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OFFICE OF THE SANGGUNIANG PANLALAWIGAN SECRETARY

CERTIFICATION

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that at the regular session duly constituted of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan, Province of Pangasinan, held on October 21, 2024 at the Session Hall, Capitol Building, Lingayen, Pangasinan, the following provincial ordinance was approved:

Authored by SP Member Rosary Gracia P. Perez-Tababa and
co-authored by SP Member Marinor B. de Guzman

PROVINCIAL ORDINANCE NO. 332-2024

AN ORDINANCE ENACTING THE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY OF THE PROVINCE OF PANGASINAN

PREAMBLE

The Provincial Government of Pangasinan is committed to serving the welfare of children which shall be the paramount consideration in all actions concerning them consistent with autonomy and the principle of the "Best Interest of the Child" as stated in Presidential Decree 603. It shall likewise serve as the Policy of the Province of Pangasinan to undertake the holistic protection and development of all children in coordination with National Government Agencies, Non-Government Organizations, Local Government Units, Schools, and other concerned duty-bearers.

This Child Protection Policy sets standards of conduct for all public and private sectors, officials, and employees to create a safe and nurturing environment for children in all activities and services provided by the provincial government.

SECTION 1: SHORT TITLE

This shall be known as the "Child Protection Policy in the Province of Pangasinan".

SECTION 2. LEGAL BASES

This Child Protection Policy is based primarily on the following international instruments and national laws:

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The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Articles 12 to 17 of the Convention provide for the participation of children and their free expression of thoughts and feelings on all matters affecting them. Articles 19-23 and 32-40 provide for the special protection of children from abuse, exploitation, and all forms of violence.

Pursuant to the 1987 Constitution. Article XV, Section 3.2 provides for the rights of children to assistance, including proper care and nutrition, and special protection from all forms of neglect, abuse, cruelty, exploitation, and other conditions prejudicial to their development.

The Child and Youth Welfare Code (Presidential Decree 603). Article 3 enumerates children's rights and Article 4 provides for their responsibilities and the corresponding authority and obligations towards them by their parents, community, the government, and other duty-bearers.

Republic Act 7610 also known as the Special Protection of Children Against Child Abuse, Exploitation, and Discrimination Act. Article 1 Section 2 provides that it shall be the state's policy to protect and rehabilitate children gravely threatened or endangered by circumstances that affect or will affect their survival and normal development over which they have no control.

Republic Act 9775 also known as Anti-Child Pornography Act of 2009. Section 2 provides the State recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, emotional, psychological, and social well-being. Towards this end, the State shall: (a) Guarantee the fundamental rights of every child from all forms of neglect, cruelty, and other conditions prejudicial to his/her development; (b) Protect every child from all forms of exploitation and abuse including, but not limited to: (1) the use of a child in pornographic performances and materials; and (2) the inducement or coercion of a child to engage or be involved in pornography through whatever means; and (c) Comply with international treaties to which the Philippines is a signatory or a State party concerning the rights of children which include, but not limited to, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, the International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention No.182 on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor and the Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime.

Republic Act 9208 also known as Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003 as amended by R.A. 10364 also known as the Expanded Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2012. This act institutes policies to eliminate trafficking in persons, especially women, and children, establishing the necessary institutional mechanisms for the protection and support of trafficked persons, and providing penalties for its violations and for purposes.



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Republic Act 9231 or An Act Providing for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor and Affording Stronger Protection for the Working Child, amending for this purpose Republic Act No. 7610, as amended, otherwise known as the "Special Protection of Children Against Child Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act".

Republic Act No 11930 or "Anti-Online Sexual Abuse or Exploitation of Children (OSAEC) and Anti-Child Sexual Abuse or Exploitation Materials (CSAEM) Act." provides special protections to children from all forms of sexual violence, abuse, and exploitation especially those committed with the use of information and communications technology (ICT), provide sanctions for their commission and carry out programs for the prevention, deterrence and intervention in all situations of online sexual abuse and exploitation of children in the digital and non-digital production, distribution or possession of child sexual abuse or exploitation material.

Provincial Ordinance No. 319 series of 2024 or the **Child Welfare Code of the Province of Pangasinan** – The Child Welfare Code underscores the province's unwavering commitment to upholding the inherent human rights of every child, as articulated in international conventions like the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and enshrined in national laws.

Provincial Ordinance No. 318 series of 2024 or the **Gender and Development Code of Pangasinan**- The GAD Code upholds and promotes gender equality and women empowerment in recognition of women's crucial role in nation-building and the development of the province.

