



Republic of the Philippines  
**QUEZON CITY COUNCIL**

Quezon City  
22<sup>nd</sup> City Council

PO22CC-323

91<sup>st</sup> Regular Session

ORDINANCE NO. SP- **3347**, S-2024

AN ORDINANCE MANDATING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE, INTEGRATIVE, AND SUSTAINABLE NEWBORN SCREENING SYSTEM IN QUEZON CITY, LOCALIZING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9288, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "NEWBORN SCREENING ACT OF 2004" AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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*Introduced by Councilors JOSEPH P. JUICO, BERNARD R. HERRERA, DOROTHY A. DELARMENTE, M.D., ALY MEDALLA and GELEEN "Dok G" G. LUMBAD*

*Co-Introduced by Councilors Tany Joe "TJ" L. Calalay, Nikki V. Crisologo, Charm M. Ferrer, Candy A. Medina, Dave C. Valmocina, Tatay Rannie Z. Ludovica, Godofredo T. Liban II, Kate Galang-Coseteng, 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, Ram V. Medalla, 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*

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*WHEREAS, Section 15, Article I of the 1987 Philippine Constitution provides that the State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them;*

*WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 9288, otherwise known as the "Newborn Screening Act of 2004," mandates the institutionalization of a National Newborn Screening System that is comprehensive, integrative, and sustainable;*

*WHEREAS, the Quezon City Government recognizes the importance of localizing the provisions of Republic Act No. 9288 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations to ensure its effective implementation within Quezon City;*

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WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of the Quezon City Government to ensure that every newborn in the City has access to newborn screening services to detect heritable conditions that can lead to serious health complications or death if left untreated;

WHEREAS, the early detection of heritable conditions through newborn screening can prevent severe mental retardation, physical deformities, and other life-threatening conditions, thus significantly improving the quality of life for affected individuals and their families

WHEREAS, the localization of the Newborn Screening Act of 2004 within Quezon City is essential for promoting the health and well-being of its residents and ensuring the timely and efficient implementation of newborn screening services;

WHEREAS, the Quezon City Health Department (QCHD) plays a crucial role in the public health infrastructure of the City and is well-positioned to lead the local implementation of the Newborn Screening Act of 2004;

WHEREAS, collaboration among government and non-government agencies, the private sector, health institutions, and the community is vital to the successful implementation of the Newborn Screening Act of 2004 within Quezon City;

WHEREAS, comprehensive training and education programs for healthcare practitioners are necessary to ensure the effective delivery of newborn screening services and to inform parents of the benefits and procedures of newborn screening;

WHEREAS, it is imperative to establish and maintain certified Newborn Screening Centers within Quezon City to provide accessible and high-quality screening services to all newborns;

WHEREAS, ensuring the proper funding and resource allocation for newborn screening services is crucial for the sustainability and effectiveness of the program.

NOW, THEREFORE,

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

SECTION 1. TITLE. – This Ordinance shall be known as the “Quezon City Newborn Screening Ordinance of 2024.”

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*SECTION 2. DECLARATION OF POLICY. – It is the policy of Quezon City to protect and promote the right to health of all newborns by ensuring they have access to comprehensive and sustainable newborn screening services.*

*SECTION 3. OBJECTIVES. – The objectives of this Ordinance are to:*

- a. ensure that every newborn in Quezon City has access to newborn screening for heritable conditions that can result in mental retardation, serious health complications, or death if left undetected and untreated;*
- b. establish and integrate a sustainable newborn screening system within the City’s public health delivery system;*
- c. ensure that all health practitioners in Quezon City are aware of the advantages of newborn screening and their responsibilities in offering newborns the opportunity to undergo newborn screening; and*
- d. ensure that parents in Quezon City recognize their responsibility in promoting their child’s right to health and full development through newborn screening.*

*SECTION 4. DEFINITION OF TERMS. – For the purposes of this Ordinance, the following terms shall mean:*

