



## MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR

No. 22

Series of 2024

### SUBJECT: GUIDELINES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DIGITIZED TRAVEL CLEARANCE FOR MINORS TRAVELING ABROAD (MTA)

#### I. RATIONALE

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) is mandated to provide special protection to children from all forms of abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and/or sale or any practice prejudicial to their development. In response thereof, the Department issued Administrative Order No. 12, series of 2017, or the Omnibus Guidelines on Minors Traveling Abroad to consolidate previous issuances on MTA and have just one policy reference concerning the prohibition for a child to travel alone or be accompanied by a person other than the parent or the legal guardian to a foreign country without a travel clearance issued by the DSWD.

However, due to innovations and enactment of several child protection laws, the DSWD seeks to amend Administrative Order No. 12, series of 2017, to update and align the policy with these new issuances that affect the effective and proper implementation of Travel Clearance for Minors Traveling Abroad.

Further, in the Agency's pursuit to continuously improve the systems, procedures, and mechanisms in the delivery of services, this amendment also introduces the inclusion of the online application portal for the digital blue card. This is the result of the streamlining process that looked into the application procedure, data and documentary requirements, case management context, and its corresponding forms. Among the salient findings in the reengineering process are as follows: a) Despite the ISO Certified Standard Operating Procedure in the issuance of Travel Clearance, the turnaround time still varies in the different regions; b) Selected regions such as FOs NCR, III, and IV-A receive the most number of applications compared to other regions but the observed processing time is much slower in regions, which receive an average of less than ten (10) applications per day; c) The semi-automated process of application through the e-Services for Travel Clearance took longer than the manual application. As to the standardized forms, they lacked basic information on the applicant, on the applications for travel under special circumstances, and on the privacy statement. The layout of the form is likewise observed to be not digitally friendly. As to the documentary requirements, there has to be clarity in the language used and consistency in instructions on the requirements. Lastly, the Travel Clearance itself was observed to be easily forged due to a lack of security features, and the use of pre-signed Blue Cards is allowed in some Field Offices.

To simplify, streamline the application process, and make it client-centric without compromising the protection of Filipino children from the perils of abuse, and exploitation and prevent them from becoming victims of child trafficking, the Department adheres to the current Administration's promotion of the use of technology in the delivery of social protection and other relevant services of the government. Hence, this initiative to digitally transform the Travel Clearance Blue Card for minors traveling abroad.

Lastly, part of the streamlining recommendation is to have a Centralized Processing Office (CPO) for the Issuance of Travel Clearance for Minors Traveling Abroad at the Central Office to ensure a standard processing of applications using the system developed for this purpose.

## II. LEGAL BASES

### A. International Instruments

1. **United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child (UNCRC)** - Articles 11 and 35 mandate State Parties to take measures to combat the illicit transfer and non-return of children abroad and to take all appropriate national, bilateral, and multilateral measures to prevent the abduction of, sale of or traffic in children for any purpose or in any form, respectively.
2. **The Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction** - A treaty which seeks to protect children below 16 years old from the harmful effects of wrongful removal and retention across international boundaries by providing a procedure about their prompt return and ensuring the protection of rights of access.

### B. National Laws and Policies

1. **Republic Act No. 11983 also known as the “New Philippine Passport Act” which lapsed into law on March 11, 2024** - Section 5(g) states that for minor applicants who are foundlings, an adult guardian through the presentation of a letter of guardianship issued by a family court may file for the minor’s passport application and DSWD travel clearance.
2. **Republic Act No. 11930 which lapsed into law on July 30, 2022 or the “Anti-Online Sexual Abuse or Exploitation of Children (OSAEC) and Anti Child Sexual Abuse or Exploitation Materials (CSAEM) Act”** - Section 4 (h) and (i) states that it is unlawful to recruit, transport, harbor, provide, or receive a child or to induce or influence the same and to introduce, or match a child to a foreign national or to any person to commit any of the offenses under the Act.
3. **Republic Act No. 11909 which lapsed into law on July 28, 2022 or the “Permanent Validity of the Certificates of Live Birth, Death, and Marriage Act”** - Section 3 of this law states that “the Certificate of Live Birth, Death, and Marriage issued, signed, certified, or authenticated by the PSA and its predecessor, the NSO, and the Local Civil Registries shall have permanent validity regardless of the date of issuance and shall be recognized and accepted in all government or private transactions or services requiring submission thereof as proof of identity and legal status of a person.”