SECTION 3. PURPOSE

This policy is designed to:

- 1. Uphold Children's Rights:** Ensure that the rights of children, as enshrined in national and international laws, are protected and promoted. Create a safe and supportive environment for children in all programs, services, and activities administered by the provincial government and in coordination with national government agencies, non-government organizations, local government units, schools, and other stakeholders.
- 2. Prevent Abuse and Exploitation:** Establish clear standards of conduct to prevent child abuse, exploitation, and discrimination. Set clear standards of conduct and behavior for public and private sectors to prevent child abuse, exploitation, and discrimination.
- 3. Create Awareness:** Foster awareness among public and private sectors and other stakeholders regarding child protection issues.



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4. **Establish Referral Mechanisms:** Provide clear procedures for reporting and responding to incidents of child abuse, exploitation, and discrimination

SECTION 4: COVERAGE OF POLICY

This policy covers the following:

a. All officials, staff, and other personnel

It is mandatory for all officials, staff, and other personnel, of the Provincial Government of Pangasinan, to strictly adhere to and abide by this policy.

b. Private sectors

All consultants, suppliers, contractors, and other agencies or structures conducting research, workshops, and appraisal purposes for the Provincial Government of Pangasinan are also mandated to adhere to this policy.

Section 5: DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following terms are defined for this policy.

Assessment - the process of examining a problem to determine its cause, severity, and course which is necessary to design an effective intervention plan.

Bullying - shall refer to any severe or repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at another student that has the effect of actually causing or placing the latter in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm or damage to his property; creating a hostile environment at school for the other student; infringing on the rights of the other student at school; or materially and substantially disrupting the education process or the orderly operation of a school; such as, but not limited to, the following:

- Any unwanted physical contact between the bully and the victim like punching, pushing, shoving, kicking, slapping, tickling, headlocks, inflicting school pranks, teasing, fighting and the use of available objects as weapons;
- Any act that causes damage to a victim's psyche and/or emotional well-being;
- Any slanderous statement or accusation that causes the victim undue emotional distress like directing foul language or profanity at the target, name-calling, tormenting and commenting negatively on victim's looks, clothes and body; and
- Cyber-bullying or any bullying done through the use of technology or any electronic means.



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Peer Abuse - refers to willful aggressive behavior that is directed towards a particular victim who may be outnumbered, younger, weak, with a disability, less confident, or otherwise vulnerable. It is committed when a student commits an act or a series of acts directed towards another student, or a series of single acts directed towards several students in a school setting or a place of learning, which results in physical and mental abuse, harassment, intimidation, or humiliation. Such acts may consist of any one or more of the following:

- a. Threats to inflict a wrong upon the person, honor, or property of the person or on his or her family;
- b. Stalking or constantly following or pursuing a person in his or her daily activities, with unwanted and obsessive attention.
- c. Taking of property
- d. Public humiliation or public and malicious imputation of a crime or of vice or defect whether real or imaginary or any act, omission, condition, status, or circumstance tending to cause dishonor, discredit or expose a person to contempt;
- e. Deliberate destructions or defacement of or damage to the child's property;
- f. Physical violence committed upon student which may or may not result in harm or injury, with or without the aid of a weapon. Such violence may be in the form of mauling, hitting, kicking, hitting, punching, throwing things at the student, pinching, spanking, or other similar acts.
- g. Demanding or requiring sexual or monetary favors or exacting money or property, from a pupil or student and
- h. Restraining the liberty and freedom of a pupil or student,

Case Manager - refers to any person handling cases of child abuse and providing proper interventions.

Case Management - is a method of providing services whereby a professional Social Worker collaboratively assesses the needs of the client and the client's family.

Cyber-Bullying - is any conduct which results in harassment, intimidation, or humiliation, through electronic means or other technology such as but not limited to texting, email, instant messaging, chatting, internet, social networking websites, or other platforms or formats.



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Corporal Punishment - refers to a kind of punishment or penalty imposed for an alleged or actual offense that is carried out or inflicted for discipline, training, or control, by a teacher, school administrator, an adult, or any other child who has been given or has assumed authority or responsibility for punishment or discipline.

Client - refers to any individual or family who makes use of the Crisis Center's services, or those seeking or being provided with social services.

Children - refers to persons below eighteen (18) years of age or those over but are unable to fully take care of themselves or protect themselves from abuse, neglect, cruelty, exploitation, or discrimination because of a physical or mental disability or condition.

Child-Friendly Spaces (CFS) - refer to spaces where communities create nurturing environments for children to engage in free and structured play, recreation, leisure, and learning activities. The child-friendly space may provide health, nutrition, psychosocial support, and other services or activities that will restore their normal functioning.

Child Protection - it is the protection of children from all forms of abuse, neglect, cruelty, exploitation, or discrimination based mainly on the special protection provisions.

