



## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. No. 7134

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BY REPRESENTATIVES TAN (A.), VILLARICA, GARBIN, ORTEGA (P.), GO (M.), SAHALI, ESCUDERO, VARGAS, AGGABAO, VIOLAGO, QUIMBO, BRAVO (A.), ACOPI, SUANSING (E.), ANTONIO, ARAGONES, CHAVEZ, CUARESMA, SALO, MARIÑO, VILLARIN, BAGUILAT, PALMA, BULUT-BEGTANG, ROQUE (H.), ZARATE, ERIGUEL, RODRIGUEZ (M.), ELAGO, ROBES, MERCADO, YAP (V.), NAVA, VILLARAZA-SUAREZ, NOGRALES (K.A.), DEL MAR, LOBREGAT, ABELLANOSA, AMATONG, CALIXTO-RUBIANO, CASTRO (F.L.), DELOSO-MONTALLA, MACAPAGAL-ARROYO, PADUANO, RELAMPAGOS, VERGARA, ROQUE (R.), SACDALAN, ZUBIRI, NOEL, GONZALES (A.P.), ORTEGA (V.N.), GARCIA (J.E.), BELARO AND PRIMICIAS-AGABAS, PER COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 599

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AN ACT PROVIDING POLICIES AND PRESCRIBING PROCEDURES ON SURVEILLANCE AND RESPONSE TO NOTIFIABLE DISEASES, EPIDEMICS, AND HEALTH EVENTS OF PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERN, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, REPEALING FOR THE PURPOSE ACT NO. 3573, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "LAW ON REPORTING OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES"

*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  
2 the “Mandatory Reporting of Notifiable Diseases and Health  
3 Events of Public Health Concern Act”.

4 SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the  
5 policy of the State to protect and promote the right to health of the  
6 people and instill health consciousness among them. It shall  
7 endeavor to protect the people from public health threats through  
8 the efficient and effective disease surveillance of notifiable diseases  
9 including emerging and reemerging infectious diseases, diseases for  
10 elimination and eradication, epidemics, and health events of public  
11 health concern and provide an effective response system in  
12 compliance with the 2005 International Health Regulations (IHR) of  
13 the World Health Organization (WHO). The State recognizes  
14 epidemics and other public health emergencies as threats to public  
15 health and national security, which can undermine the social,  
16 economic, and political functions of the State.

17 The State also recognizes disease surveillance and response  
18 systems of the Department of Health (DOH) and its local  
19 counterparts, as the first line of defense to epidemics and health  
20 events of public health concern that pose risk to public health and  
21 security.

22 SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act:

23 (a) *Disease* refers to an illness due to a specific toxic  
24 substance, occupational exposure or infectious agent, which affects a  
25 susceptible individual, either directly or indirectly, as from an  
26 infected animal or person, or indirectly through an intermediate  
27 host, vector, or the environment;

1           (b) *Disease control* refers to the reduction of disease  
2 incidence, prevalence, morbidity or mortality to a locally acceptable  
3 level as a result of deliberate efforts and continued intervention  
4 measures to maintain the reduction;

5           (c) *Disease surveillance* refers to the ongoing systematic  
6 collection, analysis, interpretation, and dissemination of outcome-  
7 specific data for use in the planning, implementation, and  
8 evaluation of public health practice. A disease surveillance system  
9 includes the functional capacity for data analysis as well as the  
10 timely dissemination of these data to persons who can undertake  
11 effective prevention and control activities;

12           (d) *Emerging or reemerging infectious diseases* refer to  
13 diseases that (1) have not occurred in humans before; (2) have  
14 occurred previously but affected only small numbers of people in  
15 isolated areas; (3) have occurred throughout human history but  
16 have only recently been recognized as a distant disease due to an  
17 infectious agent; (4) are caused by previously undetected or  
18 unknown infectious agents; (5) are due to mutant or resistant  
19 strains of a causative organism; and (6) once were major health  
20 problems in the country, and then declined dramatically, but are  
21 again becoming health problems for a significant proportion of the  
22 population;