4. **Republic Act No. 8972, as amended by Republic Act No. 11861 which lapsed into law in June 4, 2022 or the “Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act”** - Section 4 defines Solo Parents as “(a) A parent who provides sole parental care and support of the child or children due to –
- (1) Birth as a consequence of rape, even without final conviction: Provided, That the mother has the sole parental care and support of the child or children: Provided, further, That the solo parent under this category may still be considered a solo parent under any of the categories in this section;
  - (2) Death of the spouse;
  - (3) Detention of the spouse for at least three (3) months or service of sentence for a criminal conviction;
  - (4) Physical or mental incapacity of the spouse as certified by a public or private medical practitioner;
  - (5) Legal separation or de facto separation for at least six (6) months, and the solo parent is entrusted with the sole parental care and support of the child or children;
  - (6) Declaration of nullity or annulment of marriage, as decreed by a court recognized by law, or due to divorce, subject to existing laws, and the solo parent is entrusted with the sole parental care and support of the child or children; or
  - (7) Abandonment by the spouse for at least six (6) months;
- (b) Spouse or any family member of an Overseas Filipino Worker (OFW), or the guardian of the child or children of an OFW: Provided, That the said OFW belongs to the low/semi-skilled worker category and is away from the Philippines for an uninterrupted period of twelve (12) months: Provided, further, That the OFW, his or her spouse, family member, or guardian of the child or children of an OFW falls under the requirements of this section;
- (c) Unmarried mother or father who keeps and rears the child or children;
- (d) Any legal guardian, adoptive or foster parent who solely provides parental care and support to a child or children;
- (e) Any relative within fourth (4th) civil degree of consanguinity or affinity of the parent or legal guardian who assumes parental care and support of the child or children as a result of the death, abandonment, disappearance or absence of the parents or solo parent for at least six (6) months: Provided, That in cases of solo grandparents who are senior citizens but who have the sole parental care and support over their grandchildren who are unmarried, or unemployed and twenty-two (22) years old or below, or those twenty-two (22) years old or over but who are unable to fully take care or protect themselves from abuse, neglect, cruelty, exploitation, or discrimination because of a physical or mental disability or condition, they shall be entitled to the benefits of this Act in addition to the benefits granted to them by Republic Act No. 9257, otherwise known as the ‘Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2003’; or

(f) A pregnant woman who provides sole parental care and support to the unborn child or children.”

5. **Republic Act No. 11596 enacted on December 10, 2021 or “An Act Prohibiting the Practice of Child Marriage and Imposing Penalties for Violations Thereof”** - Section 1 of the law states that “marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of capacitated parties and child betrothal and marriage shall have no legal effect.”
6. **Republic Act No. 11642 or the “Domestic Administrative Adoption and Alternative Care Act” and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) which was approved on November 6, 2021** - Section 8 (h) of the IRR states that “the National Authority on Child Care (NACC) shall issue travel clearance for all cases which are under its jurisdiction.”
7. **Republic Act No. 11032 or the Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act of 2018** - The law mandates the re-engineering of systems and procedures of government agencies to reduce bureaucratic red tape and processing time.
8. **Republic Act No. 10165 or “An Act to Strengthen and Propagate Foster Care and to Provide Funds therefor” which was enacted on June 11, 2012** - Section 6 states that Foster Parents have the rights, duties, and liabilities of persons exercising substitute parental authority, as may be provided under the Family Code over the children under their foster care.
9. **Republic Act No. 9255 or “An Act Allowing Illegitimate children to use the surname of their father, amending for the Purpose Article 176 of the Executive Order No. 209 otherwise known as the Family Code of the Philippines” which was approved in February 24, 2004** - states that “Illegitimate children shall use the surname and shall be under the parental authority of their mother, and shall be entitled to support in conformity with this Code. However, illegitimate children may use the surname of their father if their filiation has been expressly recognized by the father through the record of birth appearing in the civil register, or when an admission in a public document or private handwritten instrument is made by the father. *Provided*, the father has the right to institute an action before the regular courts to prove non-filiation during his lifetime. The legitime of each illegitimate child shall consist of one-half of the legitimate child.”
10. **Republic Act No. 9231 or “an Act Providing for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor and Afford Stronger Protection for the Working Child, Amending for this purpose RA 7610” which was approved on December 19, 2003** - Section 2 states that “It is hereby declared to be the policy of the State to provide special protection to children from all forms of abuse, neglect, cruelty, exploitation, and discrimination, and other conditions prejudicial to their development including child labor and its worst forms.”