Child Sexual Abuse or Exploitation Material or Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAEM/CSAM) - refers to any representation, whether offline, or by, through, or with the use of ICT, by means of visual, video, audio, written, or any combination thereof, by electronic, mechanical, digital, optical, magnetic or any other means, of a child engaged or involved in real or simulated sexual activities, or depicting acts of sexual abuse or exploitation of a child as a sexual object. It shall also include materials that focus on the genitalia or other private body parts of a child.

Child Sexual Abuse - refers to any form of communication through any platform or format, or any physical interaction between a child and any person when the child is being used for any act or activity inducing sexual stimulation or for the purpose of sexual gratification or in pursuit of the desire to have carnal knowledge of the child, regardless of the gender of the perpetrator or the victim, or the consent of the victim.

Child Abuse - refers to the maltreatment, whether habitual or not, of the child which includes any of the following:

- Psychological /emotional abuse** - any act by deeds or words which debase, degrade, or demean the intrinsic worth and dignity of a child as a human being.
- Physical abuse** - unreasonable infliction of physical injury to a child.
- Neglect** - unreasonable deprivation of his basic needs for survival, such as food and shelter, failure to immediately give medical treatment to an injured child resulting in serious impairment of his growth and development or in his permanent incapacity or death.



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- d. **Sexual Abuse** - any employment, use, persuasion inducement, enticement, or coercion of a child to engage in or assist another person to engage in, sexual intercourse or lascivious conduct or the molestation, prostitution, or incest with children.
- e. **Incest** - refers to sexual abuse committed against a child by someone who is related to his/her within the fourth degree of consanguinity or affinity and who exercises influence, authority, or moral ascendancy over his/ her.
- f. **Rape** - sexual abuse committed to a person under the following circumstances: through force, threat, and intimidation.
- g. **Acts of lasciviousness/ lascivious conduct** - intentionally touching, either directly or through the clothing, of the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or buttocks, or the introduction of any object into the genitalia, anus or mouth, or any person whether of the same or opposite sex, with the intent to abuse, humiliate, harass, degrade, or arouse or gratify the sexual desire of any person, bestiality, masturbation, lascivious exhibition of the genitals or public area of a person.

Child Exploitation - refers to the use of children for someone else advantage gratification or profit often resulting in the unjust, cruel, and harmful treatment of the child. These activities disrupt the child's normal functioning.

Two (2) main forms of child exploitation are recognized;

- a. **Sexual Exploitation** - means the hiring, employment, persuasion, inducement, or coercion of a child to perform in obscene exhibitions and indecent shows, whether live or in video or film, or to pose or act as a model in obscene publications or pornographic materials, or to sell or distribute said materials.
- b. **Economic exploitation** - refers to the use of the child in work or other activities for the benefit of others. Economic exploitation involves a certain gain or profit through the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services. This includes, but not limited to, illegal child labor as defined in RA 9231.

Confidentiality - preservation of secret information concerning the client that is disclosed in a professional relationship.

Child Protection - refers to programs, services, procedures, and structures that are intended to prevent and respond to abuse, neglect, exploitation, discrimination, and violence.

Children in School - refers to bona fide pupils, students, or learners who are enrolled in the basic education system, whether regular, irregular, transferee, or repeater, including those who have been temporarily out of school, who are in the school or learning centers premises or participating in school-sanctioned activities.



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Crisis Situation - it is a disruption or breakdown in a person's or family's normal pattern of functioning.

Counseling - individual problem-solving method or a one-to-one interface with the client aimed at restoring or enhancing social functioning.

Discrimination Against Children - refers to an act of exclusion, distinction, restriction, or preference that is based on any ground such as age, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation and gender identity, language, religion, political or other opinions, national or social origin, property, birth, disability etc.

False Accusation - allegations made by clients that are knowingly untrue, malicious, or made with the intent to harm the reputation or well-being of a person.

Intervention - the overall term used to describe all activities by case managers on behalf of and in collaboration with their clients.

Guardians or Custodians - refers to legal guardians, foster parents, and other persons including relatives or even nonrelatives who have physical custody of the child.

Preventive Mechanism - refers to a comprehensive set of strategies, measures, programs, and actions aimed at preventing the occurrence of child abuse. These mechanisms focus on addressing risk factors, promoting protective factors, and creating safe environments for children.

Positive Discipline - a non-violent approach to help and guide children develop positive behavior while respecting their rights to healthy development, protection from violence, and participative learning.

Pupil, Student, Learner - means a child who regularly attends classes at any level of the basic education system, under the supervision and teaching of a teacher.

Public Sectors - companies and organizations run by the state or controlled by the government.

Private Sectors - comprised of businesses and enterprises that are controlled by private individuals and groups to make a profit.

Referred Clients - clients who have been referred by other agencies/ies for further intervention/assistance.

Rescued Clients - clients that are saved from danger through the joint efforts extended by the center staff and other concerned agency/ies.



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Referral Mechanism - refers to the process of directing or referring cases of alleged or confirmed child abuse to the appropriate authorities or service providers for intervention and support.

