

**Department of Social Welfare and Development**  
**Policies, Programs/Services and other Initiatives for Senior Citizens**

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**A. Current laws and plan**

1. ***Republic Act No. 10645 (July 28, 2014) - An Act Providing for the Mandatory Philhealth Coverage for All Senior Citizens, Amending for the Purpose of Republic Act No. 7432, As Amended by Republic Act No.9994, Otherwise Known as the "Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010"***

It is an act guarantying all senior citizens coverage of the national health insurance program of PhilHealth. It stipulate that funds necessary to ensure the enrollment of all senior citizens not currently covered by any existing category shall be sourced from the National Health Insurance Fund of PhilHealth from proceeds of Republic Act No. 10351, in accordance with the pertinent laws and regulations.

2. ***Republic Act No. 9994 (February 15, 2010) - An Act Granting Additional Benefits and Privileges to Senior Citizens, Further Amending Republic Act No. 7432***

The Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010 is an act augmenting the benefits and services to the elderly. These benefits and services include: (a) the 20% discount and VAT exemptions on medicines, professional fees, diagnostic and laboratory fees, certain goods, as applicable; (b) the 5% discount for the senior citizens monthly utilization of water and electricity; (c) the 50% discount for the consumption of electricity, water and telephone by the senior citizens centers, and residential care/group homes for neglected and abandoned senior citizens; (d) monthly stipend of Php 500.00 and other services for indigent senior citizens; (e) honorarium for the head of the Office of the senior Citizens Affairs (OSCA); and (f) the inclusion of the Secretary of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) as member of the National Coordinating and Monitoring Board (NCMB).

3. ***Republic Act No. 9257 (February 26, 2012) - An Act Granting Additional Benefits and Privileges to Senior Citizens, Amending for the Purpose Republic Act No. 7432***

This act guarantees full support to the improvement of the total well-being of the elderly and their full participation in society considering the senior citizens as integral part of the Philippine society. It expanded the coverage of the benefits and due privileges to the senior citizens to include all business establishments. It made mandatory the provision of 20 percent discount in all establishments, as well as installed due processes in the organization of the OSCA and selection of the OSCA Head. It also recognizes the important role of the private sector in the improvement of the welfare of senior citizens and to actively seek their partnership. Also, it provides a comprehensive health care and rehabilitation system for the disabled senior citizens to foster their capacity and to attain a more meaningful and productive ageing.

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### **4. *The General Appropriations Act FY 2015, Section 33 - Programs and Projects Related to Senior Citizen and Persons with Disability***

For the past years the GAA has include a provision addressing the concerns of senior citizens. This year, said provision stipulates that all agencies of the government shall formulate plans, programs and projects intended to address the concerns of senior citizens and persons with disability. Moreover, it provides that all government facilities, including infrastructure, non-infrastructure and civil works projects of the government, as well as office buildings, streets and highways, shall provide architectural facilities or structural features, designs or facilities that shall reasonably enhance the mobility, safety and welfare of persons with disability pursuant to B.P. Blg. 344 and R.A. No. 7277.

### **5. *Implementation of the Philippine Plan of Action for Senior Citizens (PPASC)***

The PPASC 2012-2016 builds on the achievements of the previous plans<sup>1</sup> while enhancing the strategies and mechanisms for a more responsive actions given the emerging challenges the senior citizens sector are facing. The Plan focuses on strengthening the collaboration of different stakeholders and the senior citizens themselves to ensure the effective implementation of various programs and services for the elderly. With the Plan, the government and the private sector would be able to firm up its commitment to vigorously pursue measures to address challenges of the ageing population such as combating elderly poverty.

