



PHILIPPINES 2000



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LEGAL SERVICE  
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Administrative Order No. 40  
Series of 2003

SUBJECT: Guidelines on the Implementation of Empowerment and Reaffirmation of Paternal Abilities (ERPAT)

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**I. Rationale**

Performance of paternal roles and responsibilities provides direction and help achieve stability in family relationships. These roles should transcend from merely a provider to shared parenting in order to promote a nurturing environment to all the members of the family. However, the organization of the family and the structure of parenting make most early care-giving tasks a feminine activity.

Fathers only serve as a shadow figure in the family, difficult to understand and are unable to provide warmth and soft nurturance to their children. This is so because fathers are rarely given basic information and never had been trained on familial responsibilities and therefore could not assume a caring role in the family.

The role of the father in the family has emerged as an important need to be addressed in the effort to achieve shared parenting tasks in the performance of familial responsibilities. It is for this reason that the Empowerment and Reaffirmation of Paternal Abilities (ERPAT) was developed to fully respond to the familial concerns and issues of today's Filipino fathers.

ERPAT gives importance and emphasis on the father's parental roles, responsibilities and abilities. It sees the significant role of fathers in performing multiple roles in all aspects of child rearing and development including the care and behavior management of adolescent children.

Further, it also gives emphasis on eliminating traditional gender role differentiation as manifested through the proliferation of the "macho" image of men as seen and observed in the norms, role expectations and behavior patterns of Filipino males. It helps them achieve a broader and fairer definition of gender roles and understanding of oneself as nurturing and caring individuals both for their children and spouses.

**II. Legal Bases**

1. 1987 Philippine Constitution

The State recognizes the sanctity of family life and shall protect and strengthen the family as a basic autonomous social institutions. It shall equally promote the life of the mother and the life of the unborn from conception. (Article 2, Section I).

The State recognizes the Filipino family as the foundation of the nation. Accordingly, it shall strengthen its solidarity and actively promote its total development. (Article XV, Section I).

## 2. Family Code of the Philippines

The husband and wife are obliged to live together, observe mutual love, respect and fidelity, and render mutual help and support (Art. 68).

The management of the household shall be the right and duty of both spouses (Art. 71).

## 3. The Child and Youth Welfare Code (PD 603)

Joint Parental Authority - The father and mother shall exercise jointly just and reasonable parental authority and responsibility over their legitimate children or adopted children (Chapter I, Article 17).

## 4. Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

The CRC, an international instrument ratified in 1990 by the Philippines, sets minimum standards for state parties to ensure the promotion and protection of the rights of children.

### III. Description

Empowerment and Reaffirmation of Paternal Abilities (ERPAT) is a service that gives importance and emphasis on the development and enrichment of knowledge, attitudes and skills of fathers in performing their paternal roles and responsibilities. It involves conduct of community based sessions for fathers and training of and organization of father leaders and volunteers in the community to facilitate collective action and participation in promoting the important role of fathers to the family.

ERPAT also serves as one of the interventions of the Parent Effectiveness Service because it sees the significant roles of fathers in all aspects of child rearing.

### IV. Objectives

#### General:

To enhance and strengthen parenting capabilities of Filipino fathers in performing their familial tasks and responsibilities, help them achieve an active and equal role with their spouses/partners in fostering the optimal development of their children and other family members and take active leadership in the community in promoting positive family life.

### **Specific:**

1. To empower fathers by developing a positive concept of self
2. To develop and enhance the father's attitudes, knowledge and skills on the following:
  - a. child caring of 0-6 years old children
  - b. preparing and equipping adolescent children in handling and meeting adult roles and responsibilities
  - c. raising children with high spiritual values
3. To help fathers develop gender sensitivity and appreciation of partnership with their spouses in promoting and enhancing family life by:
  - a. enhancing and strengthening a positive and satisfying marital relationship
  - b. preventing violence in the home
  - c. promoting shared parenthood and planned family size
4. To establish support networks among fathers in the community and enhance their active participation and involvement in the following areas:
  - a. help fathers become aware of their role in establishing a drug-free family
  - b. promote understanding of and prevention of HIV-AIDS

## **V. Project Components**

### **A. Advocacy and social mobilization**

This will involve conduct of advocacy and social mobilization activities in securing support and awareness in the implementation of ERPAT in the community. Public awareness and information campaign shall convey basic messages that promote the important role of Filipino fathers in instilling and fostering love, respect, discipline, industry and care for the family. Indigenous form of media shall be utilized to advocate for support and promotion and implementation of ERPAT at the community using local talents and resources.

