



Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL POLICE COMMISSION
NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS, PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF, PNP
Camp BGen Rafael T Crame, Quezon City

MAR 19 2024

DPRM(D)231129-455

PNP MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR

NO.: 2024-023

PNP REGULATIONS ON BEARING AND/OR SPORTING OF TATTOOS

1. REFERENCES:

- a. Republic Act (RA) No. 8551, also known as the “Philippine National Police Reform and Reorganization Act of 1998”;
- b. RA No. 6975, otherwise known as “An Act Establishing the Philippine National Police Under a Reorganized Department of the Interior and Local Government, and for Other Purposes”;
- c. Section 22 (c), Rule XIV on the Omnibus Rules Implementing Book V of Executive Order No. 292, and Other Pertinent Civil Service Laws;
- d. NAPOLCOM Memorandum Circular (NMC) No. 2021-003, with the title of “Prescribing the Guidelines and Procedures for Lateral Entry as Police Commissioned Officers”;
- e. NMC No. 2016-002, or otherwise known as “Revised Rules of Procedure Before the Administrative Disciplinary Authorities and the Internal Affairs Service of the Philippine National Police”;
- f. PNP MC dated June 4, 2021 entitled, “Reimplementation of Delinquency Reporting System dated June 4, 2021”;
- g. PNP MC No. 2015-001 entitled, “Supplemental Guidelines on the Delinquency Report System (Strengthening the Disciplinary Authority of Chief of Office); and
- h. Health Service Physical Examination Manual titled: “Prescribing Standards, Policies, Procedures and Guidelines for the Conduct of Complete Physical, Mental and Dental Examinations in the Philippine National Police”.

2. RATIONALE:

This MC provides for the policies and guidelines to be followed by PNP applicants, uniformed, and non-uniformed personnel of the PNP pertaining to bearing and/or sporting of tattoos.

3. SITUATION:

It has been observed that there are significant numbers of PNP personnel who are bearing and/or sporting tattoos that are visible even when they are in PNP uniform.



While for some, tattoos may appear to be not in accordance with the employment standards in the uniformed service, some personnel however, viewed and embraced the same as creative body arts. Since, at present, there are no laws prohibiting tattoos and that neither NAPOLCOM nor the PNP has issued specific policies on this, the bearing and/or sporting of tattoos has now become an individual's choice in the PNP.

With the foregoing situation, there is a need to come up with a policy that will regulate the sporting and bearing of tattoos within the organization as one of the employment standards of the PNP.

4. PURPOSE:

This MC provides the guidelines on bearing and/or sporting of tattoos during the recruitment process for Patrolman/Patrolwoman, Lateral Entry (Line and Technical), Cadets of the Philippine National Police Academy (PNPA), and Non-Uniformed Personnel (NUP). This shall also apply to all active uniformed and NUP of the PNP. It specifically aims to:

- a. Provide clear policies on bearing and/or sporting of tattoos;
- b. Generally prohibit applicants for Patrolman/Patrolwoman, NUP, Lateral Entry (Line and Technical) and Cadets of the PNPA bearing or sporting tattoos on any part of their bodies; and
- c. Regulate the bearing and/or sporting of tattoos on active uniformed and NUP.

5. DEFINITION OF TERMS:

For purposes of this MC, the following terms or words and phrases shall mean or be understood as follows:

- a. Aesthetic Tattoo – refers to a tattoo or mark on the lips or eyebrows, permanent makeup, or other cosmetic tattoos.
- b. Ethnically or religiously discriminatory and offensive Tattoo – tattoo that is grossly offensive or discriminatory to a certain sect or religion or other ethnic groups.
- c. Extremist Tattoo – a tattoo affiliated with, depicting, or symbolizing extremist philosophies, organizations, or activities.
- d. Indecent Tattoo – a tattoo that is grossly offensive to modesty, decency, propriety, or professionalism.
- e. PNP Uniform – refers to all sets of clothing and apparel officially prescribed to all uniformed and non-uniformed personnel of the PNP approved by NAPOLCOM or PNP NUP Uniform Board, respectively.



- f. Racist Tattoo – tattoo that advocates a philosophy that degrades or demeans a person based on race, ethnicity, or national origin.
- g. Sexist and Obscene Tattoo – tattoo that advocates a philosophy that degrades or demeans a person based on gender but may not meet the same definition of “indecent.”
- h. Tattoo – refers to a form of body modification made by inserting permanent markings on the skin by way of ink and needles.
- i. Unauthorized Tattoo – refers to an extremist tattoo, ethnically or religiously discriminatory and offensive tattoo, indecent tattoo, racist tattoo, sexist tattoo and tattoo associated to prohibited or unauthorized organizations or associations.
- j. Visible Tattoo – refers to a tattoo that is not completely covered by authorized PNP uniforms which can be seen in plain view.

6. GUIDELINES:

a. General Guidelines

1) General Rules and Exceptions:

- a) Tattoos are generally prohibited as one of the employment standards in the PNP.
- b) While tattoos are generally prohibited, the same may be regulated under the following conditions:
 - (1) Tattoos of uniformed and non-uniformed personnel that are not visible when the personnel is wearing PNP-prescribed uniforms; and
 - (2) Aesthetic tattoos that are natural or ordinary looking as possible.

