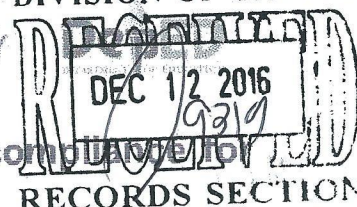


PRESS RELEASE

DepEd, ACT fast-track teacher-beneficiaries' PSF compliance for PSF



The Department of Education (DepEd) recently gained the support of the Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT) in expediting the release of financial assistance from the President's Social Fund (PSF) for government personnel, including teachers, whose houses were partially and totally damaged by typhoon "Yolanda" and/or the 7.2-magnitude earthquake in Bohol.

The Undersecretary sought the assistance of ACT local leaders in encouraging beneficiaries and field offices that have yet to submit liquidation documents to meet the deadline. Schools divisions must submit liquidation requirements on or before December 9, 2016 for Batch 1, and January 20, 2017 for Batch 2. The Department is set to furnish ACT with a list of requirement deficiencies from Divisions to help determine which offices or beneficiaries need to comply accordingly.

"Let's work together *para ma-address ang mga Divisions, para makapag-comply sila. . .* We need to find ways *para matulungan sila na makumpleto 'yung liquidation documents,*" DepEd Undersecretary for Legal and Legislative Affairs Alberto Muyot told ACT Teachers party-list Rep. France Castro and teacher-leaders from Visayas during a recent dialogue at the Central Office (CO).

Muyot further moved to arrange a meeting with the Presidential Management Staff (PMS) to ask for a liberal interpretation of the Deed of Donation of the Office of the President (OP) and DepEd to negotiate for the immediate release of the second tranche for beneficiaries who have completed the liquidation requirements on time.

According to PMS policy, the second tranche will be released only upon the submission of all liquidation requirements by all Divisions under each batch to PMS, through DepEd CO Accounting Division, and upon the approval of the release of the second tranche based on the favorable results of PMS' financial and physical performance evaluation.

"We released a memorandum [December 1, 2016] on the final call for submission of liquidation requirements to Regions and Divisions to serve as guideline. We have also instructed the Schools Division Superintendents (SDS) to call for a meeting with the beneficiaries to clarify the process of PMS," stated Director Ronilda Co of DepEd Disaster Risk Reduction Management Service (DRRMS).

"For the last three years *sino ba, sa Division ba ang may problema dito?* For sure *hindi naman siguro dito sa CO [Central Office] kasi tumatanggap lang kayo, pero paano nagtatagal sa Division?*" Castro said.

Co disclosed that a bottleneck in the procedure is in the field auditing. Previously, liquidation documents should be audited by the field COA before submission to the DepEd CO Accounting Division. To address this, the PMS recently agreed to accept, instead, a certification by the Division Accountant that the funds transferred have been liquidated and accounted for in the books, which is pursuant to the latest COA Circular 2016-002 issued on May 31, 2016. However, should OP-COA

find any suspension, the accountant who certified that the funds have been liquidated will be held liable.

Meanwhile, to accommodate qualified beneficiaries who were not included in the first two batches, ACT proposed to lobby for the possibility of a third batch and for the alignment of a separate fund in future budget deliberations. The Undersecretary clarified that negotiations with PMS will have to be done to determine the parameters for the proposed third batch.

END

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