

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 609

FURTHER ENHANCING EMPLOYABILITY BY DIRECTING THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT TO ADMINISTER A VOLUNTARY EXAMINATION FOR THE NURSES LICENSED PURSUANT TO THE JUNE 2006 BOARD OF NURSING EXAMINATION AND PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO THE VOLUNTARY EXAMINEES

WHEREAS, the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS) recently decided that Philippine nurses licensed pursuant to the Board of Nursing (BON) Examination of June 2006 shall not be eligible for the grant of *VisaScreen* Certificates;

WHEREAS, the CGFNS significantly noted that a retake of and passing the equivalent of Tests III and V of the June 2006 BON Examination in a Board Examination administered by Philippine regulatory authorities shall remedy the eligibility problem of nurses;

WHEREAS, the CGFNS likewise urged Philippine authorities to give these nurses the opportunity to retake the abovementioned equivalency tests without the need of surrendering their licenses;

WHEREAS, in response to this call and as a measure of enhancing the employability of our nurses, the Government deems it appropriate to immediately act through the Department of Labor and Employment, which has immediate supervision and control over the Professional Regulation Commission and the BON.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO, President of the Republic of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by law, do hereby order:

SECTION 1. Special Voluntary Examination. The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), acting through the Board of Nursing (BON) and utilizing the administrative processes of the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC), shall administer a special voluntary examination to the nurses licensed pursuant to the June 2006 BON Examination.

SEC. 2. Examination, when taken. The special voluntary examination shall be offered in the June 2007 and December 2007 BON Examination and may



be taken once at either dates, at the voluntary examinee's choice, and shall be for the equivalent of Tests III and V of the June 2006 BON Examination. The results of these tests shall not affect the validity of the licenses previously issued to the voluntary examinees.

SEC. 3. Examination Process. The application for special voluntary examination shall be filed with the PRC under the same administrative processes for the application for examination of regular BON examinees, and the examination itself shall be conducted in the same manner and under the same security safeguards observed for regular BON examinations. The DOLE Secretary, through his representatives, shall monitor all stages of the voluntary examination process.

SEC. 4. Examination Results reported directly to the DOLE Secretary. The BON, after correction of the special voluntary examination papers and tabulation of results, shall report the results solely to the DOLE Secretary, not to the PRC to whom the regular BON Examination results are reported in the regular course of things.

SEC. 5. Dissemination of Results. The DOLE Secretary and the BON Chair, upon receipt of the results, shall:

- a) Undertake the public release of the names of those who passed the examination;
- b) Notify the individual examinees; and
- c) Furnish the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS) with the official results and with such information about the regularity of the examination as the CGFNS may require.

SEC. 6. Waiver of Examination Fees. The PRC is directed to waive the collection of application fees from the voluntary examinees of the June 2007 and December 2007 special voluntary examinations, as was the case in the re-take ordered by the courts and implemented in the December 2006 BON Examination.

SEC. 7. Designation of Special Review Centers. The DOLE Secretary is hereby authorized to designate schools that are either recognized by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) as centers of excellence in nursing or with the highest passing rates in nursing examinations in their area, in such numbers and with such geographic distribution as the Secretary shall determine, as special review centers through which the Government may channel the financial assistance it shall provide for the review of voluntary examinees, to ensure the integrity of the preparatory stage of the examination process and to provide the best review opportunities for the voluntary examinees.

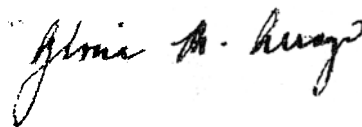


SEC. 8. Promulgation of Additional Guidelines. The DOLE Secretary shall promulgate the additional guidelines necessary to effectively implement this Executive Order. The PRC and the BON are hereby directed to provide the fullest coordination, support and cooperation to carry out the terms of this Order into effect.

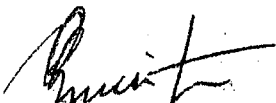
SEC. 9. Funding. The amount of Twenty Million Pesos (₱20,000,000.00) required for the administration of the special voluntary examination shall be chargeable against appropriate funding sources as may be identified by the Secretary of Budget and Management .

SEC. 10. Effectivity. This Executive Order shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in a national newspaper of general circulation.

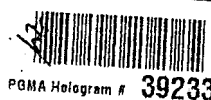
DONE in the City of Manila, this 12th of March in the year of Our Lord, Two Thousand and Seven.



By the President:



EDUARDO R. ERMITA
Executive Secretary



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