# ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PROGRESSIVE ACCREDITATION SYSTEM (PAS) AND ITS IMPLEMENTING GUIDELINES

*MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 2018-03, April 11, 2018*

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Pursuant to the authority vested in the Department of Tourism (DOT) by Republic Act No. 9593, otherwise known as the Tourism Act of 2009, to maintain international standards of excellence in all tourism facilities and services, and promote the country as a safe and wholesome tourist destination, the guidelines for the Progressive Accreditation System are hereby promulgated to implement the intent and purpose of the Tourism Act of 2009.

## 1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 The Philippine tourism industry came to its peak and has achieved unprecedented milestones during the last six (6) years. These include an uninterrupted increase in the tourism industry's key growth indicators namely: domestic and international tourist arrivals, domestic and international tourism receipts, length of stay of international tourists as well as increase in the contribution of tourism to the national gross domestic product (GDP) and employment.

1.2 Concomitant to the influx of tourists in the country is the rapid increase in the establishment of tourism enterprises to answer the demand of the country's growing patronage. Multitudes of tourism enterprises of various types and levels were seen to be established during the past years. As such, the formulation of a progressive accreditation system is timely to address the need of these enterprises for an accreditation system that recognizes their various levels of development and standards of operation.

1.3 The DOT, thus, deemed it best to establish the Progressive Accreditation System (PAS) that will cover primary tourism enterprises, prescribing not only the minimum standards for Basic Registration and Regular Accreditation, but also reflecting customers' expectations for the Premium or Star-Rating Accreditation.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

2.1 To make DOT accreditation system more inclusive;

2.2 To motivate stakeholders to maintain and improve the quality of their property's facilities and services; and

2.3 To develop a database of primary tourism enterprises in the country.

## 3.0 PROGRESSIVE ACCREDITATION SYSTEM (PAS)

The PAS is a three-level recognition scheme of the DOT for Primary Tourism Enterprises entailing progressive minimum standards and reflecting customers' expectations, thus:

3.1 Basic Registration


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Basic Registration shall be issued to a tourism-oriented enterprise found to be compliant with the Basic requirements set by the DOT.

Basic Registration applies to primary tourism enterprises as stated under Section 4.0 of this guidelines, except for Hotels, Resorts, Apartment Hotels, Homestays, Tourist Land Transport Operators and Online Travel and Tour Agencies.

Basic Registration shall be valid for a period of one (1) year from the date of issuance unless sooner cancelled for a cause.

3.2 Regular Accreditation

Regular Accreditation shall be issued to a tourism enterprise found to be compliant with both basic and minimum standards for the operation of tourism facilities and services.

Regular Accreditation shall be valid for a period of two (2) years and shall be renewable thereafter unless sooner cancelled for a cause.

3.3 Premium Accreditation and Star Rating Accreditation

3.3.1 Premium Accreditation shall be issued to a tourism enterprise found to have complied with the minimum standards prescribed under Regular and Premium Accreditation. It shall apply to all primary tourism enterprises as stated under Section 4.0 of this guidelines, except for Hotels, Resorts, Apartment Hotels and Online Travel and Tour Agencies.

Premium Accreditation shall be valid for a period of three (3) years and shall be renewable thereafter unless sooner cancelled for a cause.

3.3.2 Star-Rating Accreditation shall be issued to Hotels, Resorts and Apartment Hotels found to have complied with the minimum standards under the National Accommodation Standards (NAS).

Star-Rating Accreditation shall be valid for a period of three (3) years and shall be renewable thereafter unless sooner cancelled for a cause.

## 4.0 SCOPE

As defined, the following primary tourism enterprises shall be covered by the PAS, thus:

4.1 Accommodation Establishments
a) Hotel - shall refer to full service accommodation with reception and guest rooms generally offering private facilities with dining facility and services.
b) Resort - shall refer to full service accommodation located in a more natural, relaxed environment, with reception and guest rooms generally offering private facilities with dining and recreation facilities and services.
c) Apartment Hotel - shall refer to serviced apartments offering self-contained units with access to kitchen and laundry facilities. A number of bedrooms may share one bathroom in the unit.
d) Mabuhay Accommodation - shall apply to Tourist Inns, Pension Houses, Motels, Bed and Breakfasts, Vacation Homes, Hostels and other similar accommodation establishments.
e) Homestay - shall refer to an alternative form of tourism where tourists will stay with the host family in the same house to experience the everyday way of life of the family and the local community.

