



Republic of the Philippines  
**OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN**  
Ombudsman Bldg., Agham Road, Government Center  
North Triangle, Diliman, Quezon City

**MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 01**

*Series of 2013*

**TO: ALL DEPUTY OMBUDSMEN, ASSISTANT OMBUDSMEN, BUREAU DIRECTORS, OFFICERS AND STAFF OF THE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE AND CORRUPTION PREVENTION OFFICE AND COUNTERPART OFFICES/BUREAUS IN AREA/SECTORAL OFFICES, AND OFFICERS AND STAFF OF THE CENTRAL RECORDS DIVISION AND RECORDS BUREAU/UNITS OF THE AREA/SECTORAL OFFICES**

**RE: GUIDELINES ON HANDLING REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE (RAS) AND OTHER FORMS OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE**

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**SECTION 1. Rationale.** – Pursuant to Section 26, pars. (3) and (4), of Republic Act No. 6770 and in line with the Ombudsman's thrust to improve responsiveness in public assistance, there is a need to ensure compliance with a high standard of public service delivery especially among frontline units extending prompt, courteous and adequate service.

**SEC. 2. Request for assistance; nature of.** – A request for assistance (RAS) refers to any form of grievance or concern seeking redress, relief or public assistance, which does not necessarily amount to a criminal, administrative or forfeiture complaint, wherein the Office is mandated to intervene within the primary scope of its powers, functions, and jurisdiction.

All other forms of assistance, such as but not limited to administering of oaths, responding to queries, giving advice, and referring an aid cognizable by other agencies, which the Office may extend (and which government offices, in general, may also extend), shall not be considered a RAS.

**SEC. 3. Docketing.** – (a) *Area/Sectoral Offices*- The public assistance unit and the records unit of each area/sectoral office shall coordinate and adopt their respective guidelines on the prompt evaluation and docketing or referencing of RAS and other forms of assistance, provided it is consistent with the general provisions hereof. The proposed guidelines shall be submitted to the Ombudsman for final approval.

(b) *Central Office*- If, upon assessment by the Central Records Division, the matter calls for a request for assistance or falls under other forms of assistance, the same shall be immediately referred to the Public Assistance Bureau for evaluation, docketing and appropriate action. Such similar matters or concerns received by the Public Assistance Bureau directly (e.g., walk-in, direct mail) or through other modes (e.g., email or hotline) shall be evaluated by its authorized evaluators and given an appropriate docket or reference number. All other matters in the nature of complaints received by the Public Assistance Bureau shall be immediately referred to the Central Records Division for evaluation and appropriate action.

(c) *Common Provisions*- A request for assistance shall be docketed as RAS while other forms of assistance shall be given an internal reference number (*i.e.*, OFA).

A RAS shall not be consolidated with a complaint for fact-finding or a regular Ombudsman case.

The appropriate bureau or unit shall maintain a RAS database for monitoring, reporting and referencing purposes.

**SEC. 4. *By whom handled.*** – A request for assistance shall be acted upon by the public assistance bureau or unit of the central/area/sectoral offices; provided, however, that a request for assistance involving uniformed personnel or law enforcement agency employees shall be acted upon by the area office where it is filed, if geographical considerations serve the need for a prompt responsive action to the concerns and matters involved therein

**SEC. 5. *Urgent action prior to referral and docketing.*** – If an urgent interim response is required, the receiving office shall initially act upon the request prior to its referral for subsequent appropriate action to the concerned area/sectoral office which shall be the one to issue the RAS docket.

**SEC. 6. *Copy-furnished documents.*** – In case the Office is furnished a copy of a written request or document addressed to another government agency, public officer or private entity, the Office shall not docket the same as RAS but shall, within the period set by law:

- (a) Acknowledge receipt of the request or document;
- (b) Inquire in writing from the addressee the action taken thereon, copy furnished the letter-sender; or
- (c) Refer the request or document to the appropriate bureau or unit within the Office, copy furnished the letter-sender.

**SEC. 7. *Action on RAS.*** – After docketing the RAS, initial action thereon shall be made within the first three (3) working days from receipt by the action officer.

The appropriate public assistance bureau or unit may arrange a conference between the requesting party and the concerned public officer with a view to a satisfactory and expeditious resolution of the RAS. The notice of conference shall be signed by the concerned bureau director or unit head.

Where the action on the RAS involves a referral to the concerned officer of another government agency for appropriate action, the indorsement shall indicate that the requester is furnished a copy thereof and the referring public assistance bureau or unit shall monitor the action(s) taken by the agency. If no response has been received within thirty (30) days from personal service or within forty-five (45) days from date of service through registered mail, a tracer shall be sent, with warning of the provision of Section 26, paragraph 4 of Republic Act No. 6770 (Ombudsman Act of 1989). If still no action is taken within thirty (30) days after receipt of the tracer, the action officer shall recommend the filing of the appropriate administrative case by the fact-finding bureau or unit against the concerned officer.

All appropriate actions shall be concluded within ninety (90) calendar days from receipt of the docketed RAS by the action officer.

**SEC. 8. RAS final report.** – An action officer shall prepare a RAS Final Report within two (2) days after the lapse of the 90-day period or at any time prior thereto upon determining that there is sufficient basis to conclude all actions on the RAS, stating the following:

- (a) nature of the request;
- (b) action(s) taken thereon; and
- (c) details of the approval or denial of the request and the recommended directive or action.

The RAS Final Report shall be submitted to the proper officer for approval. A copy of the approved RAS Final Report shall be furnished the requester together with the feedback form.

**SEC. 9. Transitory Provision.** – All RAS pending for more than ninety (90) days shall be concluded within thirty (30) calendar days from effectivity of this Memorandum Circular. The directors or heads of the various public assistance bureaus or units shall monitor the compliance and submit a quarterly statistical report to the Ombudsman.

**SEC. 10. Repealing Clause.** – Rule IV of Administrative Order No. 07 (series of 1990), as amended, and other previous issuances inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

**SEC. 11. Effectivity Clause.** – This Memorandum Circular shall take effect on June 1, 2013 after fifteen (15) days following the completion of its publication in a newspaper of general circulation and upon filing of three (3) certified copies thereof with the University of the Philippines Law Center.

19 April 2013, Quezon City, Philippines.

  
**CONCHITA CARPIO MORALES**  
Ombudsman 19 April 2013

Cc: Director, MISS

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Philippines Law Center on April 23, 2013.

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