



Administrative Order No. 16
Series of 2020

SUBJECT : INTERIM PROCESS ON THE ACCREDITATION OF PRE-MARRIAGE COUNSELORS DURING A STATE OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY OR CALAMITY

I. Rationale/Introduction

The current situation with the COVID-19 pandemic has ushered the country to a "new normal" thereby, resulting to a need to shift dynamics in doing regular transactions. Observance and compliance to safety health protocols as directed by the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases are a priority in the conduct and performance of regular work functions and transactions on a daily basis to prevent the further spread of the virus. Moreover, as raised by several Field Offices, entry to other Local Government Units (LGUs) are temporarily prohibited due to the pandemic, thus, the difficulty to proceed with the usual accreditation process.

Nevertheless, the Department must move forward and continue performing its mandate and accomplish its targets despite the challenges posed by the pandemic. Hence, to ensure regular and continuous performance of regulatory functions particularly on the accreditation of Pre-Marriage Counselors (PMC), an interim process for the accreditation of PMCs is hereby provided for guidance during a declaration of State of National Emergency/Calamity.

II. Legal Bases

This guideline is supported by the following:

1. Proclamation No. 922 s. 2020

Section 5. The State of Public Health Emergency shall remain in force and effect until lifted or withdrawn by the President.

2. Proclamation No. 929 s. 2020

Section 1. Declaring a State of Calamity through-out the Philippines Due to Corona Virus Disease 2019.

3. Omnibus Guidelines on the Implementation of Community Quarantine in the Philippines.
4. Administrative Order No. 03 s. 2020 or the DSWD COVID-19 Response and Recovery Plan 2020-2022.

III. Coverage and Applicability

This guideline shall cover and be applicable only if:

- A State of National Emergency/Calamity is declared; and
- An area is declared under Enhanced/General Community Quarantine.

Whereas, for local areas that are not under any community quarantine, the same process as stipulated in Administrative Order No. 14 s. 2009 entitled Omnibus Guidelines in the Accreditation of Marriage Counselors, Item No. X (Accreditation Process) shall be followed.

IV. Accreditation Process

The process identified aims to lessen physical interactions and contacts between the assessor and the applicants for accreditation, therefore requiring the aid of technological or digital platforms in pursuing the accreditation process. Below shall be the process for accreditation following closely the same procedures as stipulated in AO No. 14 s. 2009:

A. Pre-Assessment

1. The applicant shall fill-out an online registration form (Google Form) to signify his/her intent to apply for PMC accreditation. *A link shall be provided by the Central Office for uniformity and shall be shared with the Field Offices.*
2. Upon receipt of registration, the DSWD Field Office shall notify the applicant via e-mail within three (3) working days to submit the needed requirements as provided in Item No. VIII (Requirements for Accreditation) of AO No. 14 s. 2009.
3. The applicant shall submit a scanned copy of the prescribed application form along with the requirements via email or hard copies of documents via courier with a cover letter addressed to the FO Regional Director.
4. Upon receipt of the documents, the DSWD Field Office shall review, within three (3) working days, the veracity of the documents submitted and acknowledge receipt of the requirements conformed with the following circumstances:
 - a. Should the submitted documents suffice and qualify for accreditation, the acknowledgement shall inform the applicant on the merit given to his/her application and to proceed with either of the following for the actual accreditation assessment observation:
 - Set a schedule for a live Pre-Marriage Counseling (PMC) session video conference; or
 - Submit a recorded video of the actual conduct of the Pre-Marriage Counseling Session including a footage of pertinent documents such as logbook of counselee, file copy of issued PM Certificates and intake sheets thru e-mail (*for file at least 25mb*), uploading of video file in google drive (*for files over 25mb*), or via courier using flash drives/CDs.
 - b. Should there be documents found lacking or insufficient and applicant is unable to meet the set qualifications as stipulated in item No. VII (Qualification of Pre-Marriage and Marriage Counselors) of AO No. 14 s. 2009, the acknowledgement shall inform the applicant of the necessary requirements and qualifications to proceed with the accreditation.

B. Assessment Process

1. Accreditation Assessment

1.1 For Live PMC Session Video Conference

Upon confirming the schedule for the live session, the following procedures shall be observed by the assessor:

- 1.1.1 Ensure and confirm that internet connectivity is stable at both ends. The applicant may be advised to record the live session in case of any internet interruptions.
- 1.1.2 Briefly orient the applicant about the guideline and discuss the mechanics of the accreditation process including presentation of pertinent documents such as logbook,



file copies of issued PM Certificates, and intake sheets. In addition, inform the applicant on the possibility of having an invalid assessment due to circumstances as stated in item No. V of this guideline.

- 1.1.3 Observe the entire duration of the live PMC session.
- 1.1.4 Conduct a brief post assessment session with the PMC applicant to discuss observations gathered covering both the good and weak points and other recommendations.

