



Department of Social Welfare and Development

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MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR

NO. 16

SERIES OF 2022

REVISED GUIDELINES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS IN CRISIS SITUATION

I. RATIONALE

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), as the leader in social protection, continuously implements the Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation (AICS) program to support government efforts in providing aid to individuals and families seeking assistance. The AICS Program serves as a stop-gap measure to support the recovery of individuals and families suffering from unexpected life events or crises.

Undoubtedly, there is an observed increase in the incidence of individuals seeking intervention, suffering from the severe economic effects brought by the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic and the rising inflation rate due to the high fuel prices, and other types of crises severely affecting individuals and families. Priority attention shall be given to the poor, vulnerable, marginalized and financially incapacitated sectors of the society.

To ensure the faster and more efficient delivery of assistance through the AICS program to the increased number of clients, there is a need to review the existing guidelines and make necessary revisions to clarify ambiguous provisions. This is also to further streamline the implementing procedure, adjust the rates of assistance and corresponding approving authorities at the Central and Field Offices and Social Welfare and Development (SWAD) Offices, and simplify the intake/eligibility forms and documentary requirements.

Hence, this Circular shall serve as the new implementing guidelines for AICS that shall amend Memorandum Circular (MC) No. 15, series of 2022.

II. LEGAL BASES

A. Section 5 of Republic Act (RA) No. 11032, or the Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act of 2018

"Sec. 5. *Reengineering of Systems and Procedures.* – All offices and agencies which provide government services are hereby mandated to regularly undertake cost compliance analysis, time and motion studies, undergo evaluation and improvement of their transaction systems and procedures, and reengineer the same if deemed necessary to reduce bureaucratic red tape and processing time. xxx"

B. Sections 3 (b) and 9 of RA No. 11463 or the Malasakit Centers Act

"Sec. 3 (b) Financial Assistance refers to monetary aid, in the form of guarantee letter, cash or check, which covers burial, transportation and other allied assistance or physical aid such as food, clothing, general assistive devices given by agencies and mandated by existing laws, rules and regulations to provide such assistance. xxx"

"Sec.9. Medical and Financial Assistance- The Malasakit Centers shall facilitate access to the following medical and financial assistance: (b) The DSWD financial assistance, based on existing Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation (AICS) guidelines.

C. Executive Order (EO) No. 221 series of 2003, Amending Executive Order No. 15, s. 1998 entitled 'Redirecting the Functions and Operations of the Department of Social Welfare and Development'

Section 3 mandates the DSWD "to implement (iii) crisis intervention".

D. EO No. 163, series of 2022, Institutionalizing Access to Protection Services for Refugees, Stateless and Asylum Seekers

"Section 1. *Policy.* The State recognizes the important and enduring relevance of the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, 1954 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Person, and 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, and has taken steps to strengthen the existing legal framework and mechanisms for the protection of refugees, stateless persons and asylum seekers in the country (hereinafter collectively referred to as "persons of concerns" [POCs]), and address their need for protection, especially in times of public emergencies.

In this regard, the State shall closely monitor and ensure full protection of the rights of POCs xxx. These shall include the provision of access to socioeconomic services, xxx.”

III. OBJECTIVES

This Circular is primarily issued to prescribe the enhanced guidelines that will govern the implementation of the AICS program by the Crisis Intervention Unit /Sections (CIU/S) at the Central and Field Offices, respectively, and Social Welfare and Development Satellite Offices (SWAD Office) and in established Malasakit Centers nationwide, and to distinguish its operations and implementation from the other DSWD programs and services.

Further, it is likewise the objective of this issuance to adopt the ease of providing assistance to the beneficiaries insofar as the overall processes and requirements are concerned.

IV. DEFINITION OF TERMS

A. **Authorized Representative-** refers to any person of legal age who represents a beneficiary who, for valid reason/s, cannot be physically present in processing and claiming the assistance requested. Allowed representatives shall be limited to:

1. **Family Member** - refers to a relative up to fourth (4th) civil degree of consanguinity or affinity, such as the spouse, children, parents, siblings, uncles, aunts, first degree cousins, grandparents and grandchildren of the beneficiary.
2. In extremely justifiable circumstances, any other individual acting as an authorized representative of a beneficiary.¹

For this purpose, the information of the representative shall also be subject to the cross matching process.

B. **Beneficiary-** refers to the person who actually needs the assistance, or on whose behalf the assistance is being sought from the DSWD through an authorized representative. The beneficiary is the ultimate recipient of the assistance.

C. **Case Summary** - refers to a document prepared by a professional Social Worker which provides an overview of the socio-economic situation of the client or beneficiary, as well as the assessment and recommendation for that particular beneficiary.

¹ Provided that said individual shall not be allowed to represent more than two (2) beneficiaries who are unrelated to him/her for every calendar year.