## **B. Institutional Mechanisms**

### **1. The Office for Senior Citizens Affairs (OSCA)**

This was established in all cities and municipalities headed by a senior citizen appointed by the mayor for a term of three (3) years. "The OSCA has the following functions: "(a) plan, implement and monitor yearly work programs in pursuance of the objectives of R.A. No. 9994

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<sup>1</sup> Three action plans for Senior Citizens have been developed since its first conception in 1999. The first Philippine Plan of Action for Older Persons (PPAOP) covers the period 1999-2004, was in response to the Macau Regional Plan of Action and in compliance to the Presidential Proclamation No. 1048 declaring a nationwide observance in the Philippines of the International Year of Older Persons in line with the UN Declaration of International Year of Older Persons. The plan addressed the need to institute appropriate policies, strategies, mechanisms and programs to ensure that senior citizen's rights are upheld and respected. The second PPASC covering the period 2006-2010 was developed following the issuance of Resolution No. 4 series of 2005 of the National Coordinating and Monitoring Board (NCMB) which provides for the creation of action plan for senior citizens in coordination with concerned government agencies and other stakeholders. This plan spelled out the strategies, programs, projects and activities contributing to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP) for the promotion of Active Ageing in the Philippines through the active participation of Senior Citizens in development as well as appreciated by the community as a whole.

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; "(b) draw up a list of available and required services which can be provided by the senior citizens; "(c) maintain and regularly update on a quarterly basis the list of senior citizens and to issue national individual identification cards, free of charge, which shall be valid anywhere in the country; "(d) serve as a general information and liason center for senior citizens; "(e) monitor compliance of the provisions of R.A. No. 9994 particularly the grant of special discounts and privileges to senior citizens; "(f) report to the mayor, any individual, establishments, business entity, institutions or agency found violating any provision of R. A. No. 9994; and "(g) assist the senior citizens in filing complaints or charges against any individual, establishments, business entity, institution, or agency refusing to comply with the privileges under R. A. No. 9994 before the Department of Justice (DOJ), the Provincial Prosecutor's Office, the regional or the municipal trial court, the municipal trial court in cities, or the municipal circuit trial court."

### **2. National Coordinating and Monitoring Board**

This is an inter-agency coordinating and monitoring mechanism at the national level established with the following functions: a) Formulate a National Plan of Action for Senior Citizens in coordination with concerned government agencies and other stakeholders; b) Develop an effective monitoring and reporting system towards an efficient, consistent and uniform implementation of the law; c) Develop and institute effective and innovative approaches and methods with which to address emerging concerns of the senior citizens; d) Coordinate the programs and projects of government agencies with responsibilities under RA No. 9994 and these Rules; e) Coordinate the conduct of nationwide information, education campaign and other advocacy activities on RA No. 9994; f) Monitor the conduct of orientation, training and other capability building programs to maximize the contributions and participation of senior citizens; g) Coordinate the conduct and evaluation of the plan of action, research and documentation of good practices and disparities for policy and program development; h) To actively establish national, regional and international networks for resource generation and technical cooperation; and i) Prepare yearly accomplishment report for the Office of the President, Congress, and the concerned national government and local government units.

### **3. Regional Coordinating and Monitoring Board (RCMB)**

It is the counterpart of the NCMB at the regional level. It is also an inter-agency coordinating and monitoring mechanism with functions similar with the National board.

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**C. Protective Services for Senior Citizens**

These are day-to-day services provided by the DSWD which respond to the needs of the sector. Protective services are categorized into center-based and community-based.

**1. Center-Based Services**

The following are programmes/services rendered on a daily basis in facilities referred to as "centers":

o **Residential Care Centers/Institutions**

Through its residential care centers, i.e., Golden Acres (located in Tanay, Rizal and Bago Bantay, Quezon City), Home for the Elderly, and Home for the Aged, the following services are being provided by the DSWD to the senior citizens:

- Social Services
- Home Life / Residential Care services
- Occupational Therapy Services
- Health and Medical Services
- Dietary Services
- Socio-Recreational Services
- Spiritual Services

In CY 2012, CY 2013, the Department has served in its residential care centers/Institutions a total of 765 and 11 721 senior citizens, respectively. In 2014, a total of 866 senior citizens were served in the Department's its residential care centers/Institutions.

o **Non-Residential Care Centers/Institutions**

The DSWD non-residential care centers and institutions offer services varying from rehabilitation to capability-building opportunities.