Responsive Mechanism - refers to a system or process in place to address and respond to incidents or reports of child abuse. It is designed to ensure the safety and well-being of the child.

Staff - refers to personnel who work in the Crisis Center delivering services to clients in need.

Survivor of Trafficking in Persons - is a victim of a severe form of trafficking when they were recruited, obtained, provided, transported through force, fraud, or coercion for the purposes of sex or labor trafficking.

Trafficking in Persons - refers to the recruitment, transportation, transfer or harboring, or receipt of persons with or without the victim's consent or knowledge, within or across national borders by means of threat or use of force, or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or of position, taking advantage of the vulnerability of the person, or the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person for the purpose of exploitation which includes at a minimum, the exploitation or the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery, servitude or the removal or sale of organs.

Trauma - difficult circumstances that are experienced by an individual that cause harmful effects and have lasting adverse effects on an individual's social functioning.

Temporary shelter - refers to the provision of temporary accommodation to clients.

Termination - the conclusion of the social worker - client intervention process, or a systematic procedure for disengaging the working relationship.

Victim-Survivor - a person who suffered from destructive or injurious, acute or chronic, emotional, mental, and/or physical victimization, derived from real or perceived threats or action, and because of these circumstances suffers from trauma.

Violence Against Children Committed in Schools - refers to a single act or a series of acts committed by school administrators, academic and non-academic personnel against a child, which result in or is likely to result in physical, sexual, psychological harm or suffering or other abuses including threats of such acts, battery, assault, coercion, harassment, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty

Walk-in clients - refer to clients who come directly to the center seeking assistance/intervention.



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SECTION 6. GUIDELINES AND POLICIES

General Guidelines

The best interest of the child shall be the paramount consideration in all decisions and actions involving children, whether undertaken by public or private social institutions and courts of law, administrative authorities, and legislative bodies, consistent with the principle of First Call for Children as enunciated in the CRC. A child is not only a valuable asset but also the future of our nation. Therefore, we must exert every effort to protect their well-being and provide opportunities for a fulfilling and joyful life. To achieve this goal, we are committed to upholding the following fundamental principles:

1. Respect for the Rights and Dignity of Every Child:

Every child deserves protection from abuse, humiliation, maltreatment, exploitation, and assault. They are entitled to fundamental rights and dignity, which must be honored and safeguarded at all times.

2. Best Interests of Children as Paramount:

In all our actions concerning children, their best interests shall be the foremost consideration. This commitment ensures that decisions and initiatives prioritize the well-being and development of each child.

3. Equality and Non-Discrimination:

Regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, race, ethnicity, religion, economic status, or social class, every child must be treated fairly and without bias.

4. Inclusive Policies and Procedures:

Children, irrespective of their background, must experience fairness and inclusivity in all aspects of governance, ensuring that no child is left behind.

5. Child-Sensitive, Gender-Sensitive, Rights-Based, and Disability-Sensitive Services:

All activities, programs, and services will be designed with a child-sensitive, gender-sensitive, rights-based, and disability-sensitive approach aligning with the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

6. Confidentiality and Data Protection:

a. Cases involving children will be handled with the utmost care and confidentiality.

b. Only case managers and other professionals who can assist in providing intervention for the child are allowed access to the child's personal information. The right to privacy for each child will be upheld and respected at all times.



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c. Personal data collected for child protection will be stored securely and used only for authorized purposes.

By adhering to these principles, we affirm our dedication to creating an environment where every child can thrive, free from harm and discrimination. Together, let us work towards a future where every child's potential is realized, ensuring the prosperity and well-being of our nation.

Code of Conduct to Ensure the Protection of Children

The Provincial Government of Pangasinan establishes the following guidelines for all private and public sectors in the province:

All officials, staff, personnel, employees, and private sectors are expected to adhere to the following principles:

- a. Assistance must be given to a child without seeking personal favors or gains.
- b. Any form of physical, verbal, or emotional abuse towards children by public and private employees/ staff is strictly prohibited.
- c. Any inappropriate behavior when interacting with children shall be avoided.
- d. Interactions with children should be transparent, and take place in open and observable settings to avoid misconceptions or suspicions.
- e. Engaging in any romantic relationship with a minor shall be prohibited.
- f. Immediate action must be taken upon learning of or witnessing any unacceptable acts or behavior toward children;
- g. Public and private sector staff/ employees are explicitly prohibited from participating in any acts involving child abuse, discrimination against children, child exploitation, violence against children, corporal punishment, or any similar acts.

The Provincial Government has established detailed guidelines for staff members working in frontline services either in the private or public sector to ensure the highest standards of decorum and ethical conduct in their interactions with children. The following comprehensive instructions are provided:

Pangasinan Crisis Intervention Center

- a. Always involve children in decisions that affect them, respecting their evolving capacities and ensuring their active participation.



