



MC No. 04, s. 2020

MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR

TO : ALL HEADS OF CONSTITUTIONAL BODIES; DEPARTMENTS, BUREAUS, AND AGENCIES OF THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT; GOVERNMENT-OWNED OR CONTROLLED CORPORATIONS (GOCCs) WITH ORIGINAL CHARTERS; LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS (LGUs); AND STATE UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES (SUCs)

SUBJECT : **Mental Health Program in the Public Sector**

As the central personnel agency of the government, the CSC is mandated to establish a career service and adopt measures to promote morale, efficiency, integrity, responsiveness and courtesy in the civil service; and to promulgate policies, standards and guidelines for the civil service and adopt plans and programs to promote economical, efficient and effective personnel administration in the government.

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 11036 otherwise known as the Mental Health Act (MHA) of 2018 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations signed on January 22, 2019, the Civil Service Commission is mandated to develop guidelines and standards on appropriate and evidenced-based mental health programs for the workplace as described in the said Act and to develop policies that promote mental health in the workplace and address stigma and discrimination suffered by people with mental health conditions.

Hence, in consultation with CSC's stakeholders including various government employees associations, the CSC promulgated CSC Resolution No. 1901265 dated October 23, 2019, which provides the guidelines in the crafting of an agency's Mental Health Program (MHP). Attached to the Guidelines is a model agency MHP. Agencies may use, apply, modify or customize the MHP model provided the stated components in the guidelines are present. Additional components may be included as necessary based on the agency needs.

Agencies shall establish their MHP within six (6) months after the effectivity of this Guidelines and shall furnish CSC, through the Human Resource Relations Office (HRRO), a copy of their MHP for monitoring, reference, and records purposes.

This Memorandum Circular shall take effect fifteen (15) days after the date of publication of CSC Resolution No. 1901265 in the Philippine Star on January 10, 2020.


ALICIA dela ROSA-BALA
Chairperson



07 FEB 2020

Bawat Kawani, Lingkod Bayani



Mental Health Program in
the Public Sector
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Number: 1901265

Promulgated: 23 OCT 2019

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Section 3, Article IX-B of the 1987 Constitution provides that “the Civil Service Commission (CSC), as the central personnel agency of the government, shall establish a career service and adopt measures to promote morale, efficiency, integrity, responsiveness and courtesy in the civil service;”

WHEREAS, Item 3, Section 12, Chapter 3 Book V Title 1, Sub title A of Executive Order No. 292 (Administrative Code of 1987), mandates the CSC to promulgate policies, standards and guidelines for the civil service and adopt plans and programs to promote economical, efficient and effective personnel administration in the government;

WHEREAS, Section 2, Republic Act (R.A.) No. 11036 also known as the Mental Health Act (MHA) of 2018 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations dated January 22, 2019, provide that the State affirms the basic right of all Filipinos to mental health as well as the fundamental rights of people who require mental health services;

WHEREAS, Section 35, RA No. 11036 mandates the Civil Service Commission to develop guidelines and standards on appropriate and evidenced-based mental health programs for the workplace stipulated in the said Act and to develop policies that promote mental health in the workplace and address stigma and discrimination endured by the service users/ people with mental health conditions;

WHEREFORE, pursuant to the above mandate, the Commission hereby **RESOLVES** to adopt the following **Guidelines on the Development of Mental Health Program in the Public Sector**:

I. OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the Guidelines is to promote over-all mental wellness and provide an inclusive, conducive and supportive work environment for all public servants to ensure healthy and productive workforce.

Specifically, the Guidelines shall ensure that agencies shall be able to:

1. Strengthen effective leadership and governance for mental health by, among others, formulating, developing, and implementing policies, strategies, programs, and regulations relating to mental health in the workplace;
2. Develop and establish a comprehensive, integrated, effective, and efficient mental health program responsive to the psychiatric, neurologic, and psychosocial needs of the government employees;

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3. Protect the rights of government employees with psychiatric, neurologic, and psychosocial health needs;
4. Strengthen information systems, evidence and research for mental health;
5. Integrate mental health care in the basic health services for government employees, and in the human resource systems and processes; and
6. Integrate strategies promoting mental health in the workplace.

II. SCOPE AND COVERAGE

The Guidelines shall cover all National Government Agencies (NGAs), Constitutional Bodies, Government-Owned or Controlled Corporations (GOCCs) with original charters, State Universities and Colleges (SUCs), Local Government Units (LGUs), and Local Water Districts.

III. MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM (MHP)

Each agency shall develop their respective Mental Health Program. Attached is a Model for reference, which the agency may expand based in their unique requirements.

An Agency Mental Health Program is designed to support the implementation of R.A. 11036 which shall be integrated as a regular HRD program specifically in Health and Wellness Sub-Program. In the crafting of the agency MHP, the following should be considered:

- A. Rationale
- B. Objectives
- C. Coverage
- D. Guiding Principles
- E. Strategies
- F. Implementation Mechanism of the MHP
- G. Roles and Responsibilities of Heads of Agencies, Human Resource Management Officer and Employee Associations
- H. Communication Plan
- I. Monitoring and Evaluation

IV. FUNDING SOURCE

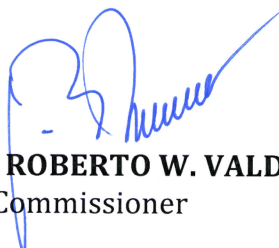
Agencies shall allocate and incorporate funds and resources in their annual work and financial plan and budget.