11. **Republic Act No. 9208 or the "Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003 as amended by Republic Act No. 10364 and further amended by Republic Act No. 11862 or the Expanded Trafficking in Persons Act" which was approved May 26, 2003** - Under Section 6 (a) and (b), it is considered qualified trafficking when it involves a child **or when the adoption is for the purpose of prostitution, pornography, sexual exploitation, forced labor, slavery, and involuntary servitude or debt bondage.**
12. **Republic Act No 8239 or the "Philippine Passports Act of 1996" which was approved November 22, 1996** - Sections 5 (f) requires the applicant who has not reached the age of majority (below 18 years old), an affidavit of consent from a parent as indicated in the passport application if the minor is traveling with either parent and a clearance from the DSWD if the minor is traveling with a legal guardian or a person other than the minor's parent/s.
13. **Republic Act No. 7658 or "An Act Prohibiting the Employment of children below 15 years of age in Public and Private Undertaking, amending for this purpose Section 12, Article VIII of RA 7610" which was enacted on November 9, 1993** - Children below fifteen (15) years of age shall not be employed except when a child works directly under the sole responsibility of his parents or guardian and only members of the employer's family are employed. Provided, however, that this employment neither endangers his life, safety, health, and morals nor impairs his normal development; Provided further, that the parent or legal guardian shall provide the said minor with the prescribed primary and/or secondary education, among other conditions cited in the law.
14. **Republic Act No. 7610 also known as the "Special Protection of Children Against Abuse Exploitation and Discrimination Act" enacted on June 17, 1992** - Section 8(a) of Article IV provides that there is an attempt to commit child trafficking "when a child travels alone to a foreign country without valid reason therefore and without clearance issued by the DSWD or written permit or justification from the child's parent or legal guardian".
15. **Executive Order No. 209, s. 1987 or the "Family Code of the Philippines"** - Article 176 states that illegitimate children shall be under the parental custody of their mother. Further, Article 216 provides that "In default of parents or a judicially appointed guardian, the following person shall exercise substitute parental authority over the child in the order indicated: the surviving grandparent, the oldest brother or sister over twenty years of age, unless unfit or disqualified; and the child's actual custodian, over twenty-one years of age, unless unfit or disqualified.

### C. Related Issuances/Guidelines

1. **Memorandum Circular 21, Series of 2018** or the Omnibus Guidelines on Foster Care Service as the legal basis as this is the latest memorandum circular regarding the Travel of Foster Child Outside the Country, VII. Implementing Procedures, K. Travel of Foster Children Outside the Country.

- a. The social worker shall assess the request of the foster family to bring the foster child outside the country. This request shall be approved by the Regional Director.
  - b. The child is allowed to travel outside the country together with the foster parents only when assessment and recommendation made by the social worker is approved by the Regional Director.
  - c. The travel clearance permit to be granted shall be limited to one time travel only provided as applicable, the foster child has been issued a certification declaring legally available for adoption.
  - d. The travel period of the child abroad shall be within the validity of the Foster Care License and Foster Placement Authority.
  - e. The foster parents shall submit an affidavit to the Regional Director before leaving the country stating that after the travel they will report to DSWD and present the child to the social worker of the Minor Travelling Abroad (MTA) Unit immediately.
  - f. The foster parents shall report to the foster care social worker and unit head after their return to the Philippines.
  - g. The managing social worker through the unit head and division chief shall report to the Regional Director in writing the return of the child to the country within five (5) working days from the date the child was present to the social worker.
2. **2023 Revised Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT) Guidelines** on Departure Formalities for International-bound Filipino Passengers.
  3. **Guidance Notes on Mandatory Issuance of Certificate of Exemption** based on the Inter-agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT) Guidelines on Departure Formalities issued by the Undersecretary for Operations Group dated 10 May 2023.
  4. **Guidance Notes on the Issuance of Travel Clearance (TC) for Children Under Domestic Adoption and Foster Care** issued by the Undersecretary for Operations Group dated 13 March 2023.