- a. **Accreditation** – refers to the accreditation/certification of Newborn Screening Facilities by the Newborn Screening Reference Center. The Department of Health (DOH) endorses the facilities to NSRC;*
- b. **DILG** – refers to the Department of the Interior and Local Government;*
- c. **DOH** – refers to the Department of Health, the lead agency in implementing Republic Act No. 9288;*
- d. **Follow-up** – refers to the monitoring of a newborn with a heritable condition to ensure that the newborn patient receives the appropriate medical or dietary prescriptions;*

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- e. **IRR** – refers to the Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 9288;
- f. **Newborn** – refers to a child from the time of complete delivery to 30 days old;
- g. **Newborn Screening (NBS)** – refers to the process of collecting a few drops of blood from the newborn onto an appropriate collection card and performing biochemical testing to determine if the newborn has a heritable condition;
- h. **Newborn Screening Center (NSC)** – refers to a facility equipped with a newborn screening laboratory that complies with the standards established by the National Institutes of Health, Philippines (NIHP), and provides all required laboratory tests and recall/follow-up programs for newborns with heritable conditions;
- i. **Newborn Screening Reference Center (NSRC)** – refers to the central facility at the NIHP that defines testing and follow-up protocols, maintains an external laboratory proficiency testing program, oversees the national testing database and case registries, assists in training activities in all aspects of the NBS program, oversees content of educational materials, recommends establishment of NSCs, and acts as the Secretariat of the Advisory Committee on Newborn Screening; and
- j. **QCHD** – refers to the Quezon City Health Department.

SECTION 5. OBLIGATION TO INFORM. –

- a. Any healthcare practitioner who delivers or assists in the delivery of a newborn in Quezon City shall, prior to delivery, inform the parents or legal guardians of the availability, nature, and benefits of newborn screening. This obligation extends to healthcare practitioners in both public and private health institutions within Quezon City;
- b. Private lying-in clinics within Quezon City shall also be mandated to inform parents or legal guardians of newborns about the availability, nature, and benefits of newborn screening. The QCHD shall coordinate with these private clinics to ensure compliance with this provision; and

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- c. *The QCHD shall be responsible for the appropriate notification and education regarding the obligation to inform parents or legal guardians about newborn screening, including providing informational materials and conducting training programs for healthcare practitioners.*

**SECTION 6. PERFORMANCE OF NEWBORN SCREENING.** – *Newborn screening shall be performed after 24 hours of life but not later than 3 days from complete delivery of the newborn. A newborn that must be placed in intensive care in order to ensure survival may be exempted from the 3-day requirement but must be tested by seven (7) days of age. It shall be the joint responsibility of the parents and the healthcare practitioner to ensure that newborn screening is performed. An appropriate informational brochure for parents to assist in fulfilling this responsibility shall be made available by the QCHD and shall be distributed to all health institutions and made available to any health practitioner requesting it for appropriate distribution.*

**SECTION 6-A. DATA PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY.** – *All health institutions, healthcare practitioners and individuals and/or entities involved in the collection, storage, processing, and dissemination of personal and sensitive information related to newborn screening shall comply with the provisions of Republic Act No. 10173, otherwise known as the Data Privacy Act of 2012.*

**SECTION 7. REFUSAL TO BE TESTED.** – *A parent or legal guardian may refuse testing on the grounds of religious beliefs but shall acknowledge in writing their understanding that refusal for testing places their newborn at risk for undiagnosed heritable conditions. A copy of this refusal documentation shall be part of the newborn’s medical record and indicated in the national newborn screening database.*

**SECTION 8. LEAD AGENCY.** – *The Quezon City Health Department (QCHD) shall be the lead agency in implementing this Ordinance. For achieving the objectives of this Ordinance, the QCHD shall have the following roles:*

- a. **Development of Comprehensive Strategies:** *The QCHD shall develop comprehensive strategies and action plans for the effective implementation of newborn screening services across Quezon City. These strategies shall include outreach programs, community engagement initiatives, and collaboration with healthcare institutions to ensure maximum coverage and participation;*
- b. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** *The QCHD shall establish a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to track the progress and impact of newborn screening activities. This framework shall include regular assessments of screening coverage, follow-up services, and health outcomes to identify areas for improvement and inform decision-making;*

