

## CONSTITUTING A TASK FORCE TO FORMULATE A DISCLOSURE POLICY FOR THE SUPREME COURT

*SC ADMINISTRATIVE CIRCULAR NO. 2-2002, January 14, 2002*

Read online (full-text search, related cases, audio case brief): <https://batas.org/library/5cc131d95148/>

---

WHEREAS, the Philippine Constitution provides in Section 7 of Article III: "The right of the people to information on matters of public concern shall be recognized. Access to official records, and to documents, and papers pertaining to official acts, transactions, or decisions, as well as to government research data used as basis for policy development, shall be afforded the citizen, subject to such limitations as may be provided by law;"

WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 6713 (Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees), among other directives, requires a standard of conduct for handling and disseminating government information by public officials and employees, and provides penalties for violation thereof;

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 12 of Republic Act No. 6713, the Civil Service Commission adopted the "Rules Implementing the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees," Rule IV of which enumerates guidelines on Transparency of Transactions and Access to Information, which require "full public disclosure" of "official information, records and documents" subject to exceptions specified therein;

WHEREAS, the Davide Watch, the vision-mission statement for the Judiciary, envisions a "Judiciary that is independent, effective and efficient, and worthy of public trust and confidence," and declares: "As the Judiciary is meant to serve the people through the dispensation of justice, the Bench must be fully accountable to the public by remaining transparent, yet not betray those aspects of the judiciary process which require utmost confidentiality;"

WHEREAS, there is a demand and a need to provide the general public, including the personnel of the Supreme Court, access to information relevant to their activities and, more importantly, their participation in democratic processes;

WHEREAS, it is equally imperative to ensure the security of information which must remain confidential to preserve the integrity and objectivity of the processes and policies of the Supreme Court which require deliberation by its Members and officers;

WHEREAS, there is an equal demand and need to instill discipline among the custodians of judicial information to facilitate public access to information where such access is guaranteed, and to ensure the integrity and security of information where confidentiality is essential;

WHEREAS, there have been instances of serious breaches of the confidentiality of sensitive information consisting of, among other infractions, the premature disclosure of Supreme Court decisions and resolutions, the leakage of deliberations or voting of its Members, and the revelation of names of ponentes of cases despite prohibition against the same;

WHEREAS, the breaches described above have diminished public trust and confidence in the impartiality of the Members of the Supreme Court and the confidentiality of their deliberations, confused the public as to the official source of accurate Court-related information, and otherwise hampered the deliberative processes of the Supreme

Court; and

WHEREAS, there has been an increasing public interest in information generated by, and related to, the Judiciary;

WHEREFORE, it is hereby ordered that a set of rules be formulated to guide the various offices and personnel of the Supreme Court in the dissemination and safekeeping of information generated or held by the Supreme Court, and to prescribe the necessary sanctions to guarantee appropriate conduct with regard to the handling of such information. This body of rules shall be known as the Disclosure Policy of the Supreme Court.

A Task Force on the Disclosure Policy is hereby created to formulate and recommend for adoption by the Supreme Court a Disclosure Policy to ensure that the Supreme Court provides the fullest possible access to, or disclosure of, official information to the public in accordance with the Constitution, applicable laws, and implementing rules and regulations.

### **I. DECLARATION OF POLICIES**

- The Supreme Court shall provide maximum responsible disclosure of timely, accurate and relevant information to the public without betraying those aspects of the decision-making process which require utmost confidentiality.
- There shall be a presumption in favor of public disclosure of information generated or held by the Supreme Court. The presumption shall be subject to exceptions to be determined by the Task Force.
- The Supreme Court prohibits and shall sanction abuse of workplace access to information for unauthorized or illegal use.
- The Supreme Court shall encourage the use and development of information communication technology that will assure responsible disclosure of information at affordable cost to the public through all efficient channels.
- "Information" shall be understood to mean any knowledge that can be communicated regardless of its physical form or the format in which it is contained, whether in tape, photographic, or electronic format, that is owned by, produced by or for, or is under the control of, the Supreme Court. The form in which information is maintained shall not affect its availability.
- The Supreme Court shall not, however, be obliged to generate specific reports out of information in its custody. An exception is when the information is maintained in a computer database, in which case, the process of retrieving information may result in the creation of a report which is not regularly produced by the Court.

### **II. COMPOSITION**

The Task Force shall be headed by Assistant Court Administrator Antonio H. Dujua, and shall be composed of the following members:

Atty. Ma. Luisa D. Villarama  
Office of the Clerk of Court

Atty. Teresita G. Dimaisip  
Judicial Records Office

Atty. Edna E. Diño  
Office of the Chief Attorney

Atty. Romeo M. Salazar  
Office of Administrative Services

Atty. Thelma C. Bahia  
Office of the Court Administrator-  
Court Management Office

Atty. Conrad S. Tolentino  
Office of the Chief Justice

Rhoda S. Santos  
Sheilah C. Critica  
Public Information Office

The Chairman may designate a Secretary-Recorder for the Task Force. The Task Force may call on resource persons and consult with the Justices and other key officials of the Court in furtherance of the performance of its responsibilities as defined herein.