### III. DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. **Adoption** - refers to the socio-legal process of providing a permanent family to a child whose parents had voluntarily or involuntarily given up their parental rights, permanently transferring all rights and responsibilities, along with filiation, making the child a legitimate child of the adoptive parents<sup>1</sup>.
2. **Centralized Processing Office (CPO)** - refers to an office wherein the data is collected and the processing is performed at the Central Office using the system developed for the frontline service.
3. **Digital Blue Card (formerly known as the DSWD Travel Clearance)** - is an electronic document issued by the Department of Social Welfare and Development to

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<sup>1</sup> Section 4 (d) of RA 11642 or the Domestic Administrative Adoption and Alternative Child Care Act

a minor traveling abroad unaccompanied by any of the parents or persons having parental authority and legal custody over the child.

4. **Foster Care** - refers to the provision of planned temporary substitute parental care to a child by a foster parent<sup>2</sup>.
5. **Foster Care License** - refer to the document issued by the NACC DSWD authorizing the foster parent to provide foster care.
6. **Foster Parent** - refers to a person, duly licensed by the DSWD, to provide foster care.
7. **Legal Guardian** - refers to the "guardian/custodian" appointed by the court.
8. **Minor (also referred to herein as "Child")** - refers to a person below eighteen (18) years of age or one who is over eighteen (18) but is unable to fully take care of himself/herself from abuse, neglect, cruelty, exploitation or discrimination because of physical or mental disability or condition<sup>3</sup>.
  - i. **Legitimate or marital children** - refers to children conceived or born within a valid marriage of the parents, or within lawful wedlock<sup>4</sup>.
  - ii. **Legitimated children** - refers to children whose birth is legalized by legitimation e.g. adoption
  - iii. **Foster child** - refers to a child placed under foster care.
  - iv. **Illegitimate or non-marital child** - refers to children conceived or born outside a valid marriage of the parents, or lawful wedlock<sup>5</sup>.
9. **National Authority on Child Care (NACC)-issued Consent to Travel** - the document issued by the NACC for minors traveling abroad for purposes of inter-country adoption.
10. **Parents** - refers to the biological or adoptive parents or legal guardians of the child.
11. **Pre-adoption Placement Authority (PAPA)** - refers to a document issued by the NACC Transition Team or through the Regional Alternative Child Care Office (RACCO) authorizing or confirming the placement of a child to the prospective adoptive parents.
12. **Prospective Adoptive Parent (PAP)** - refers to an individual who files for administrative adoption.
13. **Regional Alternative Child Care Office (RACCO)**- refers to the Adoption Resource and Referral Unit (ARRU) of the DSWD Field Office, which will act as the regional office of the NACC and venue of filing petitions.

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<sup>2</sup> Section 4 (r) of RA 11642 or the Domestic Administrative Adoption and Alternative Child Care Act

<sup>3</sup> Section 3 (a) of RA 7610 or the Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act

<sup>4</sup> Article 164 of the Family Code

<sup>5</sup> Article 165 of the Family Code

14. **Renewal** - refers to the application type where minor/s who has/have previously been issued by the Department a travel clearance to travel abroad.

15. **Solo Parent** - refers to:

(a) A parent who provides sole parental care and support of the child or children due to –

(1) Birth as a consequence of rape, even without final conviction: *Provided*, That the mother has the sole parental care and support of the child or children: *Provided*, further, That the solo parent under this category may still be considered a solo parent under any of the categories in this section;

(2) Death of the spouse;

(3) Detention of the spouse for at least three (3) months or service of sentence for a criminal conviction;

(4) Physical or mental incapacity of the spouse as certified by a public or private medical practitioner;

(5) Legal separation or de facto separation for at least six (6) months, and the solo parent is entrusted with the sole parental care and support of the child or children;

(6) Declaration of nullity or annulment of marriage, as decreed by a court recognized by law, or due to divorce, subject to existing laws, and the solo parent is entrusted with the sole parental care and support of the child or children; or

(7) Abandonment by the spouse for at least six (6) months;

(b) Spouse or any family member of an Overseas Filipino Worker (OFW), or the guardian of the child or children of an OFW: *Provided*, That the said OFW belongs to the low/semi-skilled worker category and is away from the Philippines for an uninterrupted period of twelve (12) months: *Provided*, further, That the OFW, his or her spouse, family member, or guardian of the child or children of an OFW falls under the requirements of this section;

(c) Unmarried mother or father who keeps and rears the child or children;

(d) Any legal guardian, adoptive or foster parent who solely provides parental care and support to a child or children;