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- c. **Capacity Building:** *The QCHD shall conduct capacity-building initiatives for healthcare practitioners involved in newborn screening, including training workshops, seminars, and certification programs. These initiatives shall aim to enhance the knowledge, skills, and competencies of healthcare professionals to deliver high-quality screening services;*
- d. **Coordination with Stakeholders:** *The QCHD shall facilitate coordination and collaboration with various stakeholders, including government agencies, non-government organizations, private sector partners, and community groups. This coordination shall ensure alignment of efforts, mobilization of resources, and synergy in the implementation of newborn screening activities;*
- e. **Advocacy and Public Awareness:** *The QCHD shall lead advocacy and public awareness campaigns to promote the importance of newborn screening and encourage participation among parents, caregivers, and the general public. These campaigns shall utilize various communication channels and platforms to reach diverse audiences and raise awareness about the benefits of early detection and intervention;*
- f. **Research and Innovation:** *The QCHD shall support research and innovation initiatives to advance newborn screening practices and technologies. This may include pilot projects, studies, and collaborations with research institutions to explore new approaches, tools, and methodologies for improving screening accuracy, efficiency, and accessibility;*
- g. **Policy Development:** *The QCHD shall contribute to the development of policies, guidelines, and regulations related to newborn screening at the local and national levels. This involvement shall ensure that policies are evidence-based, responsive to local needs, and supportive of the objectives of this Ordinance;*
- h. **Resource Mobilization:** *The QCHD shall work towards mobilizing resources, including funding, equipment, and human resources, to sustain and scale up newborn screening services in Quezon City. This may involve advocacy for budget allocations, partnerships with donors and philanthropic organizations, and leveraging existing resources within the healthcare system;*

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- i. **Adaptation to Emerging Needs:** The QCHD shall remain responsive to emerging needs and challenges related to newborn screening, including changes in technology, epidemiological trends, and community dynamics. This may require flexibility in program design, implementation strategies, and policy responses to address evolving issues and ensure continued relevance and effectiveness of newborn screening services;
- j. **Quality Assurance and Standards Compliance:** The QCHD shall establish mechanisms for quality assurance and standards compliance to ensure that newborn screening services meet established guidelines, protocols, and benchmarks. This may involve regular audits and performance reviews to maintain high standards of service delivery and accountability; and
- k. **Partnership Development:** The QCHD shall foster partnerships and collaborations with relevant stakeholders, including healthcare providers, professional associations, academic institutions, and civil society organizations. These partnerships shall be based on principles of mutual respect, shared goals, and collective action to strengthen the newborn screening ecosystem and maximize impact.

SECTION 9. ESTABLISHMENT AND ACCREDITATION OF NEWBORN SCREENING CENTERS. – The QCHD shall ensure that Newborn Screening Centers are strategically located to be accessible to the relevant public and provide services that comply with the standards approved by the DOH. No Newborn Screening Center shall be allowed to operate unless duly accredited by the NSRC based on the standards set forth by the NIHP. At a minimum, every Newborn Screening Center shall:

- a. have a certified laboratory performing all tests included in the newborn screening program;
- b. have recall/ follow-up programs for infants found positive for any heritable condition;
- c. be supervised and staffed by trained personnel who have been duly qualified by the NIHP; and

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- d. *submit to periodic announced or unannounced inspections by the NIHP to evaluate and ensure quality Newborn Screening Center performance.*

**SECTION 10. ACCREDITATION OF PRIVATE LYING-IN CLINICS.** – *All private lying-in clinics within Quezon City shall be required to obtain accreditation from the NSRC to perform newborn screening. To qualify for accreditation, private lying-in clinics must: a) comply with the standards and guidelines set by the NIHP and QCHD for newborn screening procedures; b) employ trained personnel who have been certified in newborn screening techniques; c) maintain adequate facilities and equipment for the collection and handling of newborn screening samples; d) submit to regular inspections and evaluations by the QCHD to ensure compliance with established standards; and e) ensure the timely submission of newborn screening samples to certified Newborn Screening Centers for testing.*