**2. Community -Based Services**

These are preventive, rehabilitative and developmental programs and initiatives for the older persons in need and at-risk.

- o **Home Care Support Services for Senior Citizens (formerly known Neighborhood Support services for Older Persons)**

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It is a community-based strategy that involves senior citizens, their families, their neighborhood and their communities to take effective steps in enhancing their caregiving capability for the sick, frail and bedridden senior citizens. This involves mobilization and capability building activities on home-care services for family and kin carers and home-care volunteers. This promotes healthy and harmonious familial relationship between senior citizens and their family/kin carers.

- ***Foster Home Program for Older Persons***

It was introduced to provide for a planned temporary substitute family care for older persons and persons with disabilities who are abandoned, neglected, unattached from the community and those on custodial care in residential care facilities.

- ***Intergenerational Program for Older Persons and Children***

This responds to the physical, social and psychological needs of older persons while addressing the generation gap between the young and old. This is being implemented in Neptali Gonzales Integrated Day Care Center for Older Persons and Children.

- ***Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation (AICS)***

AICS is the provision of assistance to individuals and families in crisis situation, which include but are not limited to, medical, transportation, burial, referral, and counseling services. AICS is being provided through the Crisis Intervention Unit (CIU). A special unit in the DSWD located in Field Offices which serves as an action center to immediately responds to cases of individuals families in crisis situation. A total of 13 735 in CY 2012 and 10 765 in CY 2013 senior citizens were provided with assistance through this initiative. While in 2014, a total 32, 011 senior citizens has availed from AICS.

- ***Social Pension for Indigent Senior Citizens***

Social Pension Program for Senior Citizens was designed to protect indigent senior citizens from the loss of income and unemployment as a result of illness, injury, disability, harvest failure, and other circumstances. This program fulfills the obligation of the government to protect the most vulnerable sector through social protection and the full implementation of RA 9994 or the Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010. RA 9994, also known as an Act Granting Additional Benefits and Privileges to Senior Citizens, which, further amends RA 7432. The DSWD issued the A.O. 03 Series of 2011 dated 13 December, 2010 and AO 15 Series of 2010 dated 17 February in line with the implementation of this program.

The DSWD has disbursed a total of PHP 90, 500, 500.00 to 181, 001 to indigent senior aged 77 years and above in CY 2012; a total of PHP1, 532,953,000 was released to 255,763 indigent senior citizens aged 77 years and above in CY 2013, and PHP 2, 788, 073, 260 was disbursed 475, 478 senior citizens aged 77 years and above in CY 2014.

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This year 2015, the program has a budget allocation of PHP 5, 962, 628, 000 for a total of 939, 609 indigent senior citizens and now covers 65 years and above indigent senior citizens.

### **3. Assistance to older persons during disasters**

Assistance being provided to older persons during disasters are as follows:

- o Provision of express lane to older persons in the relief distribution site;
- o Nutritional value of Family Food Pack being distributed to affected population, including the older persons, is highly considered;
- o Prioritization of older persons in the provision of temporary shelter assistance;
- o Profile of affected population are collected so that the needs of the most vulnerable groups are given immediate attention especially those with serious illness including unaccompanied elderly;
- o Medical facilities are established 24/7 in every evacuation centers for older persons easy access for health services and psychosocial support;

### **D. Participation to International Meetings, Workshops, and Fora**

#### **1. ASEAN-Japan High Level Officials Meeting on Caring Societies (21-23 October 2014)**

This is an annual meeting held by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan (MHLW) to strengthen the regional cooperation among East Asian countries from the viewpoint of the idea of "World Welfare Plan" that Japan had advocated in the Lyons summit in 1996. It has contributed significantly to further strengthening cooperation in caring society fields in the East Asian region.

