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May 27, 2016

MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR
NO. 2016-71

TO : ALL DILG REGIONAL, PROVINCIAL AND CITY DIRECTORS AND ALL OTHERS CONCERNED

SUBJECT : GUIDELINES FOR THE CONDUCT OF THE 2016 NEWLY ELECTED OFFICIALS (NEO) PROGRAM

I. BACKGROUND

The Newly Elected Officials (NEO) Program is a **“term-based”** capacity development program of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG). The Local Government Academy (LGA), the training arm of the Department spearheads the implementation of the program in partnership with the various operating units of the DILG, Leagues of Local Governments, National Government Agencies, Civil Society Organizations, Local Resource Institutions, Development Partners and other local governance stakeholders. As part of the context building for the program, the 2016 NEO refers to all local officials given the fresh mandate as a result of the May 2016 local election that will serve the office from 2016 to 2019. As such, the NEO Program is a ladderized program that will cater to the capacity development requirements of these officials from the very start up to the last day of their term in office.

The 2016 NEO Program is designed to prepare local officials for the ASEAN Community, create harmonization and complementation of national and local priorities, address the continuing challenge of climate change and disaster, launching of the sustainable development goals, scale up CSO involvement in governance and rapid urbanization.

The NEO Program will be implemented utilizing various modes of delivery such as but not limited to field assessment, face-to face, webinar, on-site coaching, workshops, dialogues etc. The various delivery modes will impact on the way our NEOs will engage with the program content and the way they experience the learning process.

II. PROGRAM OBJECTIVE

The 2016 NEO Program aims to build strategic leaders out of newly-elected officials who would lead their local governments in becoming competitive, efficient and responsive institutions for development.

III. PROGRAM COMPONENTS

The 2016 NEO Program has five major (5) components and shall be open to all elected local officials whether - newly minted or re-elected. The five (5) components of the program are: Component 1: Ensuring Smooth Transition; Component 2: Jumpstarting Local Governance; Component 3: Looking Forward to Better Governance; Component 4: Sharpening the Saw; and Component 5: Enhancing LGU Performance.

Component 1 : Ensuring Smooth Transition

This component of the program will serve as an avenue for the smooth transition of powers from the previous sets of officials to the newly elected local officials. Consistent with DILG MC No. 2016-21, a transition team shall be created in every LGU which shall conduct the following:

1. Conduct an inventory of all real or immovable and movable properties of the LGU
2. Assemble all documents or records
3. Turn-over of accountabilities of the LGU using prescribed forms
4. Organize a turn-over ceremony, to include a briefing on the Governance Assessment Report and Key Challenges to the incoming set of local officials
5. Ensure the accomplishment and submission of Elective Officials Personnel Data Sheet (ELOPDS) by the incoming officials, and submit the same not later than July 8, 2016, to their respective Human Resource Management Office, Office of the Sanggunian, and DILG Field Office.

Under this component of the program, LGUs are also expected to include in the transition meeting its State of Local Governance and the result of the LGU Score Card.

The DILG shall facilitate the transition proceedings.

Output : Transition Team Plan, Transition Documents and Baseline Profile (to include the SLGR and the LGU Score Card)

Projected timeline: April to July 2016

Component 2 : Jumpstarting Local Governance

Jumpstarting Local Governance basically provides the foundation that will help local officials understand and think critically about the organizational, political, and constitutional environment of public service in the LGU. It is composed of two (2) parts: Part I. Basic Orientation: First 100 Days in Office and Part II. LGU Guide to Action: Webinar Series.

Part I. Basic Orientation: First 100 Days in Office

The Basic Orientation seminar is a must for all the newly-elected officials regardless of whether they are new to the position, re-elected or comebacking. This part will serve as a venue for the elected local officials to be groomed as development managers and empowered world class leaders. The orientation will be delivered thru blended learning mode using face-to-face, peer to peer dialogues and actual site visits. These learning methodologies provide newly-elected officials an opportunity to interface with more seasoned colleagues thru problem solving sessions, sharing of realistic, practical and innovative ways of doing things.

Focus of the basic orientation shall be on Decentralization and Governance, Duties and Functions of elected officials focusing on "What They Can Do"; "What They Can Not Do" and their accountabilities that goes along with these duties and functions. Discussion on Common Pitfalls will also be held to help local officials avoid cases with the OMBUDSMAN, COA, CSC, etc. The basic orientation will also provide an opportunity to the newly-elected officials to do a session on Issues, Challenges and Solutions with their more seasoned colleagues.