The Chairman shall be entitled to an expense allowance of P500 per meeting but not to exceed P3,000 per month. The members shall be entitled to an expense allowance of P350 per meeting but not to exceed P2,100 per month. The Secretary-Recorder shall be entitled to an expense allowance of P650 per month.

### III. RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Task Force shall formulate the Disclosure Policy for the Supreme Court, which shall

- Determine which information and documents generated or held by the Supreme Court must be disclosed and which must be withheld, either temporarily or permanently;
- Identify or catalogue the said information and documents, including personnel records, and identify the offices or sources responsible for these information and documents;
- Prescribe an access classification system defining levels of access, which system shall guide custodians and users of information as to what types of information and documents may be accessed by whom, from which offices or sources, and which must remain confidential. Only the Members of the Court shall be allowed absolute access to all information generated and held by the Supreme Court, but the restrictions on disclosure as specified in the Disclosure Policy shall apply to the Members with equal force as to all officers and personnel of the Court;
- Define the responsibilities of the custodians of information and documents, as well as those who handle such information and documents as part of their responsibilities;
- Prescribe guidelines to be observed by a requesting party to facilitate a request for information or documents;
- Prescribe a system of fees for the provision of access to Court information and reproduction of documents. The system shall recognize the financial capabilities of the requesters of information, the purpose for which the information is requested, the format in which the information is stored or sought, and other relevant considerations;
- Prescribe reasonable time limits within which requested information or documents should be provided the requester;
- Prescribe sanctions for violations of the Disclosure Policy. Sanctions may include reprimand, suspension, loss or denial of access to information, dismissal from the service, or other sanctions in accordance with prevailing regulations of the Supreme Court and applicable laws. The Disclosure Policy shall prescribe procedures by which complaints involving disclosure may be decided, and shall determine the appropriate body or office which shall

oversee the implementation of sanctions; and

- Identify the person/s who or office/s which shall conduct a regular review of the contents of the Disclosure Policy. The Disclosure Policy shall likewise prescribe the period during which such review shall take place.

The Disclosure Policy for the Supreme Court must take into account all existing information-related policies of the Court as well as applicable laws, rules and regulations. Upon completion of the Disclosure Policy, the same shall be submitted by the Task Force to the Supreme Court En Bane for its approval.

- In addition to the above responsibilities, the Task Force shall

- Publish an agency guide which shall contain an index and description of the major information systems of the Supreme Court, and provide simple and useful guide to the intended audience for obtaining various types and categories of public information from the Court. Where the Task Force has deemed it necessary to prescribe forms to facilitate access to information, such forms will also be included in the agency guide. The agency guide shall be available in electronic format and be accessible through the Supreme Court's website.

- Determine the capability of the personnel necessary for the effective and efficient implementation of the disclosure policy and, if necessary, outline a program for the development or improvement of such capability.

#### **IV. COMPLETION OF WORK**

The Task Force shall complete its work under this Administrative Circular within eight months from its constitution.

This Administrative Circular shall take effect on 25 January 2002.

Issued this 14th day of January 2002.

(Sgd.) HILARIO G. DAVIDE, JR

Chief Justice

(Sgd.) JOSUE N. BELLOSILLO

(Sgd.) JOSE A. R. MELO

Chairman Second Division

Chariman, Third Division

(per A.M. No. 99-12-08-SC)

**ABOUT BATAS.ORG**

# Study smarter at BATAS.org

*The Philippine bar review and law-school companion built around how your brain actually remembers.*

**The complete Philippine law library - free for everyone.**

More than 100,000 Supreme Court decisions, Republic Acts, and executive issuances - full-text searchable, browsable by category and year, and always free. No paywall, no login. This PDF came from it.

**Audio case-brief lectures.**

Any decision becomes a podcast-style lecture - facts, issues, ruling, and doctrine - with read-along highlighting and a hands-free presentation mode. Study while commuting, working out, or resting your eyes.

**Bar review built on the science of memory.**

Complete, sequenced courses for all eight bar subjects, narrated like podcasts and reinforced with retrieval practice and spaced review - the study techniques with the strongest evidence behind them.

**The full law-school curriculum.**

One subscription unlocks the entire J.D. curriculum - every subject, every lesson, with your progress tracked down to the paragraph so you can pick up exactly where you left off, on any device.

**Mock exams that tell you where you stand.**

Timed multiple-choice exams graded instantly, with per-subject score breakdowns and focus suggestions that point you at your weakest topics first.

**A study planner that keeps you on pace.**

Set your schedule and BATAS tells you every day whether you are on track for bar day - and exactly which lesson to take next.

**Start free at <https://batas.org>**

The law library is free forever - and your first lesson is one click away.

The text of this document is an official public record and remains in the public domain. Formatting, presentation, and compilation © 2026 batas.org.

Downloaded free from the batas.org Law Library. Share it freely - the library is free for every law student, bar reviewee, and practitioner.