



Republic of the Philippines
LEGAL EDUCATION BOARD
Quezon City

Memorandum Circular No. 60, Series of 2020

SUBJECT: INTERIM GUIDELINES FOR THE VIRTUAL DELIVERY OF PUBLIC SERVICES

The unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic have necessitated the development of a response that will not only provide a clear direction forward but will also ensure the continuation of public services in an environment that guarantees safety. Using an approach that is grounded on technology and promotes ease of doing business, the agency meets its duty to its stakeholders. The services provided by the Legal Education Board (LEB) are henceforth migrated to virtual platforms subject to the following guidelines.

Section 1
LEGAL AND POLICY BASES

- 1.1. These guidelines are hereby promulgated in compliance with and contextualized within the intersection of the different laws and national government policies on electronic governance and public service.
- 1.2. In particular, these guidelines shall be interpreted in light of the broad public policy expressed through the following statutes, rules and frameworks:
 - 1.2.1. Republic Act (R.A.) No. 11469 or the *Bayanihan to Heal as One Act*, and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR);
 - 1.2.2. R.A. No. 11032 or the *Ease of Doing Business Act*, as it amends R.A. 9845 or the *Anti-Red Tape Act*, and its IRR;
 - 1.2.3. Administrative Order (A.O.) No. 23, series of 2020, which orders the *elimination of overregulation to promote efficiency of government processes*;
 - 1.2.4. A.O. No. 30, series of 2020, which *directs all government offices to formulate and issue guidelines on the interruption of periods for the filing of documents, payment of taxes, charges and other fees, and cancellation of proceedings before their respective offices, and on the movement of timelines for the release of benefits*;
 - 1.2.5. R.A. No. 8792 or the *Electronic Commerce Act*, and its IRR;
 - 1.2.6. Administrative Matter No. 01-7-01-SC, or the *Rules on Electronic Evidence*;
 - 1.2.7. R.A. No. 10173 or the *Data Privacy Act*, and its IRR;
 - 1.2.8. The *E-Government Masterplan 2022* of the Department of Information Communication and Technology, pursuant to R.A. No. 10173; and
 - 1.2.9. R.A. No. 6713 or the *Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees*, its IRR and related Civil Service Commission issuances.
- 1.3. Pursuant to the provisions of law, the delivery of public service through electronic and virtual platforms shall be in consonance with the policy of the State to promote a high standard of ethics in public service. Therefore, public officials and employees shall at all times be accountable to

the people and shall discharge their duties with utmost responsibility, integrity, competence and loyalty, act with patriotism and justice, lead modest lives, and uphold public interest over public interest.

- 1.4. At all times, the high quality of the public service delivery whether through physical or virtual platforms shall also be maintained and improved.

Section 2

VIRTUAL PLATFORMS FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

- 2.1. To ensure the safety of the transacting public, the delivery of public services in the agency shall be fully migrated to virtual platforms.
- 2.2. *Virtual platforms* shall pertain to modes of communicating and transacting with the public without physical or face-to-face interaction. These shall include telephonic, electronic and other technology-enabled communications.
- 2.3. In the short term, all transactions shall be done through the following virtual platforms:
 - 2.3.1. Regular services shall be provided through the official agency electronic messaging channels.
 - 2.3.1.1. An electronic application or transaction form for each service shall be developed and made accessible to the public.
 - 2.3.1.2. As far as practicable, only those transactions using the official form shall be entertained.
 - 2.3.1.3. The Regulatory Division shall develop these electronic application or transaction forms in a manner consistent with these guidelines and the relevant issuance of the Board for each service involved.
 - 2.3.2. Advising services shall be provided through the official agency telephone lines; and,
 - 2.3.3. Public consultations, meetings, trainings and similar services shall be facilitated through secure virtual conference software.
- 2.4. No physical transactions shall be allowed at any time, except only in extremely necessary cases.
 - 2.4.1. The cases that are considered extremely necessary are those that involve clients who have travelled from outside Mega Manila to visit the LEB office, or regardless where they are from, are shown to have exerted great effort in order to transact physically, or any similar situation based on humanitarian grounds.
 - 2.4.2. In these limited physical transactions, only phone advising using the local trunk line system will be allowed.
- 2.5. A **unique transaction code** shall be assigned to all incoming transactions from the different platforms. The transaction code shall serve as a reference number.
- 2.6. The collection of service and transaction fees under Category E or Auxiliary Services pursuant to LEB Memorandum Order (LEBMO) No. 12, Series of 2018, shall be temporarily suspended.
 - 2.6.1. All other fees under LEBMO 12 shall be made only through check, or postal money order.
 - 2.6.2. Schools may seek a deferral of payment of fees for up to two (2) months.
- 2.7. The submission of requirements in compliance with reportorial duties or Board directive shall be extended by a period of forty-five (45) days from the original end of the compliance period.
- 2.8. In the long term, the agency shall invest in and develop an integrated management information system for legal education that will enable efficient, reliable and secure public services through virtual platforms. A virtual payment scheme for fees shall also be developed.