23           (e) *Epidemic or outbreak* refers to an occurrence of more  
24 cases of disease than normally expected within a specific place or  
25 group of people over a given period of time;

26           (f) *Epidemiologic investigation* refers to an inquiry to the  
27 incidence, prevalence, extent, source, mode of transmission,

1 causation of, and other information pertinent to a disease  
2 occurrence;

3 (g) *Health event of public health concern* refers to either a  
4 public health emergency or a public health threat;

5 (h) *Infectious disease* refers to a clinically manifested  
6 disease of humans or animals resulting from an infection;

7 (i) *Mandatory reporting* refers to the obligatory reporting of  
8 a condition to local or state health authorities, as required for  
9 notifiable diseases, epidemics or public health events of public  
10 health concern;

11 (j) *Notifiable disease* refers to a disease that, by legal  
12 requirements, must be reported to the public health authorities;

13 (k) *Public health authority* refers to the DOH (specifically  
14 the Epidemiology Bureau, Disease Prevention and Control Bureau,  
15 Bureau of Quarantine and International Health Surveillance,  
16 Health Emergency Management Bureau, Food and Drug  
17 Administration, Research Institute of Tropical Medicine and other  
18 National Reference Laboratories, and DOH Regional Offices), the  
19 local health office (provincial, city or municipality), or any person  
20 directly authorized to act on behalf of the DOH or the local health  
21 office;

22 (l) *Public health emergency* refers to an occurrence or  
23 imminent threat of an illness or health condition that:

24 (1) Is caused by any of the following:

25 (i) Bioterrorism;

26 (ii) Appearance of a novel or previously controlled or  
27 eradicated infectious agent or biological toxin;

28 (iii) A natural disaster;

- 1 (iv) A chemical attack or accidental release;  
2 (v) A nuclear attack or accident; or  
3 (vi) An attack or accidental release of radioactive materials;

4 and

- 5 (2) Poses a high probability of any of the following:  
6 (i) A large number of deaths in the affected population;  
7 (ii) A large number of serious or long-term disabilities in the  
8 affected population;  
9 (iii) Widespread exposure to an infectious or toxic agent that  
10 poses a significant risk of substantial harm to a large number of  
11 people in the affected population;  
12 (iv) International exposure to an infectious or toxic agent  
13 that poses a significant risk to the health of citizens of other  
14 countries; or  
15 (v) Trade and travel restrictions;  
16 (m) *Public health threat* refers to any situation or factor that  
17 may represent a danger to the health of the people; and  
18 (n) *Response* refers to the implementation of specific  
19 activities to control further spread of infection, outbreaks or  
20 epidemics and prevent reoccurrence. It includes verification, rapid  
21 assessment, case measures, treatment of patients, conduct of  
22 prevention activities, and rehabilitation.

23 SEC. 4. *Objectives.* – This Act shall have the following  
24 objectives:

- 25 (a) To continuously develop and upgrade the list of  
26 nationally notifiable diseases and health events of public health  
27 concern with their corresponding case definitions;

1 (b) To ensure the establishment and maintenance of  
2 relevant, efficient and effective disease surveillance and response  
3 system at the national and local levels;

4 (c) To expand collaborations beyond traditional public health  
5 partners to include others who may be involved in the disease  
6 surveillance and response, such as agricultural agencies,  
7 veterinarians, law enforcement entities, and transportation  
8 agencies, among others;

9 (d) To provide accurate and timely health information about  
10 notifiable diseases, and health-related events and conditions to  
11 citizens and health providers as an integral part of response to  
12 public health emergencies;

13 (e) To establish effective mechanisms for strong  
14 collaboration with national and local government health agencies to  
15 ensure proper procedures are in place to promptly respond to  
16 reports of notifiable diseases and health events of public health  
17 concern, including case investigations, treatment, and control and  
18 containment, including follow-up activities;

