

1. Policy Statement

PEZA recognizes that the workplace has an important role in slowing the spread of infection relative to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) which has been declared by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC). Consistent with our commitment to safe and healthy working conditions, PEZA shall implement widely accepted measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in its offices.

2. Scope of Application

The Policy, which is internal in nature, applies to all employees, service providers (e.g. clerical staff, security services, utility services and the like) clients and visitors in the premises of PEZA offices nationwide, including PEZA offices in the economic zones or Joint PEZA-Customs Offices (JPCOs). An external policy which will be applicable to locators and the economic zones shall be separately formulated.

3. Definition of Terms

- a. **Hand hygiene.** Washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or if this is not available, use of 70% alcohol solution or hand sanitizers.
- b. **Person-in-Charge.** For the purpose of monitoring of compliance to office rules and regulations, the PIC in PEZA shall be the designated Human Resource (HR), Administrative Services official in Head Office and the public zones as applicable. For the private economic zones or JPCOs, the PIC shall refer to the zone manager or officer in-charge.
- c. **Respiratory hygiene.** Covering the mouth and nose during coughing and sneezing using surgical masks, tissues, flexed elbow, sleeves of clothes or inside the neckline of shirts followed by hand hygiene.
- d. **Social distancing.** Refers to remaining out of congregate settings, avoiding mass gatherings, and maintaining distance (approximately 6 feet or 2 meters) from others when possible

4. General Guidelines

- a. **Fever detection and management.** All employees, service providers and visitors shall be requested to have their temperature taken by the guard-on-duty before entering the PEZA premises with the use of the thermal scanner. Those entering the PEZA premises with fever of at least 37.6 degrees Celsius will be refused entry.
 - i. Visitors who have been refused entry has the option to call the concerned PEZA delivery unit for assistance with their transaction but they will not be allowed to proceed to the PEZA office.
 - ii. Employees who have been refused entry shall inform their immediate supervisor and HRD. Their absence from work shall be chargeable to sick leave unless the CSC conditions have been met as specified in CSC MC 05 series of 2020.
- b. **Restriction on foreign travel.** All PEZA officials and employees, regardless of rank, shall strictly observe travel restrictions imposed by authorities such as Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) or the Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases. The Office of the Director General (ODG), mindful of Presidential Proclamation 922, shall be constrained to disallow non-essential travels abroad. Henceforth, it is highly recommended that foreign

travels by officials and employees be postponed for the duration of the public health emergency.

- c. **Promote good respiratory hygiene.** Proper respiratory etiquette shall be practiced at all times to avoid the spread of infection since COVID-19 spreads in a similar way as the flu. This is through covering the mouth and nose during coughing and sneezing using surgical masks, tissues, flexed elbow, sleeves of clothes or inside the neckline of shirts followed by hand hygiene
 - d. **Proper hand hygiene.** Proper hand hygiene shall be practiced since COVID-19 may be spread through hand contact with contaminated surfaces or objects and then, touching the eyes, nose or mouth. This is through washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or if this is not available, use of 70% alcohol solution or hand sanitizers.
 - e. **Social distancing measures.** Refers to remaining out of congregate settings, avoiding mass gatherings, and maintaining distance (approximately 6 feet or 2 meters) from others when possible. All employees and officials shall encourage their visitors or clients to make use of teleconference or email communication instead of in-person meetings or personal transaction whenever practicable.
 - f. **Cleaning and disinfection of the PEZA offices.** All frequently touched surfaces (e.g. desks, tables, doorknobs), objects (e.g. telephones, keyboards) and common areas (e.g. reception area, meeting rooms, toilets) shall be cleaned daily and whenever practicable, with regular disinfectant.
 - g. **Personal sanitation kit.** Employees are encouraged to maintain their personal sanitation kit to include soap, alcohol, hand sanitizers, vitamin C and facial mask.
 - h. **Duties and Obligations of the Person in-Charge (PIC).** The PICs of HR and EHS Committee shall ensure the following:
 - i. All PEZA employees, service providers, clients and visitors are aware of PEZA's COVID-19 policy;
 - ii. Appropriate COVID-19 information materials are available in client areas;
 - iii. Provision of tools to implement low-cost measures to prevent the spread of infection which include thermal scanners in Head Office and public zones; adequate soap and sanitizers; and face masks in clinics.
 - iv. Monitor compliance of PEZA employees and implement appropriate administrative proceedings whenever necessary;
 - v. Lead in communicating appropriate warnings to clients and visitors who violate the COVID-19 policy. Warnings may include asking the visitor to request the said person to leave the PEZA premises with the assistance of the security guard;
 - vi. Inform PEZA employees and its in-house service providers (e.g. utility workers, security guards, clerical staff and the like) of the Policy so that they will assist in communicating the Policy to clients and visitors and issue appropriate warnings whenever necessary.
5. Management of COVID-19 symptoms and risks
- a. Employees who exhibit COVID-19-like symptoms (e.g. fever, cough, shortness of breath) or has recently travelled to a country with local transmission or has been exposed to COVID-19 laboratory-confirmed case (e.g. living in the same household, on the same aircraft and seated within 2 meters, primary careprovider) are considered as high to medium risks for exposure to COVID-19 by the CDC and must
 - i. Immediately report his / her condition to the immediate supervisor and HR;

- ii. Voluntarily seek immediate medical attention; and,
 - iii. Go on self-quarantine.
- b. Conditions of leave availment for self-quarantine for those who have exhibited COVID-19 symptoms and those who recently travelled abroad shall follow CSC MC 05 series of 2020 as follows:
 - i. The 14-day self-quarantine period shall not be deducted from earned leave credits **provided the CSC conditions are met** and the required supporting documents are submitted immediately
 - ii. Continued absence after the 14-day self-quarantine period has elapsed shall be charged to sick leave credits and until this is exhausted, use of vacation leave credits shall then be allowed.

6. Information Education Campaign

- a. The HR shall facilitate the conduct of orientation programs to increase the awareness of PEZA employees on COVID-19 and to also inform them of their rights and duties.
- b. The Company Doctor and Company Nurse shall guide the PICs in the implementation the COVID-19 policy.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

- a. The Environment, Health and Safety Committee (EHS) shall establish a survey on COVID-19 for PEZA employees to collect relevant baseline statistics; and,
- b. The HR will keep track of employees who were tested positive for fever, respiratory infections and suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19.

8. Review of the Policy

A review of this Policy shall be made once the relevant local or international policy making bodies issue new guidelines that will affect its effectivity.

9. References

- a. CDC Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers
- b. CDC Interim US Guidance for Risk Assessment and Public Health Management of Persons with Potential COVID-19 Exposures
- c. CSC Memorandum Circular No.05 series of 2020 – Interim Guidelines on the Use of Leave Credits for Absences due to Self-Quarantine and / or Treatment Relative to the COVID-19;
- d. DOH Department Memorandum No.56 series of 2020 – Interim Guidelines for COVID-19 Response in the Workplace;
- e. DOH Department Memorandum No. 90 series of 2020 – Interim Guidelines on the Management of Persons Under Monitoring Suspected with COVID-19 for Home Quarantine
- f. Presidential Proclamation 922 – State of Public Health Emergency Throughout the Philippines due to the COVID-19 Threat
- g. WHO COVID-19 Situation Report 48

10. Effectivity

This policy and manual of procedure shall take effect immediately.