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- b. Use positive discipline and strictly prohibit the practice of corporal punishment to promote constructive behavior and emotional well-being among children.
- c. Respect children's religious beliefs and practices, and never force them to participate in activities that go against their beliefs.
- d. Prohibit staff members from engaging children in sexually provocative performances or presentations to maintain a safe and secure environment free from exploitation.
- e. Assign tasks to children based on their developmental stage and capacities, avoiding tasks beyond their abilities due to age and physical build.
- f. Prohibit children's exposure to violent video games, pornographic materials, or obscene websites, and monitor and control the content accessible to children.
- g. Ensure that visitors, service providers, interns, volunteers, and visiting researchers treat children appropriately and responsibly to maintain a safe environment for children in the center.
- h. Exercise care in conducting interviews with children, using sensitive and age-appropriate communication to avoid causing harm or offense.
- i. Take immediate and appropriate action in response to incidents of bullying, submitting incident reports to the center head for documentation and intervention.
- j. Prioritize children seeking assistance and provide timely and efficient responses to their needs.
- k. Take immediate action when a child is being harassed or treated inappropriately by another client and intervene promptly if a child is being used to facilitate approval of a request for assistance.
- l. Avoid subjecting a child to unnecessary and potentially frightening interviews when validating suspicions of misrepresentation by a family member seeking financial assistance.
- m. Maintains the confidentiality and privacy of all PCIC clients. Any information, details, or identities related to PCIC clients will not be disclosed, shared, or exposed to the media without explicit consent.



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Evacuation Centers

During disasters, it is crucial to prioritize the needs of children in evacuation centers managed by the Provincial Government. A child-centric approach not only safeguards the well-being of the young population but also ensures a nurturing environment that promotes their physical, emotional, and psychological welfare.

- a. Establish a child-friendly safe space within evacuation centers for children, including sleeping areas, recreational spaces, and educational facilities.
- b. Prioritize the allocation of essential resources such as food, water, and medical supplies to children, considering their age-specific requirements.
- c. Implement a system for immediate identification and registration of separated or unaccompanied children, ensuring prompt reintegration with family members or guardians.
- d. Enforce protocols that prohibit exploitation, abuse, or discrimination against children within the evacuation centers.
- e. Foster collaboration among different organizations to coordinate efforts and ensure a unified approach to child-centric care.
- f. Provide a strict policy against taking photographs of children in dehumanizing conditions within the evacuation centers.
- g. Ensure that all media personnel, volunteers, and donors adhere to ethical guidelines that prohibit the use of such photographs for fundraising purposes without explicit consent from the relevant authorities and the children's guardians.
- h. Collaborate with child protection agencies and educational organizations to establish temporary learning spaces within evacuation centers.
- i. Integrate psychosocial support services to address the emotional and psychological needs of children, including counseling, recreational activities, and creative expression sessions.

Child Care and Development Center /Child-Caring Institution or facility

- a. Implement training for staff and volunteers on recognizing and appreciating individual differences in children's development.
- b. Develop customized plans for each child based on their unique needs, ensuring that interventions are tailored to their specific social and cognitive requirements.



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- c. Encourage an inclusive environment that fosters diversity and positive interactions among children without stigmatizing differences.
- d. Establish a system for conducting thorough assessments of each child upon arrival to create modified care plans.
- e. Develop and implement activities that promote inclusivity and diversity within the center.
- f. Create a supportive environment where children feel accepted, respected, and valued for their unique qualities.
- g. Provide alternative activities that respect the diverse beliefs and preferences of children and their families.
- h. Create a culture of open communication, encouraging staff and caregivers to address challenging behaviors through constructive means.
- i. Establish a clear and strict policy against engaging children in sexually provocative performances or presentations.
- j. Establish and communicate a code of conduct for parents, guardians, and accompanying individuals regarding their interactions with other beneficiaries and children in the center.

Healthcare Facilities

- a. Create a safe and child-friendly environment within the premises of healthcare facilities.
- b. Implement security measures to prevent unauthorized access to areas where abused children are present.
- c. Regularly assess and address any potential hazards or risks that may pose a threat to children's safety.
- d. Respect and protect the confidentiality and privacy of children and their families.
- e. Obtain appropriate consent before disclosing any personal or sensitive information.
- f. Establish clear reporting and response mechanisms for staff members to report any concerns or suspicions of child abuse or neglect.



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- g. Ensure that staff members are competent to recognize potential victims of abuse.
- h. Record, report and refer to appropriate stakeholders such as the Local Social Welfare and Development Office and law enforcement agencies/authorities to strengthen child safeguarding efforts.
- i. Share best practices with other healthcare facilities to promote a culture of child protection.
- j. Demonstrate strong/ commitment to the cost of protecting children and all healthcare facilities.

