



Republic of the Philippines  
**Department of Education**

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DepEd MEMORANDUM  
No. **012**, s. 2019

06 FEB 2019

**PROTECTION OF THE WELFARE OF FILIPINO TEACHERS PARTICIPATING  
IN THE UNITED STATES EXCHANGE VISITOR PROGRAM**

To: Undersecretaries  
Assistant Secretaries  
Regional Secretary, ARMM  
Bureau and Service Directors  
Regional Directors  
Schools Division Superintendents  
Public and Private Elementary and Secondary School Heads  
All Others Concerned

1. The Department of Education (DepEd) issues this Memorandum **for the protection of the welfare of Filipino Teachers participating in the United States (US) Exchange Visitor Program (EVP).**
2. The EVP is an international exchange program by the US established under its United States Information and Education Exchange Act of 1948 and further defined under its Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, as amended. The general purpose of the EVP is to promote international educational and cultural exchange to develop mutual understanding between the people of the US and other countries.
3. The governments of the Philippines and the US entered into an agreement to implement the EVP in 1948. A committee was created to coordinate Philippine participation in the EVP through Administrative No. (AO) 191 dated 3 April 1956, amended by AO 210 dated 21 March 1970, and further amended by AO 242 dated 17 January 1996.
4. Individuals approved to participate in work-and-study-based programs under the EVP are granted Exchange Visitor (J) non-immigrant visa, particularly J-1 Visa for the exchange visitors, and J-2 Visa for spouses and dependents, as applicable.
5. At the 33rd Cabinet Meeting held on 7 January 2019, the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) gave a report on the implementation of the EVP, which raised the following concerns:
  - a. Collection of exorbitant fees for J-1 visa application and processing;
  - b. Teachers and other workers do not receive regular benefits including repatriation due to J-1 visa limitations;
  - c. Local partners, middlemen, and visa sponsors force teachers, interns, and their families to pay excessive amounts for car pool transportation, accommodation, and insurance, among others;
  - d. J-1 visa program is being abused by visa sponsors, employers, or schools as an alternative form of employment; and,

- e. Local agencies did not assume accountability to the participants whenever problems arose onsite.
6. While rules and regulations on the implementation of the EVP are being reviewed by the various concerned government agencies, all DepEd officials, school heads, and private school administrators are hereby enjoined to exercise due diligence in acting upon requests for authority to travel to the US under J-1 visa, whether for official or personal/private purpose, to ensure the protection of the welfare of our teachers.
7. Immediate dissemination of this Memorandum is desired.



**LEONOR MAGTOLIS BRIONES**  
Secretary

Reference:

N o n e

To be indicated in the Perpetual Index  
under the following subjects:

OFFICIALS  
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