- D. **Certificate of Eligibility (CE)** - refers to the document issued by the DSWD, proving that the client is eligible to receive the services under the AICS program.
- E. **Client** - refers to an individual or group of individuals who seeks assistance for himself/herself or on behalf of the beneficiary, due to their inability to be physically present.
- F. **Crisis Situation/s** - refers to a time in the individuals' life when they experience a breakdown or disruption in their usual or normal daily activities or family functioning which disrupts or prevents them from adequately performing their social functions.
- G. **Crossmatching** - refers to the process of counter checking the information or data sets provided by the client who seeks the assistance of the DSWD.
- H. **General Intake Sheet (GIS)** - refers to the form used by the DSWD Social Workers to obtain the basic information of the beneficiary and the authorized representative, the problem presented, and the assessment and recommended assistance to the beneficiaries.
- I. **Guarantee Letter (GL)** - *refers to* a document issued by the DSWD in favor of the beneficiary addressed to service providers to guarantee the payment of the services.
- J. **Material Assistance Distribution Sheet (MDS)** - is the form used by the DSWD to record all clients who will receive material assistance.
- K. **Service Providers** - refer to hospitals, funeral homes and other service providers such as, but not limited to, diagnostic laboratories, clinics, drugstores among others which are willing to accept the GLs issued by the DSWD for payment of their services and/or goods for the beneficiary.
- L. **Social Case Study Report (SCSR)** - refers to the document prepared by a professional Social Worker in public and private practice, that describes in detail the situation and conditions of the beneficiary, including his/her social history. The document likewise include, assessment, plan for intervention and recommendation.

V. PROGRAM COVERAGE

- A. **Financial Assistance-** refers to cash or GL provided to qualified beneficiaries or through the service providers, namely:

- a. **Medical Assistance** - This assistance shall cover hospitalization expenses, cost of medicines, and other medical treatment or procedures such as implants, common laboratory tests and diagnostic imaging procedures for any illness or ailment, including postpartum² complications, and also provision of assistive devices.

A client may be given assistance based on a hospital bill only once. Additionally, an in-patient beneficiary may request other assistance in the event that the needed medicine/s or treatment of the patient is not available at the hospital of confinement.

Other health care expenses such as immunization, birthing (including cesarean delivery), and purchase of vitamins and other supplements which are not related to medical treatment or aftercare shall not be covered by this assistance.

- b. **Funeral Assistance** - This assistance shall cover funeral and other related expenses including, but not limited to, expenses in bringing the remains of the deceased to his or her residence/hometown, interment, cremation, and/or burial site in accordance with existing customary practices of the family especially among Indigenous Cultural Communities/Indigenous Peoples (IPs) and Moros.

Funeral and related expenses due to a disaster, calamity, and/or critical events or similar circumstances resulting in one or multiple casualties within the family may allow the surviving family member/ immediate relative of the deceased to request outright cash assistance subject to the assessment of the DSWD Social Worker, without the need of a SCSR.

- c. **Transportation Assistance** - This assistance is in the form of purchase or payment of transport (air/sea/land) tickets and/or expenses for travels of beneficiary within the Philippines, for purposes not limited to: return to home provinces permanently, or seek medical intervention/s in another place, or attendance to emergency concerns such as death or care of sick family member or relative, rescue of abused or trafficked relatives, or events of disaster/calamity that require immediate presence of the beneficiary.

Outright cash may be considered for those who will be traveling using multiple modes of transportation.

² Including but not limited to: excessive bleeding (hemorrhage); cardiovascular diseases or high blood pressure disorders of pregnancy; infection or sepsis; amniotic fluid embolism; anesthesia complications.

Provided that, if the DSWD procures the ticket for the beneficiary, the expenses for food and other necessary expenses for the travel shall be given to the beneficiary in cash. The Social Worker shall state in the GIS or in a separate justification attached to the CE his assessment to justify the provision of outright cash.

- d. **Educational Assistance** - this is a form of assistance given to a student-in-crisis, to help defray school expenses and/or cost of sending students/children to school such as school fees, school supplies, school projects, allowances, and other related expenses. Beneficiaries may include those who are breadwinners, whether or not they are the heads of their families, or working students or orphaned/abandoned and/or now living with relatives, children of solo parents or with unemployed parents or Overseas Filipinos (OFs) or persons with disability-in-crisis, or children of rebel returnees or of persons deprived of liberty³, children with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) or those living with parents with HIV, those who are victims of abuse or displacement, or are otherwise in crisis due to human-induced or natural calamities. This may include those taking technical or vocational courses. A maximum of three (3) students per family shall be entitled to this assistance.

This assistance shall not cover graduate (Masteral) and post-graduate (Doctoral) studies including professional degrees such as, but not limited to, Doctor of Medicine and Bachelor of Laws/Juris Doctor and those expenses for the review and registration fees for the licensure/bar examinations.

- e. **Food Assistance** – this is a form of assistance given to beneficiaries to meet the need for food and other nutritional requirements for sustenance. The assistance may also be provided through outright cash to supplement the transportation and medical assistance.
- f. **Cash Assistance for other Support Services** - This assistance is an outright cash provided to individuals and families in crisis or in extremely difficult circumstances.

B. Material Assistance - refers to the provision of food and non-food items to beneficiaries who need immediate material support which can be

³ "Person Deprived of Liberty (PDL) – refers to a detainee, inmate, or prisoner, or other person under confinement or custody in any other manner", Rule III, Section 3(u), Revised Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 10575.

covered by the items listed below, subject to the availability of the material assistance as follows:

- a. **Family Food Packs/Other Food items** - refers to food packs, hot/ready-to-eat/precooked/prepacked meals, or food voucher or whatever is available at the CIU/CIS/SWAD Office. It may be given to individuals and families who are in need such as, but not limited to, persons with disabilities, homeless/street dwellers or fire victims and other disaster situations.

