



Republic of the Philippines
QUEZON CITY COUNCIL

Quezon City
22nd City Council

PO22CC-317

72nd Regular Session

ORDINANCE NO. SP- **3315**, S-2024

AN ORDINANCE ENSURING COMPREHENSIVE PROTECTION AND DIGNITY FOR CANCER PATIENTS AND SURVIVORS: SAFEGUARDING AGAINST BULLYING, HARASSMENT, AND DISCRIMINATION

Introduced by Councilor CHARM M. FERRER

Co-Introduced by Councilors Bernard R. Herrera, Tany Joe "TJ" L. Calalay, Dorothy A. Delarmente, M.D., Joseph P. Juico, Nikki V. Crisologo, Fernando Miguel "Mikey" F. Belmonte, Aly Medalla, Dave C. Valmocina, Tatay Rannie Z. Ludovica, Godofredo T. Liban II, Albert Alvin "Chuckie" L. Antonio III, Don S. De Leon, Wencerom Benedict C. Lagumbay, Atty. Anton L. Reyes, Edgar "Egay" G. Yap, Imee A. Rillo, Raquel S. Malañgen, Irene R. Belmonte, Nanette Castelo-Daza, Marra C. Suntay, Joseph Joe Visaya, Alfred Vargas, MPA, Shaira "Shay" L. Liban, Aiko S. Melendez, Mutya Castelo, Maria Eleanor "Doc Ellie" R. Juan, O.D., Kristine Alexia R. Matias, Eric Z. Medina, Emmanuel Banjo A. Pilar, Vito Sotto Generoso, Victor "Vic" Bernardo, Jose Maria M. Rodriguez and Jhon Angelli "Sami" C. Neri

WHEREAS, the 1987 Philippine Constitution declares that the State values the dignity of every human person and guarantees full respect for human rights. It also imposes upon the State the duty to ensure the fundamental equality before the law of men and women;

WHEREAS, the Philippines is a signatory to numerous international agreements that seek to ensure respect for the human rights of all persons regardless of race, ethnic origin, religion, religious affiliation or beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identity, social status, age, looks or political beliefs, even belief in health care and love for one's body and health;

WHEREAS, cancer is challenging enough without having to endure bullying and judgment from others. Sadly, cancer bullying is all too prevalent and many people are not even aware that their actions, words or conduct already constitute bullying;

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WHEREAS, cancer patients and survivors face unique challenges and vulnerabilities, both during their treatment and in their transition to survivorship, including physical, emotional and psychological impacts that may persist long after their diagnosis;

WHEREAS, immediate family members of cancer patients and survivors also experience the emotional and psychological impacts of the disease, hence their well-being and dignity should likewise be safeguarded against any form of bullying or harassment, recognizing the interconnections of familial support in the journey towards healing and recovery;

WHEREAS, individuals living with cancer or in remission should be afforded the same rights and protections against bullying and harassment as any other member of society, in order to maintain their dignity, well-being and quality of life;

WHEREAS, each person's battle with cancer affects his/her life in many different ways (including famous people); it varies throughout his/her journey. Spewing mean-spirited comments is not only unkind and disrespectful, but is in no way building up patients and survivors or promoting the positive, encouraging environment that all cancer patients and survivors need in order to heal;

WHEREAS, bullying of cancer patients and survivors can exacerbate the trauma and stress associated with their condition, impede their access to necessary medical care and support services, and hinder their ability to fully participate in school, work and community life;

WHEREAS, it is incumbent upon our community to promote compassion, empathy and inclusivity, and to take proactive measures to prevent and address bullying behavior targeting cancer patients and survivors, thereby fostering a culture of respect, understanding and support for all individuals affected by this devastating disease;

WHEREAS, studies have indicated that cancer patients and survivors often face discrimination, stigma and social ostracism due to misunderstandings about their condition, leading to increased vulnerability to bullying and marginalization within society;

WHEREAS, the journey of a cancer patient or survivor is marked by immense courage, resilience and perseverance, as they confront the physical and emotional tolls of the disease and its treatment, demonstrating admirable strength in the face of adversity;

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WHEREAS, the harmful effects of bullying on individuals' mental health, self-esteem and overall well-being are well-documented, and such behaviors can exacerbate the already challenging circumstances faced by cancer patients and survivors, further jeopardizing their recovery and quality of life;

WHEREAS, fostering a supportive and compassionate community environment that upholds the rights and dignity of all individuals, regardless of their health status, is essential in promoting healing, empowerment and social justice, and is aligned with the values of equality and human rights cherished by our society.