Section 3 ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

- 3.1. The primary platform of the agency for public services shall be the use of electronic communications, and as far as practicable, it shall use the Government-wide Email system or GOV.PH for its official business.
- 3.2. An electronic communications management system shall be employed to record, track and archive electronic data messages using the **unique transaction code**.
 - 3.2.1. Agency personnel shall be allowed to use only the official email system, and are expected to use the facility responsibly.
 - 3.2.2. Online and emailing etiquette, and professionalism in the service are also to be strictly observed.
 - 3.2.3. The use of other secure electronic communication platforms for official business may be allowed upon approval of the Executive Committee.
- 3.3. All incoming, outgoing and intraoffice communications shall be received and made through the official email system, and subject to the requirements under the Electronic Commerce Act, shall be treated as valid electronic data messages sufficient to initiate the usual public service procedures and office operations of the agency.
 - 3.3.1. The printing of physical copies of received messages shall not be required unless necessary.
 - 3.3.2. Nonetheless, the printing of physical copies of important messages shall be made periodically for archiving purposes.
- 3.4. A more detailed *electronic communications protocol* shall be issued by the Regulatory Division to govern the electronic communications management system.
 - 3.4.1. The protocol shall also outline the procedure for the use of the official emailing system, including a procedure for acknowledging receipt of messages.
 - 3.4.2. Following the provisions of the Electronic Commerce Act, electronic data messages shall be treated received by the addressee at the time the message enters their designated information system.

Section 4 ELECTRONIC FILING

- 4.1. The submission of electronic documents shall be accepted when made through the official email system of the agency, and subject to the requirements of law and these guidelines, shall be treated as original documents sufficient to initiate usual public service procedures and office operations of the agency. Electronic documents filed through a physical electronic storage device shall also be treated in the same way.
- 4.2. All documentary requirements may be satisfied by the submission of electronic copies, unless directed otherwise by the Board, and at all times, it shall be the responsibility of the sender to maintain and safeguard the physical copies of the documentary submissions.
- 4.3. Physical documents, at the option of the applicant, may still be submitted through courier services, or dropped-off at the office premises.
 - 4.3.1. Physical documents under these guidelines is understood to include documents such as letters, notes, papers and the like, as well as object submissions like storage devices, packages and parcels.

4.3.2. Submission of physical documents shall be subject to the sanitation guidelines of the agency.

4.4. All official documents of the agency shall also be issued electronically and transmitted through its official email system, and shall be treated as original documents.

4.4.1. An applicant or addressee need not wait for the physical copy of the official agency document.

4.4.2. Nonetheless, documents to be issued by the agency, when necessary, may be sent out through courier services, or scheduled for pick-up at the office premises.

Section 5 PHONE COMMUNICATIONS

5.1. The secondary platform for public services shall be the use of the telephone line which shall be limited to the designated telephone line number of the agency.

5.2. Only advising services are available through the agency's telephone lines.

5.2.1. Advising services pertain to the provision of advice, guidance and other verbal transmission of information based on a query or concern of the caller.

5.2.2. No personal information, as defined under the Data Privacy Act, shall be transmitted by the agency's personnel over the phone.

5.3. A specific *telephone advising protocol* shall also be issued by the Regulatory Division to ensure the responsible provision of services.

Section 6 STREAMLINED REVIEW PROCESS

6.1. In the migration of the public services delivery to virtual platforms, the review process involved in transactions shall be streamlined to align with technological adjustments and comply with the requirements under the Anti-Red Tape Act, as amended.

