

**GUIDELINES ON THE AVAILMENT OF LIBRENG GAMOT
PARA SA MASA (LINGAP SA MASA): A MEDICINE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
OF THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT**

1. RATIONALE

Article XIII, Section 11 of the Constitution provides:

“The State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which shall endeavor to make essential goods, health and other social services available to all the people at affordable cost. There shall be priority for the needs of the underprivileged, sick, elderly, disabled, women, and children. The State shall endeavor to provide free medical care to paupers.”

Regrettably, with the rising cost of medicines and health care in the country, lives are lost and otherwise curable or preventable diseases worsen because patients are not able to purchase prescription drugs.

Cognizant of this pressing concern vis-à-vis the government's obligation to prioritize the health and wellbeing of the people, PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE allocated One Billion Pesos (PhP 1,000,000,000.00) for medicine assistance to indigent patients to be sourced from the Socio-Civic Projects Fund of the Office of the President.

The President's PhP 1 Billion medicine assistance fund shall be disbursed under a program which shall hereinafter be known as **LIBRENG GAMOT PARA SA MASA** or **LINGAP SA MASA**, which the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) was tasked by the President to manage and implement.

Hence, these Guidelines on the availment of the President's **LINGAP SA MASA** (the “Program”).

2. OBJECTIVES

1. To carry out the President's directive to provide free medicines to indigent Filipinos needing treatment for various illnesses or injuries;
2. To provide guidelines for the disbursement of the PhP 1 Billion medicine assistance fund or **LINGAP SA MASA**; and
3. To operationalize the availment of free medicines under **LINGAP SA MASA**.

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3. DESCRIPTION OF LINGAP SA MASA PROGRAM

LINGAP SA MASA is envisioned as the program that will implement the President's directive to provide free medicines to indigents and to needy government workers. The amount of PhP 1 Billion has been committed to the program to be sourced from the Socio-Civic Projects Fund of the Office of the President.

The President tasked the DSWD to be the implementing agency of **LINGAP SA MASA**.

LINGAP SA MASA will be implemented by establishing desks at identified hospitals where patients needing prescription medicines will be assessed and provided assistance via the issuance of guarantee letters for the purchase of medicines from hospital pharmacies or from partner drug stores.

LINGAP SA MASA shall be a program distinct and separate from the Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation (**AICS**).

4. IMPLEMENTING OFFICE

The DSWD's Protective Services Bureau under the DSWD's Protective Services Program shall be the lead implementing office of **LINGAP SA MASA**.

5. TARGET BENEFICIARIES

The beneficiaries of **LINGAP SA MASA** are indigent Filipinos who are either confined in or receiving out-patient treatment from herein identified hospitals and who are in need of prescription medicines.

Priority shall, however, be given to the following:

1. Families or individuals who are indigent, vulnerable, or disadvantaged;
2. Those in the informal sector and poor based on the DSWD Listahanan;
3. Those who are in crisis situations based on assessment of Social Workers;
4. Government employees and contract of service workers working in the government; and
5. Beneficiaries of soldiers and police who were killed or wounded in the line of duty.

The program does not cover prescription medicines for drug dependents undergoing treatment or rehabilitation, which shall be covered by a separate program for that purpose.



6. RULES AND REQUIREMENTS FOR AVAILMENT

A. DOCUMENTARY REQUIREMENTS

Patients or their representatives seeking availment of free medicines shall present to the DSWD-assigned social worker in the identified hospitals, original or certified true copy of the following documents:

1. Any valid ID of the patient;
2. If the patient has a representative, any valid ID of the representative and a written authorization signed by the patient in favor of the representative;
3. Doctor's Prescription issued within the last three (3) months, indicating the date and the name of the patient, duly signed by the attending physician, with the license number and contact details of the physician; and
4. Proof of Indigency, such as but not limited to Barangay Certificate of Indigency or Certification issued by the medical social service of an identified hospital.

Certified true copies must be certified by either (i) the DSWD Social Worker assigned to the hospital, (ii) the office that issued the document, or (iii) the officer who signed the document.

B. OPERATIONAL RULES

1. Medicine assistance can only be availed by patients who are currently confined or are currently receiving treatment or rehabilitation after consultation or check-up from identified hospitals or doctors of the identified hospitals.
2. The assistance can be availed of only once in three (3) months, unless supported by justification based on need, urgency, and other factors as may be determined and approved by the DSWD Social Worker. Those who have received medicine assistance for the same purpose under the AICS shall not be eligible under this Program, and vice-versa.
3. All releases shall comply with amount limitations per approving authority as prescribed hereunder.
4. DSWD Social Workers assigned to the identified hospitals shall provide assistance eight (8) hours a day, five (5) days a week.

The DSWD may prescribe additional rules or amend the foregoing rules as the need arises to ensure the efficient and fair implementation of the Program.