### **B. Organization and Strengthening of Fathers' Associations**

The ERPAT association will be organized to help sustain the project and expand its reach to other areas. This involves formation of ERPAT groups composed of core leaders at the barangay level who will facilitate the overall organization of ERPAT at all levels in the barangay, municipality or city district office, provincial/city, regional and national level. The organized structure shall serve as venues for collective action and participation founded on the principles of cooperation, trust, good communication and commitment to the promotion of the important roles of fathers in the family and in promoting the social well-being of families as a whole.

### **C. Capability Building/Training**

Training and capability building activities shall be at two (2) levels :

1. ERPAT members - member of the ERPAT associations/groups, father leaders and volunteers shall be provided with training and capability building to enhance their knowledge, attitude and skills in performing their paternal roles and responsibilities.
2. LGU Workers/Implementors - the implementor shall be provided with trainings to ensure effective and efficient program implementation.

Basic courses shall include community volunteers development, participatory leadership, peer counseling and organization building and project development and sustainability. Experiential learning activities shall also be conducted to substantiate and deepen the formal training provided to the ERPAT implementors and volunteers.

### **D. Networking and Alliance Building**

Resource generation and mobilization and achieving the thrusts of networking and alliance building among agencies and among father groups are the most important indicators of a successful community organization. Networking facilitates sharing of knowledge, skills and resources among people and organizations in the community. Father leaders and volunteers and/or father associations shall be mobilized to generate resources to sustain implementation of ERPAT in the community This will include family welfare serving agencies and child caring/placing agencies as well as the LGUs and POs in the target areas. Hence, efforts to converge the resources and services of different welfare agencies operating within the area will be pursued to ensure optimal use of resources for ERPAT.

## **VI. Target Beneficiaries**

All males who need enhancement of knowledge, attitudes and skills on fathering who are unable to cope with familial responsibilities and who fall under the following categories are the priority participants/ beneficiaries of this service:

1. Biological fathers
  - solo father
  - returning migrant/OFWs
  - released prisoners
  - persons with disabilities
2. Adoptive Fathers
3. Surrogate fathers
  - foster father

- guardian
- caretaker

## VII. Procedures in Implementing ERPAT

### A. Social Preparation

#### 1. Identification, Recruitment and Orientation

This will involve identification of priority target beneficiaries at the community level through homevisits, referrals by LGUs and non-government organizations (NGOs) or groups in the locality. Fathers who are members of the Day Care Service Parents Group (DCSPG), Neighborhood Parent Effectiveness Assembly (NPEA), Supplemental Feeding Parents Groups (SFPG), spouses of women who are involved/beneficiaries of programs for women and members of the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children and the Barangay Council will serve as target participants.

Fathers of families at risks shall also be considered. The indicators of families at risks are, but not limited to, the following:

- with cases of mild and severe abuses in the family
- family members with poor health/nutrition
- presence of out-of-school youth
- inappropriate behavior models of family heads/members such as use and abuse of substance/drugs
- solo male parent

#### 2. Awareness and Consciousness-Raising

Conduct of an orientation meeting about ERPAT shall also be done to make the fathers and volunteers become aware of the nature and mechanics of ERPAT and to establish rapport, camaraderie and friendship among fathers and key leaders in the community. This will involve games and group dynamics to strengthen relationships among target participants of ERPAT. The orientation meeting shall be focused on the background, rationale, objectives, approaches, strategies of ERPAT. It shall also include brainstorming sessions on the present situations of Filipino fathers.

Identified fathers shall be organized to form a core group composed of 20-25 individuals who are concerned and capable of assisting or initiating activities in the community that will promote parental capabilities of fathers. Coordination with the barangay council shall be undertaken to elicit support in terms of having a representative to help organize an initial group of father leaders and volunteers as participants. Informal father leaders in the barangay and key leaders from different sectors such as church, schools, and other organizations in the barangay shall also be invited.

## B. Capability Building

### 1. LGU Workers

Direct service workers of the LGUs shall be trained to serve as trainers in the implementation of ERPAT. The direct service workers shall organize, train and supervise the Peer Support Group of fathers in the community. They shall provide additional training activities if necessary for the skills enhancement of father leaders and volunteers.

### 2. Training of Fathers

The training of fathers on ERPAT aims to enhance knowledge, skills and attitudes of fathers in the performance of their familial tasks and responsibilities. Training on organizing, networking and resource mobilization shall be conducted as well as other training activities that may be identified by the LGU worker as needed by the fathers.

### 3. Peer Support Training

Skills enhancement on peer counseling shall be provided to equip fathers with necessary skills in counseling, problem-solving techniques, decision-making, effective leadership and group management and positive family life skills to enhance peer support and relations among fathers.