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF QUEZON CITY IN REGULAR SESSION ASSEMBLED:

SECTION 1. PURPOSE. – The purpose of this Ordinance is to protect cancer patients and survivors from bullying and harassment, ensuring their right to dignity, respect and fair treatment within our community.

SECTION 2. POLICY OF THE CITY. –

- (a) *Education and Awareness: The City shall undertake initiatives to educate the public about the diverse nature of cancer and its impacts on individuals, families and communities. These efforts shall include awareness campaigns, educational programs and community outreach activities aimed at fostering understanding, empathy and support for cancer patients and survivors.*
- (b) *Collaboration with Healthcare Institutions: The City shall collaborate with healthcare institutions, non-profit organizations, and advocacy groups to ensure that comprehensive support services are available to cancer patients and survivors, including counseling, support groups and access to medical care.*
- (c) *Promotion of Early Detection and Treatment: The City shall promote initiatives aimed at early detection and treatment of cancer, including regular screenings, vaccination programs, and access to affordable healthcare services for all residents.*

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- (d) *Inclusion of Cancer Education in the School Curricula: The City shall work with educational authorities to incorporate age-appropriate cancer education into the school curricula, ensuring that students are informed about the signs, symptoms and risk factors associated with cancer, as well as the importance of compassion and support for individuals affected by the disease.*
- (e) *Training for Law Enforcement and First Responders: The City shall provide training for law enforcement officers, emergency responders and other relevant personnel on how to effectively recognize and respond to incidents of bullying and harassment targeting cancer patients and survivors, ensuring that these individuals receive appropriate support and assistance.*
- (f) *Public Awareness Events: The City shall organize public awareness events, such as seminars, workshops and forums, to promote understanding and acceptance of cancer patients and survivors, challenge stigma and discrimination, and foster a culture of inclusivity and support within the community.*
- (g) *Promotion of Healthy Lifestyles: The City shall promote policies and programs that encourage healthy lifestyles and reduce the risk factors associated with cancer, such as tobacco use, excessive alcohol consumption, poor nutrition and physical inactivity.*
- (h) *Recognition of Cancer Awareness Months: The City shall officially recognize and support national and international cancer awareness months, such as Breast Cancer Awareness Month and World Cancer Day, by participating in related activities and initiatives to raise awareness and show solidarity with cancer patients and survivors.*
- (i) *Evaluation and Monitoring: The City shall periodically evaluate and monitor the implementation of this Section to ensure its effectiveness in promoting cancer education, awareness and support within the community. Adjustments and enhancements shall be made as needed to address emerging needs and challenges related to cancer prevention and control.*

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- (j) *Collaboration with Stakeholders: The City shall engage with stakeholders, including government agencies, healthcare providers, academic institutions, civil society organizations, and the private sector, in the development and implementation of initiatives to promote cancer education and awareness, leveraging their expertise, resources and networks to maximize impact and reach across diverse populations.*
- (k) *Public Engagement and Participation: The City shall actively involve residents, community leaders, and other stakeholders in the planning, implementation and evaluation of cancer education and awareness initiatives, fostering a sense of ownership and collective responsibility in promoting the well-being of cancer patients and survivors within the community.*
- (l) *Reporting and Accountability: The City shall establish mechanisms for reporting the progress and outcomes of its efforts to promote cancer education and awareness, ensuring transparency and accountability in the use of public resources and the achievement of desired objectives and outcomes.*
- (m) *Continual Improvement: The City shall commit to continual improvement of its efforts to promote cancer education and awareness, seeking feedback from stakeholders, monitoring trends and developments in the field, and adapting strategies and approaches as needed to address evolving challenges and opportunities in cancer prevention and control.*
- (n) *Recognition and Appreciation: The City shall recognize and appreciate individuals, organizations and institutions that contribute to the promotion of cancer education and awareness through awards, commendations and other forms of public recognition, inspiring others to join in the collective effort to combat cancer and support those affected by it.*
- (o) *Integration with Health Equity Efforts: The City shall integrate its efforts to promote cancer education and awareness with broader health equity initiatives aimed at addressing social determinants of health, reducing health disparities, and ensuring equitable access to healthcare services for all residents, particularly those from marginalized and underserved communities.*