V. EFFECTIVITY

This Guidelines shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in a newspaper of general circulation or in the Official Gazette. All agencies are required to submit their MHP to CSC-Human Resource Relations Office, within six (6) months after the effectivity of this Guidelines.


ALICIA dela ROSA-BALA
Chairperson


LEOPOLDO ROBERTO W. VALDEROSA, JR.
Commissioner


AILEEN LOURDES A. LIZADA
Commissioner

Attested by:

DOLORES B. BONIFACIO
Director IV
Commission Secretariat and Liaison Office

(Name of Agency)
Mental Health Program
(A Model)

A. Rationale

In pursuit of the *(Mandate of the Agency)*, the *(Name of Agency)* shall integrate and advocate the mental health initiatives in all human resource and organizational development policies and programs in the agency and ensure that every employee is consciously aware and sensitive to mental health issues and programs.

The Agency commits itself to promoting the well-being of people by ensuring that: mental health is valued, promoted and protected; mental health conditions are treated and prevented; timely, affordable, high quality and culturally-appropriate health care for these conditions are made available to its employees; such health services are free from coercion and accountable to the service users; and employees affected by mental health conditions are able to exercise the full range of human rights, and work and participate fully at work, free from stigmatization and discrimination.

B. Objectives

1. Strengthen effective leadership and governance for mental health by, among others, formulating, developing, and implementing agency policies, strategies and programs relating to mental health;
2. Develop and establish a comprehensive, integrated, effective, and efficient mental health program responsive to the psychiatric, neurologic, and psychosocial needs of the employees;
3. Protect the rights of employees with psychiatric, neurologic, and psychosocial health needs;
4. Integrate mental health care in the basic health services for government employees; and in the human resource systems and processes;
5. Integrate strategies promoting mental health in the workplace

C. Coverage

This MHP shall cover all employees of the agency, regardless of employment status, including regular, permanent, casual and contractual employees.

D. Guiding Principles

1. Non-discriminatory

An employee at risk shall not be discriminated in any form, regardless of status, age, sex, sexual orientation and gender identity, creed or religion.



Any employee at risk or identified to have a mental health condition shall not be discriminated in terms of recruitment, promotion and termination. They shall not be discriminated nor prevented to receive benefits as government employee because of their condition.

They shall continue to perform their duties and responsibilities provided they are issued a certification certifying that their condition does not impede their productivity and still fit to work, and continued work will not aggravate mental health condition.

2. Reasonable Working Arrangements

Employees identified to have mental condition and have undergone treatment and recovered as certified by an attending physician shall not be prevented from returning to work provided an accredited physician certifies that he/she is fit to work.

Agency Heads shall make work arrangements adaptable and flexible to accommodate employees at risk or identified with mental health conditions.

3. Confidentiality

All information and medical records, including those submitted during the recruitment process shall be protected and treated with confidentiality, as provided under applicable laws and rules, particularly the Data Privacy Act.

4. Rights-based

The right to health as enshrined under the Universal Health Rights is promoted, protected, fulfilled thru the mental health program.

Employees at risk or identified with mental condition shall not be deprived of the opportunity to work and to participate in policy-making and program implementation relating to mental health.

Employees at risk or identified with mental health shall not be prevented from exercising their inherent civil, political, economic, social, religious and cultural rights.

Employees at risk or identified with mental health shall have access to affordable evidence-based treatment and medical services and participate in mental health advocacy, policy planning, legislation, service provision, monitoring, research and evaluation.

5. Sustainability

Mental health initiatives shall be integrated into the Health and Wellness Program to ensure their sustainability.



E. Strategies

1. Prevention, promotion and information and education campaign on mental health well-being
 - a) Conduct of Mental Health Wellness activities
 - i. Regular stress management activities
 - ii. Team-building activities
 - iii. Organized Peer Counseling Circle
 - iv. Physical fitness activities
 - v. Support group for employees with special needs (working mothers/lactating mothers, single parent)
 - vi. Interest group sharing (hobbyists, riders, theatre artists, etc.)
 - b) Conduct of continuing mental health awareness/education activities
 - i. Production of IEC materials on mental health (e.g. distributing leaflets challenging the misconceptions associated with mental illness)
 - ii. Conduct of regular seminars, symposiums, or fora on mental health for all employees; and
 - iii. Conduct of stress debriefing to identified/selected employees who suffered tragic, traumatic and stressful life experience/event
2. Treatment and Recovery
 - a) Provision of support to employees with mental health issues at work by providing intervention, treatment and referral.
 - b) Conduct of debriefing interventions in case of life-threatening situations or traumatic experience which may or may not be work related (e.g. after experiencing natural/man-made calamities).
 - c) Reintegration into the workplace of employees who have completed mental health treatment.
 - d) Provision of support to retiring employees for easier transition.
3. Integration of mental health in human resource development and management policies and programs
 - a) Ensure that mental health assessment of an employee is undertaken during recruitment and if applicable, during promotion.