4.2 Travel and Tour Agencies

a) Tour Operator - shall mean an entity engaged in the business of inbound and/or local tour operation such as organizing and/or conducting tours as well as making online reservations, arranging and booking for transportation and accommodation for a fee, commission, or any form of remuneration.


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b) Travel Agency - shall mean an entity engaged in the business of providing travel-related services such as transportation or accommodation reservations/bookings, documentation of travel papers, sale and/or issuance of tickets and selling of outbound tours for a fee, commission, or any form of remuneration.

c) Travel and Tour Agency - shall mean an entity engaged in the business of providing both Tour Operator and Travel Agency services, as defined in (a) and (b).

d) Online Travel and Tour Agency - shall mean an entity whose operations are solely conducted through websites and other online platform dedicated to travel and tour operations.

4.3 Tourist Land Transport Operator - shall mean an entity regularly engaged in providing land transport services exclusively, for tourist use for a fee or any form of remuneration.

4.4 MICE Organizer - shall mean an entity engaged in the business of managing or organizing congresses, conventions, meetings/ conferences, exhibitions or similar events in a professional manner for a fee or any form of remuneration.

4.5 MICE Venue/Facility - shall mean a physical space designed and provided for events, exhibitions, meetings/conferences and conventions for a fee or any form of remuneration.

## 5.0 REQUIREMENTS

5.1 Documentary Requirements

The documentary requirements for primary tourism enterprises for each category are attached as Annex A*.

5.2 Physical Requirements

The physical requirements for primary tourism enterprises for each category and each level are attached as Annex B*.

The criteria/requirements under the National Accommodation Standards (DOT Memorandum Circular 2012-02) are incorporated by way of reference.

## 6.0 SELF-ASSESSMENT FORM (SAF)

The SAF is a document or checklist (copy attached as Annex C*) where the applicant tourism enterprise pre-determines its qualification for Basic Registration, Regular Accreditation or Premium/Star-Rating Accreditation by evaluating the degree of their compliance with the minimum requirements/ standards set by the Department.

The SAF shall be made available in the DOT-Regional Office’s (RO) and on the website of the DOT at all times for tourism enterprises' reference and use.

## 7.0 RENEWAL PERIOD AND VALIDITY OF ACCREDITATION

The following schedules shall be observed in the filing of application for accreditation with corresponding date of expiry:

Entity type

Renewal Period

Accreditation Expiry

Accommodation Establishments


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August 1 to October 31

October 31

Travel and Tour Agencies

April 1 to June 30

June 30

Tourist Land Transport Operator

February 1 to April 30

April 30

MICE Organizer and MICE Venue/ Facility

April 1 to June 30

June 30

## 8.0 PROCEDURE

A tourism enterprise who wishes to apply for DOT Registration/Accreditation may submit a Letter of Intent or duly accomplished Self-Assessment Form (SAF) to the DOT-Regional Office or file an application through Online Accreditation System.

An inspection shall then be scheduled and conducted at the designated time, and in the presence of the owner or his authorized representative. The DOT Accreditation Officer shall discuss with the General Manager or Authorized Representative the results/findings, after which both parties shall sign the Inspection Checklist.

## 8.1 BASIC REGISTRATION

8.1.1 If found to be compliant with the requirements for Basic Registration upon inspection, the DOT shall issue the Certificate of Registration to the tourism enterprise.

For mabuhay accommodation, registration may be extended for another year upon compliance with at least 50% of the identified physical requirements (marked ***) of the regular accreditation. Corresponding validation shall be conducted by the DOT.

8.1.2 The Certificate of Registration to be issued by the DOT shall bear the following disclosure and, terms and conditions, thus:

## (FRONT)

DISCLOSURE FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION AND
CONSUMER PROTECTION

This Certification does not serve to guarantee the quality of the facilities and services of this tourism enterprise.

## (DORSAL)

## TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The tourism enterprise in favour of which this Certificate was issued shall be bound to comply with all the laws, rules and regulations being implemented by DOT as well as the other government agencies.