19 (f) To ensure that public health authorities have the  
20 statutory and regulatory authority to ensure the following:

21 (1) Mandatory reporting of reportable diseases and health  
22 events of public health concern;

23 (2) Epidemic and/or epidemiologic investigation, outbreaks,  
24 case investigations, patient interviews, review of medical records,  
25 contact tracing, sample collection and testing, risk assessments,  
26 laboratory investigation, population surveys, and environmental  
27 investigation;

1 (3) Quarantine and isolation; and

2 (4) Rapid containment and implementation of measures for  
3 disease prevention and control; and

4 (g) To respect to the fullest extent possible the rights of  
5 people to liberty, bodily integrity, and privacy while maintaining  
6 and preserving public health and security.

7 SEC. 5. *Notifiable Diseases and Health Events of Public*  
8 *Health Concern.* – The Epidemiology Bureau under the DOH  
9 shall regularly update and issue a list of nationally notifiable  
10 health events of public health concern with their corresponding  
11 case definitions. The selection and the deletion of diseases and  
12 health events of public health concern shall be based on criteria  
13 established by the DOH.

14 SEC. 6. *Mandatory Reporting of Notifiable Diseases and*  
15 *Health Events of Public Health Concern.* – The Philippine  
16 Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response (PIDSRS) System and  
17 other duly institutionalized disease surveillance and response  
18 systems of the DOH for notifiable diseases and health events of  
19 public health concern shall be recognized as official information  
20 systems for mandatory notification of national health event of public  
21 health concern as provided in Section 5 of this Act.

22 The disease surveillance and information system shall include  
23 the following requirements:

24 (a) The DOH and its local counterparts shall establish and  
25 maintain functional disease surveillance and response systems,  
26 which include coordination mechanisms, implementation protocols  
27 for reporting and response, measures for data security and

1 confidentiality, and procedures and provision to ensure safety of  
2 personnel conducting disease surveillance and response activities;

3 (b) All public and private physicians, allied medical  
4 personnel, professional societies, hospitals, clinics, health facilities,  
5 laboratories, institutions, workplaces, schools, prisons, ports,  
6 airports, establishments, communities, other government agencies,  
7 and nongovernment organizations are required to accurately and  
8 immediately report notifiable diseases and health events of public  
9 health concern as issued by the DOH;

10 (c) Information gathered from disease surveillance and  
11 response systems are confidential and not subject to freedom of  
12 information that can be accessed by the public. Data collection,  
13 analysis, and the dissemination of information from official disease  
14 surveillance and response systems can only be done by authorized  
15 personnel from the DOH and its local counterparts;

16 (d) To perform their disease surveillance and response  
17 functions, authorized health personnel from the DOH and its local  
18 counterparts have the statutory and regulatory authority to enforce  
19 the following:

20 (1) Establishment of disease surveillance and response  
21 systems in private and public facilities deemed necessary to protect  
22 the health of the population;

23 (2) Mandatory reporting of notifiable diseases and health  
24 events of public health concern;

25 (3) Conduct of epidemic and epidemiologic investigations,  
26 outbreak investigations, case investigations, patient interviews,  
27 review of medical records, contact tracing, collection, storage,  
28 transport and testing of samples and specimen, risk assessments,



1 laboratory investigation, population surveys, and environmental  
2 investigation; and

3 (4) Rapid containment, quarantine and isolation, disease  
4 prevention and control measures, and product recall; and

5 (e) All personnel of the DOH and its local counterparts, and  
6 all other individuals or entities involved in conducting disease  
7 surveillance and response activities shall respect, to the fullest  
8 extent possible, the rights of people to liberty, bodily integrity, and  
9 privacy while maintaining and preserving public health and  
10 security.

