

[REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9417, March 30, 2007]

**AN ACT TO STRENGTHEN THE OFFICE OF THE SOLICITOR
GENERAL, BY EXPANDING AND STREAMLINING ITS
BUREAUCRACY, UPGRADING EMPLOYEE SKILLS AND
AUGMENTING BENEFITS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is the declared policy of the State to protect the rights and promote the welfare of the Filipino worker. Pursuant to this policy and to ensure efficient and effective performance in the legal service of the Government, an expansion and streamlining shall be affected in the Office of the Solicitor General.

The legal and administrative staff of the Office of the Solicitor General shall be increased and their positions upgraded to adequately meet the Republic's burgeoning need for legal services. The litigation and other skills of lawyers of the Office of the Solicitor General shall be promoted, the benefits of employees augmented, and their welfare enhanced. Academic growth and the honing of legal and communications expertise shall be encouraged.

SEC. 2. *Expansion.* - The staff of the Office of the Solicitor General shall be increased and their positions upgraded. From fifteen (15) legal divisions, there shall be at least thirty (30) legal divisions in the Office of the Solicitor General, with a corresponding increase in the general and administrative support personnel and provision for ample office space. Each division, permanently headed by an Assistant Solicitor General, shall consist of ten (10) lawyers and such other personnel as may be necessary for the office to effectively carry out its functions.

The present administrative structure of the Office of the Solicitor General shall be reorganized into the Financial Management Service, Docket and Case Management Services, and the Human Resources Management Service. Each of these shall be composed of the necessary divisions and sections.

General occupying the positions affected by the changes embodied in this Act at the time of its approval shall thereafter occupy the positions mandated by this Act, and discharge the duties and functions of their new positions and receive the corresponding salary and benefits without the necessity of any new appointment.

SEC. 3. *Standards.* - The Solicitor General shall have a cabinet rank and the same qualifications for appointment, rank, prerogatives, salaries, allowances, benefits and privileges as the Presiding Justice of the Court of Appeals; an Assistant Solicitor General, those of an Associate Justice of the Court of Appeals.

The qualifications for appointment, rank, prerogatives, salaries, and privileges of Solicitors shall be the same as judges, specified as follows:

Senior State Solicitor -	Regional Trial Court Judge
State Solicitor II -	Metropolitan Trial Court Judge
State Solicitor I -	Municipal Trial Court in Cities Judge

The Solicitor General shall determine the qualifications, prerogatives and responsibilities of the Associate Solicitors.

SEC. 4. *Compensation.* - The basic monthly compensation of the Solicitor General, Assistant Solicitors General, State Solicitors and Associate Solicitors shall be as follows:

POSITION	SALARY FROM	GRADE TO
Solicitor General	30	31
Assistant Solicitor General	29	30
Senior State Solicitor	28	29
State Solicitor II	27	28
State Solicitor I	26	27
Associate Solicitor III	25	26
Associate Solicitor II	22	25
Associate Solicitor I	18	24

The positions and salaries of non-legal personnel in the Office of the Solicitor General shall be raised to the level of their counterparts in the Court of Appeals.

Subject to the availability of funds, the salaries and privileges of personnel of the Office of the Solicitor General granted under this Act may be further increased to match any corresponding increase in salaries and privileges later granted to their respective counterparts in the Court of Appeals.

SEC. 5. *Benefits and Privileges.* - Subject to the availability of funds, the Office of the Solicitor General may provide its employees with the following benefits:

- (1) Health care services through a health maintenance organization (HMO). Expenses for the mandatory annual executive check-up of the Solicitor General, the Assistant Solicitors General, and Service Heads, shall be for the account of the office;
- (2) All employees shall be covered by accident insurance policies procured by the office at its own expense during travels while in the performance of their official duties and functions;
- (3) Without prejudice to efficiency in the service, scholarships to deserving employees on official time and at the expense of the Office of the Solicitor General to enhance their academic growth and upgrade their knowledge and skills. Scholars under this provision shall be selected on the basis of competitive examination; and
- (4) A provident fund which shall consist of contributions made both by the Office of the Solicitor General and by its lawyers and employees to a