

PRESS RELEASE

2020 March 18

Foreign nationals, balikbayans, OFWs, may now depart PH during community quarantine period

MANILA, Philippines—Bureau of Immigration (BI) officials have announced the lifting of the 72-hour travel period for departing overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), balikbayan, and foreign nationals.

This follows the pronouncement of Cabinet Secretary Karlo Nograles during a media briefing last night on modifications to the March 16 memorandum on the Enhanced Community Quarantine over the entire Luzon.

According to BI Commissioner Jaime Morente, foreign nationals may now leave anytime during the community quarantine period, unless their flights have been cancelled by the airlines or the CAB (Civil Aeronautics Board).

Morente likewise clarified that balikbayans and OFWs are allowed to depart the country during this period. “There was some confusion with other government agencies yesterday, but we discussed this to them and to the IATF-EID (Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Disease), and we were able to clarify that OFWs are indeed allowed to travel,” he stated. Departing Filipino tourists, he stated, are temporarily not allowed to depart.

Morente added that previously-imposed travel restrictions for arriving passengers still remain in effect.

“Our travel restrictions for foreign nationals arriving from China, Hong Kong, Macau, North Gyeongsang including Daegu and Cheongdo of South Korea, Iran, and Italy still stands,” announced Morente.

Currently, foreign nationals are not allowed to enter the country if they have a history of travel from China, Hong Kong, Macau, and North Gyeongsang including Daegu and Cheongdo of South Korea within the last 14 days. Exempted classes are Filipinos, their spouse and their children, foreigners with Philippine permanent resident visas, and members of the diplomatic corps.

Meanwhile, passengers coming from Iran and Italy are required to present a medical certificate issued within the last 48 hours from arrival, stating that they are Covid-19 free. #