In the case of promotion, the agency may identify certain positions that may require mandatory mental health assessment (i.e., Executive/Managerial, drivers, frontline positions).

- b) Integrate mental health awareness session in the new employees' orientation.
 - c) Include mental health assessment in the Annual Physical Examination (APE).
 - d) Provide mechanism to ensure the psychological wellness of its human resource personnel and agency mental health service providers.
4. Establishment of institutional networks and referral system which can provide support mechanism for employees who are with mental conditions or at risk for mental health condition:
- a) Institutional Networks
 - Inventory of Health Institutions that provide treatment and recovery program for people with mental health issues/concerns, with list of services offered and their contact numbers
 - Mobilization of organized support groups on mental health
 - Provision of DOH MH Hotline and other support mechanisms for employees at risks and with mental health conditions
 - b) Referral system
 - A protocol or referral system for employees with mental health conditions should be established
5. Capacity-building for MHP administrators in the agency
- a) Provide basic education and trainings on mental health for MHP administrators;
 - b) Provide information and training on how to handle employees at risk or those with mental health conditions.
6. Review of working conditions
- a) Assessment of workplace conditions/environment
 - b) Assessment of workload assignment vis-a-vis accomplishment
 - c) Review of job description




F. Implementation Mechanism of the MHP

1. The Mental Health Service Provider shall assess the employee at risk or identified with mental health condition, to identify the stage of mental well-being of such employee.
2. Appropriate action based on the initial assessment shall be undertaken by the Human Resource Management Office, which may be, but not limited to:
 - a. Notification of family members on initial assessment on the condition of the employee at risk and solicit their support to the process; and
 - b. Referral to accredited and licensed mental health professional and mental health institution for further assessment.
3. Should there be a need for employees at risk or identified with mental health conditions to undergo medical check-up and assessment, the agency shall refer to relevant medical institutions to provide for such needs and treatment, as necessary.
4. Should there be a need for the employee at risk or identified with mental health condition to undergo treatment, the agency head shall allow the employee the necessary number of days leave chargeable against hihs/her earned leave as recommended by the attending physician.
5. Work arrangements shall be done to accommodate employees who will report to work after treatment.
6. Monitoring of performance and health conditions shall be done to ensure sustainable productivity and wellness of the employee who had undergone treatment from mental health condition.

G. Responsibilities

A. Head of Government Agency

The agency head shall ensure the institutionalization of the implementation of the MHP, with the following responsibilities;

1. Ensure that all established mental health policies are administered and enforced in the workplace;
 2. Ensure mental health program is integrated in the human resource development and management, policies and processes;
 3. Provide resources including funding to effectively implement the mental health program; and
 4. Establish institutional network which can provide assistance in the implementation of the mental health program.
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B. Human Resource Management Office (or functionally related office)

The MHP and its programs and activities shall be managed by the Human Resource Management Office or functionally related office of the agency, with the following responsibilities:

1. Ensure mental health program is integrated in the human resource development and management, policies and programs;
2. Administer, manage and monitor implementation of the Mental Health Program;
3. Provide continuous education and training and initiate workplace discussions on mental health and ensure that all human resources are aware of the mental health program.
4. Maintain contact with institutional networks (e.g., hospitals, agencies, trainers, health and other professionals, etc.) to support the implementation of MHP;
5. Keep up-to-date with recommended mental health information and education materials;
6. Assist in incident investigations, analysis and preparation of mental health related reports and summaries, keeping record of the same;
7. Establish Mental Health Profile of employees and ensure that records of employees with mental health conditions and those at risk must at all times be managed, kept safe and treated with confidentiality conforming with the provision of the Data Privacy Act and the Mental Health Act; and
8. Submit a copy of the agency MHP within six (6) months after the effectivity of these Guidelines to the CSC through the CSC-HRRO for monitoring, reference, and records purposes.

Submit quarterly monitoring report to the Head of Agency on the implementation of the MHP and such report shall be included in the annual accomplishment report of the agency.

C. Employee Organization/Association

The officers and members of the employee organization shall be tapped to:

1. Collaborate with the head of the agency and the human resource management office or unit/office in charge in the development, administration, implementation, and monitoring of the MHP; and

2. Provide support and assistance in developing strategies, administration, information dissemination, implementation and monitoring of the programs and activities on mental health initiate.

H. Communication Plan on MHP

The agency shall adopt and implement a communication plan to promote the mental health program through the use of available media. Information and education materials shall be made available and activities may be conducted to facilitate the dissemination of relevant information on mental health.

I. Monitoring and Evaluation

A quarterly monitoring report shall be submitted by the Human Resource Management Office or functionally related office to the Head of Agency on the implementation of the MHP and such report shall be included in the annual accomplishment report of the agency.

J. Funding

The agency shall allocate and incorporate funds and resources in their annual work and financial plan and budget.

