

**[ DOH ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 2010-0022,  
July 09, 2010 ]**

**POLICIES IN THE CONDUCT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL EXAMINATIONS  
FOR OVERSEAS WORK APPLICANTS**

**I. BACKGROUND**

On February 12, 2008, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo directed the Department of Health (DOH), the Department of Labor and Employment and the Philippine

Overseas Employment Administration to deal with the concerns on the repatriation of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) purportedly as an aftermath of psychological and/ or psychiatric disorders.

In response to the Presidential Directive, the DOH through the Bureau of Health Facilities and Services (BHFS) conducted more stringent inspections, monitoring and spot-checking activities of DOH accredited medical clinics providing psychological examinations for overseas work applicants by including a psychologist as a member of the regulatory team. This was followed by the creation of a technical working group in view of Department Personnel Order No. 2008-3392 to review and evaluate the standards and requirements of psychological tests which measure emotional and environmental adaptability of OFWs.

Pursuant to Administrative Order (AO) No. 1, s. 2003 entitled "Operational Guidelines in the Conduct of Pre-Employment Medical Examination of Overseas Workers and Seafarers," applicants for overseas work are required to undergo PEME at medical clinics accredited by the DOH. Part of the PEME is psychological screening and evaluation which includes the following battery of psychological tests: 1) Draw a Person Test (DAOT) or House Tree Person Test, 2) Sack's Sentence Completion Test (SSCT), 3) Bender Gestalt Motor Visual Test, and 4) Raven's Progressive Matrices or Purdue Non-Language Test.

Subsequently, on February 28, 2009, the DOH through the BHFS, issued AO No. 2009-0002 "Addendum to AO No. 1, s. 2003 Operational Guidelines in the Conduct of Pre-Employment Medical Examination for Overseas Workers and Seafarers" which states in part that psychologists without a master's degree and a course in psychological assessment are advised to use the 16 Personality Factors Test, Filipino version, in lieu of the DAPT and the SSCT". In addition, to enhance the capability of psychometricians and psychologists working in DOH accredited medical clinics, annual orientation workshops and trainings have been conducted by the DOH in coordination with the National Center for Mental Health and the Philippine Psychological Corporation in 2008 and 2009 respectively. This Order took into account the recommendations of competent authorities and is a result of several reviews and consultations made with concerned stakeholders including the academe.

In view of the foregoing and with the advent of Republic Act (RA) No. 10029 known as "Philippine Psychology Act of 2009," it is evident that the DOH has aligned its activities and issuances with the aforementioned RA way before it was approved and then published last March 25, 2010, to professionalize the conduct of psychological examination for overseas work applicants.

## **II. OBJECTIVE**

This Order aims to standardize and update the conduct of psychological examinations for overseas work applicants.

## **III. SCOPE OF APPLICATION**

This Order applies to all DOH accredited medical clinics providing psychological services for overseas work applicants.

## **IV. DEFINITION OF TERMS**

For purposes of this Order, the following terms and acronyms shall have the following definition:

A. Accreditation – the formal authorization issued by the DOH to an individual, partnership, corporation or association to operate a medical facility for overseas workers and seafarers.

B. Applicant – refers to a person who is applying for work abroad and is required to undergo PEME prior to deployment.

C. BHFS – acronym for the Bureau of Health Facilities and Services, the regulatory body of the DOH.

D. DOH – acronym for the Department of Health.

E. DOH Accredited Medical Clinics – refers to medical facilities for overseas workers and seafarers.

F. Inspection/Monitoring Tool – the checklist utilized by the regulatory officers during inspection or monitoring visits to evaluate compliance of DOH accredited medical clinics to minimum standards and requirements in the conduct of psychological examinations for overseas work applicants.

G. OFW – acronym for Overseas Filipino Worker.

H. PEME – acronym for Pre-Employment Medical Examination. It refers to the complete medical examination that is implemented on an applicant as a requirement for screening to determine whether he is physically and mentally fit to work.

I. Psychologist – an individual who is duly licensed as professional psychologist in accordance with RA 10029. Psychologists shall take full responsibility for the supervision of psychometrician(s) and their work in the DOH accredited medical clinic as stipulated under Article III Section 3, (c) and (d) of RA 10029 known as "Philippine Psychology Act of 2009."

J. Psychometrician – an individual who is duly licensed as psychometrician in accordance with RA 10029 known as "Philippine Psychology Act of 2009."