**SECTION 11. CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING.** – *The QCHD, with the assistance of the NIHP and other government agencies, professional societies, and non-government organizations shall:*

- a. *conduct continuing information, education, re-education, and training programs for health personnel on the rationale, benefits, and procedures of newborn screening; and*
- b. *disseminate information materials on newborn screening at least annually to all health personnel involved in maternal and pediatric care.*

*The QCHD shall prioritize the development of capabilities among health workers involved in newborn screening. This shall include training programs, skills enhancement workshops, and capacity-building initiatives aimed at equipping healthcare practitioners with the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary to effectively deliver newborn screening services.*

**SECTION 12. AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION, EDUCATION, AND COMMUNICATION (IEC) MATERIALS.** –

- a. *The QCHD shall ensure the availability of Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials regarding newborn screening in all healthcare facilities within Quezon City, including both public and private clinics;*

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- b. *These IEC materials shall be provided free of charge to all healthcare facilities and shall contain comprehensive information about the importance, process, and benefits of newborn screening, as well as the rights and responsibilities of parents or legal guardians in ensuring their newborn's access to screening services;*
- c. *It shall be the responsibility of private clinics to ensure that these IEC materials are prominently displayed in areas accessible to patients and visitors, such as waiting areas or information desks, to facilitate awareness and understanding of newborn screening among the public; and*
- d. *The QCHD shall periodically review and update the content of these materials to ensure accuracy and relevance.*

**SECTION 13. ESTABLISHMENT OF FUNCTIONAL CASE MANAGEMENT REFERRAL SYSTEM.** – *The QCHD shall establish a functional case management referral system with a strategically accessible Newborn Care Services Network (NCSN). This system shall facilitate the timely and appropriate referral of newborns identified with heritable conditions during screening to specialized care facilities for further evaluation, diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up.*

**SECTION 14. COORDINATION AND NETWORKING AMONG CONCERNED AGENCIES.** – *The QCHD shall establish coordination and networking mechanisms among concerned agencies involved in newborn screening implementation. This shall include collaboration with national government agencies, local government units, healthcare providers, civil society organizations, and other relevant stakeholders to ensure a holistic and integrated approach to NBS service delivery.*

**SECTION 15. MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF NBS IMPLEMENTATION.** – *The QCHD shall be responsible for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of newborn screening (NBS) in the locality. This shall include regular assessments of screening coverage, service quality, health outcomes, and adherence to established protocols and standards to identify areas for improvement and inform decision-making.*

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SECTION 16. PROVISION OF FINANCIAL PACKAGES. – The QCHD shall provide financial packages to make NBS accessible, as much as possible, free among economically deprived populations. This may include innovative financing mechanisms, public-private partnerships, community-based funding initiatives, and other strategies to ensure equitable access to NBS services for all residents of Quezon City.

SECTION 17. APPROPRIATIONS. – The necessary funds for the implementation of this Ordinance shall be charged against the annual budget of the QCHD. An initial appropriation of Php5,000,000.00 is hereby allocated for the implementation of this Ordinance such as, but not limited to, the hiring of personnel, purchase of equipment, training programs, monitoring, and other related activities. Subsequent appropriations shall be included in the annual budget of the QCHD for the continued implementation of this Ordinance.

SECTION 18. IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS. – to effectively carry out the provisions of this Ordinance, the QCHD shall issue the necessary Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) within 60 days from the approval of this Ordinance.

SECTION 19. REPEALING CLAUSE. – All ordinances, executive orders, and administrative regulations, or any parts thereof, which are inconsistent with this Ordinance are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 20. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE. – If, for any reason, any section or provision of this Ordinance shall be declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other sections or provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

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*SECTION 21. EFFECTIVITY CLAUSE. – This Ordinance shall take effect after its publication in a newspaper of general circulation, and after posting of copies in conspicuous locations within Quezon City.*

ENACTED: October 14, 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: NOV 20 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 October 14, 2024 and was PASSED on Third/Final Reading on October 16, 2024.*



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

