



DEPARTMENT ORDER NO. 2021- 028

**GUIDELINES ON THE CONDUCT OF FACE-TO-FACE TRAININGS IN AREAS UNDER
COMMUNITY QUARANTINE**

WHEREAS, under the Republic Act (RA) No. 9593 or the *Tourism Act of 2009*, the Department of Tourism (DOT) is mandated to conduct seminars, workshops, and provide continuing education programs for the tourism industry manpower to upgrade quality, competence, and excellence in tourism services;

WHEREAS, on 20 March 2020, the DOT issued Department Order No. 2020-023 or the *Guidelines for the Conduct of Internal Business Processes in the Department of Tourism Central Office, Regional Offices, and Foreign Offices during the Period of Enhanced Community Quarantine Due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic*, which ordered the temporary suspension of the conduct of DOT-organized or DOT-led activities, workshops, seminars, or trainings;

WHEREAS, on 30 December 2020, the DOT and the Department of Trade Industry (DTI) issued Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2020-003 or the *Guidelines Governing the Conduct of Essential Work Meetings and Events in Areas Under General Community Quarantine (GCQ)*, which allows the conduct of Essential Work Meetings such as workshops, trainings, and seminars under Community Quarantine;

WHEREAS, on 20 February 2021, the DOT and DTI issued Joint Memorandum Circular (JMC) No. 2021-001 or the *Amended Guidelines Governing the Conduct of Essential Meetings and Social Events in Areas under General Community Quarantine* expanding the scope of venues for Essential Work Meetings;

WHEREAS, the conduct of trainings, workshops, and seminars for DOT stakeholders are considered Essential Work Meetings allowed under DOT-DTI JMC No. 2021-001;

WHEREAS, there is a need to provide guidelines for the conduct of trainings, workshops, and seminars to ensure compliance with health and safety protocols;

NOW, THEREFORE, in view of the foregoing, the following Guidelines on the Conduct of DOT Face-to-Face Trainings in Areas under a Community Quarantine is hereby issued:

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 1. Short Title. This shall be known as the “*Guidelines on DOT Trainings under a Community Quarantine.*”

Section 2. Definition of Terms. For purposes of these Guidelines, the following terms are hereby defined as follows:

- (a) “Blended Learning Program” shall refer to a type of education which combines electronic or online learning and traditional face-to-face training.
- (b) “Essential Works Meetings” shall refer to a congregation of at least two (2) people, with or without external participants, vital to the sustenance of the operations and business interests of the organization and not for recreational or leisure purposes, such as workshops, trainings, seminars, congresses, conferences, conventions, board meetings,

colloquia, conclaves, symposia, company/government recognitions, and press conferences.

- (c) “Face-to-Face Training” shall refer to a type or component of Training that requires participants to be physically present in a specific venue for purposes of practical or hands-on activities, demonstration, practical examination, and or other similar activities.
- (d) “General Community Quarantine” or “GCQ” shall refer to the implementation of temporary measures limiting movement and transportation, regulation of operating industries, and presence of uniformed personnel to enforce community quarantine protocols.
- (e) “Health Declaration Form” shall refer to a digital form that a person must fill-out to declare his or her current condition and travel history for the past fourteen (14) days, substantially following the template in Annex A-1 of the DTI-DOLE Joint Memorandum Circular No. 20-04-A.
- (f) “Maximum Venue Capacity” shall refer to the maximum number of people that may be physically accommodated inside the premises of the venue or facility, which shall not be more than the limitations set forth under this Circular, the Fire Code of the Philippines and other limitations set by the Local Government Unit.
- (g) “Modified General Community Quarantine” or “MGCQ” shall refer to the transition phase between GCQ and the New Normal, when the following temporary measures are relaxed and become less necessary: limiting movement and transportation, the regulation of operating industries, and the presence of uniformed personnel to enforce community quarantine protocols.
- (h) “Online Learning” shall refer to a type of education that takes place over the internet and shall include both synchronous and asynchronous courses.
- (i) “Organizer” shall refer to relevant DOT operating units and its respective partners (i.e. third party organizers and the Local Government Units) in the implementation of Face-to-Face Trainings.
- (j) “Regional Tour Guiding (RTG) Course” shall refer to a 30-day training course conducted within a region to train potential tour guides that can guide within the region and leading to DOT accreditation.
- (k) “Trainings” shall refer to seminars, workshops, or trainings organized, led or initiated by DOT whereby an individual or organization can obtain, improve and retain knowledge, skills, tools or other resources that are necessary for the efficient performance of work.
- (l) “Venue” shall refer to the location or place where the Training shall be conducted.

Section 3. Scope and Coverage. This Order shall apply to Face-to-Face Trainings organized, conducted, led, or initiated by the Department of Tourism for external stakeholders in areas under a Community Quarantine.

