WALANG BOTONG KAPALIT ANG PAGHINGI NG TULONG SA DSWD

The Department of Social Welfare and Development – Central Luzon received a news report and validated the same through the official Facebook account of the Bulacan Police Provincial Office which stated that a 52-year-old Barangay Kagawad candidate for local elections was arrested on October 28,2023 at Barangay Bagong Barrio in Pandi, Bulacan by the operatives of the Bulacan Police Provincial Office for alleged vote-buying activities in the area in clear violation of the Omnibus Election Code.

It was mentioned in the report that several items were seized from the possession of the suspect at the time of the arrest which included the "General Intake Sheet of the DSWD". The General Intake Sheet of the DSWD is a document used for an intake interview that basically provides information of clients seeking assistance from the Department.

The DSWD hereby clarifies that the apprehended candidate is neither a staff nor a DSWD official and has no direct engagement, in whatever capacity, with the DSWD. Further, the alleged vote-buying incident involving the use of DSWD document is an isolated incident and no further similar reports are being received by the Department. However, the public is warned to remain extra vigilant and to not entertain those individuals' offering assistance from DSWD in exchange for their votes. Persons-in-need and eligible to receive assistance from DSWD shall submit their documents to authorized DSWD staff only at our DSWD Offices and no payment in any form shall be collected from them.

We reiterate that the Department of Social Welfare and Development stands firm to the policies and rules pertaining to the use of election paraphernalia in compliance with the

Omnibus Election Code and appurtenant guidelines and issuances by the COMELEC regulating specific acts committed before or during election by candidates and the like.

We generally condemn the illegal use of these documents as election paraphernalia which alludes that these DSWD documents might have been used for personal gains of candidates during the SKB elections denigrating the life-long and well-established integrity and dignity of the Department as well as its ever-vigilant workforce. We will not allow that the Department’s character be put in shade through the commission of acts violative of the election code.

Again, as an integral agency under the auspices and direction of the Honorable Secretary of the Department, we shall make all necessary efforts to see to the full extent the truth behind this incident. ###