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- (p) *Advocacy for Policy Change: The City shall advocate for policy changes at the local, national and international levels to address systemic barriers to cancer prevention, diagnosis, treatment and survivorship, advocating for policies that promote health equity, protect human rights and advance the well-being of all individuals affected by cancer.*
- (q) *Collaboration with Media Partners: The City shall collaborate with media partners, including traditional and digital media outlets, to amplify messages and raise awareness about cancer education and awareness initiatives, leveraging their reach and influence to disseminate accurate information, challenge misconceptions, and promote positive attitudes and behaviors towards cancer patients and survivors.*
- (r) *Empowerment of Cancer Patients and Survivors: The City shall empower cancer patients and survivors to become advocates for their own health and well-being, providing them with the information, resources and support they need to navigate their cancer journey with confidence, dignity and resilience, and to actively participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives.*
- (s) *Collaboration with Support-Based Organizations: The City will partner with support-based organizations and spiritual leaders to infuse messages of hope, compassion and healing into cancer education and awareness efforts, acknowledging the vital role that can spiritually support in aiding individuals impacted by cancer and their families.*
- (t) *Culturally- and Linguistically-Appropriate Services: The City shall ensure that cancer education and awareness initiatives are culturally- and linguistically-appropriate, taking into account the diverse backgrounds, beliefs and languages spoken by residents, and employing strategies to reach and engage underserved populations, including ethnic minorities, immigrants, refugees and indigenous communities.*
- (u) *Collaboration with Schools and Youth Organizations: The City shall collaborate with schools, youth organizations and other youth-serving institutions to engage young people in cancer education and awareness activities, empowering them to become agents of change in their communities and become advocates for the well-being of their peers affected by cancer.*

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- (v) *Promotion of Survivorship and Quality of Life: The City shall promote initiatives to support cancer survivors in their transition to survivorship and enhance their quality of life, addressing their physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs.*

SECTION 3. DEFINITION OF TERMS. – For the purpose of this Ordinance, the following terms shall be defined as:

- (a) *Cancer – any malignant growth or tumor, including but not limited to, carcinomas, sarcomas, lymphomas and leukemias, regardless of the specific type or location within the body.*
- (b) *Cancer Patient – a person who is receiving medical treatment for a malignant growth or tumor or any individual diagnosed with cancer, undergoing treatment.*
- (c) *Cancer Survivor – any individual who has overcome cancer and is in remission.*
- (d) *Bullying – any severe or repeated use of a physical, written, verbal or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, that is intended to harm, intimidate or cause distress to a cancer patient or survivor, such as, but not limited to, the following:*
 - (1) *Any unwanted physical contact between the bully and the cancer patient or survivor like punching, pushing, shoving, kicking, slapping, tickling, headlocking, inflicting pranks, teasing, fighting and using available objects as weapons;*
 - (2) *Any act that causes damage to a cancer patient or survivor’s psyche and/or emotional well-being;*
 - (3) *Any slanderous statement or accusation that causes the cancer patient or survivor undue emotional distress like directing foul language or profanity at the target, name-calling, tormenting and commenting negatively on victim’s looks, clothes, body and his/her medical condition/s; and*
 - (4) *Cyber-bullying or any bullying done through the use of technology or any electronic means.*

