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**A Year in Lockdown in the Philippines:
Timeline of the Pandemic and Conditions of Living
under Quarantine Rules (Part 2.)**

Abstract: The article examines the course of the spread of the coronavirus infection epidemic in the Philippines during the first year, 2020, from the moment of the first confirmed cases of infection to the present time. The author pays attention to how the epidemic developed from May to December 2020, what measures were taken by the country's national government to combat the coronavirus, in which tightly regulated framework people were forced to live. We are considering 4 types of quarantines that were introduced by the Philippine government in different regions of the country during the specified period.

Keywords: *Covid-19, cases of infection, deaths, quarantine, employees, basic necessity goods, transport*

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**ГОД ЖИЗНИ В ЛОКДАУНЕ НА ФИЛИППИНАХ:
ХОД ПАНДЕМИИ И УСЛОВИЯ ЖИЗНИ В КАРАНТИНЕ
(Часть 2.)**

Аннотация: Статья рассматривает ход распространения эпидемии коронавирусной инфекции на Филиппинах в течение первого – 2020 – года с момента первых подтвержденных случаев заражения до нынешнего времени. Автор уделяет внимание тому,

как развивалась эпидемия с мая по декабрь месяц 2020 г., тому какие меры принимались национальным правительством страны для борьбы с коронавирусом, в каких жестко регулируемых рамках вынуждены были жить люди. Рассматриваются 4 типа карантина, которые вводились правительством Филиппин в разных областях страны в течение означенного периода.

Ключевые слова: COVID-19, случаи заражения, случаи смерти, карантин, работники, товары первой необходимости, транспорт

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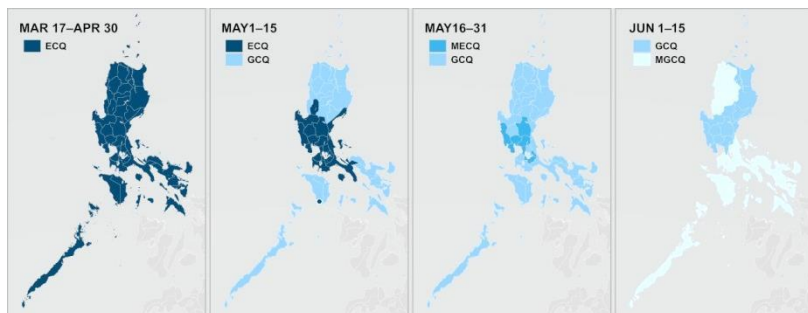
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Types of quarantine in the Philippines throughout year 2020. Among quarantines introduced in the Philippines we can name four main types: enhanced community quarantine (ECQ)¹, modified enhanced community quarantine (MECQ), general community quarantine (GCQ) and modified general community quarantine (MGCQ), the first one being the strictest version and the last being the most relaxed one.

Territorially the dynamics of quarantine changes in time in the Philippines are well shown in the following map. Whereas in the very beginning all the country was very quickly put under one and the same type of quarantine, further on the matters kept changing from bad to better and better and as of June 1–15 we can see that the largest part of the country turned to modified general community quarantine – the slightest version among the 4 types. However, it is clear that even after 3 months of lockdown the central part of the Philippines, including the National Capital Region (NCR) had to still

stay under a bit stricter version of general community quarantine. What is the difference among these 4 aforementioned types of quarantine we will see to further on.



Source: Implementation of community quarantine in Luzon from March 17 to June 15. URL: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enhanced_community_quarantine_in_Luzon#/media/File:COVID-19_community_quarantine_in_Luzon.svg

Enhanced community quarantine. When the "community quarantine" was applied to Luzon, Presidential Spokesperson Salvador Panelo, said that the Luzon-wide enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) is equivalent to an "absolute lockdown or total lockdown". President Rodrigo Duterte added that "it is not martial law"². Localities under an enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) are generally ordered to stay at home, with its residents restricted from traveling to other cities or barangays. Barangay governments can issue quarantine passes allowing residents to buy essential goods outside curfew hours and within the issuing barangays' jurisdiction. The Bayanihan to Heal as One Act also provides measures related to the ECQ, such as³:

- Limited operation of all forms of transportation. (For areas under ECQ, public transportation shall be suspended except commissioned shuttle services for employees of permitted offices or establishments, as well as point-to-point transport services provided by the government, giving priority to healthcare workers⁴.)
- Movement of cargo via air, land and sea within and across areas placed under any form of community quarantine shall be unhampered. Provided, that only a maximum of five (5) personnel may operate a cargo and delivery vehicles by land, with or without load.