(e) Any relative within fourth (4th) civil degree of consanguinity or affinity of the parent or legal guardian who assumes parental care and support of the child or children as a result of the death, abandonment, disappearance or absence of the parents or solo parent for at least six (6) months: *Provided*, That in cases of solo grandparents who are senior citizens but who have the sole parental care and support over their grandchildren who are unmarried, or unemployed and twenty-two (22) years old or below, or those twenty-two (22) years old or over but who are unable to fully take care or protect themselves from abuse, neglect, cruelty,

exploitation, or discrimination because of a physical or mental disability or condition, they shall be entitled to the benefits of this Act in addition to the benefits granted to them by Republic Act No. 9257, otherwise known as the 'Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2003'; or

(f) A pregnant woman who provides sole parental care and support to the unborn child or children.

16. **Substitute Parent** - Under EO No. 209, substitute parents is defined as: Art. 216. In default of parents or a judicially appointed guardian, the following person shall exercise substitute parental authority over the child in the order indicated:

(1) The surviving grandparent, as provided in Art. 214;

(2) The oldest brother or sister, over twenty-one years of age, unless unfit or disqualified

(3) The child's actual custodian, over twenty-one years of age, unless unfit or disqualified; and

(4) Whenever the appointment of a judicial guardian over the property of the child becomes necessary, the same order of preference shall be observed.

17. **Sponsor** - refers to the person/organization that provides directly for all the traveling expenses of the minor abroad and other related expenses of the child while in the Philippines.

18. **Social Welfare and Development Agencies (SWDAs)** - refers to:

- i. Private SWDA – are non- stock, non- profit organizations duly established and / or recognized under the Philippine laws performing social welfare and development activities.
- ii. Public SWDA – those managed by National Government Agencies (NGAs) of local Government Units (LGUs) which are exempted from registration and licensing but its SWD programs and services are required to be accredited.

#### IV. COVERAGE

##### 1. Minor/s required to secure travel clearance:

- a. Filipino minors who are traveling alone outside the Philippines using the Philippine Passport;
- b. Filipino minor traveling with prospective adoptive parent/s for inter-country adoption;
- c. Filipino minor traveling with a person other than his/her parent/s, legal guardian, or person exercising parental authority/legal custody over him/her;
- d. Filipino minor who is illegitimate and is traveling with his/her biological father; and

- e. A minor below thirteen (13) years old but will be accompanied by a sibling or a relative within the 4th degree of consanguinity or affinity who is over fifteen (15) years old and whose purpose for travel is to permanently join the parent/s abroad.

**2. Circumstances where a minor is exempted from securing a Travel Clearance:**

- a. A minor accompanied by the following:

- 1. Either or both of the minor's parents, if the minor is legitimate;
- 2. The minor's biological mother, if the minor is illegitimate;
- 3. The minor's father who has been granted sole parental custody or custody by the proper court, if the minor is illegitimate;
- 4. The minor's legal guardian;
- 5. The person, including one of the minor's parents, who was granted sole parental authority or legal custody by the proper court, in which case the court decision should specifically include a statement to this effect, i.e naming the person to whom sole parental authority or legal custody over the minor has been granted; and
- 6. Minor's adoptive parents if the minor is granted with adoption decree and Certificate of finality.

- b. A minor who is an immigrant or a permanent resident abroad, with foreign service holding a diplomatic/official passport such as Ambassador/General Consul/Attaches, provided he/she is holding a valid passport such as dependent visa/identification card which serves as a proof that the travel does not constitute child trafficking.

**3. Circumstances requiring MANDATORY issuance of Certificate of Exemption:**

- a. If the parents are not married, and the child's traveling companion is the biological father who has sole parental custody or legal custody over the minor as evidenced by a Court Order;
- b. When the traveling companion is the legal guardian as evidenced by a Court Order;
- c. Orphans of married parents and traveling with substitute parent/s (grandparents or nearest kin per Family Code); and
- d. Orphans of non-married parents and traveling with the substitute parent/s (maternal side)

**V. GENERAL POLICIES**

- 1. All applications for Travel Clearance and Certificate of Exemption shall be lodged online using the MTA Online portal and shall be processed at the Central Office.