The contents of the family food packs may be the same as that regularly provided during disaster operations. However, the PMB-CID may provide food packs containing ready-to-eat/precooked/prepacked meals, or those especially packaged for groups in vulnerable situations, not limited to, older persons, pregnant women, lactating mothers or other persons with special needs, the standard composition of said food packs may be recommended by the Nutritionist-Dietitian of the PMB duly approved by the Undersecretary for Operations.

- b. **Hygiene and sleeping kits** - refer to hygiene and/or sleeping kits that are regularly provided during disaster operations.
- c. **Assistive Devices and Technologies** - refer to assistive devices such as, but not limited to, wheelchairs, canes, walkers and appropriate technologies such as, but not limited to, hearing aids, vocal aids, visual aids, and specialized computer software and hardware that increase mobility, hearing, vision, or communication capacities.

C. Psychosocial Support - refers to support given to help meet the psychological, emotional, and social needs of beneficiaries and their families. It is a set of interventions that intends to positively improve a person's behavior to reduce the impact of stress brought about by a crisis through behavioral modification interventions. This is intended for giving immediate relief to psychological and emotional issues under specific circumstances through the following:

- a. **Psychological First Aid (PFA)** - refers to immediate assistance in the form of comfort giving, clarificatory counseling provided to children, adolescents, adults, and families who are affected by a disaster or traumatic incident.
- b. **Social Work Counseling** - refers to counseling to help clients gain insights into their feelings and which affects their behaviors, and/or enable them to process their thoughts and feelings. This

also identifies potential solutions to the issues at hand for the crisis situation.

- D. **Referral Services** - refers to assistance provided when the requested support is not within the range of AICS programs and services or DSWD services.

As needed, clients availing assistance through the AICS program may be referred to LSWDOs or place of residence for case management.

VI. PROGRAM BENEFICIARY

The AICS program is intended for individuals and families assessed to be experiencing crises or extreme difficult situations needing financial or material support. The assistance may be provided as an augmentation to that provided by the LGU, based on the assessment of a DSWD Social Worker.

In general, any individual who is in a crisis situation or in difficult circumstances in life may be assisted through the provision of appropriate assistance. The program beneficiary may include Persons of Concerns (POCs), as defined under EO No. 163, series of 2022.

VII. DOCUMENTARY REQUIREMENTS

As a general rule, the beneficiary or the authorized representative shall submit a copy of their VALID ID or alternative document/s for identification, except in extremely justifiable circumstances where the beneficiary or representative⁴ may have no VALID ID, in which case, the justification from the DSWD Social Welfare Officer (SWO) pertaining to the absence of the VALID ID shall suffice.

In order to be accepted by the DSWD, VALID IDs:

1. Must not be expired, *i.e.*, it must be up to date, or still valid as of the date of application for assistance;
2. Must not appear to be fake or dubious;
3. Are preferably issued by the government, including the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) ID issued by the DSWD;
4. Are preferably with signature, except Philsys ID;
5. Are preferably with the picture of the client.

A person who is acting as an authorized representative of the beneficiary shall present an authorization letter duly signed by the beneficiary, except when the beneficiary is a minor or any person without capacity to act.⁵

⁴ such as, but not limited to, out of school youth but who are of legal age, IPs, victims of fire, typhoon or other calamities or disasters (natural or human induced disasters).

⁵ As defined in the Civil Code of the Philippines.

Further, the GIS and CE shall be required in all cases and for all clients, except those requesting for material assistance such as food packs, hot/ready-to-eat meals, and hygiene or sleeping kits wherein only the GIS is required. These documents must be kept in either hard or electronic copy. The GIS is considered a confidential document and the safekeeping thereof must conform with the prescribed laws, rules and regulations. The PMB-CID will cascade the editable copies of the GIS and CE which shall be utilized by the DSWD nationwide.

The following documentary requirements for each type of assistance shall be submitted in original/certified true copies, to wit:

| Type | Documents |
|----------------------------------|---|
| <p><i>Medical Assistance</i></p> | <p>Any identification document, as stated above; and,</p> <p><i>Any of the following, as may be applicable:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical Certificate or Medical Abstract with date of issuance, complete name, signature and license number of the attending physician (issued within the last 3 months); <i>or</i> • Discharge summary with date of issuance, complete name, signature and license number of the attending physician (issued within the last 3 months); <i>or</i> • Certificate of confinement with date of issuance, complete name, signature and license number of the attending physician (issued within the last 3 months); <i>or</i> • Death Summary with date of issuance, complete name, signature and license number of the attending physician (issued within the last 3 months); <i>or</i> • Alagang Pinoy Tagubilin Form with diagnosis, date of issuance, complete name, signature and license number of the attending physician (issued within the last 3 months) • Referral Letter from the Malasakit Center issued by the duly assigned DSWD social worker or Medical social worker (MSW) <p><i>Depending on the purpose of the medical assistance, the client shall submit any of the following requirements, in addition to the basic requirements above:</i></p> |

