

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
NATIONAL NUTRITION COUNCIL

21 September 2020

NNC Memorandum No. 2020-006
Series of 2020

**SUBJECT: Revised guidelines for providing medical and survivorship assistance to
Barangay Nutrition Scholars (BNS)**

Background and rationale

The Barangay Nutrition Scholars (BNS) Program is a human resource development strategy of the Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition, which involves the recruitment, training, deployment and supervision of volunteer workers for nutrition or barangay nutrition scholars (BNS). Presidential Decree No. 1569 (1978) mandated the deployment of one BNS in every barangay in the country to monitor the nutritional status of children and link communities with nutrition and related service providers. Presidential Decree No. 1569 also mandated the NNC to administer the program in cooperation with local government units.

In many instances, BNSs perform more than their prescribed tasks by actually delivering or facilitating the delivery of services, mobilizing the community for nutrition action, linking with various sectors, and keeping records.

The NNC used to include in its support to active BNSs a Php 5,000 GSIS accident insurance coverage. In mid-2014, the provision of financial assistance for medical purposes or in connection with the death of a BNS started as a substitute for the GSIS accident insurance coverage in the past. In-house financial assistance was preferred over the GSIS accident insurance coverage because of the high cost of premium paid by NNC per year compared to the number of BNSs availing the insurance.

Aside from a modest monthly traveling allowance from the NNC in Manila and from the provincial, city, municipal or barangay governments, a BNS may avail of assistance for sickness and hospitalization or the survivorship assistance for their family in case of a BNS's death.

Since 2014, the NNC has provided two types of assistance in this context: medical assistance and survivorship assistance. Medical assistance started in the amount of Php 5,000 in 2014. Survivorship assistance started in the amount of Php 10,000 and was increased to Php 20,000.

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This set of guidelines was developed to further define the assistance being provided to BNSs in line with the existing mandate of hospital institutions, specifically of government hospitals, coverage of PhilHealth insurance and maximizing the DOH medical assistance both along in-patient and out-patient care.

Objective of the guidelines

To prescribe standard requirements and procedures for extending medical and survivorship assistance to BNSs to expedite the processing and toward the efficient use of available resources.

Who may avail

All BNSs on active status of duty regardless of the fund source of allowance/honorarium, i.e. barangay, municipal, city or provincial funding can avail of medical and survivorship assistance from NNC.

In addition, the assistance could be extended to BNSs who have been separated from duty provided the request is filed within six (6) months from the last day of effectivity of his/her contract of service as BNS. However, medical assistance shall be provided only if the reason of separation from service of a BNS was due to illness or medical condition.

For medical assistance, confinement and care should be in a government health facility except for cases 1) wherein the therapy/services are only available in private clinic/hospital; 2) BNS is in a life-threatening situation where the nearest care provider is a private one; and 3) as endorsed or referred to by the municipal health officer (MHO) or city health officer (CHO). Hospital confinement due to childbirth or pregnancy is not included in the medical assistance.

Furthermore, a one-time per year medical assistance will also be extended to BNSs undergoing dialysis treatment without the requirement of being admitted in a hospital facility.

In support to BNSs who have contracted or have been exposed to persons with COVID-19 virus during their fieldwork and/or duty, the BNSs who have been admitted to temporary treatment and monitoring facility, quarantine centers or LIGTAS COVID center for at least fourteen (14) days shall be eligible to claim medical assistance. This will be temporary and can only be availed during the pandemic.

Assistance provided

1. Survivorship assistance in the amount of Php 20,000 for any cause of death.

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2. A **one-time per year** medical assistance amounting to Php 5,000 as additional assistance for confinement in a hospital and related post-confinement expenses, or outpatient cost for dialysis treatment.

Notification and filing of claims

1. The BNS, an immediate member of the family, nutrition action officer (NAO), or the district/city nutrition program officer may notify their respective LGU of the condition of the BNS who may need assistance along with pertinent document attached.

2. Application Requirements

- a. General requirements

- 1) Endorsement of the NNC Regional Nutrition Program Coordinator addressed to the NNC Executive Director
 - 2) Appraisal Form filled out by the NNC Regional Office (Attachment 1)

NNC ROs must fill in details needed on the green cells.

