

DIRECTING STRICT COMPLIANCE WITH THE VITAL RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE OFFICIAL TRAVEL ABROAD OF GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES, BOTH NATIONAL AND LOCAL, INCLUDING T...

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 559, September 12, 1979

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WHEREAS, it has been the policy of the Government to observe proper and reasonable restraint in the utilization of its overall assets and resources and as much as possible to reduce or limit its expenditures to such activities as are essential to the needs of a sound, efficient and progressive public service and to the attainment of the country's development goals;

WHEREAS, pursuant to the aforestated policy, it is deemed necessary and desirable to re-emphasize the vital rules and regulations governing the official travel abroad of government officials and employees, both national and local, including those in government-owned or controlled corporations, which regulatory measures are basically designed to conserve the country's foreign exchange resources and to derive from such travel maximum and positively beneficial results for the Government and the nation as a whole, the better to secure faithful compliance with such rules and regulations;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, FERDINAND E. MARCOS, President of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by law, do hereby direct all officials and employees in the government, both national and local, including government-owned or controlled corporations, to render strict compliance with the existing rules and regulations governing the official travel abroad of government personnel, particularly with respect to the following areas of concern:

1. Official travel abroad of government personnel shall be limited to those which are urgent and necessary. In accordance with this policy, no official travel abroad of government officials and employees shall be allowed except where the trip (a) will not involve the expenditure of government funds; (b) is for the purpose of complying with an international commitment of the Philippine Government; (c) would directly redound to the financial benefit of the country; and (d) is in connection with a scholarship, fellowship, or training or study grant. It must be clearly understood that even in the exceptional cases herein enumerated, the approval of the request for authority to travel abroad does not necessarily follow from the fact that a proposed trip abroad falls under any of the aforesaid exceptions.

Any request for authority to travel abroad may or may not be approved by the Office of the President depending on the various factors and circumstances, involved, including the number of government personnel in the proposed trip, the expenditure of government funds that it would entail, and the public benefit that may be derived therefrom. The Ministers of the various Ministries and all heads of government offices, bureaus, agencies and instrumentalities, including government-owned or controlled corporations, are hereby enjoined to recommend only those trips which are urgent and extremely necessary, will involve the minimum in expenditure and personnel and expected to bring immediate benefit to the country.

The international commitment referred to in the immediate preceding paragraph is one arising out of an agreement entered into between governments through their respective officials or agencies in charge of foreign relations matters. In this regard, it is hereby directed that no officer or office shall commit the Government to the sending abroad of any government personnel without the prior approval of the Office of the President of the Philippines. It is also hereby directed that any invitation for the sending abroad of any government officials and employees shall first be forwarded to the Office of the President for determination whether or not the invitation may be accepted, as well as of those who may make the trip.

2. Proposals for travel abroad shall be submitted for the consideration of the Office of the President not later than ten (10) days before the expected date of departure. Failure to comply with this requirement may be sufficient ground for the disapproval of the proposed trip. Such proposals must be accompanied by the supporting papers and documents required under the existing rules and regulations on foreign travel, including the following:

- (a) Certificate of urgency of the proposed trip signed by the Minister of the Ministry concerned, the chiefs of independent offices, or by the managing heads of government-owned or controlled corporations;
- (b) Travel Data Sheet and, in proper cases, a Training/Scholarship Agreement, in the prescribed standard forms;
- (c) An estimate of the total financial requirement of the proposed trip, if the trip is to be funded by the government fully or partially;
- (d) A certification from the President's Center for Special Studies that the official or employee concerned has attended the orientation course/seminar required under Memorandum Circular No. 954, dated January 26, 1977, of the Office of the President.

3. The piecemeal system of submitting requests pertaining to foreign travel of government officials and employees, wherein after authority for a particular trip has been issued by the Office of the President, another request is subsequently submitted either for side-trips or for the grant of additional expenses, or both, shall be prohibited. Trips abroad which are approved by the Office of the President shall be undertaken strictly in accordance with the terms and conditions in the travel authority and no subsequent request shall be entertained if it is for a proposed side-trip or for confirming one already undertaken, or for the grant of additional expenses or allowances, or for the approval of an amount over and above that granted in the travel authority.

4. All the existing rules and regulations on foreign travel which are designed or intended to protect the financial interests of the Government and to insure that the travel abroad of government personnel will serve as an effective instrument for the improvement of public service and the attainment of national objectives and goals shall be strictly enforced. The limitations on representation expenses and the requirements regarding the submission of report, prescribed in Sections 17 and 18 of Executive Order No. 129, dated May, 6, 1968, must be properly complied with.

5. Any violation of the provisions of this Executive Order shall subject the official or employee concerned to disciplinary action.

6. This Executive Order shall take effect immediately.

Done in the City of Manila, this 12th day of September, in the year of Our Lord, nineteen hundred and seventy-nine.

(SGD.) FERDINAND E. MARCOS
President of the Philippines

By the President:

(SGD.) JUAN C. TUVERA
Presidential Assistant

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