- Workers in the logistics sector, such as cargo, trucking, courier delivery and port operations shall likewise be allowed to transit across areas placed under any form of community quarantine.
- Suspension of work or creation of alternative working arrangements (work from home):

Employees in the private sector

- a) Employers should extend financial help or assistance to their employees and may grant pro-rated 13th month pay.
- b) DOLE and DSWD will provide social amelioration packages for those affected by the work stoppage.
- c) Employers should not terminate employees by reason only of not reporting for work because of the COVID-19 situation.

Employees in the government sector

- a) Work in agencies and instrumentalities of the government, including GOCCs and LGUs may operate under a skeleton workforce and with other alternative work arrangements as approved by the head of agency unless a different operational capacity is required in agencies providing health and emergency frontline services, border control and other critical services.
 - b) Work in all public and private offices shall be allowed to resume physical work in full capacity with alternative arrangements for persons who are 60 years old and above, those with immunodeficiency, comorbidities, other health risks and pregnant women⁵.
- Ensuring the availability of food and medicine for all.
 - Enforcing measures against profiteering and hoarding of essential goods.
 - Implementation of a 30-day grace period for the payment of loans and rents during the period of quarantine.
 - Only businesses offering essential goods and services are allowed to operate.

Governmental resources provide the same information in a more detailed and simpler way, strictly describing who, what and how is allowed to do during the ECQ. It is clear from the text below that the rules are expected to be followed in the right manner and people are to be controlled by official police forces. Judging by me

personal experience of shortly visiting the Philippines 2 years before the Covid-19 situation, there is no doubt that the police generally did there work of controlling and checking with all might. Here is the text itself for further comparison with the types of quarantine following the ECQ⁶.

| Dos | Don'ts |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1. Everyone must stay at home | 1. No classes at all levels. 2. No reporting for work in government and private sector, except for some exemptions. |

Who may go out of their homes?

| Dos | Don'ts |
|---|--|
| 1. Only one person per household would be allowed to buy/access basic necessities: barangay captains to check compliance 2. Employees of establishments involved in the production, processing, and distribution of basic necessities: food (supermarkets, groceries, convenience stores, vet markets), pharmacies/drugstores; banks or remittance centres. 3. PNP, AFP and other uniformed personnel. 4. Personnel involved in health work, border control, emergency, and other mission-critical services. 5. Media with authorization from PCOO. 6. ALWAYS BRING and pre- | 1. Those who are most vulnerable should not go out. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seniors (60 years old and above) • Those with preexisting medical condition like cardio-vascular disease, hypertension, diabetes, COPD, cancer and others • Pregnant women 2. Do not ask non-exempted individuals to accompany you to your work-place. 3. DO NOT LOITER. 4. Do not intimidate or resist persons in authority. Always remain calm and respectful. |

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| <p>sent the following at designed checkpoints:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification Card • Proof of residence • Certification of employment • Delivery recipe for those transporting good to and from the quarantine area; and • Authorization or certifications, if applicable, issued by authorized government offices. | |
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What other establishments are open?

| Dos | Don'ts |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All basic utilities should continue to operate: water, electricity, Internet, telecommunications. 2. Other critical services should remain open: garbage collection, funeral and interment services, gasoline stations. 3. Capital Market to open today (March 18). 4. Business Process Outsourcing (BPO/IT) and export-oriented establishments as long as they are provided temporary housing/shelter by their companies. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Casinos, gambling places, including POGOS. 2. Hotels shall not accept any new bookings. |

Mass public transportation

| Dos | Don'ts |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. LGUs and employers should provide point to point transportation for people authorized to report for work, specifically | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ALL public transportation are not allowed to operate, such as tricycles, pedicabs, taxis/Grab, |