Private Sectors/ Structures/ Institutions

- a. Create a child protection policy for their sectors/structures/institutions align with the Provincial Child Protection Policy.
- b. Provide comprehensive training programs for all staff on recognizing signs of child abuse, appropriate conduct, and reporting procedures. Regularly update staff on child protection policies.
- c. Create a confidential and easily accessible reporting system for staff to report any suspicions or concerns regarding child abuse. Communicate the reporting process.
- d. Define a prompt and thorough investigation process for reported cases. Ensure cooperation with the Local Social Welfare Office and law enforcement agencies/ authorities
- e. Emphasize the importance of confidentiality in handling child abuse cases. Disclose information only to authorized personnel involved in the case management.
- f. Ensure that the physical environment is child-friendly and safe.

SECTION 7: Preventive Mechanism

Conduct of Conferences, Workshops, Meetings, Roundtables, Discussions, Special Events, and Other Similar Activities

The Provincial Government of Pangasinan is committed to safeguarding children's well-being during their participation in various activities organized by the government. To uphold this commitment, the following procedures have been established:

7.1 Ensure a Safe and Inclusive Environment

- a. Create a safe and welcoming environment for all children attending the event.



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- b. Treat every child with respect and dignity, regardless of their background, abilities, or characteristics.
- c. Foster an inclusive atmosphere where every child feels valued and included.

7.2 Communicate with parents, school adviser, and guardian

- a. Obtain written consent from parents, and legal guardians before involving children in any event or activity.
- b. Write a letter to the organization to which a child is affiliated. For children in school, the letter should be addressed to the principal if it will only involve a child or children from the same school; or to the appropriate school superintendent in case of a group of children coming from different schools. If a child is required to be absent from class, make a letter to excuse them.

7.3 Provide Adequate Supervision

- a. Ensure that there is appropriate adult supervision throughout the event to maintain a safe and secure environment.

7.4 Prioritize Child Protection

- a. Promptly report and address any incident or concerns related to child protection.
- b. Always be aware and observant of the needs and behavior of the children. In cases where there are disclosures during the activity, always ensure that confidentiality is upheld.

7.5 Foster Positive Communication

- a. Encourage open and respectful communication between facilitators, staff, volunteers, and children.
- b. Listen actively to children's ideas, opinions, and concerns, and provide them with opportunities to express themselves.
- c. Ensure that all communication is age-appropriate, clear, and easily understandable for children.

7.6 Promote Learning and Participation

- a. Design engaging and age-appropriate activities that encourage active participation and learning for children.



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- b. Provide opportunities for children to share their thoughts, ideas, and experiences during discussions and workshops.
- c. Foster a supportive and inclusive environment that encourages children to explore new concepts and express themselves freely.
- d. Core activities should be confined within the 8-hour schedule. Other activities should be limited until 10:00 pm to ensure enough rest and sleep among children and their mentors.

7.7 Respect Privacy and Confidentiality

- a. Respect the privacy and confidentiality of children by not sharing their personal information without proper consent.
- b. Obtain permission from children and their parents or legal guardians before capturing or sharing any photographs or videos.

7.8 Address Concerns and Feedback

- a. Establish a mechanism for children, parents, and guardians to raise concerns or provide feedback about the event.
- b. Take all concerns seriously and address them promptly and appropriately.
- c. Continuously evaluate and improve the facilitation of events for children based on feedback and lessons learned.
- d. If a child requires medical attention during any provincial government activities, it is the responsibility of the activity's facilitator to administer first aid and arrange transportation to an appropriate medical facility. The child's parent, guardian, mentor, or accompanying adult should be notified immediately.
- e. Ensure that the return of child/children to their respective destinations is properly arranged and monitored.

SECTION 8: Responsive Mechanism

Responding to Child abuse and other Child-Related issues

8.1 Response to offenses committed by a non-provincial government official, employee, or staff



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- a. In any venue/ activity where there is an offense committed by a non-provincial government official, employee, or staff, it must be referred to PSWDO for assessment, and intervention and endorsed to proper law enforcement authority immediately.

8.2 Response to the Child Abuse Cases and Other Child-Related Issues Received by the Provincial Government

- a. All provincial government officials, employees, staff, and private sectors are expected to give the needed assistance by being responsive to all child-related cases received through phone calls, personal reports, or inquiries.
- b. Cases received through formal communications will be forwarded immediately to the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office (PSWDO) for appropriate actions. Collaboration with law enforcement agencies, social workers and other concerned stakeholders shall be made to ensure multi-disciplinary intervention.
- c. Assure the caller that the information he/ she provides shall be kept confidential; Describe the reporting processes in detail, stressing how crucial it is to abide by the rules when reporting suspicious cases.
- d. For cases of abuse that need immediate action or rescue operation, refer the case directly to the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office.