II. FACE-TO-FACE TRAININGS UNDER COMMUNITY QUARANTINE

Section 4. Conduct of Trainings under Different Levels of Community Quarantine. Trainings conducted in areas under Community Quarantine shall be subject to the following conditions:

Community Quarantine Level	Training Allowed
ECQ and MECQ	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Online Learning only
GCQ and MGCQ	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Online Learning• Face-to-Face at 50% Venue Capacity• Blended Learning Program

Section 5. Maximum Venue Capacity. Unless otherwise provided by subsequent IATF issuances or Presidential directives, the conduct of Face-to-Face Trainings in areas under GCQ and MGCQ shall be allowed at a Maximum Venue Capacity of fifty percent (50%).

Section 6. Permitted Venue for Face-to-Face Trainings. In addition to the permitted venues for Essential Meetings under DOT-DTI Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2021-001, the following may also be allowed as venue for Face-to-Face Training:

- a. Conference Hall in DOT Offices;
- b. Venues allowed by the Local Government Units (LGUs) for trainings, seminars and workshops such as gymnasium, areas or spaces appropriate for the Face-to-Face Trainings.

Provided, however, that the applicable provisions of DOT-DTI Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2021-001 or its subsequent amendments, and other relevant DOT issuances shall be observed.

Section 7. Permitted Participants. Unless otherwise provided by subsequent IATF issuances or Presidential directives, only individuals with ages eighteen (18) years old and above, except those with immunodeficiency, comorbidity, or other health risks, and pregnant women shall be allowed to participate in Face-to-Face Trainings.

III. HEALTH AND SAFETY STANDARDS

Section 8. Submission of Training Calendar. To ensure proper monitoring of Face-to-Face Trainings, the DOT Regional Offices shall submit their training calendars containing the list of trainings duly approved and signed by the Regional Director or Officer-in-Charge to the Office of Industry Manpower Development (OIMD) at least one (1) month before the scheduled Training dates.

Section 9. Temperature Scan and Contact Tracing. The Organizer shall ensure that the following health and safety requirements and procedures are observed during the conduct of Face-to-Face Trainings:

- a. Participants' body temperature shall be screened, and shall be required to register or log in the StaySafe.Ph App or other contact tracing and Health Declaration applications prior to their entry in the venue.
- b. If based on the Health Declaration Form, the employee meets any of the following conditions, he/she shall be denied to participate in the activity and shall be directed to consult a doctor or stay at home:
 1. Participant is experiencing fever, cough and/or colds, body pains, or sore throat;

2. Participant had a face-to-face contact with a Probable or Confirmed COVID-19 case within one (1) meter and for more than fifteen (15) minutes for the past fourteen (14) days;
3. Participant provided direct care for a patient with Probable or Confirmed COVID-19 case without using PPE for the past fourteen (14) days; or
4. Participant travelled outside the Philippines in the last 14 days; (*DTI- DOLE JMC No. 20-04-A*).

Section 10. Digital Forms and Pre-Registration of Participants. Participants shall be required to pre-register through the use of digital or online forms. Walk-in participants shall not be allowed. Attendance sheet shall also be accomplished and submitted through the use of digital or online forms.

Section 11. Entry and Exit. Entry and exit points to a Training space should be limited. There should only be one dedicated entry and one dedicated exit point. For training spaces with only one access, the training organizer must do close monitoring of the access to ensure that all entry and exit to the room is done in an orderly manner. Directional signs and floor markings shall be provided for a safe and orderly flow of traffic and avoid bottlenecks.

Section 12. Seating arrangement. The Training Organizer must ensure that there is ample space between trainees in line with physical/social distancing requirement. Participants must be seated approximately two (2) meters apart. This is in addition to the required floor space for practical activities.

- a. For classroom and breakout rooms, there shall be a distance of two (2) meters between seats.
- b. For theatre-style set-up, a checkerboard set-up shall be used, removing every other chair and arranging it so that no one is seated behind someone else.
- c. For U-shaped set up, there shall be maximum of 2 people at each 6-ft. table, instead of the usual standard for 3 people per 6-ft. table.

Section 13. Personal Protective Equipment.

- a. Face masks and face shields shall be worn properly throughout the duration of the activity. If a participant does not have a mask and a face shield, the Organizer must ensure that these are provided to the participant.
- b. The Organizer is encouraged to provide alcohol and/or hand sanitizer dispensers and tissues at the entrance and inside the venue premises.

Section 14. Physical Distancing.

- a. Physical distancing shall be observed at all times during Face-to-Face Trainings. The Organizer shall ensure that participants and resource speakers maintain a distance of at least two (2) meters apart during the activity, including during meals, breaks, and other interactions.
- b. The number of people within toilet facilities shall be limited at any given time during the activity.
- c. The Organizer shall ensure that participants and resource speakers maintain Physical Distancing in the conduct of non-physical group activities.