1.2 For Recorded Video of PMC Session

Upon confirming that the applicant shall be using a recorded video of the PMC session conducted as his/her option, the following procedures shall be observed by the assessor:

- 1.2.1 Contact the applicant either through call, chat, or email upon receipt of the recorded video either through email/messenger or receipt of flash drives/CDs.
- 1.2.2 Briefly orient the applicant about the guideline and discuss the mechanics of the accreditation process based on the alternative chosen, wherein, the assessor shall watch the full video coverage submitted as basis for the assessment. In addition, inform the applicant on the possibility of having an invalid assessment due to circumstances as stated in item No. V of this guideline.
- 1.1.5 After watching the video, contact the applicant within three (3) working days to conduct a brief post assessment session to discuss the observation gathered covering both the good and weak points and other recommendations based on the submitted video.

2. Confirmation Report and Issuance of Certificate

After the actual assessment, the concerned DSWD Field Office shall:

- 2.1 Prepare a confirmation report on the assessment result of the assessment within seven (7) working days and email the same upon approval of the Regional Director.
- 2.2 If the result of the assessment is favorable, the accreditation certificate shall be prepared simultaneously with the confirmation report and the same shall be issued to the applicant upon approval of the Regional Director.
- 2.3 The DSWD Field Office shall update the directory of the accredited PM Counselors at the regional website within three (3) working days upon approval of the certificate.

Attached is the Citizen's Charter (*Annex A*) for guidance. In addition to the process, the assessor should take into consideration the stipulations provided in the **Joint Advisory 2020-01: Interim Guidelines on the Provision of Pre-Marriage Orientation and Counseling (PMOC) services during the period of State of Public Health Emergency through-out the country due to COVID-19 Pandemic** as a variable in the assessment.

V. Invalid Assessment

The accreditation assessment shall be deemed invalid if the assessor is unable to diligently assess the applicant's full demonstration of the required competencies (KSA) due to internet connectivity interruptions or incomplete video recording. Whichever may be the case based on the aforementioned circumstances, another session shall be required to fulfill the needed requirement of the actual assessment.

The applicant shall be informed prudently about the situation within three (3) working days either through a formal letter/e-mail or other communication lines and shall be advised to undergo another round of accreditation assessment.

VI. Consent from Would-Be-Married Couple/s

The PM Counselor shall secure a written consent from the would-be-married couple/s allowing the recording of the PMC session for accreditation purposes which shall be included in the email of the recorded video. *Please refer to Annex B for the suggested template.*

VII. Confidentiality Clause

The recorded videos for accreditation purposes shall be treated confidential and by no means shall be shared to the public or any unauthorized personnel.

VIII. Separability Clause

If any part, section, or provision of these guideline is held invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

IX. Effectivity

The guideline shall take effect immediately upon approval and shall continue to take effect until the State of Public Health Emergency/National State of Calamity is lifted.



ROLANDO JOSELITO D. BAUTISTA

Secretary

Date: DEC 28 2020

ANNEX A – Citizens Charter

ANNEX B- Consent

ANNEX A – Citizen’s Charter

ACCREDITATION OF PRE-MARRIAGE COUNSELORS (INTERIM PROCESS)

Refers to the interim process of assessing the Pre-Marriage Counselors if they are compliant to set standards.

Office or Division:	Standards Section – DSWD Field Office
Classification:	Highly Technical
Type of Transaction:	Government to Client (G2C)
Who may avail:	ALL Practicing/Planning to practice Pre-Marriage Counseling Sessions
CHECKLIST OF REQUIREMENTS	WHERE TO SECURE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Google Form Online Registration 	Any DSWD Field Office - Standards Section (Regions I, II, III, IV-A, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI, XII, CAR, Caraga, MIMAROPA & NCR)
<p><u>Per AO No. 14 s. 2009</u></p> <p>NEW APPLICANT</p> <p>Scanned copy of the following documents:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Accomplished Application Form 2. Certificate of graduation/college diploma or transcript of records from last school attended. 3. Certificate of attendance from PMC orientation program. 4. Certificate from immediate supervisor that the applicant is tasked to conduct PMC sessions. 5. Summary Documentation of PMC session/s conducted by the applicant in the past six (6) months period should be made available. 	Any DSWD Field Office - Standards Section (Regions I, II, III, IV-A, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI, XII, CAR, Caraga, MIMAROPA & NCR)
<p>FOR RENEWAL</p> <p>Scanned copy of the following documents:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Accomplished Application Form 2. Certificates of attendance to at least eight (8) hours training 	Any DSWD Field Office - Standards Section (Regions I, II, III, IV-A, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI, XII, CAR, Caraga, MIMAROPA & NCR)