The Senior Official of the Department participated to the conduct of the Meeting in Tokyo Japan as the country's expression of continued support to strengthening the development of human resources and to further promote collaborative relationships between the ASEAN countries and Japan on caring particularly the ageing population. He made a presentation on the Philippine initiatives to address the issues and concerns of the older persons.

#### **2. Workshop on Social Integration and the Rights of the Older Persons in the Asia Pacific (30 Sep 2014 to 2 Oct 2014)**

"The Workshop was held in follow up to the United Nations General Assembly resolutions 65/182 and 67/139 on the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) on Ageing which has been requested to consider proposals for an international legal instrument to promote and protect the rights and dignity of older persons and the Bangkok Statement on the Asia-Pacific Review of the Implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, adopted by ESCAP member States on 12 September 2012, which recommends that ESCAP members and associate members accord priority to addressing the rights of older persons in legal and policy frameworks" (ESCAP website).

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The Department Senior Official representative was identified a reactor in one of the sessions (Right to Health). We made a strong position on the need to address the normative and implementation gaps in the international protection system for the older persons and underscored that the elaboration of the international legal instrument for the older persons will frame older persons' rights as integral part of the broader international human rights agenda and importantly codify older persons rights into international law thus provide clarity on international standards ensuring their rights and prohibit their discrimination.

### **3. 53<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Commission on Social Development (04-13 February 2015)**

The Commission has been the key United Nations body in charge of the follow up and implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action. They meet annually in New York in February.

The Department's Senior Official participated to the aforementioned Session. He made intervention specific on the roundtable discussion on the *United Nations plans and programmes of action pertaining to the situation of social groups*. His intervention underscored the need to address issues of the older persons particularly the issue on abuse and exploitation.

## **E. Other Initiatives**

### **1. Sheltered Workshop for Older Persons and Persons with Disabilities**

The sheltered workshop is a community based facility designed to provide work training and productive employment for Older Persons by producing and selling goods or services for income or profit. This is to enable them to realize their aspiration and become assets to their families and community.

This project was piloted in the municipality of Asingan, Pangasinan and now being marketed by the Department for implementation of LGUs.

### **2. Golden Reception and Action Center for the Elderly and Other Special Cases (GRACES)**

GRACES is a 24-hour, 7-day-a-week assessment/diagnostic and residential care facility where the needs of senior citizens, bedridden and adult spinal cord Injury patients are assessed and provided necessary actions through the following means of intervention:

- Temporary or Short-Term Care - for a maximum of one (1) month
- Immediate Return to their Respective Families;
- Referral to either the GRACES Hospice Care Program or Other Long-Term Arrangements i.e. Foster Home Care and Group Home Care.

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GRACES will serve senior citizens ages 60 years and above who are lost, abandoned, neglected, unattached referred by the Philippine Orthopedic Center (POC).

GRACES is still under pilot implementation in the National Capital Region.

**3. Research on Active Ageing (ASEAN Act)**

ASEAN Act Cooperation Project is an initiative of the Philippine Government geared towards promoting active ageing among ASEAN member countries. This is being conducted in cooperation with the other ASEAN countries for a period of 18 months which commenced in 2013. It is a regional research project that seeks to look at the actual impact of community-based programs for older persons in select ASEAN countries.

**4. 2014 ASEAN Regional Workshop on Social Pension: "Building Towards a Comparative Study on Social Pension Scheme".**

This is also a Philippine Government initiative that promotes social pensions as a tool for promoting social inclusion and protection of vulnerable older persons as well as enhancing the well-being of older persons, their families and communities. The activity was conducted on 10-14 March 2014. Its conduct provided a venue for ASEAN countries to discuss their experiences on the implementation of the social pension/schemes, and served as a "prelude" for the regional study on social pension/schemes' socio-economic impact which the ASEAN is planning to conduct.