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Republika ng Pilipinas  
**Kagawaran ng Edukasyon**  
Tanggapan ng Pangalawang Kalihim

**DepEd Task Force COVID-19**  
**MEMORANDUM No. 244**  
05 November 2020

For: **Minister of Basic, Higher, and Technical Education, BARMM  
Regional Directors  
Schools Division Superintendents  
Public School Heads  
All Others Concerned**

Subject: **GUIDELINES ON THE USE OF SCHOOLS AS EVACUATION  
CENTERS IN CONSIDERATION OF THE COVID-19  
PANDEMIC**

The Department of Education (DepEd) Task Force COVID-19 reminds all concerned that **the use of DepEd schools as evacuation centers for families and individuals affected by natural and human-induced disasters shall continue to be guided by the *Children's Emergency Relief and Protection Act (RA 10821)* and COVID-19 minimum health standards.**

The following are specifically reiterated:

1. RA 10821 emphasizes that the establishment of evacuation centers which are safe, inclusive, child-friendly, and provide for gender-sensitive and responsive amenities is the responsibility of Local Government Units (LGUs). **A school may only be used as an evacuation center only as a last resort, or only in cases where there is no other available place or structure which can be used for the said purpose.** In cases where schools shall be used, the following shall be observed pursuant to RA 10821:
  - a. LGUs shall coordinate with the School Heads and respective Schools Division Superintendents (SDS) before schools may be used as temporary evacuation centers, and shall **execute a Memorandum of Agreement.**
  - b. Should the school be used, the LGU shall coordinate with the School Head and ensure that gymnasiums, learning and activity centers, auditoriums and other open spaces shall be utilized first; **classrooms shall only be used as a last resort.**



**Office of the Undersecretary for Administration (OUA)**

[Administrative Service (AS), Information and Communications Technology Service (ICTS), Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Service (DRRMS), Bureau of Learner Support Services (BLSS), Baguio Teachers Camp (BTC), Central Security & Safety Office (CSSO)]

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- c. School personnel shall focus on providing education services, particularly education continuity for children in affected communities; **they shall not be assigned as camp managers.**

Following DepEd policy, school personnel and members of the DRRM Teams in schools designated as evacuation centers may be requested to render service even when classes and/or work are suspended only for the purpose of monitoring the school facilities and resources, subject to strict compliance to COVID-19 health measures.

In view of the emergency response services rendered during the period of work cancellation/suspension, concerned personnel shall be entitled to service credits pursuant to DepEd Order No. 53, s. 2003, and/or overtime payment subject to policy and guidelines set by the Civil Service Commission and the Department of Budget and Management.

- d. When necessary, **the use of school premises shall be as brief as possible.** It shall only be up to three (3) days for short-term displacement, fifteen days for medium and long-term displacement, or until such time that the respective LGUs are able to establish alternative transitional sites.
- e. **If the use is predicted to exceed fifteen days, the affected LGU shall provide written documentation** to the DepEd and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) on the following:
- i. The name and location of the school;
  - ii. All alternative evacuation centers, transitional relocation sites, and/or permanent relocation sites for final selection;
  - iii. Measures being implemented to prevent interference or disruption to the school and educational activities of children;
  - iv. Timeline for the relocation of and plan of action for internally displaced persons to sites outside of schools shall be approved by DepEd.
- f. The Regional or Division Office of DepEd, assisted by the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), the Local Engineering Office, and the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) shall **conduct regular site inspection of public schools to ensure the stability of structures for the safety of children and their environment.** A report on the inspection shall be submitted to the Secretary of DepEd, copy furnished the Local Chief Executive, for the purpose of repair of the damaged school being used as an evacuation center.
- g. **The LGU is responsible for facilitating general cleaning, fumigation, payment of utilities, and repair of schools used as evacuation centers.** Damages incurred by schools used as evacuation



centers shall be immediately reported by their respective School Heads to the LGU for appropriate action. Repairs and/or replacement of damaged facilities and materials of damages to schools used as evacuation centers shall be immediately undertaken to ensure the safety and well-being of internally displaced persons. Such repairs and replacement shall be monitored by the School Head and SDS in coordination with the LGU. LGUs shall also provide clean-up kits.

2. In consideration of the COVID-19 Pandemic, a school may only be considered for use as an evacuation center if:
  - a. The **school is not currently being used as a COVID-19 quarantine or isolation facility**, following OM-OSEC-2020-002, -003, -004, and -005.
  - b. The **disinfection of the school has been completed** after its use as a quarantine or isolation facility.
  - c. The LGU concerned is able to ensure that **all applicable and required health standards are adhered to in the set-up and operation of the school to be used as an evacuation center of last resort**, as evidenced by a certification from the local Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF).
3. Finally, the findings of the Office of the Undersecretary for Administration first released through an Aide Memoire dated 04 May 2020 (*please see attached*) that **the design specifications of the ceilings of school buildings constructed from 2014 to 2019 were apparently not followed in actual construction** is reiterated. DepEd is currently in the direction of replacing the existing ceilings of school buildings, specifically those that were constructed from 2014 onwards.

As a preventive measure against any untoward incident, all are advised to **refrain from using single-story school buildings, and the top floors of multi-story school buildings for evacuation purposes.**

For all future correspondence and queries on this subject, please contact the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Service (DRRMS) through telephone number (02) 8637-4933 and email at [drmo@deped.gov.ph](mailto:drmo@deped.gov.ph) ; or Mr. Jeonoh Kali Fornoles, Senior Technical Assistant II of the said office via email at [jeonoh.fornoles@deped.gov.ph](mailto:jeonoh.fornoles@deped.gov.ph) .

For immediate and appropriate action.



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**ALAIN DEL B. PASCUA**

Undersecretary  
Chairperson, DepEd Task Force COVID-19