Filing of any complaint for violation of these laws, rules and regulations determined to be with merit by DOT will result in automatic cancellation of the Basic Registration issued to the afore-named tourism enterprise.

8.1.3 If the tourism enterprise failed to meet the basic requirements, the DOT shall give the tourism enterprise a period of six (6) months to rectify its deficiencies. Failure to comply shall result to the issuance of Notice of Non- Compliance, copy furnished the LGU concerned.

## 8.2 REGULAR ACCREDITATION

8.2.1 If found to be compliant with the minimum standards for Regular Accreditation, DOT shall issue a Certificate of Accreditation and DOT Accreditation Sticker upon approval of the application and payment of corresponding accreditation fees.

8.2.2 If the tourism enterprise failed to meet the minimum standards for Regular Accreditation, Basic Registration shall be granted in accordance with Section 8.1.

## 8.3 PREMIUM AND STAR ACCREDITATION

8.3.1 Premium Accreditation
8.3.1.a If found to be compliant with the minimum standards for Premium Accreditation, DOT shall issue a Certificate of Accreditation and DOT Plaque to the tourism enterprise upon approval of the application and payment of corresponding accreditation fees. In the case of Mabuhay Accommodations, premium accreditation shall only be issued upon compliance of at least 50% of the total points allotted.

8.3.1.b If the tourism enterprise failed to meet the minimum standards for Premium Accreditation, the provisions of Section 8.2 or 8.1 (whichever is applicable) shall apply.

8.3.2 Star-Rating Accreditation

8.3.2.a Hotels, Resorts and Apartment Hotels applying for Star-Rating Accreditation shall be subjected to Third-Party Audit composed of a Third-Party Assessor (TPA), and Tourism Quality Advisor from DOT - Standards Monitoring and Enforcement Division (SMED) and DOT-RO.

If found to be compliant with the minimum standards for Star-Rating Accreditation, corresponding star rating classification shall be issued in accordance with the NAS.

A Certificate of Accreditation and DOT Plaque shall be issued to the tourism enterprise upon approval of the application and payment of the accreditation fees.

8.3.2.b If the tourism enterprise failed to meet the minimum score of 251 points under the NAS, the tourism enterprise may still be considered for regular accreditation provided that it has complied with the mandatory requirements and garnered not less than 200 points. Otherwise, the tourism enterprise shall be re-categorized into Mabuhay Accommodation, subject to inspection.


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## 9.0 DORMANCY

Dormant applications shall automatically be withdrawn after 45 days of inactivity. Appropriate warnings/notifications shall be sent to the applicant on the 30th and 45th day reckoned from date of submission.

## 10.0 FEES

10.1 The tourism enterprise shall pay the following accreditation and miscellaneous fees, as may be applicable:

Typ e o f Touris m
Enterpr i se

C l assi fi cati on
( If appli cabl e)

Extende d Bas ic
Registrati on

Regular Accreditation

Premium/ Star - Rating Accreditation

Hotel/Resort/ Apartment Hotel

5 s t ar

8 , 500. 00

4 s t ar

7 , 500. 00

3 s t ar

6 , 500. 00

2 s t ar

5 , 500. 00

1 s t ar

4 , 500. 00

Regu l ar

2 , 000. 00

Mabuhay
Accommodation

500 . 00

1 , 400. 00

2 , 100. 00

Homestay

600 . 00

900 . 00

Tourist Land Transport Operator (Minimum of 3 units)

Bu s

700 . 00/ unit

1 , 050. 00/ unit

Coas t er/ M i ni
Bu s

400 . 00/ unit

600 . 00/ unit

Va n

300 . 00/ unit

450 . 00/ unit

Ca r

200 . 00/ unit

300 . 00/ unit

Travel and Tour Agency

M a in Offi ce

5 , 000. 00

7 , 500. 00

Branc h Offi ce

3 , 000. 00

4 , 500. 00

On li ne Travel Agency

5 , 000. 00

7 , 500. 00

M IC E Organizer

1 , 400. 00

2 , 100. 00

M IC E Venue/ Facility

2 , 800. 00

4 , 200. 00

10.2 Sticker Fee. DOT Stickers shall be issued to accredited tourism enterprises upon payment of P300.00 per sticker.

10.3 Plaque Fee. Requests for duplicate of DOT Plaques shall be processed upon payment of P2,500.00.

10.4 Re-assessment Fee. A fee of P5,000.00 shall be charged to an accredited tourism enterprise requesting for an upgrade in its existing accreditation level.