2. Person/s allowed to file an application for Travel Clearance and Certificate of Exemption using the MTA Online portal are the following:
  - a. Minor's parent/s, Solo Parents and legal guardian;
  - b. Substitute parents;
  - c. Parents of an illegitimate child with a Court Order granting him/her sole custody over the minor; and
  - d. Authorized traveling companion with a Written Consent from the minor's parent/legal guardian.
3. A minor under the care of a Child Caring Agency (CCA) or a Social Welfare and Development Agency (SWADA) is exempted from the travel clearance fees provided such agency has a valid Registration and License from the Department.
4. A minor cleared for inter-country adoption by the NACC for inter-country placement shall be issued a NACC-RACCO Consent to Travel Certificate.
5. A minor who is the subject of an ongoing/pending custody battle before the court between his/her parents and is traveling abroad with either of his/her parents will not be issued a travel clearance unless a court order is issued allowing him/her to travel with said parent. The family of the minor shall be responsible for filing a manifestation in the court for the issuance of a hold departure order, the inclusion of the minor's name in the Bureau of Immigration's watch list as well as in the delisting of the name of the minor, once the issue of custody has been resolved by the Court.
6. A validation/assessment report of the Local Social Welfare and Development Officer (LSWDO) of the City or Municipality where the minor resides should be required for minor/s who will participate in any cultural presentation, compete in a foreign country, for purposes of fundraising, and ensure that competition is not harmful to the health and development of the minor.
7. A digitally secured number and code shall appear on the front and back of the Travel Clearance Certificate.
8. The authority to sign on the digitized blue card shall be assigned to the Director of the Program Management Bureau but may be delegated, with approved Special Order, to the Division Chief of the Sectoral Programs Division of the Program Management Bureau, the Head of the Central Processing Office for MTA, and its Social Welfare Officers III.
9. No minor below thirteen (13) years of age shall be allowed to travel alone.
10. Cases not covered by these guidelines shall be submitted for resolution by the Secretary.
11. In case of loss of the issued travel clearance, a new set of requirements should be submitted using the MTA online portal.

12. Once a digital blue card is issued and there are changes of two (2) to three (3) entries either in the country of destination, purpose of travel, and traveling companion, the applicant is required to re-apply with the corresponding documentary requirements and will be charged the travel clearance application fee. However, if the change is only on the date of travel or country of destination, the applicant shall apply for the change of entry, free of charge. Provided that the request for change of entry on the date of travel or country of destination is applied from the date of issuance up to ten (10) days before the date of travel. One-time single-entry change/s may only be applied once.
13. The manual application process at the Field Office, through the Community-based Section/Unit, will be activated once the system is down and/or during the State of Calamity or Emergency for at least twenty-four (24) hours as confirmed by the MTA Central Office. The Field Office's focal person for children under the Protective Services Division shall be responsible for the manual processing of applications or shall revert to the previous process of manual application wherein the SWAD Social Workers may still screen and assess. Consequently, the FO Focal Person for Children shall encode the applications processed manually to the system once restored, for monitoring. The signatory of the manually processed Travel Clearance blue cards shall be the Division Chief of the Protective Services Division.

## VI. DOCUMENTARY REQUIREMENTS

### A. Minor/s traveling alone to a foreign country for the first time:

#### Scanned copies of the following:

1. QR-coded Birth Certificate from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA);
2. QR-coded Marriage Certificate of the minor's parents or the Court Decision on Legal Guardianship, Solo Parent ID, if applicable;
3. Affidavit of support and Certified copy of Evidence of financial capability of the sponsor such as any of the following:
  - a. A certificate of Employment;
  - b. Latest ITR; or
  - c. Bank Statement.
4. QR-coded Death Certificate (in case of death of either parent or both) issued by the Local Civil Registrar;
5. Scanned copy of colored passport-size photos of the minor (in white background) taken within six (6) months;
6. Valid ID/Passport of Parents (with signature); and
7. Passport of Minor (if available).

### B. For the Succeeding unaccompanied travel to a foreign country:

#### Scanned copies of the following:

1. Scanned copy of colored passport-size photos of the minor (in white background) taken within six (6) months;

2. Valid ID/Passport of parents (with signature), Solo Parent ID, if applicable;
3. Affidavit of support and Certified copy of Evidence of financial capability of the sponsor such as any of the following:
  - a. A certificate of Employment;
  - b. Latest ITR; or
  - c. Bank Statement.