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- (5) *Discrimination – Any unjust or prejudicial treatment of individuals based on their status as cancer patients or survivors. This includes, but is not limited to:*
- (5.1) *Exclusion – Denying access to opportunities, services or facilities that are available to others based on their cancer status;*
 - (5.2) *Unequal Treatment – Providing less favorable conditions or treatment to cancer patients or survivors compared to others in similar circumstances;*
 - (5.3) *Harassment – Subjecting cancer patients or survivors to unwanted and offensive conduct related to their cancer status, which creates a hostile environment;*
 - (5.4) *Bias – Making decisions or forming opinions about cancer patients or survivors that are influenced by stereotypes or misconceptions about their condition.*

SECTION 4. PROHIBITED CONDUCTS/ACTS. –

- (a) *No educational institution shall refuse admission, expel, discipline, segregate or deny participation, benefits or services to a student or prospective student on the basis of his/her condition as a cancer patient.*
- (b) *No cancer patient shall be deprived of the right to ride in any transportation.*
- (c) *No business establishment, such as restaurants, shall deny any cancer patient from entering its premises and availing of its services.*
- (d) *A deceased cancer patient shall not be denied any kind of decent burial services.*
- (e) *No person shall inquire about an individual’s medical history related to the individual’s ability to perform a particular job or task, or to determine eligibility for a particular benefit or service.*

SECTION 5. SCOPE OF PROTECTION. – *The protection provided by this Ordinance shall apply to all acts of bullying occurring in any setting, including, but not limited to, schools, workplaces, public places and online platforms.*

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SECTION 6. PENALTIES. –

- (a) Any person, or in the case of an entity, the responsible officer, found to have committed any of the prohibited acts enumerated in Section 4 hereof shall, upon due notice and trial, suffer a fine not exceeding Php5,000.00 or imprisonment for a period of not exceeding 1 year, or both, in the discretion of the court, and without prejudice to such person or entity's liability for civil damages in a case which may independently be filed against him/her.
- (b) In addition to the criminal and civil liability provided in this Ordinance, the revocation or cancellation of an establishment's business permit shall be imposed on any establishment found to have committed any of the prohibited acts enumerated in Section 4 hereof.
- (c) In case a public officer commits any of the prohibited acts enumerated in Section 4 hereof, he/she shall be dealt with administratively in addition to his/her criminal and civil liability provided herein.
- (d) Any individual who believes they have been bullied, harassed or discriminated, as defined and prohibited in this Ordinance, may seek assistance from the Barangay, Department of Public Order and Safety, City Health Department, and file a complaint with the proper tribunal or office.

SECTION 7. IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS. – The City Health Department shall be the lead office to formulate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Ordinance, together with the other concerned departments and offices, within 90 days from the effectivity of this Ordinance.

SECTION 8. REPEALING CLAUSE. – All ordinances, resolutions, executive orders, memorandum circulars, and other administrative orders or parts thereof which are inconsistent with any provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 9. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE. – If any provision of this Ordinance is declared void or unconstitutional, the remaining portions shall not be affected thereby and shall remain in full force and effect.

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SECTION 10. EFFECTIVITY CLAUSE. – This Ordinance shall be posted at prominent places in the City Hall, for a minimum period of 3 consecutive weeks and shall also be published in a newspaper of general circulation, within the territorial jurisdiction of the City. This Ordinance shall take effect on the day following its publication.

ENACTED: July 29, 2024.


GIAN G. SOTTO
City Vice Mayor
Presiding Officer

ATTESTED:



ATTY. JOHN THOMAS S. ALFEROS, III
City Government Department Head III
(City Council Secretary)

APPROVED: OCT 21 2024


MA. JOSEFINA G. BELMONTE
City Mayor

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this Ordinance was APPROVED by the City Council on Second Reading on July 29, 2024 and was PASSED on Third/Final Reading on August 5, 2024.


ATTY. JOHN THOMAS S. ALFEROS, III
City Government Department Head III
(City Council Secretary)