11 *SEC. 7. Declaration of Epidemic or Public Health Emergency.*

12 – The Secretary of Health shall have the authority to declare  
13 epidemics of national and/or international concerns except when  
14 the same threatens national security. In which case, the President  
15 of the Republic of the Philippines shall declare a State of  
16 Public Health Emergency and mobilize governmental and  
17 nongovernmental agencies to respond to the threat.

18 Provincial, city or municipal health offices may declare a  
19 disease outbreak within their respective localities provided the  
20 declaration is supported by sufficient scientific evidence based  
21 on disease surveillance data, epidemiologic investigation,  
22 environmental investigation, and laboratory investigation.

23 *SEC. 8. Establishment of Epidemiology and Surveillance*

24 *Units.* – The DOH, in coordination with the local government  
25 units, shall ensure that the Epidemiology and Surveillance Units  
26 (ESUs) are established and functional in all levels of the DOH and  
27 its local counterparts, and in public and private health facilities and  
28 laboratories as well as ports and airports in all provinces, cities and

1 municipalities throughout the country. This shall provide effective  
2 linkages between the public health authorities and the local  
3 government units in the provision of timely, accurate, and reliable  
4 epidemiologic information from the field; coordinate needed  
5 response; and facilitate capacity building in the field of  
6 epidemiology, disease surveillance and response.

7 All ESUs shall have trained manpower and provision of  
8 adequate resources, including equipment, logistics, communication,  
9 transportation, laboratory supplies and reagents, personal  
10 protective equipment and health insurance, to effectively perform  
11 their disease surveillance and response functions.

12 SEC. 9. *Prohibited Acts.* - The following shall be prohibited  
13 under this Act:

14 (a) Unauthorized disclosure of private and confidential  
15 information pertaining to a patient's medical condition or  
16 treatment;

17 (b) Tampering of records or intentionally providing  
18 misinformation;

19 (c) Nonoperation of the disease surveillance and response  
20 systems;

21 (d) Noncooperation of persons and entities that should report  
22 and/or respond to notifiable diseases or health events of public  
23 concern; and

24 (e) Noncooperation of the person or entities identified as  
25 having the notifiable disease, or affected by the health event of  
26 public concern.

27 SEC. 10. *Penalties.* - Any person or entity found to have  
28 violated Section 9 of this Act shall be penalized with a fine of not

1 less than twenty thousand pesos (P20,000.00) but not more than  
2 fifty thousand pesos (P50,000.00) or imprisonment of not less than  
3 one (1) month but not more than six (6) months, or both such fine  
4 and imprisonment, at the discretion of the proper court.

5 The Professional Regulation Commission shall have the  
6 authority to suspend or revoke the license to practice of any medical  
7 professional for any violation of this Act.

8 The Civil Service Commission shall have the authority to  
9 suspend or revoke the civil service eligibility of a public servant who  
10 is in violation of this Act.

11 If the offense is committed by a public or private health  
12 facility, institution, agency, corporation, school, or other juridical  
13 entity duly organized in accordance with law, the chief executive  
14 officer, president, general manager, or such other officer in charge  
15 shall be held liable. In addition, the business permit and license to  
16 operate of the concerned facility, institution, agency, corporation,  
17 school, or legal entity shall be cancelled.

18 SEC. 11. *Appropriations.* – The amount needed for the  
19 initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the  
20 current year's appropriations of the DOH. Thereafter, such sums as  
21 may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall  
22 be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

23 SEC. 12. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The DOH  
24 shall issue the implementing rules and regulations for this Act  
25 within one hundred twenty (120) days after the approval of this Act.

26 SEC. 13. *Separability Clause.* – If any part, section or  
27 provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, other

1 provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and  
2 effect.

3       SEC. 14. *Repealing Clause.* – Act No. 3573, otherwise known  
4 as the “Law on Reporting of Communicable Diseases”, is hereby  
5 repealed. All laws, decrees, orders, issuances and rules and  
6 regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this  
7 Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

8       SEC. 15. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15)  
9 days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of  
10 general circulation.

Approved,

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