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| <p><i>If payment for hospital bill</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Temporary/final Hospital Bill/Statement of Account (Outstanding Balance) with complete name and signature of the Billing Clerk; or - A Certificate of Balance or promissory note shall be required if the patient has already been discharged from the hospital. |
| <p><i>If for medicines/assistive devices</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prescription with date of issuance, complete name, signature and license number of the attending physician (issued within the last 3 months); or - Treatment protocol with date of issuance, complete name, signature and license number of the attending physician (issued within the last 3 months) |
| <p><i>If for medical procedures</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Laboratory request/s with date of issuance, complete name, signature and license number of the attending physician; or - Laboratory Protocol with date of issuance, complete name, signature and license number of the attending physician (issued within the last 3 months); or - Doctor's order with date of issuance, complete name, signature and license number of the attending physician (preferably valid for 3 months) |
| <p><i>If for therapy and other special treatment</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Treatment protocol with date of issuance, complete name, signature and license number of the attending physician; or - Philhealth certification that their coverage is exhausted; or - Prescription with date of issuance, complete name, signature and license number of the attending physician; or - Doctor's order with date of issuance, complete name, signature and license number of the attending physician (preferably valid for 3 months); or - Quotation with full name and signature of any issuing officer; or - Psychiatrist or psychologist certification with date of issuance, complete name, signature and license number of the attending psychiatrist/psychologist |
| <p>If the amount of assistance being requested exceeds Php 10,000.00, the assistance will be provided through a GL, and the following shall be required as additional documents:</p> | |

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| | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quotation for laboratory or special medicines, <i>and</i>, 2. SCSR/Case Summary from the LSWDO or the DSWD SWO or Medical Social Worker in hospitals or Social Worker of the NGO's |
| <i>Funeral Assistance</i> | <p>Any identification document, as stated above; and,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Death Certificate issued by the hospital or by the city/municipal health office, with or without registry number; <i>or</i> • Certification from the Hospital/Doctor/authorized medical practitioner/ Imam (for Moro) and Tribal Chieftain for IPs; <p><i>Any of the following, as may be applicable:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funeral Contract (except for Moro and IPs performing customary practices); <i>or</i> • Statement of account; <i>or</i> • Certification from the Barangay that the family made the casket but they have debt to pay for the materials and other expenses; <i>or</i> Transfer Permit (except for Moro and Indigenous Peoples performing customary practices), if the assistance for transfer of a cadaver is requested separately or along with other items under funeral assistance. <p>Provided that a Certificate of Balance or promissory note is required should there be funeral expenses left unpaid.</p> <p>If the amount of assistance being requested exceeds Php 10,000.00, the assistance will be provided through a GL and a SCSR/Case Summary from the LSWDO or the DSWD SWO or Medical Social Worker in hospitals or Social Worker of the NGO's shall also be required.</p> |
| <i>Transportation Assistance</i> | <p>Any identification document, as stated above; and,</p> <p><i>Any of the following, as may be applicable:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police Blotter/Certification (for victims of pickpockets, illegal recruitment, etc.); <i>or</i> • Death Certificate/Certification from the Hospital/Doctor/authorized medical practitioner/Tribal Chieftain (for IPs)/Imam (for Moro)/Transfer Permit (except |

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| | <p>for Moro and Indigenous Peoples performing customary practices), if applicable; <i>or</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depending on the applicable circumstances, other supporting document/s such as, but not limited to, medical certificate, and/or court order/subpoena/referral from other agencies, barangay or local social welfare development office. |
| <i>Educational Assistance</i> | <p>Any identification document, as stated above, of the parent/guardian accompanying/assisting/representing the minor student, or of the student him/herself if of legal age; and,</p> <p><i>Any of the following, as may be applicable:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate of Enrolment or Registration; <i>or</i> • School ID of the student; <i>or</i> • Statement of Account; <i>or</i> • Any document issued by the school that can establish that the student is enrolled. |
| <i>Food Assistance</i> | <p>Any identification document, as stated above; and,</p> <p><i>Any of the following, as may be applicable:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any document/record that can prove that the beneficiary is in crisis/in need of food assistance; <i>or</i> • Referral letter; <i>or</i> • Certificate of indigency; <i>or</i> • Any document/record that can prove that the beneficiary is stranded/trip ticket; <i>or</i> • For patients or their authorized representatives, any medical document/record that can prove that the beneficiary is admitted in a hospital/medical certificate/abstract. |
| <i>Cash Assistance for other support services</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Any identification document 2. A project proposal from the proponent requesting party approved by the Secretary or Designated Officer both in the CO and FOs. 3. <i>Any of the following, as may be applicable:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police Report/Blotter; <i>or</i> • BFP Report/Certification for fire victims; <i>or</i> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passport, Travel Document(s), Certification from OWWA/POLO/Department of Migrant Workers or the Barangay or any proof of repatriation by the OF; or • Certificate for Victims of Online Sexual Exploitation of Children or violence against women and children issued by the LSWDO; or • Referral letter/endorsement (e.g. from the DOJ/INGOs, LGU/s or other concerned agency); or • <i>Declaration of a State of Calamity by the National Government or LGU, whenever applicable; or</i> • <i>Recommendation from Disaster Response Management Group (DRMG/DRMD/DRMS) for Augmentation Support from AICS; or</i> • Incident report of the LGU; or • Spot report from the AFP or PNP; or • Certification of death; or • Certificate from the LDRMO; or • Disaster Assistance Family Access Card (DAFAC); or • Joint AFP-PNP Intelligence Committee (JAPIC) certificate; or • Medico-legal certification; or • Barangay Certificate of Residency or Certificate of Indigency/Certificate of the Client is in Need of Assistance/other documents, in the absence of any of the documents enumerated. |
| <p><i>Material Assistance (family food packs or sleeping or hygiene kit or meals)</i></p> | <p>Any identification document, as stated above; and,</p> <p><i>As may be applicable:</i></p> <p>For an individual client</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GIS; and • MDS <p>For groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GIS; and • Case Summary and MDS |

In exceptional circumstances where a document listed above, including the authorization letter, cannot be reasonably produced, but the facts can be verified or proved during the assessment, the DSWD SWO may provide a justification to support the provision of assistance to the client. Provided that such justification shall be approved by the CIU Head/CID Chief/CIS Head/SWAD Team Leader.