6.1.1. The streamlined review process shall primarily involve the following steps and review period per each type of transaction:

6.1.1.1.

TRANSACTION TYPE	PROCESS	PERIOD
Simple	Receipt – Processing – Final action – Release	Three (3) days
Complex	Receipt – Processing – Endorsement – Final Action – Release	Seven (7) days
Highly Technical	Receipt – Study – Recommendation – Final Action – Release	20 days
Multi-step Highly Technical	Receipt – Study – Recommendation – Preliminary Review – Feedback – Compliance – Final Action – Release	40 days

6.1.1.2. Under Section 6, the following terms shall pertain to:

6.1.1.2.1. Receipt – the act of the Front Desk Officer in receiving an application, which involves preliminary evaluation of completeness of submission. Incomplete submissions will not be accepted;

- 6.1.1.2.2. Processing – the act of the Regulatory Division in evaluating an application in simple and complex transactions based on the completeness of the submission and compliance with the standards for approval;
- 6.1.1.2.3. Study – the act of the Regulatory Division in evaluating more in-depth an application in highly technical and multi-step highly technical transactions based on the completeness of the submission, compliance with the standards for approval, information outside the application and additional supporting research;
- 6.1.1.2.4. Endorsement – the act of the Regulatory Division Head in reviewing the processing of an application and prepare the documents for approval of the Chairman;
- 6.1.1.2.5. Recommendation – the act of the Regulatory Division Head in reviewing the study conducted in highly technical and multi-step highly technical transactions and prepare the documents for preliminary review of the Board;
- 6.1.1.2.6. Preliminary Review – the act of the Board in considering the application in highly technical and multi-step highly technical transactions to either approve, disapprove or return the application for feedback;
- 6.1.1.2.7. Feedback – only when directed by the Board upon preliminary review, the act of the Regulatory Division in transmitting results of the preliminary review to the applicant for submission of further requirements;
- 6.1.1.2.8. Compliance – the act of the Regulatory Division of receiving and evaluating the compliance made by the applicant after feedback has been made;
- 6.1.1.2.9. Final Action – the act by the Regulatory Division Head, Chairman or the Board, depending on the nature of the transaction, of whether approving or denying the application; and,
- 6.1.1.2.10. Release – the terminal act in the process where the results of the final action is transmitted and, if granted, the applicable documents are issued to the applicant.

6.1.2. In applying the simplified steps in the review process, and pursuant to the definitions under the Anti-Red Tape Act as amended, the available public services offered by the agency shall have the following transaction category, period of review, standards of review and designated person for final action:

TRANSACTION TYPE AND PERIOD	TRANSACTION	BASIS	STANDARDS OF REVIEW	FINAL ACTION
Simple (3 Days)	Advising	N/A	Valid request	Regulatory Division Head
	True copy of documents	N/A	Valid request	
	Certification of Authenticity and Verification of	N/A	Complete request from Registrar	

	Academic Records			
	Certificate of PhilSAT Exemption	Section 10, LEBMO 7	Complete and timely application form Honor graduate granted professional civil service eligibility	
	Refresher Course	LEBMO 3	Complete and timely application	
			Valid Government Recognition	
			Graduated students in the last three (3) academic years	
			Maintained at least 10% passing rate for new examinees in the last three (3) academic years	
	Certificate of Graduation (per 50 students)	Resolution 2012-02, LEB Memorandum Circular 6	Complete and timely application form	
			Compliance with admission standards	
	Reissuance of Academic Credentials	LEBMO 19	Complete application	
Complex (7 Days)	Summer Class	LEBMO 13	Complete and timely application form	Chairman
			Compliance with requirements on term duration, maximum academic load, and number of class hours	
	Academic Calendar	LEBMO 10	Complete and timely application Compliance with requirements on academic year duration, minimum number of days, prescribed number of hours, summer term, and opening	
	Appeal of denials of simple transactions	N/A	Chairman's discretion	
Highly Technical (20 Days)	Special requests for exemption from application of LEB regulations	N/A	Board discretion	Board
	Curriculum	Section 53, LEBMO 1, 09/03/2013 Memo, Resolution 2018-226, Resolution 2018-266, Resolution	Board discretion Compliance with model curriculum, as amended, and table of pre-requisites, as amended	