- 3) Endorsement letter of the local chief executive addressed to the NNC Executive Director through the NNC Regional Nutrition Program Coordinator (NPC)
 - 4) Original or certified true copy of BNS masterlist for the active BNS of current year or a copy of the BNS masterlist indicating the name of the BNS within the immediate six-month period prior to separation/confinement, as attested by the municipal nutrition action officer (MNAO) and municipal mayor. The masterlist should include the following information:
 - a) Full name of BNS (consistent with the government-issued ID or birth certificate submitted)
 - b) Barangay assignment
 - c) Birth date (consistent with the government-issued ID or birth certificate submitted)
 - d) Age
 - e) Gender
 - f) Date of first deployment (mm/dd/yy)
 - g) Inclusive date of service for the year (month and year)
 - h) Name of beneficiary
 - i) Relationship of beneficiary to BNS

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- 5) Photocopy of one (1) valid ID card issued by the government or birth certificate, certified true copy by a barangay official.

b. For medical assistance

- 1) Letter request of BNS applicant (with signature) addressed to the Executive Director of the National Nutrition Council (NNC)
- 2) Original medical certificate or medical abstract issued by the C/MHO or attending physician indicating the following information:
 - a) Full name of patient (BNS)
 - b) Age
 - c) Medical condition and/or diagnosis
 - d) Dates of hospital confinement and discharge
 - e) Hospital of confinement
 - f) Full name, signature, and license number of attending physician
- 3) For BNSs who have contracted or have been exposed to persons with COVID-19, and were confined/admitted in a temporary treatment and monitoring facility, quarantine facility or LIGTAS COVID Centers, requirements include:
 - a) Letter request of BNS applicant (with signature) addressed to the Executive Director of the NNC
 - b) Certified true copy of at least one (1) confirmatory results of the COVID-19 real-time reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (rRT-PCR) test issued by the DOH-accredited laboratories and other facilities, and certified by the rural health unit (if COVID-19 positive)
 - c) Certified true copy of the Certificate of Completion of Quarantine or Isolation, or medical certificate issued by the local health officer

c. For survivorship assistance

- 1) Letter request addressed to the Executive Director of NNC from the next-of-kin of the deceased BNS as identified beneficiary in the BNS masterlist. If for some reason another beneficiary will be named, the letter request should indicate why the originally-named beneficiary has been changed and should be certified by the barangay captain or C/MNAO.

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- 2) Certified true copy of death certificate
- d. All claims should be filed within six months from the occurrence of the hospitalization or death.
- e. In case of emergencies such as occurrence of pandemic and force majeure where logistics and transportation are hampered and restricted, submission of requirements may be extended for another three (3) months, a total of nine(9) months to file for claims from the date of hospitalization or death of BNS. In this case, the letter of request from the BNS or the beneficiary should indicate the reasons for delayed filing. NNC Regional Offices may also initially endorse the requirements through e-mail, and then facilitate mailing of the original request with attachments to the NNC Central Office once it is already possible to do so.

Review and approval process

1. All claims should be filed within six months from the occurrence of the hospitalization or death. In case of extraordinary situations such as occurrence of epidemic, volcanic eruptions, flood, civil strife, war, terrorist action, or act of God and where logistics and transportation are hampered and restricted, submission of complete requirements may be extended for another 3-4 months, to file for claims from the date of hospitalization or death of BNS. In this case, the letter of request from the BNS or the beneficiary should indicate the reasons for delayed filing.
2. Upon receipt at the regional office, requests or claims should be stamped as received and recorded in the official logbook. This will also be the “date received at RO” in the appraisal form.
3. The document is referred to the staff in charge of reviewing such claims.
 - a. Staff-in-charge reviews documents submitted to determine validity of the claim and the completeness and compliance with the requirements.
 - b. The BNS or the family member of the BNS seeking medical assistance or the beneficiary requesting for the survivorship assistance through the endorsing Nutrition Action Officer or District/City Nutrition Program Coordinator should be informed of any deficiency preferably in writing or via email message or short message service (SMS). Thus, contact details should be provided in the letter-request.
 - c. Staff-in-charge should follow up and ensure “closure” of claims the soonest time possible.

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4. If the claim is in order, staff-in-charge drafts and finalizes the endorsement of the NPC and signs the appraisal form.
5. NPC does final validation, and if the request is in order, signs the regional office endorsement and appraisal form.
6. The regional office then sends the endorsement with all the supporting documents to the central office via mail or courier services.
7. Upon receipt and recording of the endorsement from the regional office at the Administrative Division, the documents are forwarded to the Nutrition Policy and Planning Division (NPPD) for validation.
8. NPPD staff-in-charge reviews submission, validates against the masterlist of BNS and advises the regional office via email of any deficiency within 2 days of validation. Should there be any deficiency, the claims will be on hold until the deficiency has been submitted by the regional office.
9. If the requirements are complete, the checklist for appraisal is signed by the staff-in-charge followed by the NPPD Chief.