For auditing purposes, the CE and all other supporting documents, except the GIS, shall be submitted to the Finance and Management Service/Unit (FMS/U). Provided that for the material assistance provided/distributed, except assistive devices, the MDS may be presented along with the VALID IDs of the clients.

These requirements shall be printed and displayed clearly outside the premises of the DSWD CO and FO/CIS/SWAD Offices, and translated in the Filipino language or such local dialects, as applicable. The PMB and its respective FO counterparts shall coordinate with the Social Marketing Service/Unit, whichever is applicable, to come up with the templated information, education and communication materials (tarpaulins, leaflets, etc.) that may be replicated by the FOs.

The clients who will present documents which appear to be fake/fraudulent shall be endorsed to the Legal Service (LS) and the Administrative Service (AS), and their FO counterparts, for appropriate action.

VIII. IMPLEMENTING PROCEDURES

In order to avail assistance from the DSWD, the clients shall undergo the applicable steps such as Screening, Interview and Assessment, Approval, and Releasing.

Depending on the type of client and the venue where the client will be assisted, the following procedures shall be observed in order to assist the clients in availing the services under the AICS program:

A. Individual clients transacting with the DSWD Offices (CIU/CIS/SWAD Offices)

1. STEP 1: Screening

- a. DSWD personnel shall check the validity and completeness of the required documents presented by the client.

If the documents are found to be incomplete, invalid and inaccurate to support the request, the client will be requested to complete the documentary requirements needed as listed in the compliance slip or refer to the corresponding program concerned.

If documents are found to be complete, valid and accurate, the client will be subjected to crossmatching to check the previous availments of the assistance.

If found to have availed assistance beyond the allowed frequency of availment, the client will be advised of the limitations on the provisions based on the guidelines as stipulated herein. Otherwise, proceed to STEP 2.

2. STEP 2: Interview and Assessment

- a. The DSWD Social Worker shall interview and assess the client as well as the documentary requirements presented, and determine the following:
 - i. Identify the actual need of the client and the accuracy and authenticity of the documents presented during the interview assessment; and
 - ii. Fill out the information in the GIS and the CE.
- b. If determined to be eligible to receive assistance, the SWO shall recommend the appropriateness of assistance.
 - i. For financial assistance amounting to P10,000.00 and below which does not require GL, the assistance shall be provided in cash. In this case, the client will be advised to proceed to Step 4 releasing.
 - ii. For assistance amounting to more than P 10,000.00, a GL shall be prepared by a DSWD personnel and will be subjected for review and approval together with the GIS, CE and justification.
 - iii. For material assistance depending on the availability, the client will be advised to proceed to Step 4 releasing.
 - iv. If there is a need for further intervention, a referral letter to another agency shall be prepared by the SWO and to be reviewed and approved by the head of CID/CIS/SWAD or his/her duly authorized representative.
- c. If determined to be ineligible, the client will be advised to comply with the appropriate and correct documentary requirements or shall be referred to the appropriate office for assistance.

3. STEP 3: Review and Approval of Assistance

If the authorized official finds the request valid and complete, the request shall be approved, otherwise the case will be referred back to the attending SWO.

For the level of approval, refer to Item XI. Approving Authority.

4. STEP 4: Releasing of Assistance

- a. All approved requests shall be forwarded to the SDO/RDO/DSWD personnel for releasing depending on the mode of assistance:

- i. **Financial Assistance** will be released by the Regular/Special Disbursing Officer/s of the FMS/U or the designated disbursing officer for cash, or to the CIU/CIS/SWAD Office for the GL, or ticket booking, if transportation assistance;

- ii. **Material Assistance** will be released by the CIU/CIS/SWAD personnel after having accomplished and signed the appropriate accountable forms.

B. For clients tagged as group of individuals

1. For clients who would be assisted by the Department as group of individuals, the CIU/CIS/SWAD Offices shall assess as is.

The following procedures shall apply to the group of individuals:

- a. The requesting party shall submit a project proposal for the approval of the Secretary or his duly authorized official/representative for CO and FOs.
- b. Upon approval, the DSWD shall inform the group of the documentary requirements needed per Item VII of this MC.

The date and venue for the distribution of assistance, shall be in public halls such as, but not limited to, public schools, barangays halls, development centers, multi-purpose halls and covered courts. In exceptional circumstances, as when there is no available public venue or due to political constraints/reasons, the venue may be conducted in private halls which shall in no case be owned by a political aspirant or candidate, especially during elections. In selecting the venue, primary consideration shall be the safety and wellbeing of the beneficiaries and the DSWD personnel.

The payout shall be made only during weekdays and within office hours except in exceptional or justifiable circumstances requiring the immediate provision of assistance during weekends and after office hours, as directed by the Secretary or his duly authorized official/representative.