Output : First 100 Days Agenda and the Social Contract of the Local Officials

Projected timeline: May to October 2016

Part II. LGU Guide to Action

LGU Guide to Action will be delivered through Webinar. The modules in this part are categorized as follows:

1. **Foundation Modules** – are introductory course modules which are recommended for the NEOs. These modules will enable them to gain knowledge and skills on local governance as they start to perform their mandate as elected local official. Modules would include New Administration's Development Contract on the Ground; Governance and Strategic Management with special emphasis on Local Development Strategy and Governance 101
2. **Elective Modules** – are optional course modules which can be taken by the NEO depending on his/her interests and need that can improve his/her performance as elected local official. Modules would include Health Governance, Local Economic Development, Education Governance, Regulatory Simplification, Environmental Governance, Public Safety, Resource Mobilization and Financial Management and Analysis, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management, Bridging Leadership and Urban Governance

A Certificate of Completion will be awarded to local officials who complete all the requirements of the foundation modules and at least two (2) elective modules. Likewise, a Certificate of Participation shall be given to local officials who completed only the requirements of the foundation modules. Said certificates shall be awarded during the grand graduation that will be organized by the DILG through the LGA. Participants who are recipient of certificate of completion will be given priority to participate in the International Benchmarking program of the DILG through the LGA

This component will be managed by the LGA in partnership with the different Regional and Sub-Regional LGRRCs of the DILG.

Output : Localized Development Contract of the New Administration, Required Module Output/s under the foundation and elective modules

Projected Timeline: May to October 2016

Component 3 : Looking Forward to Better Governance

This component will immerse the NEOs on the actual challenges confronted by the local community in terms of governance, climate change and disaster resiliency, competitiveness and social protection. Recognizing the peculiar requirements of LGUs, this component will be done *“onsite”* with DILG field officers assisting in the process. The component is composed of three (3) Parts.

Part I : Formulation of LGU Plans

This will serve as an opportunity for local governments to prepare their development plans especially their - Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP); Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) and; the Executive-Legislative Agenda (ELA) that is based on the actual challenges confronted by the LGU. Also in this part, LGUs will be required to draw a competency based Capacity Development (CapDev) Agenda that will lay down the interventions that are required to implement the LGUs' development plans

Output : LGU Plans – CDP, CLUP, ELA and Capacity Development Agenda

Projected Timeline: July to October 2016

Part II : Webinar Executive Sessions

Executive Sessions on various governance issues and challenges will be done through Webinar series. Renowned technical experts and practitioners will be tapped to deliver these various topics.

Projected Timeline: December 2016 onwards

Part III : Alliance Building

A Provincial Alliance Building workshop between the province and its component cities and municipalities will be held to ensure synergy of actions and define the common development priorities of the province. These priorities will be integrated into the Provincial Physical Framework Plan of the province.

Output : Provincial Physical Framework Plan

Projected Timeline: September to October 2016

Component 4 : Sharpening the Saw

This component is about continuous improvement and creating balance across the different aspects of good local governance. Effective governance depends a lot on LGUs that take actions to improve their performance. It also seeks to address the LGUs performance gaps as mapped-out in their CapDev Agenda. In this component, LGUs will match their identified capacity development needs with the existing capacity development services and training packages available in the market. Moreover, the CapDev Agenda shall serve as basis of participation of LGU officials to various capdev activities (such as but not limited to training programs, benchmarking activities, study tours, workshops etc.) either local or international. This is to ensure the responsiveness of the program vis-à-vis CapDev requirements as reflected in the Capacity Development Agenda and to ensure judicious utilization of LGU funds for the purpose.

Timeline : January 2017 onwards

COMPONENT 5 : Enhancing LGU Performance

The Department believes that good local governance leads to good performance and results to better delivery of public services. While the over-all aim of the NEO Program is to capacitate the local officials to perform on their mandate and improve the state of local governance in their area, Component 5 will capture the accomplishments of the NEO program by way of reviewing the performance of the LGU based on defined criteria and performance indicators in the Department's Performance Audits for local governments.

Timeline : January 2017 onwards

IV. STRATEGY OF IMPLEMENTATION

The DILG through the Local Government Academy (LGA) in partnership with the various operating units and regional and sub-regional offices of the Department shall spearhead the implementation of the NEO Program. The Local Governance Resource Centers – an interactive learning center for LGUs at the national and regional level shall serve as the platform in delivering the program. The LGRCs shall adopt innovative ways (such as but not limited to webinar, peer coaching and mentoring, workshops, on-site training, benchmarking activities etc.) in delivering the program.