- d. Group discussion, hands-on or practical activities are highly discouraged. However, in case group discussion, workshops, hands-on or practical activities are necessary in the Face-to-Face Training, the Organizer shall ensure that proper Physical Distancing are duly observed.
- e. Activities involving physical contact or close contact of participants are highly discouraged.

Section 15. Duration of Trainings. Duration of Face-to-Face Trainings shall not be more than three (3) days, with eight (8) hour-long sessions per day. Should the Training program be for more than three days, the Organizer shall use a Blended Learning Programs method, with lectures to be delivered online, and with the Face-to-Face Training limited to the skills or actual demonstration component.

Notwithstanding the preceding paragraph, the Regional Tour Guiding (RTG) Courses shall be allowed to have a maximum of eight (8) days of Face-to-Face Trainings for practical activities such as technical tours, mock formal dinner, industry immersion, and practical examination. All other components of the RTG such as lectures, panel presentation, and research work shall be conducted online.

Section 16. Reminders on House Rules. The Organizer is encouraged to give frequent reminders on the following:

- a. Mandatory wearing of face masks and face shields throughout the duration of the activity;
- b. Participants shall refrain from touching their mouth, nose, or eyes;
- c. Participants shall do regular hand washing/sanitizing;
- d. Long hair is encouraged to be tied up or pinned away from the face; and
- e. Participants shall maintain Physical Distancing throughout the Training.

Section 17. Notices. Posting notices or infographics on health and safety guidelines inside the Training venue is highly encouraged. Other information such as emergency contact numbers of nearby hospital or emergency response team may be made available.

Section 18. Meal Arrangements. The following meal arrangements shall be observed:

- a. Buffet service shall not be allowed;
- b. Meals and refreshments shall be pre-packed and consumed at the participants' individual seats or area in the venue to maintain Physical Distancing;
- c. Participants are encouraged to bring their own refillable water containers and utensils. In case cutleries will not be provided, participants must be informed in advance if they are to bring their own utensils; and
- d. As much as possible, only bottled drinks should be provided during the training session.

Section 19. Training Materials and Equipment.

- a. To reduce the risk of contamination, consumables to be used during the training should be prepared for each individual. These include, but are not limited to, training kits, markers, pens, paper, and other training materials. Sharing of materials is discouraged.

- b. As far as practicable, the use of technology shall be maximized in the distribution of reference materials. Copies of lectures, presentations, and other reference materials shall be sent electronically (via email, messenger or other applicable apps).
- c. Microphones and other training equipment shall be sanitized after every use and during breaks.

Section 20. Trainers and resource speakers. The engagement of resource speakers and local trainers is highly encouraged. In case a local trainer is not available, other options to deliver the lecture should be explored (pre-taped lecture, etc.).

Section 21. Provision of Isolation Area. The Organizer shall designate an isolation room or area where participants who feel unwell or show symptoms of COVID-19 during the activity may be brought to before referral to the doctor on duty, to the nearest hospital, or to the Barangay Health Emergency Response Team (BHERT), in accordance with DOH prescribed protocols.

Section 22. Post-Training Reporting. Participants shall be advised that if symptoms of COVID-19 occur within fourteen (14) days from the last day of the activity occur, the participant should inform DOT immediately for proper contact tracing.

IV. OTHER PROVISIONS

Section 23. Coordination with Local Government Units. If a Training is conducted in partnership with the LGUs, the Organizer shall seek the assistance of the LGU in identifying the proper venue for the Face-to-Face Trainings.

Section 24. Interzonal and Intrazonal Movement. The Organizer shall ensure that its participants in the Face-to-Face Trainings shall comply with rules on interzonal and intrazonal movement or travel protocols under pertinent IATF Guidelines.

Section 25. Supplemental Guidelines. The Organizer shall ensure compliance with applicable provisions of DOT-DTI Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2020-003 and DOT-DTI Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2021-001, DOT Memorandum Circular No 2020-006A or the *Amended New Normal Health and Safety Guidelines for MICE Organizers and Mice Venues/Facilities* during the conduct of Face-to-Face Trainings

Section 26. Separability Clause. If any portion or provision of this Order is declared null and void or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in force and in effect.

Section 27. Repealing Clause. The provision of Sections X (b) of D.O. No. 2020-23 and all other DOT issuances inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed or modified accordingly. All relevant provisions not inconsistent with this Order shall remain effective and enforceable.

Section 28. Effectivity. This Circular shall take effect immediately and shall remain effective until otherwise superseded, amended, or repealed accordingly.

For guidance and strict compliance.

10 April 2021

BERNADETTE ROMULO-PUYAT
Secretary