7. GENERAL POLICIES OR GUIDELINES FOR DISBURSEMENT OF ASSISTANCE

A. APPROVING AUTHORITY

The amount of medicine assistance to be provided to beneficiaries shall be based on the assessment and recommendation of DSWD Social Worker and reviewed and approved by the authorized officials of the Department as follows:

AMOUNT	REVIEWED BY	APPROVED BY
Up to to PhP 5,000.00	Social Worker	Team Leader Social Worker
More than PhP 5,000.00 up to PhP 10,000.00	Team Leader Social Worker	PSU Head
More than PhP 10,000.00 up to PhP 25,000.00	Team Leader Social Worker & PSU Head	Assistant Regional Director
More than PhP 25,000.00 up to PhP 75,000.00	Team Leader Social Worker & PSU Head	Regional Director

B. PROCEDURE FOR RELEASE AND PAYMENT OF MEDICINE ASSISTANCE

1. The patient or his/her representative shall present the doctor's prescription to the pharmacy of the government hospital or, if the needed medicine/s are not available in the hospital's pharmacy, to the partner drug store. The pharmacy or partner drug store shall then issue a quotation for the needed medicine/s.
2. The patient or his/her representative shall present shall then submit the quotation to the DSWD Social Worker together with other documentary requirements. The DSWD Social Worker shall then assess the case. If found eligible, the DSWD Social Worker shall issue a **DSWD LINGAP sa MASA Guarantee Letter (GL)**, which shall specify the type and amount of the needed medicine/s, and the corresponding price.
3. The patient or his/her representative shall present the GL to the pharmacy or partner drug store. The pharmacy or partner drug store shall then issue the needed medicine/s, receive the GL, and stamp the GL "**ISSUED**".
4. On the 15th and last day of every month, the pharmacy or partner drug store shall submit a Statement of Account, attaching thereto originals of all GLs and other supporting documents, to the Program Focal Person at the concerned Field Office, who shall then facilitate the processing of the same for payment.

C. ADMINISTRATIVE COST

Pursuant to the directives of the President, the DSWD Central Office shall allocate funds for the administrative cost of managing and implementing the Program, chargeable against the Protective Services for Individuals and Families in Difficult Circumstances (PSIFDC).

8. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

The following would be the roles and functions of specific office:

DSWD Central Office

- Designate a Program Focal Person who shall closely monitor, coordinate and oversee the implementation of the Program by the Field Offices;
- Transfer funds to the Field Offices with identified government hospitals for implementation and operationalization of the Program;
- Provide technical assistance to the Field Offices on the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Program;
- Track and monitor the physical and financial accomplishments of the Program;
- Consolidate monthly reports on the implementation of the Program submitted the Field Offices;
- Submit an overall Program Accomplishment Report to the Department Secretary, for onward submission to the Office of the President; and
- Conduct a semestral National Program Implementation Review (PIR) with the Field Offices to determine the impact and outcome of the Program.

Field Offices

- Assign a DSWD Social Worker/s to each identified government hospital who shall assess and facilitate the issuance of GLs;
- Designate a Program Focal Person to closely monitor and coordinate the implementation of the Program with the DSWD Central Office and other implementing partners;
- Conduct an orientation for Service Providers on the extent and veracity of the Program, and forge Memoranda of Agreement with partner hospitals, pharmacies and drug stores;
- Implement the Program in accordance with the approved Work and Financial Plan and policy guidelines;



- Facilitate payment to partner government hospitals, pharmacies and drug stores, subject to pertinent accounting and auditing rules;
- Submit a monthly physical and financial accomplishment report to the DSWD Central Office on the 5th day of the following month; and
- Conduct a semestral Program Implementation Review (PIR) at the regional level with the implementing partners to determine the impact and outcome of the Program.

Partner Hospitals, Pharmacies and Drug Stores

The DSWD Field Offices may forge Memoranda of Agreement with government hospitals, pharmacies and other drug stores for the effective and timely implementation of this Program.

9. REPORTING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- The Central Office shall submit an Overall Program Accomplishment and Fund Utilization Report to the Office of the President on a quarterly and/or on need basis.
- The Field Offices shall ensure the full utilization of the fund, and submit an Update Report, indicating the accomplishment and status of the Program (physical and financial), to the Central Office on a monthly and/or on need basis.
- The Office of the Undersecretary for the Operations and Programs Group–Protective Programs shall oversee the Program, monitor the overall implementation of the Program by the identified Field Offices, and conduct an annual Program Implementation Review (PIR) to evaluate and assess the overall implementation of the Program.
- The Central Office shall closely coordinate with, and conduct regular monitoring of, the Field Offices for the implementation of the Program.

10. INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION

The program shall be implemented in selected Regions through their respective Regional Hospitals, as follows:

REGION	AREA	REGIONAL HOSPITAL
FO NCR	Manila	University of the Philippines-Philippine General Hospital (UP-PGH)
FO III	City of San Fernando Pampanga	Jose B. Lingad Memorial Hospital (JBLMH)
FO VI	Iloilo City	Western Visayas Medical Center (WVMC)
FO VII	Cebu City	Vicente Sotto Memorial Medical Center

		(VSMMC)
FO XI	Davao City Tagum City	Southern Philippines Medical Center (SPMC) Davao Regional Hospital (DRH)

The Field Offices of other regions shall continue to provide medical assistance through the regular AICS of DSWD, chargeable against Protective Services Programs fund.

11. FUND MECHANISM

The Program shall be funded from the One Billion Pesos (PhP 1,000,000,00.00) transferred to the DSWD from the Socio-Civic Projects Fund of the Office of the President.

The DSWD Central Office shall download the funds to the selected Field Offices, which shall then be responsible for ensuring payment to the identified government hospitals, pharmacies and partner drug stores.

12. EFFECTIVITY

This Circular shall take effect immediately and shall supersede Memorandum Circular No. 14, series of 2016, entitled “*Guidelines on the Availment of Medicine Assistance Funded under the President’s P1 Billion Fund*”. The provisions of all other issuances inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed and/or amended accordingly.

1 February 2017, Quezon City, Philippines.


JUDY M. TAGUIWALO
 Secretary

Certified True Copy:


MYRNA H. REYES

Records & Archives Mgt. Section