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| health workers. 2. Transportation from the airport may be provided by the DOTr or OWWA (for OFWs). 3. Walking or biking is allowed. | jeepneys, buses including MRT/LRT. |
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Flow of goods

| Dos | Don'ts |
|---|--|
| 1. Movement of cargo via air, land and sea shall be unhampered. | 1. Cargo truck and vans should not be blocked from entering the ports, express ways or highways. |

Employees in the private sector

| Dos | Don'ts |
|--|--|
| 1. Employers are encouraged to adopt a work arrangement that will not require physically reporting for work. 2. Employers should extend financial help or assistance to their employees; may grant prorated 13 th month pay. 3. DOLE and DSWD will provide social amelioration package for those affected by the work stoppage. | 1. Unless the company is engaged in basic necessities or services, employers should not require their employees to report for work. 2. Employers should not terminate their employees by reason only of not reporting for work because of the Covid-19 situation. |

Employees in the government sector

| Dos | Don'ts |
|--|---|
| 1. Employees in the executive branch should work from home, except those vendoring emergency frontline services. 2. Those authorized to work should maintain only a skeletal force. | 1. No travels/events/trainings allowed. |

Travel in and out of the Philippines

| Dos | Don'ts |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Filipinos abroad can return to the Philippines any time, including their foreign spouse and children. 2. Other permanent residents of the Philippines may also return. 3. All returning Filipinos and permanent residents from China, Hongkong and Macau shall be subject to 14-day quarantine in a quarantine facility. All other returning Filipinos and permanent residents arriving in Luzon shall comply with mandatory home quarantine. 4. OFWs, balikbayans and foreign nationals will be allowed to leave the Philippines at any time, as long as their departure is 24 hours from the time they leave their homes or hotels. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Filipinos who will go out as tourists to any destination shall not be allowed to leave the country. 2. No sendoff party will be allowed to a company departing passengers. |

Modified Enhanced Community Quarantine (MECQ) which was introduced in particular areas in the country in May, mid-July and then in August, is said to be less strict than the ECQ, but still stricter than the GCQ. Under this type of quarantine people should comply to the following rules:

1. Minimum public health standards shall be complied with at all times for the duration of the MECQ.
2. Strict home quarantine shall be observed in all households, and the movement of all residents shall still be limited to accessing essential goods and services, and for work in permitted offices or establishments or other activities.

3. Any person below 21 years old, those who are 60 years old and above, those with immunodeficiency, comorbidity, or other health risks, and pregnant women, including any person who resides with the aforementioned, shall be required to remain in their residences at all times, except when indispensable under the circumstances for obtaining essential goods and services, for work in industries and offices or other permitted activities. (There is a full list of permitted establishments and industries with commentaries on how they are allowed to function under MECQ⁷).
4. Agencies and instrumentalities of the government, including GOCCs, as well as LGUs, may operate with skeletal workforce in combination with other alternative work arrangements as approved by the head of agency unless a different operational capacity is required in agencies providing health and emergency frontline services, border control, and other critical services.
5. Accredited diplomatic missions and international organizations shall be advised to operate under skeletal workforce.
6. Hotels or accommodation establishments shall not be allowed to operate.
7. Mass gatherings for reasons of leisure and entertainment shall be prohibited. Gatherings that are for provision of critical government services and authorized humanitarian activities while adhering to the prescribed minimum health standards shall be allowed. Religious gatherings shall be limited to not more than 5 persons until otherwise modified through subsequent issuances of the IATF.
8. Face-to-face or in-person classes at all levels shall be suspended.
9. Public transportation shall be suspended except for the shuttle services for employees of permitted offices and establishments, giving priority to healthcare workers.
10. Private transportation such as company shuttles and personal vehicles utilized by persons authorized outside their residences are allowed subject to the guidelines provided by DOTr. The use of bikers and other non-motorized transportation is strongly encouraged.
11. Limited operations in malls and shopping centres shall be allowed, except for leisure establishments and services which shall

continue to be closed. Allowed establishments are meant to provide only authorized items of basic needs. Those below 21 and those who are 60 and over, those with immunodeficiency, comorbidity, or other health risks, and pregnant women, including anyone who resides with the aforementioned individuals, may not enter malls and shopping centres, except for the necessity of buying basic products and services.

