



MC No. 01, s. 2017

## MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR

- TO :** ALL HEADS OF CONSTITUTIONAL BODIES; DEPARTMENTS, BUREAUS AND AGENCIES OF THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT; LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS; GOVERNMENT-OWNED AND CONTROLLED CORPORATIONS WITH ORIGINAL CHARTER; AND STATE UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES
- SUBJECT :** Reiteration of the Policy on Government Office Hours; and the Administrative Offenses of Frequent Unauthorized Absences (Habitual Absenteeism); Tardiness in Reporting for Duty; and Loafing from Duty during Regular Office Hours

The Constitution mandates that public officers and employees must at all times be accountable to the people, serve them with utmost responsibility, integrity, loyalty, and efficiency, act with patriotism and lead modest lives<sup>1</sup>. Part of this accountability is the observance of the prescribed office hours in a given working day.

It has come to the attention of the Commission that there are government officials and employees who are not observing the prescribed office hours and are not recording their daily attendance in the proper form. Likewise, unauthorized absences, tardiness and loafing from duty during regular office hours are detrimental to public service.

The Commission hereby reiterates the following policy on government office hours, including the aforementioned administrative offenses and their corresponding penalties.

- 1) On Government Office Hours, **Sections 1 to 5, Rule XVII, Omnibus Rules Implementing Book V of Executive Order No. 292** provide:

*“SECTION 1. It shall be the duty of each head of department or agency to require all officers and employees under him to strictly observe the prescribed office hours.*

<sup>1</sup>Section 1, Article XI, 1987 Constitution.

*“SEC. 2. Each head of department or agency shall require a daily record of attendance of all the officers and employees under him including those serving in the field or on the water, to be kept on the proper form and, whenever possible, registered on the bundy clock.*

*“Service ‘in the field’ shall refer to service rendered outside the office proper and service ‘on the water’ shall refer to service rendered on board a vessel which is the usual place of work.*

*“SEC. 3. Chiefs and Assistant Chiefs of agencies who are appointed by the President, officers who rank higher than these chiefs in the three branches of the government, and other presidential appointees need not punch in the bundy clock, but attendance and all absences of such officers must be recorded.*

*“SEC. 4. Falsification or irregularities in the keeping of time records will render the guilty officer or employee administratively liable without prejudice to criminal prosecution as the circumstances warrant.*

*“SEC. 5. Officers and employees of all departments and agencies except those covered by special laws shall render not less than eight hours of work a day for five days a week or a total of forty hours a week, exclusive of time for lunch. As a general rule, such hours shall be from eight o’clock in the morning to twelve o’clock noon and from one o’clock to five o’clock in the afternoon on all days except Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays.*

- 2) On Frequent Unauthorized Absences (Habitual Absenteeism), Tardiness in Reporting for Duty and Loafing from Duty during Regular Office Hours, **Section 22, Rule XIV, Omnibus Rules Implementing Book V of Executive Order No. 292** provides:

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*“An officer or employee in the civil service shall be considered habitually absent if he incurs unauthorized absences exceeding the allowable 2.5 days monthly leave credit under the Leave Law for at least three (3) months in a semester or at least three (3) consecutive months during the year.*

*“In case of claim of ill-health, heads of departments or agencies are encouraged to verify the validity of such claim, if not satisfied with the reason given, should disapprove the application for sick leave. On the other hand, in cases where an employee absents himself from work before approval of the application, said application should be disapproved.*

*“In the discretion of the Head of any department, agency, or office, any government physician may be authorized to do a spot check on employees who are supposed to be on sick leave.*

Further, **Section 46 (B) (5), Revised Rules on Administrative Cases in the Civil Service (RRACCS)** provides that Frequent Unauthorized Absences (Habitual Absenteeism), Tardiness in Reporting for Duty, and Loafing from Duty during Regular Office Hours are grave offenses punishable by suspension of six (6) months and one (1) day to one (1) year for the first offense and dismissal from the service for the second offense.

On the other hand, under **Section 46 (F) (4), RRACCS**, Frequent Unauthorized Tardiness (Habitual Tardiness) is a light offense punishable by reprimand for the first offense, suspension of one (1) to thirty (30) days for the second offense, and dismissal from the service for the third offense. It is committed when an official or employee incurs tardiness, regardless of the number of minutes, ten (10) times a month for at least two (2) months in a semester or at least two (2) consecutive months during the year.

The classification of Habitual Tardiness as either a grave offense or a light offense would depend on the frequency or regularity of its commission and its effects on the government service.

For strict compliance.

  
**ALICIA dela ROSA-BALA**  
Chairperson

31 JAN 2017