In all payout security and protection of beneficiaries and DSWD personnel shall be ensured.

Other coordination shall be made by the CO or the FO with appropriate offices/authorities, as applicable, before, during and after all payouts.

During the payout proper, the following process shall be followed:

i. STEP 1: Validation

The assigned personnel shall check the validity and completeness of required documents presented by the client.

ii. STEP 2: Interview and Assessment

The assigned personnel shall fill-out the identifying information of the client in the GIS; the SWO to conduct an interview and assessment and establish the eligibility of the client and complete the filling out of the GIS and CE.

The pre-approved project proposal shall serve as the main basis for the grant of assistance.

iii. STEP 3: Review and Release of Assistance

The assistance shall be released upon the establishment of the correctness and completeness of documents which shall serve as the basis for the eligibility of the client.

C. For patient clients in hospitals with established Malasakit Centers

The CO-CID and all FOs shall ensure the presence of the DSWD representatives in established Malasakit Centers.

The roles of DSWD in Malasakit Centers remain those stipulated under the Joint Administrative Order (JAO) No. 1, series of 2020 providing for non medical assistance in support of the Department with the Department of Health (DOH), Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) and the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PHIC) entitled the "*Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the Medical and Financial Assistance to Indigent and Financially-Incapacitated patients pursuant to Republic Act No. 11463 also known as "Malasakit Centers Act of 2019"*".

Further, the adjustments set in these Guidelines shall also be made applicable in handling client-patients in Malasakit Centers provided that the assistance is within the parameters stated under the JAO.

The approving authorities for assistance provided in Malasakit Centers shall be the CIU/CIS/SWAD Team Leader, as applicable.

IX. MODES OF PROVIDING ASSISTANCE

The provision of assistance may be in the following form:

A. Financial assistance - It may be through cash or GL:

1. **Cash** - For assistance in the amount of P10,000.00 and below, the entitled client may claim it from the designated disbursing officer within the day, subject to the availability of funds.
2. **Guarantee letter (GL)** - For assistance above P10,000.00 it shall be released through a GL, unless other modes are authorized, as approved by the Department Secretary or his duly authorized representative.

The GL shall be prepared by the DSWD personnel based on the type of assistance and amount. A GL is considered an urgent document and should be prioritized for signing by the designated approving authorities.

The releasing officer shall inform the client that the GL shall be presented to the concerned service provider. The payment of the amount granted in the GL shall be made directly by the DSWD to the said service provider through a bank-to-bank transaction or Authority to Debit Account (ADA).

For this purpose, the DSWD should engage with service providers through a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). In the absence of a MOA, a Certificate of Acceptance from the service provider will be sufficient.

- ### B. Material Assistance
- clients are required to appear in person. In case he/she cannot appear personally due to valid reason, he/she may authorize a relative up to the fourth (4th) civil degree of consanguinity or affinity to claim the material items. Every beneficiary shall be required to present any identification documents and sign the MDS as proof of the receipt of the assistance.

- C. **Other Disbursement Strategies** - The DSWD may resort to other expeditious means of distribution by engaging partners/service providers that are able and willing to assist the Department.

As may be authorized and if applicable, the following disbursement strategies may be considered:

1. Payment through electronic or digital means;
2. Cash card payments;
3. Transfer of funds to other National Government Agency/ies or LGU/s; or
4. Any other modes to expedite the distribution of assistance

The other schemes of delivery of assistance such as payment through digital or electronic means or cash card payments shall be implemented simultaneously with other available mechanisms to ensure efficient delivery of service. In the implementation of these guidelines a MOA with partner financial intermediaries may be resorted to subject to applicable procurement, accounting and/or auditing laws, rules and regulations.

X. RATE OF ASSISTANCE AND FREQUENCY OF AVAILMENT

The rates of assistance and the frequency of availment shall be as follows:

| Type | Particulars | Cost of Assistance | | Frequency of Availment ⁶ |
|---------------------------|---------------------|--|---------|---|
| | | Minimum | Maximum | |
| Transportation Assistance | Land/Sea/Air Travel | Actual Cost based on ticket price and/or other travel expenses | | General Rule: Once a year Exceptions where they can claim more than once, cases such as: (a) Travel due to the consecutive death of an |

⁶ The frequency of availment prescribes the limit on the number of times a client may avail of a particular type of assistance at a given period and this should NOT be interpreted as giving the client the privilege/premium to claim the assistance repeatedly as the period comes. Even a repeat or recurring client (as those with maintenance medications) will undergo assessment every time he/she requests for assistance.

| | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|----------|------------|--|
| | | | | <p>immediate family member such as spouse, parents and children</p> <p>(b) Travel for medical reasons - as the need arises</p> |
| Medical Assistance | Hospital bill | 1,000.00 | 150,000.00 | <p>General Rule: Once every admission/ discharge</p> <p>Exceptions: For chronic diseases or illnesses - Per hospitalization/ admission</p> |
| | Medicines | 1,000.00 | 150,000.00 | Once every three months |
| | Laboratory Procedures | | | |
| Other special treatment such as, but not limited to dialysis, chemotherapy, implant and pre-operation procedures | | | | |
| Funeral Assistance | Funeral Expenses | 5,000.00 | 50,000.00 | General Rule: Per beneficiary/ incident of death |
| | Transfer of Cadaver | | | |
| | Casualties during disaster/ calamity | | 10,000.00 | <i>Note: One client may avail and</i> |