		2018-356, LEBMO 19	
	New Elective	LEBMO 14	Board discretion Complete and timely application Form Compliance with nature of subject as involving the study of substantive and/or procedural law(s), and/or legal skill needed by a law practitioner
	Honoris Causa	LEBMO 9	Board discretion Complete and timely application Compliance with requirements in the qualification of grantor, honoree, and non-disqualifications
Multi-step Highly Technical (40 Days)	Tuition and Other School Fee Increases	LEBMO 8	Board discretion Complete and timely application
	Equivalency of Foreign Law Degree	Resolution 2019-430	Board discretion Complete application Compliance with standards of equivalency, particularly nature of degree
	Permit to Enroll in 4 th Year	Resolution 115-27	Board discretion Complete and timely application Compliance with the standards of equivalency, particularly entry requirement
Special (1 Year)	Government Permit and Recognitions	LEBMO 1	Board discretion Complete and timely application Compliance with standards of fitness to operate the basic law program/graduate law program/extension/branch

6.1.1. In all these transactions, the final actions done by the Regulatory Division Head shall be regularly reported to the Chairman and to the Board, for their reference and review.

Section 7 TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE

- 7.1. In order to ensure that the agency will be able to provide efficient, reliable and secure virtual public services, its technological infrastructure and capacity shall be developed.
- 7.1.1. Subject to the limitations of procurement laws, all essential personnel shall be equipped with a computer unit, an internet connection device and data connection.
- 7.1.2. The agency shall also provide an online conference software for its use.
- 7.1.3. The use of these agency-provided devices and technologies shall strictly be for official business purposes.
- 7.1.4. The personnel shall also be capacitated to effectively support virtual public services.

- 7.2. The telephone line shall also be maintained to ensure reliable advising services, but local teleconferencing for physical transactions within office premises shall be explored for possible implementation in the agency.
- 7.3. Additionally, the cyber security and data privacy infrastructure shall be improved in the long term to safeguard the integrity of the agency.
- 7.4. The duties in Section 7 shall be lodged with the Administrative Division Head.

Section 8 CYBER SECURITY AND DATA PRIVACY

- 8.1. In the virtual delivery of public services, the agency commits to the fundamental importance of privacy.
 - 8.1.1. The LEB shall ensure that personal information of its stakeholders in its custody and control is always protected and secured.
 - 8.1.2. Information collected from the stakeholders shall be used strictly in accordance with these guidelines in providing services, pursuing scholarship and crafting policies.
- 8.2. The privacy protection guaranteed by the agency extends to the collection, recording, organization, storage, updating or modification, retrieval, consultation, use, consolidation, blocking, erasure or destruction of personal information received by the agency as mandated by law, and/or related rules and regulations, memorandums and other issuances of the Board.
- 8.3. All law schools, students, clients, and other legal stakeholders under the supervision and administration by the LEB, consistent with its powers and functions under R.A. 7662, and those who will avail of the LEB's services, shall consent to the processing of their personal information.
- 8.4. Pursuant to the Data Privacy Act, personal information shall refer to any information whether recorded in a material form or not, from which the identity of an individual is apparent or can be reasonably and directly ascertained by the entity holding the information, or when put together with other information would directly and certainly identify an individual.
- 8.5. The information to be collected shall be limited to those required by law, rules and regulations, memorandum, and other related issuances.
 - 8.5.1. In its virtual platforms, the agency may collect the following information:
 - 8.5.1.1. Full name;
 - 8.5.1.2. Birth date;
 - 8.5.1.3. Place of birth;
 - 8.5.1.4. Home address;
 - 8.5.1.5. Gender;
 - 8.5.1.6. Civil status;
 - 8.5.1.7. Citizenship;
 - 8.5.1.8. Height;
 - 8.5.1.9. Weight;
 - 8.5.1.10. Tax Identification Number;
 - 8.5.1.11. Roll Number;
 - 8.5.1.12. Image of persons;
 - 8.5.1.13. Image of identification cards; and,
 - 8.5.1.14. School background.
 - 8.5.2. The agency shall not collect any other information, or allow information to be used for other purposes, without the express verbal or written consent of the client, except when authorized by law.