Processing and release of financial assistance

1. NPPD also prepares the documents for processing, i.e. Obligation Request Slip (ORS) and the Disbursement Voucher (DV) for the claim, payable to the BNS for medical assistance and the designated beneficiary for survivorship assistance. This will be routed to Financial and Management Division (FMD) for processing of the request. A tracking slip will also be attached to the request.
2. FMD shall process the claim based on existing procedures with a signed cheque payable to the BNS (for medical assistance) or beneficiary (survivorship assistance) as the end result.
3. The signed cheque is then forwarded to the Administrative Division for the preparation of the transmittal letter and acknowledgment receipt for the assistance provided.
4. The transmittal letter is signed by the Executive Director.
5. The Administrative Division (AD) then mails or delivers the check with the transmittal letter and acknowledgement receipt to the regional office concerned.

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Acknowledgement of assistance received

1. The NNC Regional Office is responsible for immediately releasing the cheque to the appropriate beneficiary. It should ensure that the transmittal slip is signed by the recipient. The NNC Regional Office shall forward the transmittal slip duly signed by the beneficiary to the NNC Central Office.
2. The cheque should be encashed by the beneficiary within three (3) months from the date indicated in the cheque to avoid staling it. Should this happen, the stale check shall be returned to NNC together with a letter-request for replacement cheque. The letter should indicate the reason why the cheque was not encashed on time.
3. At the NNC Central Office, the signed transmittal slip is forwarded to the NPPD for notation and entry into the monitoring form. The NPPD then releases the signed transmittal slip to AD, also for notation and filing.
4. The NNC Regional Office also prepares a letter addressed to the city/municipal mayor in his capacity and chairperson of the local nutrition committee, indicating that the medical or survivorship assistance has been given to the recipient. A copy of the signed transmittal slip is also attached to the letter to the city/municipal mayor.

Funding support

The NNC Central Office will fund the medical and survivorship assistance for BNSs charged to 310100100004000.

Effectivity

These guidelines will take effect immediately and will be in force unless modified in part or full.

APPROVED:


AZUCENA M. DAYANGHIRANG, MD, MCH, CESE
Executive Director

References:

DOH-DILG Joint Administrative Order No. 2020-0001: Guidelines on Local Isolation and General Treatment Areas for COVID-19 cases (LIGTAS COVID) and the Community-based Management of MILD COVID-19 Cases

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**CHECKLIST FOR NNC MEDICAL AND SURVIVORSHIP ASSISTANCE REQUESTS FOR
BARANGAY NUTRITION SCHOLARS**

Province/City: _____	Date Received at RO: _____ (mm/dd/yyyy)
Municipality: _____	Date Received at CO: _____ (mm/dd/yyyy)
Barangay: _____	Date Received at NPPD: _____ (mm/dd/yyyy)
Name of BNS: _____ <i>Family name, Given name, Middle initial</i>	Sex: _____

DOCUMENTARY REQUIREMENTS	YES/NO	REMARKS
1. Endorsement letter by Local Chief Executive		
2. Original/certified true copy of BNS Masterlist		
3. Photocopy of one (1) valid ID of BNS certified true copy by the barangay secretary/MNAO		
For medical assistance		
4. Letter request of BNS applicant		
5. Original medical certificate/abstract		
6. Certified true copy of at least one (1) confirmatory results of the COVID-19 real-time reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (rRT-PCR)		For BNS who contracted COVID-19
7. Certified true copy of the Certificate of Completion of Quarantine or Isolation, or medical certificate issued by the local health officer		For BNS who contracted COVID-19
For survivorship assistance		
8. Letter request of beneficiary of deceased BNS		
9. Photocopy of one (1) valid ID of BNS' beneficiary		
10. Certified true copy of death certificate		
ACTION		Indicate the diagnosis for medical assistance or the cause of death for survivorship assistance
1. Medical (P5,000)		
2. Survivorship (P20,000)		

NNC Regional Office	NPPD
Appraised by: _____ Date: _____ (mm/dd/yyyy)	Appraised by: _____ Date: _____ (mm/dd/yyyy)
Submitted by: _____ Nutrition Program Coordinator (Name and signature)	Reviewed by: _____ HYGEIA CERES CATALINA B. GAWE NOV and OIC, Nutrition Policy and Planning Division

For survivorship assistance, copy of death certificate provided to NSD for updating of database:

(mm/dd/yyyy)
Date request forwarded to FMD for processing:

(mm/dd/yyyy)