## C. Peer Support Organization and Mobilization

This will involve the organization of fathers into peer support groups who shall help and respond to the other concerns of fathers in the community. Fathers shall be organized into working committees and will carry out specific functions aimed at promoting positive family lifestyle. It shall be focused at providing continuing enrichment of the knowledge and skills of fathers in the performance of their familial roles and responsibilities. Peer support organization and mobilization shall aim to establish a group of peer counselors among fathers to support and counsel fathers during times of challenges and struggles.

## D. Organization of ERPAT Associations

ERPAT volunteers and leaders shall be organized from the barangay to the municipal/city level and may be further organized at the provincial, regional and national level. Each level shall regularly meet either monthly or quarterly depending on the agreed period of the members and officers of the ERPAT Associations. The LGU at each level shall provide funds and manpower in the operation of ERPAT associations in their respective areas.

## **VIII. Project Monitoring, Supervision, Evaluation and Sustainability**

Project monitoring and supervision serve as the most important scheme to ensure effective project implementation and management. It will involve on-site visitation and supervision and periodic report and evaluation of project accomplishments. Regular feedbacking shall be established with program implementors and partners to keep track with the phases on stages of implementations to be able to respond to arising issues and problems that may be encountered during the stage of implementation.

Monitoring and evaluation of the project implementation shall focus on the following activities:

1. Regular monitoring visits will be conducted by the DSWD national and field offices. This will be a joint activity together with the local government units concerned.
2. Mid-term project implementation review will be conducted to evaluate the strength and weaknesses of the volunteers and the project implementation.
3. Annual Project Implementation review will be conducted to evaluate the overall project implementation for continuity and improvement as a basis for plan of action for the succeeding year.

Conduct of sustaining activities is likewise very important for the ERPAT organizations to undertake. These include activities that will help respond to the needs and problems of each members individually or in groups. Suggested activities include provision of livelihood projects, conduct of cultural and sports activities, and provision of awards and other forms of recognition to the efforts of father leaders and volunteers. Home visitations to ERPAT members, regular meeting of peer support groups, conduct of annual review of project implementation and continuing support and recognition to model ERPAT leaders and volunteers shall also be conducted.

## **IX. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **A. DSWD**

#### **1. Central Office**

- Prepare guidelines and other program material for the project.
- Oversee the overall implementation of the project.
- Allocate funds for the implementation of the project.
- Monitor, evaluate and provide technical assistance to the DSWD Regional Offices on the operationalization of the project.
- Conduct orientation/demonstration of the project to LGUs implementors.
- Consolidate and analyze reports submitted by the regions.
- Prepare quarterly reports and update of the project.
- Conduct documentation and research of the project.

## 2. Regional Offices

- Conduct consultation with LGUs to determine their interest, readiness, commitment and capability to implement the project.
- Assist in the orientation of LGU implementors.
- Monitor and provide technical assistance to LGU implementors.
- Develop and maintain linkages with local officials, NGOs and GOs in the area relative to project implementation.
- Assist in the evaluation research and documentation of the project.
- Ensure judicious disbursement of program funds.
- Prepare and submit quarterly reports on the project to the Central Office.

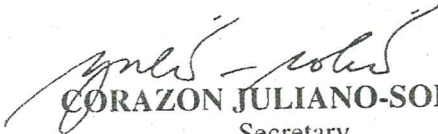
## B. Local Government Units

1. Implement and supervise the project.
2. Provide administrative fund support in the implementation of the project.
3. Facilitate organization and federation of ERPAT Associations.
4. Supervise activities of ERPAT Associations, e.g. planning and implementation of support activities in the community.
5. Conduct training for ERPAT volunteers and leaders.
6. Provide technical assistance and supervision to members and officers of ERPAT associations.
7. Identify/access resources for the provision of social services to ERPAT family members.
8. Develop and maintain linkages with NGOs, GOs and other stakeholders.
9. Support public awareness raising/Regional campaign concerning overall goals and thrust of ERPAT.
10. Prepare quarterly status reports to Regional Offices.

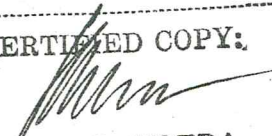
## C. Other Stakeholders (NGOs/Church/Academes/Civic Groups/Association)

- Act as resource persons
- Provide referral services
- Provide fund augmentation and resource generation
- Conduct trainings on ERPAT session and skills enhancement activities
- Assist MSWDOs/CSWDOs in identification/recruitment of ERPAT participants
- Participate in program review and enrichment/development

This Order shall take effect immediately.

  
**CORAZON JULIANO-SOLIMAN**  
Secretary  
Department of Social Welfare and Development

A CERTIFIED COPY:

  
**RENATO F. GILERA**