



Women's BULLETIN

Vol.15 No.2 MARCH 2019

The Official Publication of DILG Gender and Development Program

2019

Extended Maternity Leave: VICTORY FOR ALL MOMS



The government has a gift for women in time for the National Women's Month this March

Just recently, President Rodrigo Duterte signed a landmark law that will allow mothers to focus on recovering from their pregnancy and form stronger bonds with their children — the 105-Day Expanded Maternity Leave Law or Republic Act No. 11210,

"I am one with President Rodrigo Roa Duterte in pushing for a more nurturing environment for women and their children; and I am delighted by the recent signing of the Republic Act 11210 or the 105-day Expanded Maternity Leave Law... Thanks to President Duterte for always promoting and protecting the rights and welfare of women," says DILG Assistant Secretary Marjorie N. Jalosjos.

“ I always believe that maternal care is crucial to the first few months of a child's life and such law recognizes the importance of the role of a mother in safeguarding the health and well-being of her newborn, ”

” adds Jalosjos, the GAD focal person of the DILG.

RA No. 11210 extends the maternity leave of working women from 60 days to 105 days with full pay and gives new mothers an option to extend for another 30 days without pay. Solo mothers, meanwhile, get 120 days of maternity leave.

Moreover, for women who experienced miscarriage or an emergency termination of pregnancy, the law gives them 60 days of maternity leave.

Unicef's 2009 State of the World's Children report says that the lifetime risk of maternal deaths in the country is one out of 140.

According to Unicef, around 11 Filipino mothers die everyday due to severe hemorrhage, hypertensive disorders, sepsis and problems related to obstructed labor and abortion. Meanwhile, around half of the deaths of Filipino children under five happen in the first 28 days of life.

The maternity leave act would therefore allow mothers to focus on their own and their babies' wellbeing.

In addition, the law provides a woman the option to give seven out of her 105 maternity leave days to the father of the child whether she is married to him or not, thus extending a fathers' paid paternity leave to 14 days.

This benefit may also be availed by an alternate caregiver in case of the father's death, absence or incapacity to fulfill his role. That alternate caregiver must be a relative within the fourth degree of consanguinity or the current partner of the mother in the same household.

The new law likewise assures those who avail of their maternity leave benefits are entitled to security of tenure and may not be demoted, fired, or have their salaries reduced.

In answer to fears that the new law will not adversely affect hiring of women in the labor sector, the act prohibits employers from discriminating against women in their job selection process.

Although doubts among the lawmakers arose during Congress ratification of the expanded maternity benefits in October last year, the measure is considered a victory for women and a cause for celebration by women's rights groups.

The Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), a newly attached agency of the DILG, believes that the law is a step that further empowers women and adheres to international standards.

"This law recognizes and acknowledges women's vital role and contribution to the labor force, while giving them the opportunity to exercise their unique reproductive role. It gives women enough time and resources to recuperate, regain her full strength, and nurture her child after giving birth," said PCW Chairperson Rhodora M. Bucoy in a statement. ■

By: Danica Uy

Layout by: Ghie Deocareza

DILG SHARED VISION

A strongly determined and highly trusted Department committed to capacitate and nurture local government units, public order, and safety institutions to sustain peaceful, progressive and resilient communities where people live happily.

