to basic screening based on the applicant's submitted documents, concerned Personnel Division staff may employ the use of e-mails, tele/videoconferencing, and other virtual means to conduct the initial evaluation of an applicant's qualifications vis-à-vis the required Qualification Standards set by the CSC.

3.2 Human Resource Merit Promotion and Selection Board (HRMPSB) Forms currently in use for the evaluation of applicants shall be used electronically (in PDF format).

Concerned individuals who are usually required to affix their signatures on the forms shall, as an alternative, affix their electronic signatures (esignatures). Said individuals are responsible for ensuring the integrity of the data on the form.

4. Conduct of Entrance Examination

4.1 As there is potential COVID-19 transmission through paper, an online entrance examination shall be administered to job applicants instead of the usual pen-and-paper test.

The online 100-item general knowledge entrance examination shall be administered for a maximum of two (2) hours and shall still be applicable to non-DA Central Office personnel who are interested to apply to first and second level and executive/managerial positions. Said personnel are required to undergo the online entrance examination within seven (7) working days upon their completion of documentary requirements, otherwise, it is assumed that they are cancelling their application.

4.2 The online entrance examination shall be strictly conducted within the DA-CO premises under the supervision of a Personnel Division staff.

In this regard, the Personnel Division shall secure a venue within the DA-CO premises for the conduct of the said online entrance examination and shall ensure the implementation of minimum health protocols (e.g. sanitation of computers after each use and social distancing).

4.3 The applicant shall be informed of the result of their respective online entrance examination through the e-mail address they registered in the Online Recruitment Tool.



C. SELECTION PROCESS

1. Conduct of Technical Examination and/or Interview

To accurately determine the fitness of an applicant's qualifications and ability to perform the duties and responsibilities of the position, the Division/Service Representative concerned shall employ the use of e-mails, tele/videoconferencing, and/or other virtual means to conduct the technical examination and/or interview.

2. Rating the Applicant

The Division/Service Representative concerned shall be guided by the agency's Merit Selection Plan, the internal rules and guidelines set by the DA-CO HRMPSB, and Item B, number 3.2 of this Memorandum Order.

3. Conducting the HRMPSB Panel Interview

3.1 The HRMPSB, with at least a majority of its members, shall conduct its interview and deliberation through the use of tele/videoconferencing.

3.2 The HRMPSB shall notify the applicant of the schedule of the tele/videoconference through e-mail, and shall give the applicant consideration with regards to the schedule of the interview subject to the Board's discretion.

4. Submission of the Shortlist of Candidates to the Secretary

The HRMPSB may submit the physical copy of the Shortlist of Candidates to the Secretary without the usual attachments, and may use their respective esignatures, provided that the usual attachments (Personal Data Sheets (PDS), HRMPSB Forms, etc.) are readily available when needed by the undersigned.

D. ISSUANCE OF APPOINTMENT

The Personnel Division, after receiving the approved Shortlist of Candidates from the Secretary, shall prepare the physical copies of the appointments of chosen individuals.

Concerned officials required to sign/initial appointment papers may use esignatures subject to DA-CO's submission of CSC Form No. 11, series 2020 to CSC National Capital Regional Office through CSC DA FO.



E. ASSUMPTION TO DUTY AND OATH OF OFFICE

1. Assumption to Duty

Appointees with appointments issued during the effectivity of the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) / Modified ECQ (MECQ) are allowed to assume office provided that they were subject to alternative working conditions as stipulated in previous DA-CO issuances.

2. Oath of Office

The administration of oath of office may be done through virtual modes such as video conferencing provided that the appointee was furnished a copy of his/her appointment through e-mail and that he/she acknowledged receipt of the appointment by affixing his/her electronic signature, if possible, or through e-mail/SMS.

If done through physical appearance, minimum health standards and precautions shall be observed such as the wearing of face masks and face shields and the maintenance of social distancing protocols

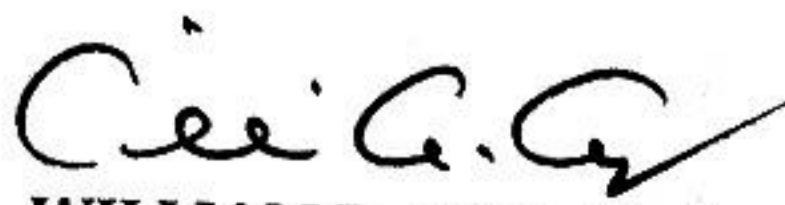
F. PROBATIONARY PERIOD OF APPOINTEES WITH ORIGINAL APPOINTMENTS

The imposition of the ECQ/MECQ/general community quarantine shall not extend the probationary period of appointees with original appointments who are performing their functions through the alternative work arrangements adopted by the agency. However, for those who are not involved in any of the alternative work arrangement since their work depends solely on office operations which could only be performed onsite, their probationary period shall be extended for the same period of the ECQ/MECQ/GCQ.

IV. EFFECTIVITY

These interim Guidelines shall take effect retroactively on March 16, 2020, the date of the President's declaration placing the entire country under the State of Calamity and shall remain in force until the same has been lifted by the President of the Philippines.

Done this 14th day of September 2020.


WILLIAM D. DAR, Ph.D.
Secretary

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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