ANNEX A – Citizen’s Charter

<p>every year (24 hours training in three years) on topics such as but not limited to Human Maturity, Value Clarification, Authentuc Love, Responsible Parenting and Gender Development.</p> <p>3. Accomplishment reports for the past three (3) years preceding the application.</p> <p>4. Sample of summary documentation of PMC session/s conducted within three (3) years period.</p>	
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CLIENT STEPS	AGENCY ACTIONS	FEES TO BE PAID	PROCESSING TIME (under normal circumstances)	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
A. PRE-ASSESSMENT				
STEP 1: Online Registration (Fill-out a google form to register intent to apply for accreditation (new/renewal) and submit)	Provide client with google link.	None	*5 minutes	Support Staff in charge of all incoming documents (Field Office - Standards Section)
STEP 2: Submission of scanned application form and requirements. Email to DSWD Standards Section Or Submission of hard copies via courier.	1.1 Notify applicant via email to submit application and other requirements. 1.2 Provides client application form, and checklist of requirements	None	*10 minutes	Technical Staff or Officer of the day / Support Staff in charge of all incoming documents (Field Office - Standards Section)
STEP 3: Await for the acknowledgement/ email notification	Reviews and assesses the completeness of the requirements/documents submitted to wit:	None	3 working days	Technical Staff or Officer (Field Office -

ANNEX A – Citizen’s Charter

CLIENT STEPS	AGENCY ACTIONS	FEES TO BE PAID	PROCESSING TIME (under normal circumstances)	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
on the result of the pre-assessment of requirements.	<p>1.1 If found complete/sufficient, acknowledge receipt of application and notifies applicant and coordinate for the schedule accreditation assessment observation.</p> <p>1.2 If found insufficient/have not met required qualification and requirements, acknowledge receipt and notify the applicant on the lacking requirements, provide necessary technical assistance and return all the submitted documents.</p> <p>Email notification/ acknowledgement.</p>			Standards Section)
<p>Note: The DSWD will implement 4:00pm cut-off on the submitted complete documents. Applications received after 4:00pm shall be considered as a next working day transaction.</p>				
<p>B. Accreditation Assessment Observation</p>				
<p>Live Session (via google meet, zoom or messenger)</p>				
<p>STEP 1: Setting-Up of Live Conferencing and Actual conduct of PMC Session</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure stable internet connectivity. • Accept invitation and join video conference room. • Prepare assessment tool. • Conduct a brief orientation re: accreditation process with the applicant prior start of the session. • Observe the entire session. 	None	1 day	Technical Staff or Officer of the day (Field Office - Standards Section)

ANNEX A – Citizen’s Charter

CLIENT STEPS	AGENCY ACTIONS	FEES TO BE PAID	PROCESSING TIME (under normal circumstances)	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a brief post assessment observation. 			
For Recorded Video				
<p>STEP 1: Upload (google drive) or email recorded video of actual PMC Session conducted</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Submit recorded file in flash drive/CD via courier</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify applicant on the receipt of the file video. • Contact the applicant and provide brief orientation on the accreditation process. • Observe and watch the full video presentation. • Contact applicant after watching the video and provide a brief post assessment observation. 	None	1 day	Technical Staff or Officer of the day (Field Office - Standards Section)
<p>STEP 2: Awaits the approval of the application/ confirmation report/issuance of the Certificate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepares the confirmation report, with the following possible content: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. If favorable, inform applicant on the approval of his/her accreditation. b. If unfavorable, recommend for re-assessment. • If assessment is favourable, prepare the certificate as well. • Submit for approval of the FO Director 		7 working days	Technical Staff/ Section Head/ Division Chief
<p>STEP 3: Receives the Accreditation Certificate</p>	Email e-copy of confirmation report and Certificate	None	1 working day	Support Staff (Field Office - Standards Section)
TOTAL				
For Complete and Compliant:		None	12 working days	

ANNEX A – Citizen's Charter

CLIENT STEPS	AGENCY ACTIONS	FEE TO BE PAID	PROCESSING TIME (under normal circumstances)	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
		None	25 minutes	

**The number of minutes shall be included on the total working days*

ANNEX B_CONSENT FORM
PMC Accreditation

Region _____
Local Government Unit of _____
Province of _____

CONSENT FORM

This is to give permission and consent to record the Pre-Marriage Counseling (PMC) session attended on _____ (date of the session) for the purposes of the PM Counselor's accreditation by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

Couple 1:

_____; Name and Signature
_____; Name and Signature

Couple 2:

_____; Name and Signature
_____; Name and Signature

Likewise, the PM Counselor shall by no means reproduce, distribute or share the contents of the recorded video to the public and ensure the confidentiality of the session during the conduct of the activity.

Name of PM Counselor: _____; Signature: _____