The Leagues of Local Governments, National Government Agencies, Local Resources Institutions, Civil Society Organizations and Development Partners shall be tapped as content and service providers to deliver components 3 and 4 of the NEO Program.

Pool of local governance mentors (composed of previous and current local officials) trained by the DILG through LGA and are recognized exemplars in the various fields of local governance will be deployed as mentors to these NEOs to help them do "*problem solving activities*" on issues besetting the LGUs. These trained mentors are either incumbent or former local officials.

V. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

To ensure smooth implementation of the 2016 NEO Program, the following roles and responsibilities are defined:

1. DILG CENTRAL OFFICE

- Provide direction, guidance and issue necessary policy guidelines governing the implementation of the NEO Program
- Ensure alignment of all activities of the various DILG operating units to ensure smooth conduct of the program at the local level
- Harmonize guidelines and programs of NGAs, CSOs, Development Partners and other stakeholders for local governments
- Whenever necessary, provide technical assistance in the conduct of the different components of the program
- Conduct performance assessment of LGUs
- Provide counterpart funds to DILG Regional/Field Offices for the conduct of the program

2. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACADEMY

- Prepare standard program design
- Prepare program implementation guidelines
- Develop course materials and other related knowledge products
- Develop program marketing plan
- Organize and deploy pool of local governance Coaches for the Peer-to-Peer Learning Sessions

- Market the program and forge partnerships with the Leagues, NGAs, Development Partners, LRIs and other local governance Stakeholders
- Manage implementation of Component 2 of the program
- Orient DILG Central, Regional and Field Officers on the program
- Develop the NEO program M&E system
- Conduct spot monitoring whenever necessary
- Prepare a national report to the Secretary based on the reports submitted by the DILG Regional/Field Offices relative to the conduct of the program.

3. DILG REGIONAL OFFICES/LGRRCs AND FIELD OFFICES

- Ensure LGRRC readiness for the conduct of NEO Webinar and other components of the program
- Orient field officers/MLGOOs and other concerned regional stakeholders on the NEO Program
- Identify target participants for the webinar and face-to-face sessions
- Coach LGUs in coming up with the required outputs
- Forge partnerships with Leagues of Local Governments, NGAs, NGOs, CSOs and LRIs at the local level
- Ensure adherence to the NEO Program Guidelines in the conduct of the program at the regional level
- Provide counterpart funds from its regular funds for the implementation of the NEO Program in the region
- Coordinate and conduct M&E activities at the regional level
- Submit report to the DILG Secretary through the Local Government Academy relative to the conduct of the program

4. LEAGUES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

- Promote and assist the DILG and LGA to ensure smooth implementation of the NEO Program
- Identify participants and ensure participation of local officials to the various components of the Program
- Assist the DILG and LGA in maintaining and deployment of local governance coaches to LGUs

5. LOCAL RESOURCE INSTITUTIONS

- Develop and deliver CapDev Programs that will address the capacity development needs of the LGUs as reflected in the Capacity Development (CapDev) Agenda of the LGU

- Provide relevant knowledge products

6. NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

- Ensure harmonization of policies that concerns enhancement of capacities of local government officials
- Ensure alignment of agency interventions i.e. programs and activities to the NEO Program
- Serve as Resource Persons in the Webinar Series/Face-to-Face Sessions and Executive Coaching Sessions as determined
- Provide relevant knowledge products

VI. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

A Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) System referred to as the LGAMES (LGA Monitoring and Evaluation Systems) has been designed and put in place by the LGA for monitoring and evaluation of program activities. For this year, monitoring report shall be done thru the LGAMES this is to ensure for the efficient and systematic monitoring of the implementation of the various components of the NEO Program. Thru the M&E, the program's delivery mechanisms will be evaluated based on the extent to which the program was able to achieve the desired outputs of each of the components. Everyone is encouraged to visit the website <http://lgames.lga.gov.ph> to get acquainted with the platform and the procedures for online forms.

The DILG Regional/Field Offices shall spearhead the conduct of monitoring and evaluation at the regional level and shall ensure that this will be inputted in the LGAMES.

VII. SCHEDULE OF PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Conduct of the Newly-Elected Officials (NEO) Program will commence in the Second Quarter of 2016 and will run until June 30, 2019.

This Memorandum Circular shall take effect immediately.


MEL SENEN S. SARMIENTO
Secretary *h*

