



Republika ng Pilipinas
KAGAWARAN NG KATARUNGAN
Department of Justice
Manila

DEPARTMENT CIRCULAR NO. **008-C**

TO : THE PROSECUTOR GENERAL
ALL REGIONAL PROSECUTORS
ALL PROVINCIAL AND CITY PROSECUTORS

SUBJECT : CLOSURE OF OFFICES AND SUSPENSION OF WORK IN
THE NATIONAL PROSECUTION SERVICE FOR THE
PERIOD OF PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY

DATE : 22 March 2020

Pursuant to Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases Resolution Nos. 11 and 12, in view of the physical closure of all courts nationwide effective 23 March 2020 in accordance with Supreme Court Administrative Circular No. 32-2020, and to safeguard the health and safety of all concerned, all prosecution offices nationwide shall likewise be physically closed effective 23 March 2020 and for the duration of the public health emergency.

Everyone is directed to stay in their respective residences. Prosecutors and the necessary support staff shall go to their respective offices only if there is a need to conduct inquest proceedings and for very urgent matters that require immediate action as may be determined by the heads of prosecution offices concerned.

For purposes of inquest proceedings and very urgent court duties, all prosecution offices shall immediately coordinate with the trial courts, the local Philippine National Police unit, and other law enforcement units. All prosecution offices shall immediately make available to all relevant persons and offices, through traditional or digital means, the names of their designated contact/point persons with all relevant contact details.

All prosecution offices are directed to ensure the availability at all times of inquest prosecutors who shall be on-call. The conduct of all inquest proceedings shall proceed in accordance with the Rules of Court and existing rules and regulations of the Department of Justice, including guidelines on the designation of inquest prosecutors on duty and the necessary support staff therefor, where applicable. Any previous designation of the members of all skeletal workforces for the duration of the public health emergency shall stand unless otherwise modified by the heads of offices.

Preliminary investigations and all other non-crucial services as may be determined by the heads of offices are suspended. Preliminary investigation hearings, case conferences, meetings, and trainings during the period of the public health emergency are deemed cancelled and shall be rescheduled after the lifting of the public health emergency.

Unless absolutely necessary and upon the determination of the Office of the Prosecutor General or the heads of the concerned prosecution offices, no travel or leave applications shall be allowed/granted during the period of the public health emergency.

The foregoing notwithstanding, all prosecutors are directed to attend to and reduce their pre-existing work backlog during their downtime period.

These guidelines shall supersede all previous guidelines inconsistent herewith, shall take effect immediately, and shall remain in force for the duration of the public health emergency unless sooner revoked.


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Secretary

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