**C. Minor/s traveling for the first time with a person other than the parents or legal guardian:**

**Scanned copies of the following:**

1. QR-coded Birth Certificate of a minor from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA);
2. QR-coded Marriage Certificate of the minor's parents or a Court Order on Legal Guardianship, Solo Parent ID, if applicable;
3. Valid ID/Passport of parents (with signature);
4. Scanned copy of colored passport-size photos of the minor (on a white background);
5. Passport of the traveling companion;
6. If family friend/foreign companion, passport bio-page and visa/Alien Certificate of Registration ID (ACR i-card);
7. Notarized oath of undertaking (if non-relative);
8. Valid ID/passport of parents (with signature);
9. Proof of financial capability of the sponsor:
  - a. Bank statements;
  - b. Certificate of Employment; or
  - c. Income Tax Return. If the sponsor is living abroad, proof of financial capability should be subscribed and sworn to before an authorized officer to administer the oath.

**D. Subsequent travel of minors with a person other than the parents or legal guardian:**

**Scanned copies of the following:**

1. Colored copy of the previous Travel Clearance issued by the DSWD, if previously applied manually;
2. Electronically generated Travel Clearance need not be uploaded for renewing applicants;
3. QR-coded Marriage Certificate of the minor's parents issued by the PSA or Court Order on Legal Guardianship, Solo Parent ID, if applicable;
4. Valid ID/Passport of parents (with signature);
5. Two (2) colored passport-size photos of the minor (on a white-background);
6. Passport of the traveling companion;
7. If family friend/foreign companion, passport bio-page and visa/Alien Certificate of Registration ID (ACR i-card);

8. Notarized oath of undertaking (if non-relative);
9. Proof of financial capability of the sponsor, any of the following:
  - a. Bank statement;
  - b. Certificate of Employment; or
  - c. Income Tax Return.

If the sponsor is living abroad, proof of financial capability should be subscribed and sworn to before an authorized officer to administer the oath.

**E. Additional requirements for minor/s under special circumstances:**

For Filipino minors migrating to another country (for purposes of determining if exempted):

- a. Scanned copy of the Visa petition approval.

For minor who is over 18 years old but is unable to fully take care of himself/herself from abuse, neglect, cruelty, exploitation or discrimination because of physical or mental disability or condition:

- a. Scanned Certification from a Physician citing the minor's condition and his/her inability to fully take care of him/herself.

For a minor who will study abroad:

- a. Scanned copy of the student visa or Acceptance or Certificate of Enrollment or Registration from the school where a minor is to be enrolled.

For a minor who will attend conferences, study tours, competition student exchange program, Summer Camp, Pilgrimage, World Youth Day, and Other related activities:

- a. Scanned copy of the Certification from the sponsoring organization;
- b. A scanned copy of the Affidavit of Undertaking of the companion indicating the safety measures undertaken by the sports agency (sports competition); and
- c. Scanned copy of the Signed invitation from the sponsoring agency/organization abroad with an itinerary of travel and list of participants and duration of the activity/travel.

For minors going abroad for medical purposes (*only applicable to children in Child Caring Agencies and SWDAs with sponsors abroad for their medical treatment*):

- a. Scanned copy of the Medical Abstract of the minor;
- b. Scanned copy of the Recommendation from the attending physician that such medical procedure is not available in the country; and
- c. Scanned Letter from the Sponsor.

For a minor going abroad for inter-country adoption:

- a. NACC issued Consent to Travel

For a minor under Foster Care, scanned copies of the following:

- a. RACCO issued Consent to Travel

For minors under adoption (must have an undergoing filed petition), scanned copies of the following:

- a. RACCO issued Consent to Travel

For minors under Legal Guardianship:

- a. Scanned Certified True Copy of Court Order on Legal Guardianship.

For abandoned minors with alleged missing parents, the following shall be the requirements, scanned copies of the following:

- a. Social Case Study Report executed by a Licensed Social Worker of the Local government unit of the parent/guardian; and
- b. Blotter report from either the local police or barangay certification from the locality or the last known address of the alleged missing parent.
- c. Solo Parent ID, if applicable