12. In addition to those allowed and enumerated construction projects under Section 2 of these Guidelines other essential and priority public and private construction projects shall be allowed, subject to compliance with the DPWH construction safety guidelines. Small-scale projects are not to be allowed.
13. The following shall not be allowed to operate within an area under MECQ:
 - Tourist destinations such as water parks, reservation service, and related services;
 - Entertainment industries such as cinemas, theatres, and karaoke bars;
 - Kid amusement industries such as playroom and kiddy rides;
 - Libraries, archives, museums, and cultural centres;
 - Gyms, fitness studios and sports facilities; and
 - Personal care services such as massage parlors, sauna, facial care, and waxing.
14. Individual outdoor exercises such as outdoor walks, jogging, running, or biking are allowed within MECQ areas. The minimum health standards and precautions such as the wearing of masks and the maintenance of social distancing protocols should be observed.
15. Other exemptions from the ECQ previous IATF resolutions or issuances of the Office of the President shall also be applied in MECQ areas⁸.

General community quarantine. The general community quarantine (GCQ), which was introduced on May 1, is generally less stringent than ECQ. Public transportation is allowed at a reduced capacity and select businesses are allowed to operate at 50 to 100 percent of their regular capacity depending on their industry. Shop-

ping malls are also allowed to operate, although only select stalls and stores are allowed to open⁹.

Modified general community quarantine. A level under GCQ, is called a modified general community quarantine (MGCQ). In order to better see the difference here let us look through a table¹⁰, comparing the two types of quarantine. Even by number of rules, as it is clear, GCQ will be stricter here, though quite a lot of rules in both kinds are similar or even the same. Those points which are not alike and show the difference are underlined.

