

## **IMPOSING A MORATORIUM ON THE TRANSFER OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENT REGIONAL OFFICES FROM ZAMBOANGA CITY TO PAGADIAN CITY PURSUANT TO MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR (MC) NO. 78 (S. 2020)**

*MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 18, April 19, 2023*

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WHEREAS, Executive Order No. 429 (s. 1990) reorganized the administrative regions in Mindanao to guarantee the effective delivery of the field services of government agencies, taking into consideration the formation of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao;

WHEREAS, Section 1 of EO No. 429 reorganized Region IX and designated Pagadian City as the regional center and Zamboanga City as the commercial and industrial center of Western Mindanao;

WHEREAS, by virtue of MC No. 75 (s. 2004), all regional offices of departments were directed to transfer from Zamboanga City to Pagadian City as soon as practicable, except the Department of Trade and Industry, Department of Labor and Employment, and Department of Tourism, which shall remain in Zamboanga City but shall establish a presence in Pagadian City.

WHEREAS, MC No. 11 (s. 2010) directed a moratorium on the transfer of regional offices of all departments and agencies from Zamboanga City to Pagadian City; and

WHEREAS, relative to the ongoing devolution of national government services, as well as the high economic and social costs brought about by the transfer, there is a need to re-evaluate the foregoing policy of implementing the full transfer of regional offices to Pagadian City;

NOW, THEREFORE, to provide an opportunity to study and re-assess the justifications for, as well as the implications of the transfer of regional offices to Pagadian City, the following are hereby ordered:

SECTION 1. All departments, bureaus and other government agencies are enjoined to suspend the transfer of their regional offices in Region IX from Zamboanga City to Pagadian City pending the study of the political, economic, and social implications of said transfer, and consultations with relevant stakeholders to be jointly conducted by the National Economic and Development Authority, Department of the Interior and Local Government, and Department of Budget and Management.

The Regional Offices that are already in Pagadian City shall continue to operate thereat.

SECTION 2. The abovementioned departments tasked to conduct the study on the matter shall submit a comprehensive report on their findings together with their recommendations to the President, through the Office of the Executive Secretary.

SECTION 3. This Circular shall take effect immediately.

DONE, in the City of Manila, this 19[th] day of April, in the year of our Lord, Two Thousand and Twenty-Three.

By authority the President:

(SGD.) LUCAS P. BERSAMIN  
Executive Secretary

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