

IN THE MATTER OF THE FOUR-DAY WORKWEEK IN THE SUPREME COURT DURING THE PERIOD OF STATE OF PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY DUE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

SC ADMINISTRATIVE CIRCULAR No. 62-2020, November 24, 2020

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WHEREAS, in Administrative Circular No. 45-2020 (Re: Court Operations During the General Community Quarantine from 19 August 2020 Onwards) issued on August 18, 2020, all courts in areas under General Community Quarantine (GCQ) were directed to be PHYSICALLY OPENED TO COURT USERS. x x x x x x x x;

WHEREAS, in the Supreme Court, the Offices of the Chief Justice and Associate Justices have been operating in accordance with the respective discretions of the Chief Justice and Associate Justices, while all other offices and services of the Court have been physically opened and are operating with a skeleton-staff of not less than fifty percent (50%) where the Chiefs of the different Offices and Services have ensured that every court personnel is assigned certain tasks to effectively and efficiently implement their respective offices' mandates even if they are working from home.

WHEREAS, in Memorandum Circular No. 18, s. 2020 issued by the Civil Service Commission (CSC) on October 15, 2020 amending the Revised Interim Guidelines for Alternative Work Arrangements and Support Mechanisms for Workers in the Government during the Period of State of Public Health Emergency due to COVID-19 Pandemic as disseminated through CSC M.C. No. 10, s. 2020, the Commission adopted the Four-day (Compressed) Workweek as one of the Alternative Work Arrangements which the government agencies may implement;

WHEREAS, under the revised interim guidelines for alternative work arrangements, the 4-day workweek may be adopted in combination with other alternative arrangement/s provided that the required 40-hour workweek is complied with;

WHEREAS, under the 4-day workweek arrangement, government employees' workweek is reduced to four (4) days, but the number of work hours per day is increased to ten (10) hours so the total number of required work hours per week would not be less than 40 hours;

WHEREAS, the CSC emphasized however, that the agency shall ensure that the normal workweek is manned and maintained in order not to prejudice public service delivery;

WHEREAS, after a serious study on the matter, the Court finds it advisable that the 4-day workweek schedule is to be observed in the Supreme Court during the period of state of public health emergency due to COVID-19 pandemic;

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court, as administrator of all courts and its personnel, acknowledges the need to implement the 4-day workweek schedule in the appellate courts and the lower courts. The respective appellate courts (i.e. Court of Appeals, Sandiganbayan and Court of Tax Appeals) and the lower courts through the Office

of the Court Administrator are enjoined to prepare their separate guidelines for implementation.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Court approves to adopt and implement the four-day workweek schedule in the Supreme Court during the period of state of public health emergency due to COVID-19 pandemic, whereby the following guidelines shall be observed:

a.

The Offices of the Chief Justice and Associate Justices shall operate in accordance with the respective discretions of the Chief Justice and Associate Justices. All other offices and services of the Court shall be physically opened and shall operate with not less than eighty percent (80%), from Monday to Friday.

b. All officials of the different offices of the Court are required to render forty (40) hours a week.

c.

The workweek schedule of employees shall be compressed to 4 days a week with a fixed office hours from 7:30AM to 5:30PM, for a total of ten (10) hours a day or forty (40) hours a week.

d.

The total number of employees in the office will be divided into five (5) groups. Each group comprising of 20% employees will be assigned a weekday's off from work. The office shall continue to operate and be open 5 days a week with not less than eighty percent (80%) attendance.

d.

Subject to the discretion of the Chiefs of Offices and services, the groupings, new work schedules and supposed rest day/day off may be changed or modified, upon prior notice to the employees.

e.

The Chiefs of Offices and Services shall submit the 4-day workweek schedules to the Leave Division, Office of Administrative Services, Supreme Court, on a monthly basis for record purposes.

f.

The rendition of overtime (OT) services in the different offices and services of the Court, except in the Offices of the Chief Justice and Associate Justices, shall be suspended. Flexible time schedules shall likewise be suspended in the meantime.

g.

The appellate courts (i.e. Court of Appeals, Sandiganbayan and Court of Tax Appeals) and the lower courts through the Office of the Court Administrator are enjoined to prepare their separate guidelines for

implementation, and to submit the same to the Office of the Chief Justice for approval, within ten (10) calendar days from receipt hereof.

This Administrative Circular takes effect on 1 December 2020.

Issued this 24th day of November, 2020.

(SGD.) DIOSDADO M. PERALTA
Chief Justice

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