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ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 2020- 003

GUIDELINES ON THE OPERATIONS OF MICE ORGANIZERS AND VENUES OR FACILITIES UNDER A MODIFIED GENERAL COMMUNITY QUARANTINE

WHEREAS, pursuant to Republic Act 9593 or the *Tourism Act of 2009*, the Department of Tourism (DOT) is mandated to develop and promote the Philippines as a center for international Meetings, Incentives, Conventions, and Exhibitions (MICE);

WHEREAS, the DOT is likewise mandated to promulgate rules and regulations governing the operation and activities of all tourism enterprises;

WHEREAS, the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases *Omnibus Guidelines on the Implementation of Community Quarantine* provides that mass gatherings including work conferences shall be allowed under a Modified General Community Quarantine (MGQC), provided that participants shall be limited to fifty percent (50%) of the seating or venue capacity;

WHEREAS, there is a need to ensure that the operations of MICE Events under MGCQ is in accordance with Minimum Public Health Standards and capacity limitations set by the IATF;

NOW, THEREFORE, in view of the foregoing, these Guidelines on the Operations of MICE Organizers and Venues/Facilities under a Modified General Community Quarantine are hereby issued.

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 1. Short Title. – This Order shall be known as the “*Guidelines on MICE Operations under MGCQ.*”

Section 2. Definition of Terms. – For purposes of these Guidelines, the term:

- (a) “Community Quarantine” refers to the restriction of movement within, into, or out of the area of quarantine of individuals, large groups of people, or communities designed to reduce the likelihood of transmission of COVID-19 among persons in and to persons outside the affected area (*IATF Omnibus Guidelines*).
- (b) “Enhanced Community Quarantine” or ECQ refers to the implementation of temporary measures imposing stringent limitations on movement and transportation of people, strict regulation of operating industries, provision of food and essential services, and heightened presence of uniformed personnel to enforce community quarantine protocols.
- (c) “General Community Quarantine” or GCQ refers to the implementation of temporary measures limiting movement and transportation, regulation of operating industries, and presence of uniformed personnel to enforce community quarantine protocols.
- (d) “Maximum Venue Capacity” refers to the maximum number of people that may be physically accommodated inside the premises of the facility as determined by the MICE Venue/Facility, which shall not be more than the limitations set under the Fire Code of the Philippines or other limitations set by the Local Government Unit.

- (e) "MICE" shall refer to Meeting, Incentive, Convention, Exhibition and business events industry.
- (f) "MICE Events" shall refer to MICE-related activities including business meetings, congresses, conventions, incentive trips, product presentations, business courses, conferences, and seminars.
- (g) "MICE Exhibitor" shall refer to a person or organization who rents an area from the MICE Organizer, usually setting up a booth in the MICE Venue, to meet with attendees for purposes of networking, marketing, generating sales, or acquiring potential clients.
- (h) "MICE Organizer" refers to an entity engaged in the business of managing or organizing congresses, conventions, meetings, conferences, exhibitions, or similar events in a professional manner for a fee or any form of remuneration.
- (i) "MICE Suppliers" shall refer to persons or organizations that supply goods and services for the holding of MICE events, including freight forwarders, contractors, and caterers.
- (j) "MICE Venue/Facility" shall mean a physical space designed and provided for events, exhibitions, meetings, conferences, and conventions for a fee or any form of remuneration.
- (k) "Minimum Public Health Standards" refers to guidelines set by the Department of Health (DOH), as well as sector-relevant guidelines to aid all sectors in implementing non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPI), which refer to public health measures that do not involve vaccines, medications, or other pharmaceutical interventions, which individuals and communities can carry out in order to reduce transmission rates, contact rates, and the duration of infectiousness of individuals in the population to mitigate COVID-19 (*IATF Omnibus Guidelines*)
- (l) "Modified Enhanced Community Quarantine" or MECQ refers to the transition phase between ECQ and GCQ, when these temporary measures are relaxed: stringent limiting movement and transportation of people, strict regulation of operating industries, provision of food and essential services, and heightened presence of uniformed personnel to enforce community quarantine protocols become less necessary
- (m) "Modified General Community Quarantine" or MGCQ refers to the transition phase between GCQ and New Normal, when these temporary measures are relaxed: limiting movement and transportation, the regulation of operating industries, and the presence of uniformed personnel to enforce community quarantine become less necessary.
- (n) "New Normal" shall refer to the emerging behaviors, situations, and minimum public health standards that will be institutionalized in common or routine practices and remain even after the pandemic while the disease is not totally eradicated through means such as widespread immunization. (*IATF Omnibus Guidelines*)
- (o) "Venue Operators" shall refer to those who own and manage venues, and take bookings from MICE Organizers. "Accommodation Establishments" shall refer to establishments operating primarily for accommodation purposes including, but not limited to, hotels, resorts, apartment hotels, tourist inns, motels, pension houses, private homes used for homestay, ecolodges, serviced apartments, condotels, and bed and breakfast facilities.

Section 3. Coverage. – This Order shall apply to all MICE Organizers and MICE Venue/Facility in the Philippines in areas under MGCQ.

II. MICE EVENTS UNDER OTHER LEVELS OF COMMUNITY QUARANTINE

Section 4. MICE Events under ECQ, MECQ, and GCQ. The conduct of MICE Events and other MICE-related activities in areas under ECQ, MECQ, and GCQ shall be strictly prohibited except for those conducted through an online platform where no physical interaction among participants is involved.

III. MICE EVENTS UNDER MODIFIED GENERAL COMMUNITY QUARANTINE

Section 5. Venue Capacity Limit. MICE Events may be conducted in areas under Modified General Community Quarantine; provided, that the total number of participants, including MICE Suppliers, Exhibitors, and Venue Operators, shall be limited to fifty percent (50%) of the Maximum Venue Capacity

Section 6. Interzonal and Intrazonal Movement. The rules on interzonal and intrazonal movement under the IATF Guidelines shall be observed. For this purpose, in case of local participants, only those from areas placed under MGCQ or areas not under any form of Community Quarantine shall be allowed to participate in the MICE Event.

Section 7. Health and Safety Protocols and Standards. As regards health and safety protocols and standards in the conduct of MICE Events, the relevant provisions Department of Tourism Memorandum Circular No. 2020 - _____ shall apply by analogy or in suppletory character, and insofar as they are not inconsistent with any provision herein.

IV. OTHER PROVISIONS

Section 8. Compliance with other relevant issuances. MICE Organizers and MICE Venues/Facilities shall comply with relevant issuances of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), and other sector-relevant agencies, relating to Minimum Public Health Standards.

Section 9. Penalties. Any violation of this Order may subject the MICE entity to the appropriate fines and penalties including revocation of its DOT accreditation, in accordance with relevant laws, rules, and regulations.

Section 10. Separability Clause. If any portion or provision of this Order is declared null and void or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in force and effect.

Section 11. Effectivity. This Order shall take effect immediately and shall remain effective until otherwise superseded, amended, or repealed accordingly.

For guidance and strict compliance.

14 July 2020


BERNADETTE ROMULO-PUYAT
Secretary

