



Inclusive Environment

How the government helps persons with disability mainstream into the society

According to the United Nations, around one billion people or 15% of the total world population live with some form of disability—may it be from birth, genetic, or from an illness. And of this number, 80% are from developing countries.

Among the world's largest vulnerable group, the persons with disability, are generally lacking of services available to them, especially in terms of employment.

The hurdles they face everyday were met with a more disastrous enemy—the COVID-19 pandemic.

As part of the government, and a champion of inclusion and diversity, how can the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) ensure that despite the pandemic, the rights and welfare of persons with disability are still being upheld?

“All employees with disabilities are entitled to all rights and benefits granted under the Labor Code of the Philippines,” said Secretary Silvestre H. Bello III. A quote that we live by as we continuously draft policies and programs for persons with disability.

Moreover, we have been in the forefront of promoting a barrier-free workplace starting from our organization. The DOLE currently employs 72 persons with disability, more than the one percent (1%) required by the Republic Act No.10524 (*An Act Expanding the Positions Reserved for Persons with Disability, Amending for the Purpose Republic Act No. 7277, As Amended, Otherwise known as the Magna Carta for Persons with Disability*).

We take this as an integral step towards inclusive governance, more so, we wanted it to be an inspiration for other government agencies, as well as to encourage the private sector to follow suit.

In addition, the DOLE was able to present its initiatives to a side event hosted by the Government of Canada for the 14th Session of the Conference of States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities last June 17, 2021.

Undersecretary Ana C. Dione presented the results of the survey conducted by the Project



The Bureau of Workers with Special Concerns
joins the nation in celebrating the



43rd National Disability Prevention & Rehabilitation Week

July 17 - 23, 2021



Theme: Kalusugan at Kaunlaran ng Pilipinong May Kapansanan, Isulong sa Gitna ng Pandemya



Empowering
Persons with
Disabilities



Inclusion Network, Inc. in coordination with the DOLE, entitled, *“Moving Towards Disability Inclusive Recovery in Employment and Livelihood in the time of COVID-19.”*

Undersecretary Dione also highlighted the programs and services offered by the DOLE for persons with disability like the DOLE Integrated Livelihood and Emergency Employment Program (DILEEP), Katulong at Gabay sa Manggagawang may Kapansanan Program, and PhilJobNet, among others.

“The DOLE has always championed and expressed its steadfast support to persons with disabilities as we recognize their invaluable role as integral part of our society. Through the implementation of our programs for marginalized and vulnerable workers, we are one with other agencies and organizations in recognizing their competence, empowering them, and enhancing their capabilities as we strive towards creating a more inclusive labor force,” Undersecretary Dione said during her presentation.

In our bid to follow through with our initiatives, the DOLE also annually joins the National Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation Week led by the National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA).

This year’s celebration is anchored by the theme, *“Kalusugan at Kaunlaran ng Pilipinong May Kapansanan, Isulong sa Gitna ng Pandemya,”* a fitting message at this time of crisis. And, in line with the celebration, the DOLE through the Bureau of Workers with Special Concerns (BWSC), will participate as a resource speaker in various virtual events.

On July 20, a representative from the BWSC will discuss the DILEEP at the Webinar on Economic Recovery Program for Persons with Disability organized by the NCDA.

The BWSC was also invited to discuss its sustainable livelihood program on July 22, during the Local Government Units Convention on Disability Inclusive Governance: Health and Economic Empowerment of Persons with Disability.

More than these participation, the DOLE also received various commendations for its programs for persons with disability.

The Commission on Audit applauded the Department for showing concerns to persons with disability through its programs, activities and projects.

“We [COA] commend the Management’s continuous effort in complying with the requirements of the law through the integration in their regular activities, the plans and programs for persons with disability,” reads the report.

Invitations and commendations like these lets us know that we are moving on the right track, and will continue to do so until every persons with disability is recognized in the world of work.

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