8.3 Managing Disclosure

- a. Once a disclosure is made, the case will be immediately referred to the PSWDO for appropriate action to ensure the safety of the client.
- b. Assure the client that disclosure will be handled with confidentiality and privacy.

Any person reporting any child-related cases to concerned offices, organizations, or institutions, acting in good faith, will not be charged with criminal, civil, or administrative liability, as provided by Article 167 of PD 603, and Section 7 of Implementing Rules & Regulations of RA 7610 on Reporting & Investigation of Child Abuse Cases”.



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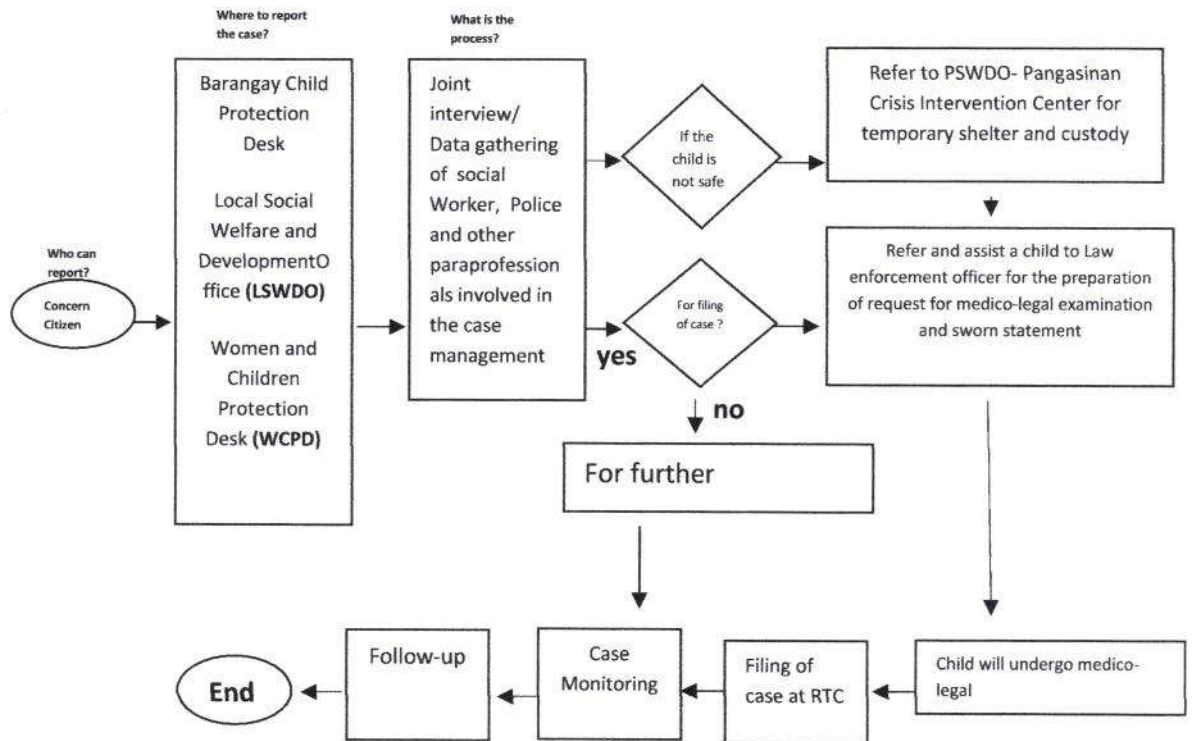
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Case Referral Flowchart



8.4 Procedure in Handling Child Abuse-Related Cases

It is the responsibility of the concerned citizen (office staff, teacher, counselor, immediate family, brgy. Council etc.) to report child abuse-related cases to the Local Social Welfare and Development Office.

- Report the alleged abuse to the designated authorities, which may include the Local Social Welfare and Development Office and the PNP VAWC desk officer
- If the child is not safe and needs special protection, a referral to the Pangasinan Crisis Intervention Center should be made for temporary shelter and custody.
- Provide the LSWDO with all relevant information, including the child's details, the nature of the abuse or neglect, and any supporting documentation.
- The LSWDO assesses the information provided and determines the level of urgency in the reported case.
- If necessary, the LSWDO may involve law enforcement agencies for immediate intervention.



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- f. If the case involves criminal actions or immediate danger to the child, the LSWDO contacts local law enforcement to take appropriate action.
- g. Coordination between the LSWDO and law enforcement agencies/ authorities ensures a prompt and comprehensive response.
- h. The LSWDO takes necessary steps to ensure the immediate safety and well-being of the child. This may involve temporary custody at the Pangasinan Crisis Intervention Center, and coordination with other stakeholders.
- i. Arrange for a medical examination and psychological assessment of the child to determine the extent of physical and emotional harm.
- j. Monitor the child's progress and well-being through regular follow-up assessments.
- k. Maintain case records of the entire process, including reports, actions taken, and outcomes.
- l. Protect the confidentiality of the parties involved by following legal and ethical standards.