| General Community Quarantine (GCQ) | Modified General Community Quarantine (MGCQ) |
|--|--|
| <p>1. Minimum public health standards shall be complied with.</p> <p>2. Movement of persons shall be limited to accessing essential goods and services, and for work in the permitted industries and establishments. <u>Movement for leisure purposes are still prohibited.</u></p> <p>3. The following are required to remain at home at all times except if indispensable for work in permitted industries and activities, or for obtaining essential goods and services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those below 15 years of age; • Those 65 years old and above; • Those with immunodeficiency, comorbidities, other health risks, pregnant women; | <p>1. Minimum public health standards shall be complied with.</p> <p>2. Movement of persons shall be limited to accessing essential goods and services, for work in offices permitted to operate, and for other activities permitted.</p> <p>3. The following are required to remain at home at all times except if indispensable for work in permitted industries and activities, or for obtaining essential goods and services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those below 15 years of age; • Those 65 years old and above; • Those with immunodeficiency, comorbidities, other health risks, pregnant women. |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Those who reside with the aforementioned.</u> <p>4. <u>Outdoor non-contact sports</u> such as golf, tennis, range shooting, biking, swimming, skateboarding, badminton shall be allowed. Operations of club houses or similar establishments shall be limited to basic operations. Operations of relevant clubhouses or similar establishments are limited to basic operations and restaurants and cafes up to 30% venue capacity provided social distancing protocols are observed. Dine-in establishments in these establishments are allowed to operate up to 09:00 PM. No spectators in non-contact sports shall be allowed. Off-track horse race betting stations may operate in areas under GCQ or lower, subject to strict health and safety protocols (per IATF Reso. No. 79).</p> <p>5. <u>Religious gatherings shall be allowed up to thirty percent (30%) of the seating or venue capacity (per IATF Reso. No. 80);</u> provided that religious gathering shall be limited to the conduct of religious worship and/or service; Provided further, that there is no objection from the local</p> | <p>4. <u>Indoor and outdoor non-contact sports</u> and other forms of exercise shall be allowed (i.e. walking, jogging, golf) provided minimum public health standards are observed. Sharing of equipment and the presence of spectators shall likewise be prohibited (per the Revised Omnibus Guidelines dated 10-08-2020).</p> <p>5. <u>Mass gatherings shall be allowed (i.e. religious services, movie screenings, concerts) provided participants shall be limited to 50% of the venue capacity.</u></p> |
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| <p>government unit where the religious gathering may take place. The religious denominations should strictly observe their submitted protocols and the minimum public health standards, particularly the social distancing measures and non-pharmaceutical interventions such as the obligatory wearing of face masks and immediate availability of hand hygiene necessities in the premises (per IATF Reso. No. 51). <u>Mass gatherings shall be prohibited except for provision of critical government services and authorized humanitarian activities.</u></p> <p>6. Public transport, including road, rail, maritime and aviation sectors, will be allowed with strict safe distancing, <u>at a reduced operational and vehicle capacity</u>, and subject to one (1) meter distance between passengers (per Revised Omnibus Guidelines dated 10-08-2020)</p> <p>7. Non-essential out-bound travel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Filipinos are allowed starting 21 October 2020, subject to the following conditions (per IATF Resolution No. 79, as amended by IATF Resolution No. 80): • For those travelling on | <p>6. Public transportation shall be allowed in accordance with DOTr guidelines and shall observe a strict one (1) meter distance between passengers. (per Revised Omnibus Guidelines dated 10-08-2020)</p> <p>7. Non-essential out-bound travel for Filipinos is allowed starting 21 October 2020, subject to the same conditions in the first column (per IATF Reso. No. 79). Tourists from areas under GCQ or lower, or those travelers from Western Visayas</p> |
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| <p>tourist visas or short-term/visitor visas, submission of confirmed round-trip tickets and adequate travel and health insurance to cover travel disruptions and hospitalization in case of COVID-19 infections during their allowable period of stay abroad;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Execution of a Bureau of Immigration Declaration acknowledging the risks involved in travelling, including risk of delay in their return trip, to be provided at the check-in counters by the airlines; • Whenever required by the country of destination or the airline, a negative COVID-19 test taken in accordance with the health and safety protocols of such destination country or airline; and • Upon return, they shall follow the Guidelines of the National Task Force for Returning Overseas Filipinos. <p>The foregoing shall not be interpreted to allow outbound travel by Filipinos to countries where travel restrictions are in place and this is without prejudice to the Bureau of Immigration's exercise of its man-</p> | <p>are allowed to go to Boracay starting 01 October 2020 (per IATF Resolution No. 74) subject to conditions.</p> <p>Movement from places under MGCQ to and from areas under no community quarantine is allowed but insofar as tourism travel is concerned, the same may still be subject to regulations of the LGU concerned (per the Revised Omnibus Guidelines dated 10-08-2020).</p> |
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date prior to departure (per IATF Reso. No. 79). Tourists from areas under GCQ or lower, or those travelers from Western Visayas are allowed to go to Boracay starting 01 October 2020 (per IATF Resolution No. 74) subject to conditions.

Inter-island travel from one area under GCQ to another area under GCQ are allowed, provided that safety protocols are observed. Interzonal movement from persons between areas placed under GCQ and MGCQ for any purpose other than leisure is allowed. Movement to and from an area under GCQ to an area with no community quarantine is allowed except if for leisure. (per Revised Omnibus Guidelines dated 10-08-2020).

8. School may have skeletal workforce to process requirements from students and to prepare for graduation and the next semester. Face-to-face or in-person classes shall be suspended. For basic education, opening of classes shall be on 24 August 2020 and shall end on 30 April 2021; For higher education, recommendations of CHED shall be adopted; For technical vocational education and

8. Limited face-to-face or in-person classes may be conducted in Higher Education Institutions provided minimum health standards are observed. Mass gatherings of students in such institutions are still prohibited. For K-12, the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan of the DepEd shall be adopted.