| | | | | |
|--|--|----------|-----------|--|
| | | | | <p><i>process one or two services at the same time (i.e. Funeral and transfer of cadaver)</i></p> <p><i>Subject to the recommendation of DRMG or counterparts of the region.</i></p> |
| Educational Assistance | Elementary students | 1,000.00 | 5,000.00 | Once every school year |
| | High school students | 2,000.00 | | |
| | Senior High School | 3,000.00 | 10,000.00 | Once every semester (varies per region) preferably done offsite. |
| | College and vocational students | 4,000.00 | | |
| <i>*in coordination with the DepEd/CHED/ TESDA</i> | | | | |
| Food Assistance | Food subsidy for individuals/ families | 2,000.00 | 5,000.00 | <p>General Rule : Once every quarter</p> <p>Exception/s : Patients - once every admission</p> |
| Cash Assistance | Other needs | 2,000.00 | 10,000.00 | Once for every applicable incident |

Provided that any type of assistance shall be subject to the availability of funds.

Further, the above rate of assistance shall not limit the attending DSWD Social Worker from undertaking the following:

- a. Recommending a higher amount, subject to his/her assessment and justification of the client's circumstances. Provided that in such cases, there

shall be a SCSR/case summary to support the provision of a higher amount. Further, the kind of assistance shall be validated by the CIU/CIS Head/SWAD Team Leader and approved by the proper authority.

b. Recommending for the provision of assistance for chronic illnesses beyond the authorized frequency or time duration subject to SWOs assessment and justification which shall be validated by the CIU/CIS Head/SWAD Team Leader and approved by the proper authority.

c. Recommending for the provision of several types of assistance or combination thereof may be allowed subject to the assessment of the SWO and approved by the proper authorities, subject to the availability of funds.

d. Recommending an adjusted rate or frequency of availment of medical assistance for COVID-19 or other disease-related medical conditions, during the **State of Public Health Emergency or other medical conditions** (i.e. clients diagnosed with chronic diseases with kidney ailment undergoing dialysis, and those cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy), or **during a State of Calamity in some areas declared by the National Government**. For these cases, hospitalization, medicines and laboratory procedures (for out-patient) may be provided once a month or as may be warranted with the rate of assistance not exceeding the ceiling provided for each availment, based on the assessment and justification by the social worker as validated and by the CIU/CIS Head/SWAD Team Leader and proper authority, respectively. Provided that, every request for assistance shall be supported with the complete requirements of the client.

XI. APPROVING AUTHORITY

The following provision is hereby amended to reflect the range of financial assistance and the authorized approving official or his/her alternate, viz:

| Amount | Field Office | Central Office | Release Period |
|------------------|---|--|-----------------|
| Up to P50,000.00 | CIS Head/SWAD Team Leader or the designated official or alternate based on succession order | CIU Head or the designated official or alternate based on succession order | Within the dayo |
| Up to P75,000.00 | Division Chief or the designated official or alternate based on succession order | Division Chief or the designated official or alternate based on succession order | |

| | | |
|-------------------|---|---|
| Up to P100,000.00 | Assistant Regional Director for Operations (ARDO) or the designated/ authorized representative or alternate based on succession order | Assistant Bureau Director of PMB/Designated Office or the designated official or alternate based on succession order |
| Up to P150,000.00 | Regional Director or the designated official or alternate based on succession order | Bureau Director of PMB/Designated Office or the designated official or alternate based on succession order |
| Above P150,000.00 | Secretary or the designated official or alternate based on succession order in the FO <i>*Refer to the Special Order</i> | Secretary or the designated official or alternate based on succession order in the CO <i>*Refer to the Special Order</i> |

In exceptional circumstances and subject to availability of funds, the DSWD Social Worker may recommend the provision of more than P150,000.00 financial assistance, provided that all documentary requirements are complied with together with Item X(a) of this Circular.

In case of absence or unavailability of the approving officers enumerated above, the signatory shall be governed by the Order of Succession pursuant to a Special Order duly issued and signed by the Secretary.

XII. HANDLING REPEAT OR RECURRING CLIENTS

Repeat or recurring clients are those who seek assistance for at least 3 to 4 times in a quarter or at least twice in a semester, or those who visit the CIU/CIS/SWAD Office regularly or seasonally due to lack of knowledge on possible types of assistance.

The PMB-CID shall establish a centralized database for repeat or recurring clients that could also be accessed by the FOs to prevent them from availing assistance twice or more in a quarter. These clients shall be under case management and, whenever deemed appropriate, they shall be endorsed to the LGU where they reside for further intervention.

XIII. DSWD PERSONNEL AND THEIR REFERRALS

DSWD personnel, regardless of the position as well as status of engagement, who need assistance from the DSWD may proceed to the Human Resource Management and Development Service/Unit (HRMDS/U) which shall conduct the checking and verification of the fact of active crisis and thereafter issue a Personnel Endorsement Slip which shall be presented to the CID/CIS/SWAD Office for STEP 2 under Item VIII(A)(2) of this Circular.

DSWD personnel endorsing referrals shall ensure that clients are properly informed of the process on how to avail of assistance from the DSWD including the documentary requirements needed. Otherwise, they shall inform their referrals to reach out to DSWD through the following modes:

1. Call (8962-2813/8951-7433) or email (ciu.co@dswd.gov.ph). Referrals who will call or email shall be subject to remote screening.
2. Walk in at the CIU/CIS/SWAD Offices. They shall be subject to personal screening.