**F. For securing the MANDATORY Certificate of Exemption:**

1. If the parents are not married, and the child's traveling companion is the biological father who has sole parental custody or legal custody over the minor as evidenced by a Court Order;
  - a. QR-coded PSA issued birth certificate of minor;
  - b. Scanned Court Order granting the Sole Parental Custody to the biological father.
2. When the traveling companion is the legal guardian;
  - a. QR-coded PSA-issued birth certificate of a minor;
  - b. Scanned Court Order granting Legal Guardianship over the minor;
3. Orphans of married parents and traveling with substitute parent/s (grandparents or nearest kin per Family Code):
  - a. QR-coded PSA issued a birth certificate of a minor;
  - b. QR-coded PSA-issued Marriage Certificate of the minor's parents
  - c. QR-coded PSA-issued Death Certificate of minor's parents
  - d. QR-coded PSA-issued Birth Certificate of the traveling companion (grandparents or nearest kin) to establish the relationship with the minor
4. Orphans of non-married parents and traveling with the substitute parent/s (maternal side):
  - a. QR-coded PSA-issued birth certificate of a minor;
  - b. QR-coded PSA-issued Death Certificate of the minor's biological mother
  - c. QR-coded PSA issued Birth Certificate of the traveling companion (maternal grandparents) to establish the relationship with the minor

## VII. PROCEDURES

### A. APPLICATION

1. The applicant should check the FAQs posted in the MTA portal to check whether or not the Travel Clearance or a Certificate of Exemption is needed.
2. If required, the applicant should create an account in the MTA portal.
3. He/She has to select if the application is for Travel Clearance or Certificate of Exemption.
4. Once selected, the applicant fills up the respective application form, uploads the requirements, and receives a system notification acknowledging the uploaded documents or a notification setting a deadline for the completion of lacking documents.
5. Applicant receives an Order of Payment and selects a payment option.
6. The social worker/assessor reviews the document to assess its completeness and verify its authenticity online with issuing agencies/offices such as BI, PSA, DFA, RACCO, Interpol, and LSWDO.
7. Once the documents are assessed to be complete and verified online with the issuing offices, the applicant will be notified to select a schedule for interview and assessment through video conferencing.
8. The applicant then selects an appointment schedule or queues on the same day for the online interview and assessment.
9. Once interviewed, assessed for a minimum of 30 minutes per client, and the result is favorable, the application is recommended for approval by the authorized signatory.
10. Applicant receives the link to the approved Digital Blue Card and submits the accomplished Client Satisfaction Survey Form.
11. The MTA Office then sends the link/QR Coded Digital Blue Card of the minor to the Bureau of Immigration for reference and monitoring.

### B. ISSUANCE OF THE TRAVEL CLEARANCE and CERTIFICATE OF EXEMPTION

The Travel Clearance or Certificate of Exemption may be obtained/ downloaded within a maximum of three working (3) working days upon completion of the online application process, and a fee of Three Hundred Pesos (Php 300.00) per child shall be paid by the applicant.

**C. VALIDITY**

The digital blue card and Certificate of Exemption generated through the system shall be valid per travel of the child.

**VIII. MONITORING/REPORTING/DATA BANKING**

- a. The Program Management Bureau, DSWD Field Offices, and NACC are responsible for maintaining a systemized database for easy reference.
- b. The Program Management Bureau shall maintain close coordination/linkage with the Bureau of Immigration and the Department of Foreign Affairs to monitor the safe departure and return of the minor to the Philippines.
- c. The Information and Communication Technology Management Service (ICTMS) to conduct regular monitoring and technical assistance to the Central Processing Office for MTA for system-related concerns and bug fixes.

**IX. TRANSITORY PROVISION**

All Travel Clearances/Blue Cards issued by the DSWD Field Offices prior to the effectivity of this guideline shall remain valid for one year only even if the validity period applied and approved is good for two years.

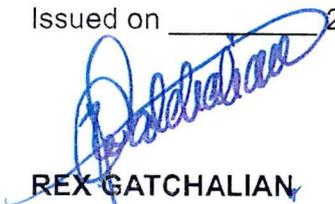
**X. REPEALING CLAUSE**

Previous issuances of the Department that are inconsistent with this AO are deemed repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

**XI. EFFECTIVITY CLAUSE**

This Memorandum Circular shall take effect and shall be published in the Official Gazette immediately upon approval.

Issued on \_\_\_\_\_ 202\_\_\_, Quezon City, Philippines

  
**REX GATCHALIAN**

Secretary

Date: 14 JUN 2024

**Certified True Copy**

  
**WILLIAM V. GARCIA, JR.**  
OIC-Division Chief  
Records and Archives Mgt. Division

**14 JUN 2024**