- 8.6. Safeguards shall be put in place to protect the security of all information in the agency's possession. These safeguards shall pertain to a combination of physical, technological and administrative security measures that are appropriate to the sensitivity of the information.
- 8.7. For electronic communications and documents, the following *cyber security protocol* shall be enforced:
- 8.7.1. Only the officially designated email system of the agency shall be used to receive and transmit electronic data messages;
- 8.7.1.1. Agency personnel shall properly identify themselves, and the subject matter of the message in all electronic communications.
- 8.7.1.2. A standard data privacy notice shall also be included in the message.
- 8.7.2. For individuals, an **ID card verification mechanism** shall be implemented.
- 8.7.2.1. No prior security questions will be asked before they can transact with the agency; however, only those transactions using the correct electronic form shall be entertained.
- 8.7.2.2. All individuals shall also be required to submit with their documents a truthful image of a valid identification card pertaining to the applicant.
- 8.7.2.3. If the individual transacting is not the applicant, the sender must also submit a scanned copy of their identification card along with an authorization letter.
- 8.7.3. For law schools, an **electronic signature verification and secure transactions mechanism** shall be implemented.
- 8.7.3.1. Legal educational institutions (LEI) shall submit a physical notarized affidavit made by the School Head or President containing the following:
- 8.7.3.1.1. Specimen signature of the School Head or President, the School Registrar and the Law Dean;
- 8.7.3.1.2. One designated institutional email address of the school, preferably that of the School Registrar, to process all its secure transactions with the Board; and,
- 8.7.3.1.3. An undertaking that it will ensure all its electronic data messages and documents that it will transmit shall be safe to access and shall transmit these securely.
- 8.7.3.2. Only incoming messages and documentary submissions from the designated institutional email address of the school shall be entertained by the agency involving secure transactions.
- 8.7.3.2.1. The **secure transactions** include the following applications:
- 8.7.3.2.1.1. *Government Permit and Recognition for Permit to Operate*
- 8.7.3.2.1.2. *Special Government Permit to Offer Refresher Course*
- 8.7.3.2.1.3. *Authority to Conduct Classes in the Summer Term*
- 8.7.3.2.1.4. *Authority for Tuition and Other School Fees Increase*
- 8.7.3.2.1.5. *Authority to Reissue Academic Credentials*
- 8.7.3.2.1.6. *Authority to Confer an Honoris Causa Degree*
- 8.7.3.2.1.7. *Certificate of Authentication and Verification*
- 8.7.3.2.1.8. *Certificate of Graduation*
- 8.7.3.2.2. Other transactions involving personal information, such as admission concerns, shall also be considered secure transactions, and the same security procedure may be required, as appropriate.

- 8.7.3.3. All other transactions, queries and communications with LEIs which do not involve personal information, including concerns pertaining to the curriculum shall be entertained by the agency through the usual email addresses used by the law school.
- 8.7.4. For agency-issued documents for transmission, a **three-step security feature** will be implemented:
- 8.7.4.1. Firstly, a security code shall be attached to the body of the document;
 - 8.7.4.2. Secondly, the security code will be countersigned by authorized personnel; and,
 - 8.7.4.3. Finally, the dry seal of the agency shall be attached.
- 8.8. A **data privacy officer** shall be assigned to oversee the data privacy concerns of the agency.
- 8.8.1. Only authorized LEB personnel shall have access to personal information collected.
 - 8.8.2. These will be stored in a database in accordance with the requirements of law.
- 8.9. In the use of its virtual platforms, particularly its online conference software, the data privacy officer shall ensure that stringent cyber security protections are in place.
- 8.9.1. The officer may recommend for the approval of the Executive Committee for the issuance of specific guidelines to promote cyber security.
 - 8.9.2. The officer may require the cessation of transactions and other actions by any personnel when there are valid cyber security concerns.
 - 8.9.3. It is the responsibility of all personnel to contribute to the promotion of cyber security in the use of the agency's virtual platforms.

Section 9 IMPLEMENTATION

- 9.1. These guidelines are immediately executory and shall apply until revoked.
- 9.2. As reasonably required by exigency, the Chairman or the Executive Committee may adjust these guidelines to facilitate the efficient, reliable and secure provision of public services.

Issued under the seal of the Legal Education Board this 8th day of May 2020 in Quezon City.

For the Board:



ZENAIDA N. ELEPAÑO
OIC, Commissioner