



EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION COMMISSION

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Baldoz says EC benefits for workers enhanced in 2013

Recognizing the need for improved social protection for vulnerable persons consonant to the DOLE Labor and Employment Plan, the Employees' Compensation Commission (ECC) chaired by Secretary Rosalinda Dimapilis-Baldoz, approved meaningful policies in 2013 that benefit workers in the public and private sector who are injured or are casualties of work-related contingencies.

Baldoz said that the ECC approved a 10% across the board increase in EC pension for the private sector, benefiting about 20,000 private sector EC disability and survivorship pensioners receiving an average of P3,200 EC pension per month. The Resolution was passed in July 2013 and is awaiting the issuance of a counterpart Executive Order. The last across the board increase in EC pension for the private sector happened in 2000.

The Labor Secretary further said that the EC funeral benefit for both the public and private sectors was increased from P10,000 to P20,000. Dependents of about 600 workers claim for EC funeral benefits yearly. For 20 years since 1993, the amount of EC funeral benefits in the private sector remained at ten thousand

pesos (Php10,000) while in the public sector, it was increased to P10,000 in September 2012 (and approved through an Executive Order 135 dated April 23, 2013) from the previous amount of P3,000 which was obtaining since 1987. Executive Orders to implement these new benefits are to be issued by the Office of the President.

"The increase in EC funeral benefit for the public sector will now equalize the EC funeral benefit for both public and private sectors," Baldoz added.

"The ECC also lifted the suspension of payment of EC medical reimbursement for retired or separated workers in the public sector, benefiting workers whose reimbursement of hospitalization and medicine expenses were suspended as part of the prioritization policy in the payment of EC benefits implemented for the public sector in 2003. This complements the lifting of the suspension in the payment of EC death benefits (survivorship pension) beyond the 5 year guaranteed period for the public sector approved by the ECC Board in July 2012 and now benefiting over 10,000 public sector workers," the labor and employment chief said.

In 2013, ECC likewise revised the conditions for the compensability of osteoarthritis, amending item no. 24 of the ECC List of Occupational Diseases. Now classified as musculoskeletal disorders (MSD), the revised conditions provide a more comprehensive categorization of the variants of MSD that are work-related (other than osteoarthritis only) in order to facilitate the identification of MSD that are work-related. There is an increasing number of EC cases under MSD that have been approved in the past 2 years.

"As a response to the recent calamities in the Visayas and the call for government to do its share in easing the life of the victims of these calamities, ECC approved the grant of advance three month pension for EC pensioners in the private sector in areas affected by typhoon Yolanda, Bohol and Cebu earthquakes and the Zamboaga crisis. This complements similar measures effected by SSS for its members," she added.

Secretary Baldoz directed ECC Executive Director Stella Zipagan-Banawis to continue to coordinate closely with its implementing agencies, the GSIS and the SSS, to provide improved services to its customers, particularly the process cycle *Continued on next page*

ECP Advocacy Seminar—Hunger for information apparent during the ECC's first salvo for 2014



Alice Borres, Information Officer III, explains the compensation aspect of the Employees' Compensation Program (ECP) to 197 human resource officers and labor union representatives at the ECC Advocacy seminar in Naga City which was held at the Avenue Plaza Hotel on January 16, 2014.

Naga City – The Employees' Compensation Commission (ECC) officials were greeted with a large turnout during the Advocacy Seminar on Employees' Compensation Program (ECP) on 16 January 2014 in Naga City, Camarines Sur.

"Despite the rainy weather, I would like to thank all of you for being present in today's activity," said Department of Labor and Employment V Regional Director Nathaniel Lacambra as he welcomed the huge crowd. About 200 company owners and human resource managers in Bicol region attended the seminar at The Tent, Avenue Plaza Hotel.

The ECC, an attached agency of DOLE, joined hands with the Regional Office V and its provincial field offices to come up with such number of participants.