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| <p>training (TVET) of the TESDA, trainings and assessments may be conducted subject to TESDA Guidelines and minimum public health standards (per Omnibus Guidelines issued 10-08-20). <u>Face-to-face competency assessment for domestic work, caregiver and housekeeping qualifications, ship's catering and other TVET qualifications may be allowed up to 50% assessment site capacity, subject to TESDA and DTI Guidelines (per IATF Resolution No. 78).</u></p> | <p>9. Alternative work arrangements should be made for persons 60 years old and above, those with health risks, and pregnant women.</p> <p>10. Operation of licensed cockpits and conduct of cock-fighting activities are allowed in areas under MGCQ or lower, subject to strict health protocols; Provided, that in-person audience, online or remote betting and live broadcasting/teleshooting of cock-fights shall not be permitted. LGUs have final decision on whether operation of licensed cockpits and conduct of cock-fighting activities can proceed in their respective localities (per IATF Reso. No. 79).</p> |
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There are some basic regulations for people living under any type of the quarantine. Thus, the movement of the following persons within and across areas placed under any form of community quarantine shall be permitted:

- Health and emergency frontline services personnel;
- Government officials and government frontline personnel;
- Duly-authorized humanitarian assistance actors;
- Persons traveling for medical or humanitarian reasons;
- Persons going to the airport for travel abroad;
- Returning or repatriated OFWs and other Overseas Filipinos returning to their places of residences;
- Other persons transported through the efforts of the national government upon observance of the necessary quarantine protocols and with the concurrence of the receiving LGUs; and
- Anyone crossing zones for work permitted in the zone of destination and going back home.

Logically speaking all those restrictions and regulations introduced should have made some effect, but whether they really brought in positive results in pandemic dynamics is yet to be examined. Needless to say, that taking into account generally low level of living among the population of the Philippines, those results cannot be without grave consequences for particular social classes, namely the poor. Therefore, our next part of this work will be dedicated to several issues. First of all, some events or governmental decisions made on particular dates during the period are planned to be discussed including those dates which were highlighted in italics in the timeline (March 30, April 1, 12, 14, May 14, July 23, October 5, November 4, 26, December 1, 17, 21, 26, 29, 30). Secondly, several points, such as 1) what help was organized in order to support the citizens; 2) how the work of hospitals was assisted; 3) what was done to arrange educational process from homes; 4) how the compliance with the quarantine rules was controlled; 5) what are the people's opinions and feelings about the whole situation; 6) how president Duterte's trust rating has changed – will be studied. Finally, general conclusion on the results after a year in Covid-19 will be made together with predictions on the future development of the Covid-19 situation in the Philippines.

¹ Different from community quarantine under which “people were ordered to limit their movement and refrain from going out of their homes unless buying essential items such as food, water, and medicine. A curfew from 8 p.m. to 5 a.m. was also put in place”. See: What is ECQ, EECQ, Lockdown, and Partial Lockdown? / By Mario Alvaro Limos. Esquire. April 20, 2020. URL:

<https://www.esquiremag.ph/life/health-and-fitness/what-is-ecq-lockdown-and-partial-lockdown-a00293-20200420-lfrm>

² Luzon under enhanced community quarantine. . . URL: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/03/16/20/duterte-places-luzon-under-enhanced-community-quarantine-to-fight-covid-19>

³ What is ECQ, EECQ, Lockdown, and Partial Lockdown?

⁴ Luzon-wide Enhanced Community Quarantine: Basic Do’s and Don’ts / By Angelica A. Chua. Platon Martinez Law. August 12, 2020. URL:

<https://platonmartinez.com/articles/luzon-wide-enhanced-community-quarantine-basic-dos-and-donts>

⁵ Luzon-wide Enhanced Community Quarantine: Basic Do’s and Don’ts.

⁶ Luzon Enhanced Community Quarantine Basic Dos and Don’ts. Bulletin № 1. URL: <https://www.deped.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/IATF-Luzon-Enhanced-Community-Quarantine-Bulletin-1.pdf>

⁷ MECQ Guidelines. From IATF and Malacañang Palace. URL: <https://governmentph.com/mecq-guidelines/>

⁸ MECQ Guidelines. From IATF and Malacañang Palace.

⁹ GUIDE: What’s the difference between ECQ and GCQ? / By Racquel Quieta. GMA. April 29, 2020. URL:

<https://www.gmanetwork.com/entertainment/showbiznews/news/62692/guidewhats-the-difference-between-ecq-and-gcq/story>

¹⁰ Business Operations Allowed Under ECQ, MECQ, GCQ, and MGCQ / Platon Martinez Law. November 11, 2020. URL: <https://platonmartinez.com/articles/business-operations-allowed-under-ecq-mecq-gcq-and-mgcq>