

# [ PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1691, May 01, 1980 ]

## **FURTHER AMENDING CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF BOOKS I, III AND V OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 442, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LABOR CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES**

**WHEREAS**, under Presidential Decree No. 442, as amended, otherwise known as the Labor Code of the Philippines, labor laws were re-oriented to meet the needs of socio-economic development and social justice;

**WHEREAS**, to attain the objectives of the Labor Code, new institutions were created within the organizational framework established by Presidential Decree No. I;

**WHEREAS**, on the basis of accumulated experience and the impact of domestic and international developments on national economic and social stability, there is now an urgent need to amend further the Labor Code for the purpose of instituting certain critical structural-functional changes in the Ministry of Labor to enable it to cope with these developments in an effective, efficient and economical manner.

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, FERDINAND E. MARCOS**, President of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by the Constitution, do hereby order and decree;

**SECTION 1.** Articles 15, 17, 20 and 35 of Book I of the Labor Code are hereby amended to read as follows:

**"Article 15. Bureau of Employment Services.** — (a) The Bureau of Employment Services shall be primarily responsible for developing and monitoring a comprehensive employment program. It shall have the power and duty:

1. To formulate and develop plans and programs to implement the employment promotion objectives of this Title;
2. To establish and maintain a registration and/or licensing system to regulate private sector participation in the recruitment and placement of workers, locally and overseas, and to secure the best possible terms and conditions of employment for Filipino contract workers and compliance therewith under such rules and regulations as may be issued by the Minister of Labor;
3. To formulate and develop employment programs designed to benefit disadvantaged groups and communities;
4. To establish and maintain a registration and/or work permit system to regulate the employment of aliens;
5. To develop a labor market information system in aid of proper manpower and development planning;
6. To develop a responsive vocational guidance and testing system in aid of proper human resources allocation; and
7. To maintain a central registry of skills, except seamen.

(b) The regional offices of the Ministry of Labor shall have the original and exclusive jurisdiction over all matters or cases involving employer-employee relations including money claims, arising out of or by virtue of any law or contracts involving Filipino workers for overseas employment except seamen: *Provided*, That the Bureau of Employment Services may,

in the case of the National Capital Region, exercise such power, whenever the Minister of Labor deems it appropriate. The decisions of the regional offices or the Bureau of Employment Services if so authorized by the Minister of Labor as *provided* in this Article, shall be appealable to the National Labor Relations Commission upon the same grounds *provided* in Article 223 hereof. The decisions of the National Labor Relations Commission shall be final and inappealable.

(c) The Minister of Labor shall have the power to impose and collect fees, based on rates recommended by the Bureau of Employment Services. Such fees shall be deposited in the National Treasury as a special account of the General Fund, for the promotion of the objectives of the Bureau of Employment Services, subject to the provisions of Section 40 of Presidential Decree No. 1177."

**"Article 17. Overseas Employment Development Board.** — An Overseas Employment Development Board is hereby created to undertake, in cooperation with relevant entities and agencies, a systematic program for overseas employment of Filipino workers in excess of domestic needs and to protect their rights to fair and equitable employment practices. It shall have the power and duty:

1. To promote the overseas employment of Filipino workers through a comprehensive market promotion and development program;
2. To secure the best possible terms and conditions of employment of Filipino contract workers on a government to government basis and to ensure compliance therewith;
3. To recruit and place workers for overseas employment on a government-to-government arrangement and in such other sectors as policy may dictate; and
4. To act as secretariat for the Board of Trustees of the Welfare and Training Fund for Overseas Workers.

**"Article 20. National Seamen Board.** — (a) A National Seamen Board is hereby created which shall develop and maintain a comprehensive program for Filipino seamen employed overseas. It shall have the power and duty:

1. To provide free placement services for seamen;
2. To regulate and supervise the activities of agents or representatives of shipping companies in the hiring of seamen for overseas employment; and secure the best possible terms of employment for contract seamen workers and secure compliance therewith;
3. To maintain a complete registry of all Filipino seamen.

(b) The Board shall have original and exclusive jurisdiction over all matters or cases including money claims, involving employer-employee relations, arising out of or by virtue of any law or contracts involving Filipino seamen for overseas employment. The decision of the Board shall be appealable to the National Labor Relations Commission upon the same grounds *provided* in Article 223 hereof. The decisions of the National Labor Relations Commission shall be final and inappealable."

**"Article 35. Suspension and/or Cancellation of License or Authority.** ? The Minister of Labor shall have the power to suspend or cancel any