For Hotels, Resorts and Apartment Hotels, a fee of P30,000.00 shall be charged to the requesting party.

10.5 Lost Certificate/Identification Card (ID). An amount of P150.00 shall be collected for an authenticated copy of Accreditation Certificate or replacement of lost ID upon submission of Letter Request and Affidavit of Loss.

10.6 Surcharge. An additional amount equivalent to 25% of the accreditation fee shall be collected for


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renewals made after the prescribed application period in accordance with Section 7. And another 50% shall be collected for every succeeding year thereafter.

## 11.0 BENEFITS AND PRIVILEGES

The DOT accredited tourism enterprise shall be entitled to the benefits and privileges under the prevailing DOT policies.

## 12.0 SUPERVISION OF TOURISM ESTABLISHMENTS

12.1 Validity of Accreditation. Certificate of Accreditation shall be valid for the following periods:

Regular Accreditation Two (2) years

Premium/Star-Rating Accreditation Three (3) years

12.2 Access of Department Representatives to Enterprise's Office and Records. The Department shall have access to a tourism establishment's office and records at a reasonable time of the day with due regard and respect accorded to the right to privacy of parties concerned.

12.3 Display of DOT Tourism Quality Seal and Accreditation Number. The DOT Accreditation Sticker/Plaque shall at all times be displayed in a conspicuous place of the establishment. The DOT accredited tourism enterprises which advertise their business or services through print or online media must display the DOT Tourism Quality Seal and Accreditation Number with validity in all its advertisements, brochures and promotional materials.

12.4 Non-Transferability of Accreditation. The rights and privileges granted under the accreditation shall be non-transferable.

12.5 Issuance of Tourism/Travel Advisory. The Department shall publish advisories against tourism enterprises found to have violated the Department of Tourism's rules and regulations.

12.6 Monitoring. The Department shall conduct periodic monitoring of tourism enterprises for the purposes of finding out whether it is being kept and/or managed in a manner conformable to the standards set by the Department.

## 13.0 DENIAL, DOWNGRADE, SUSPENSION OR REVOCATION OF ACCREDITATION

### 13.1 Grounds for Denial of Applications for Accreditation

The Department may deny the application for accreditation of tourism enterprises, on the following grounds:

a) Making any false declaration or statement, making use of any such declaration or statement or any document containing the same or committing fraud or any act of misrepresentation for the purpose of obtaining accreditation;
b) Failure to comply with the standards and requirements for accreditation;
c) Failure to pay outstanding surcharges, fines and penalties;
d) A determinative finding of liability for complaint/s filed against the tourism enterprise with the DOT;

### 13.2 Grounds for Suspension and Cancellation of Accreditation and Schedule of Fines and Penalties

12.2.1 The Office of Tourism Regulations, Coordination and Resource Generation (TRCRG), upon the recommendation of the Office of Tourism Standards and Regulation-SMED, may downgrade, suspend or revoke the accreditation of, and/or impose fines against, the tourism enterprise found to have violated any of the following provisions after due notice and hearing:


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**GROUNDS/OFFENSE S**

**FINE S AND PENALTIES**

1s t offense

2n d offense

3r d offense

a . Unau t hori zed use and/ or t ransf er of DOT Accred it ati on Certifi cat es, Sti ckers, I Ds or any docu m ent i ssued by t he DOT.

Ster n warni ng and a fi ne of P5, 000. 00

S ix (6) m on t hs suspension and a fi ne of P10 , 000. 00

Revoca ti on/ cance ll ati on an d a fi ne of P20 , 000. 00

b . Unaut hori zed reproducti on of DOT Accred it ati on

On e (1) year suspensi on and a fi ne o f P5 , 000. 00

Revoca ti on/ cance ll ati on an d a fi ne of

Cer tifi cat es, Sti ckers, I Ds or any docu m ent issued by t he DOT.