SECTION 9: BEHAVIORAL PROTOCOLS TO PROTECT EMPLOYEES FROM FALSE ACCUSATION BY CLIENTS

- a. Employees are encouraged to report any incident of false accusations promptly.
- b. All false accusations will be thoroughly investigated fairly and neutrally.
- c. Clients found to have made false accusations against employees may face consequences such as institution of legal actions, if necessary.
- d. All reports of false accusations will be documented and kept on record for review and reference.

SECTION 10: POLICY IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING, AND REVIEW

10.1 Policy Implementation

- a. Conduct comprehensive training programs on the policy, covering its principles, guidelines, and reporting procedures.
- b. The organization/ agency will establish clear procedures and protocols for reporting and responding to child protection concerns or incidents.



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- c. Conduct of awareness campaign and training sessions to promote a culture of child protection within the workplace.

10.2 Monitoring and Evaluation

- a. The Provincial Council for the Protection of Children (PCPC) shall be responsible for monitoring the LGUs' compliance with this policy, which shall be conducted on an annual basis during the Local Council for the Protection of Children Functionality Assessment and Child Friendly-Local Government Audit.

Chairperson : GOVERNOR

Vice Chairperson : Chairman, Committee on Children, Women Senior Citizens, Family Affairs and Social Welfare

Members : Provincial Administrator
Provincial Legal Officer
Provincial Social Welfare and Development Officer
Provincial Director, DILG
Women and Child Protection Desk Officer-
Provincial Police Office
Provincial Budget Officer
Provincial Treasurer
Provincial Planning and Development Coordinator
Provincial Agriculturist
Provincial Health Officer II/ Provincial Nutrition Officer
Employment and Services Office-Provincial Manager
Provincial Population Cooperative and Livelihood Development Officer
Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Officer
Provincial Librarian
SP Member (SK Federation President-Pangasinan Chapter)
Provincial Prosecutor
Provincial Information and Media Relations Officer
Department of Education, Pangasinan I
Department of Education, Pangasinan II
Schools Division Superintendent, Urdaneta City, Pangasinan
Schools Division Superintendent, Alaminos City, Pangasinan



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Secretary to the Sanggunian

Schools Division Superintendent, Dagupan City,
Pangasinan

Schools Division Superintendent, San Carlos City,
Pangasinan

CSO Representatives: President- Northern Luzon
Mother and Child Association

President, Provincial CSO

President, Federation of Child Development Workers
of Pangasinan Inc. (PFCDWPI)

President, Federations of Parents & Teachers
Association of Pangasinan National High School

GAD Focal Person -Pangasinan National High
School

PCPC Child Representatives:

10.3 Review

- a. The Child Protection Policy will be reviewed periodically, at least once every five (5) years.
- b. Any revisions or updates to the policy will be disseminated to all stakeholders and implemented within a reasonable timeframe.
- c. The Sangguniang Panlalawigan shall ensure that the revised policy is accessible and available to all stakeholders.

SECTION 11: Dissemination

- a. The Sangguniang Panlalawigan shall ensure the wide dissemination of this policy to all public officials and employees.
- b. A printed copy of the Child Protection Policy shall be posted in a conspicuous area in all provincial government offices.

FINAL PROVISIONS

SECTION 12: Review of Provisions. - This Policy shall be subject of regular review by the Sangguniang Panlalawigan in coordination with the various agencies and organizations who are partners in the promotion and protection of the rights of children, once every five (5) years, or more often as may be necessary.

SECTION 13: Separability Clauses. - If, for any reason or reasons, any part or provision of this Code shall be held to be unconstitutional or invalid, other parts or provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.



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SECTION 14: Applicability Clause. – All other matters relating to the impositions or regulations provided in this Code shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of existing laws and other ordinances. This Code shall apply to all the people within the territorial jurisdiction of the Province of Pangasinan as well, and all persons, who may be subject to the provision of this Code.

SECTION 15: Repealing Clause. – All ordinances, resolutions executive orders and issuances which are inconsistent with any of the provisions of this Code are hereby repealed and/or modified accordingly.

SECTION 16: Effectivity Clause. – This Code shall take effect after its posting, and publication for three (3) consecutive issues in a local newspaper of general circulation.

CERTIFIED BY:

VERNA T. NAVA-PEREZ
Secretary to the Sanggunian

ATTESTED:

MARK RONALD DG. LAMBINO
Vice Governor
(Presiding Officer)

APPROVED:

RAMON V. GUICO III
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