"We are here to intensify awareness of workers and employers about the Employees' Compensation Program and its benefits particularly in the countryside," said

Continued on next page



ECC-DOLE Press Conference in Naga City. DOLE Regional Director Nathaniel V. Lacambra discusses the New Wage Order No. RBV-16 which registers an P8 increase in minimum wage. The press conference was a prelude to the Employees' Compensation Advocacy Seminar held on 16 January 2014 at Avenue Plaza Hotel in Naga City. On the panel is Dr. Raymond Banaga, ECC- Medical Officer, DOLE Regional Director Nathaniel V. Lacambra, ECC Deputy Executive Director Atty. Jonathan Villasoto and ARD Exequiel Ronie Guzman.

Baldoz announces three month advance pension to EC pensioners

Employees' Compensation pensioners in the private sector whose areas were affected by typhoon "Yolanda", earthquake in Bohol and Cebu and the Zamboanga crisis may avail of an advance three month pension grant at the Social Security System (SSS), according to Labor and Employment Secretary Rosalinda Dimapilis-Baldoz.

Citing a report from ECC Executive Director Stella Z. Banawis, Baldoz said that the new policy is in line with DOLE's efforts of finding ways and means to alleviate the suffering of workers affected by catastrophes. The grant of three month advance EC pension will assist the pensioners in rising above the trauma.

"Furthermore, the ECC may extend the period of grant depending on the extent of the damage suffered by the EC pensioners in the above-cited areas," Baldoz added.

In the ECC Board Resolution declaring this policy, the SSS was directed to prescribe the guidelines for the implementation of the three months advance pension to EC pensioners.

For more information about the grant of advance three month pension for EC pensioners affected by typhoon "Yolanda" earthquake in Bohol and Cebu and Zamboanga crisis, please contact the ECC at 899-42-51 or 52 local 227 or 228, e-mail the ECC at ecc_mails@yahoo.com or visit the ECC website at www.ecc.gov.ph.

Baldoz says EC... from front page

time in evaluating EC claims. In 2013, ECC likewise issued board resolutions on the following:

1. The grant of sick leave benefits and other similar benefits voluntarily provided by employers does not bar the grant of EC temporary or permanent disability benefits.
2. For purposes of processing of payment for medical services, government and private hospitals duly licensed by DOH and accredited by Philhealth and physicians duly licensed by the Professional Regulation Commission are automatically deemed accredited by the Commission.
3. Submission by the GSIS and SSS of proof of compliance with the decision of the Commission on EC appealed cases to grant EC benefits
4. Observance of procedures on elevation of denied EC claims at the GSIS and SSS in order to facilitate the appeal of denied cases to the ECC.

Meantime, Director Banawis expressed that a review of the adequacy of the present EC benefits will be further conducted in 2014 backed by a stable State Insurance Fund (SIF). The total reserves of the SIF for future payment of EC claims in both public and private sectors stand at P44.44 billion as of September 2013.

Finally, Baldoz said that the ECC will continue to review its benefits and services as part of its commitment to strengthen the role of the EC program in protecting the safety and health of workers and in pooling risks arising from occupational accidents and diseases.



ECC Deputy Executive Director Atty. Jonathan Villasoto provides an update on the recent EC Board Resolutions to the Bicol SSS Officials headed by Maria Fe Abraham, Chief Executive Officer II of SSS-Iriga during the ECC-SSS consultation meeting held at Avenue Plaza Hotel on January 16, 2014.

ECP Advocacy Seminar... from front page

OIC-Deputy Executive Director Jonathan Villasoto, who led the ECC team's advocacy semi-

nar in Camarines Sur.

According to Atty. Villasoto, the seminar focused on the three aspects of the EC program: prevention, compensation, and rehabilitation. Dr. Raymond Bañaga, Medical Officer III; Alice Borres, Information Officer III and Cedia Maulion, Information and Public Assistance Division Chief, were the resource speakers for the one-day event.

Ms. Ana Christine Soriano, DOLE V Camarines Sur Provincial Field Officer, discussed the DOLE's various livelihood programs and services.

The activity was also attended by SSS medical officers, GSIS claim officers and TESDA personnel. These government agencies are significant in achieving the ECP's successful dissemination and implementation.

A day prior to the seminar, a press briefing was also held at the Avenue Plaza Hotel.

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