**P10 , 000. 00**

c . Gross and evi dent bad f aith in deali ng with cli ent s/ f raudul ent solicitation of business o r m aki ng any f al se, decepti ve or mi sl eadi ng cl ai ms or st at e m ents f or t he purpose of soli citi ng busi ness f rom cli ent s.

S ix (6) m on t hs suspensi on and/ or a fi ne of P10 , 000. 00

On e (1) yea r suspensi on and/ or a fi ne of P20 , 000. 00

Revoca ti on/ cancell ati on and a fi ne of P50 , 000. 00

e . Fail ure to di spl ay t he DOT Accredit ati on S ti cker/ Pl aque in a conspi cuous pl ace of the est abli sh m ent

S t ern warni ng and a fi ne of P5, 000. 00

Thre e (3) m onth s suspensi on an d a fi ne of P10 , 000. 00

S ix (6) M on t hs suspensi on an d a fi ne of P20 , 000. 00

f. Fail ure to d i spl ay/ specify t he DOT Touri sm Quali ty Seal ad Accredit ati on Nu m ber with vali dity in all of its adver ti se m ents t hrough print or onli ne media

S t ern W arni ng and a fi ne of P5, 000. 00

Thre e (3) m onth s suspensi on an d a fi ne of P10 , 000. 00


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S ix (6) M on t hs suspensi on an d a fi ne of P20 , 000. 00

g . Pro m oti on, f acilit ati on or conduct of acti viti es i nvol vi ng drug-related t ransacti ons or any f orm o f expl oit ati on of wo m en or chil dren

Revoca ti on/ cancell ati on and a fi ne of P100, 000. 00

h . Fail ure to co m ply with l aws i ncl udi ng t hose requi ri ng t ouri sm es t abli sh m ents to grant pr i vil eges and benefits to seni or citi zens and persons with di sabilit y, a m ong ot hers

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S ix (6) m ont hs suspensi on

Revoca ti on/ Cancell ati on

i. Any ot her act or o mi ssi on dee m ed to be det ri m ent al to t he t ouri sm i ndustry

S t ern warni ng and/ or a fi ne of not l ess t han 1 , 000. 00 but not m or e t han P10, 000. 00 base d on t he gravity of the offense

Thre e (3) m onths to on e (1) yea r suspensi on and/ or a fi ne of P10 , 000. 00 bu t no t m ore t han P20, 000. 00 based on t he gravity of t he off ense

Revoca ti on/ Cance ll ati on o f accredit ati on and/ or a fi ne o P20, 000. 00 bu t no t m or e P100 , 000. 00 base d on t he gravity of t he off ense

13.3 Ground for Downgrading of Accreditation

The Department may downgrade the level of accreditation of tourism enterprises for failure to maintain compliance with the prescribed standards set by the DOT.

## 14.0 MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

14.1 Confidential Character of Certain Data. Information and documents received or filed with the Department in pursuance of the requirements of these rules shall be treated as confidential and shall concerned.

14.2 Issuance of Additional Circulars/Orders. The Department shall, whenever necessary, issue additional Circulars/Orders for a more effective implementation of these guidelines.

14.3 Separability Clause. The provisions of these rules are hereby declared separable, and in the event that anyone or more of such provisions are declared invalid, the validity of all other provisions shall not be affected thereby.

14.4 Repealing Clause. All existing rules and regulations or circulars previously issued by the Department of Tourism which are inconsistent with the provisions of these rules are hereby repealed and/or modified accordingly.

14.5 Effectivity. This Memorandum Circular shall take effect immediately after publication in a newspaper of general circulation or in the Official Gazette. Let three (3) copies hereof be filed with the Office of National Administrative Register (ONAR), UP Law Center pursuant to Presidential Memorandum Circular No. 11, dated 09 October 1992.


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APPROVED AND PROMULGATED THIS 19th DAY OF MARCH, 2018 MAKATI, PHILIPPINES.

(SGD) WANDA CORAZON TULFO-TEO
Secretary

Attested by:

(SGD) ALMARITA R. JIMENEZ
Undersecretary
Tourism Regulation, Coordination and Resource Generation

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