All referred client/s by the DSWD personnel, regardless of the position as well as status of engagement, will be subjected to the processes set under this Circular which include the determination of the type and amount of assistance during the interview and assessment taking into account the documentary requirements presented.

In order to maintain transparency and accountability pursuant to the strict compliance of the processes laid down by the Department, the DSWD personnel, must observe the following:

1. Not to accompany the referred beneficiary/client to the CIU/CIS/SWAD Office;
2. Not to interfere with the SWO's interview and assessment;
3. Not to attempt to influence or abet, by verbal request or by proceeding to the CIU/CIS/SWAD OFFICE, the Social Workers or any other personnel in prioritizing the assessment of their relatives.

No DSWD personnel shall ask or request monetary or other consideration from the referred clients. Any derogatory report in this regard shall be referred to the DSWD LS and HRMDS, copy furnished the PMB-CID, for the institution of the appropriate action/complaint in accordance with the existing rules and

regulations of the DSWD and other applicable laws. This arrangement shall be reflected at the FO level.

XIV. INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

The other OBSUs of the Department, together with their FO counterparts, shall extend the necessary support to give effect to the provisions and objectives of this Circular. Specifically, the following OBSUs, together with their FO counterparts:

- A. The FMS shall assign disbursing officers and facilitate the release and availability of cash in the daily operations of the AICS program nationwide, and ensure the prompt settlement of dues to service providers and/or fund transfers to financial institutions for digital payments, if applicable.
- B. The AS shall provide technical assistance and augmentation support for the security and maintenance personnel, supplies, including in the procurement of equipment as well as the corresponding repairs and maintenance needed to implement the AICS program.
- C. The LS, in coordination with the Administrative Service (Security), shall assist in handling erring DSWD personnel as well as clients who would attempt to present fraudulent documents to avail assistance from the AICS program. Subject to the approval of the Office of the Secretary, the LS shall refer the matter to the appropriate law enforcement agency or file the necessary complaint with the proper authorities/forum, for investigation, prosecution or final resolution.
- D. The ICTMS shall ensure that the existing information system used by the Department (e.g. Crisis Intervention Monitoring System (CriMs)) will be updated consistent with the revisions set forth in this Circular. Additionally, access to such a system shall be granted/shared with the PMB-CID personnel to (i) add/edit/incorporate minor modifications, (ii) upload the data captured whenever the system is offline/down, and (iii) generate reports, data and information based on the required fields.

In cases/areas with poor/intermittent/no connection, the ICTMS shall develop the necessary feature to perform offline crossmatching and to sync the data captured once internet connection is stable.

The ICTMS shall provide technical assistance to ensure the inclusion of the necessary Information and Communication Technology requirement for the implementation of the program nationwide in the Information Systems Strategic Plan of the Department.

XV. GRIEVANCE MECHANISM

CIU/CIS and SWAD Satellite Offices shall implement two mechanisms in handling grievances and complaints.

These are responded and processed via two modalities: (1) Written Communication and Email which is handled by the Grievance Focal Person (GFP), and (2) Personal or Onsite Complaints thru the Public Assistance Complaint Desk (PACD).

A separate guideline shall be issued to this effect.

XVI. REPORTING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Program Management Bureau- Crisis Intervention Division (PMB-CID) shall be the primary office responsible to monitor and provide technical assistance to the FOs in the implementation of the AICS program in collaboration with the Office of the Undersecretary for Operations (OUSO) and the Assistant Secretary for Statutory Programs.

The Bureau shall maintain a consolidated physical and financial report on the overall implementation of AICS and shall provide reports as requested. For this purpose, the existing reporting tools and templates shall be utilized unless the PMB-CID requires new tools, templates and cascades necessary adjustments in the current tools.

The FOs shall submit regular reports as required or requested by the CO and/or the Management indicating the physical and financial data/information to be submitted online or whichever is applicable.

A narrative analysis on the status of the implementation of the program shall be submitted by the FOs to the PMB-CID every fifth (5th) day of the succeeding month, with copies provided to the Office of the Undersecretary for Operations and Assistant Secretary for Statutory Programs. The reports shall include the implementation report of the program in established Malasakit Centers.

A periodic Program Implementation Review shall be conducted by the PMB-CID with the FOs to assess and monitor the implementation of the program. Lastly, an annual Program Evaluation and Planning Workshop shall also be organized to guide the targeting for the succeeding year.

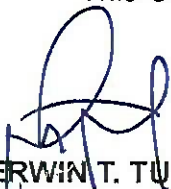
For this purpose, the FOs shall ensure that all CIU/CISSWAD offices shall have at least one (1) reporting focal person who shall submit to the CIS Reporting Focal Person for onward submission to the PMB-CID.

XVII. REPEALING CLAUSE


All issuances of the Department relative only to the implementation of the AICS program shall be considered as repealed upon the effectivity of these guidelines.

XVIII. EFFECTIVITY

This Circular shall take effect after fifteen (15) days upon signing hereof.



ERWIN T. TULFO
Secretary
Date: 22 AUG 2022

Certified True Copy
 23 AUG 2022
MYRNA H. REYES
OIC-Division Chief
Records and Archives Mgt. Division