2) Specific Prohibitions:

- a) Uniformed and non-uniformed personnel are prohibited to have tattoo, regardless of its size or dimension, on their face, head, scalp, tongue, lips, eyelids, neck, hands, and other parts of the body, except in cases falling under paragraph 6(a)(1)(b) above.
- b) Whether visible or covered by PNP uniform, all personnel shall not bear and/or sport unauthorized tattoos. For purposes of this MC, the following tattoos are considered unauthorized:
 - (1) Extremist Tattoos;
 - (2) Ethnically or Religiously Discriminatory and Offensive Tattoos;
 - (3) Indecent Tattoos;



- (4) Racist Tattoos;
- (5) Sexist Tattoos; and
- (6) Tattoos Associated to Prohibited or Unauthorized Organizations or Associations
- c) No applicant for Patrolman/Patrolwoman, Lateral Entry and PNPA Cadets, whether civilian or in-service, shall have tattoos on their bodies, regardless of its size or irrespective of whether visible or not, except if it is done for aesthetic or cosmetic purposes on the lips, eyelids, or eyebrows, subject to the provision of paragraph 6(a)(1)(b)(2). The bearing and/or sporting of tattoos shall be one of the grounds for disqualification of applicants for PNP uniformed and non-uniformed service, to include Lateral Entry for Line and Technical Officers and PNPA Cadetship Program.
- d) Should, for whatever reason, the existence of tattoo/s be discovered only during the training, the same shall be a ground for the institution of termination proceedings against said trainee for failure to comply with this policy, in relation to the provisions of NMC No. 2016-002. The inspecting officer or personnel concerned in this case, shall likewise be held liable for failure to report properly the existence of such tattoo.
- 3) Unauthorized and/or visible tattoos of PNP personnel shall be removed within the period of three months from the time the personnel concerned received the directive to remove the said tattoo/s.
- 4) The prohibition stated under the immediately preceding provision shall likewise apply to Newly Appointed Police Commissioned Officers and Newly Appointed Police Non-Commissioned Officers, who, upon the approval of this MC are still in temporary status. They shall, consistent with due process of law, likewise be given a period of three months to remove their tattoo/s, reckoning from the time said trainees received the directive to remove the same. Failure to remove his/her tattoo/s shall be a ground for institution of termination proceedings against said trainee for failure to comply with this policy, in relation to the provisions of NMC No. 2016-002.
- 5) Any additional tattoo or tattoo inked after the effectivity of this MC shall be a ground for the filing of an administrative case against erring personnel, without need of further directing him/her to remove it. Under this circumstance, erring personnel is presumed to be in bad faith, which shall be considered as aggravating circumstance in an administrative case.



- 6) For purposes of determining whether a tattoo was only inked after the effectivity of this MC, the AdmOs of all units shall require all personnel to submit an Undertaking with Declaration of Tattoos (Annex "A"), duly administered by authorized administering officer, stating therein the number of tattoos, exact location in his/her body and their sizes. Said record shall be kept on file in their respective offices and summary of said record shall be forwarded to DPRM (Attn: DLOD or DLOS of different PROs) or its equivalent offices in the NSUs within the period of 30 days immediately after the effectivity of this policy. Updated reports shall be submitted to DLOD/DLOS, whenever a need to update arises.

b. Specific Guidelines

1) For PNP Personnel

- a) Visible and/or unauthorized tattoos shall be inspected during regular and random inspections set by the PNP;
- b) The designated Inspecting Supervisors shall, on the same day, submit report pertaining to the presence of visible and/or unauthorized tattoos to the respective Administrative Officers, copy furnished DLOD/DLOS and DIDM/RIDMD;
- c) The Head/Chief of Office/Unit concerned shall, within 24 hours from the submission of report of the Inspecting Supervisor, issue a directive to the personnel concerned to remove the visible and/or unauthorized tattoo/s within three months from receipt of the directive. Failure on the part of the personnel to comply with the directive within the prescribed period provided under these rules shall result in the conduct of a pre-charge investigation by the office/unit concerned;
- d) All PNP offices/units are required to disseminate the policy on bearing and/or sporting of tattoo to its personnel once every month or as necessary under the circumstances through the conduct of regular Police Information and Continuing Education; and
- e) The Head/Chief of Office/Unit may, at any time, require/direct the personnel to remove the tattoo whenever its existence is established, and if warranted by circumstances, initiate the filing of case/s, pursuant to this policy.

2) For Civilian and In-Service Applicants

- a) Recruitment Officers must inform all applicants of the existence of this policy prior to or during the actual recruitment process;
- b) Removal of tattoos shall be done prior to the online or actual submission of applications, provided the wounds caused by the removal has been totally healed and did not result to extensive,



deep, or adherent scars, to include keloid and hypertrophic scars, that interfere with muscular movement or with the wearing of field service uniform and equipment;

- c) During the conduct of the physical examination, the medical inspecting officer shall remind all applicants of the policy of the PNP on the bearing and/or sporting of tattoos;
- d) After the conduct of the physical examination, the medical inspecting officer shall, within the same day, inform the Physical, Medical, Dental Examination (PMDE) Board of the existence of any tattoos on the body of the applicant/s;
- e) The PMDE Board, within the period of three days from the time the information of the existence of tattoos in a PNP applicant is reported, shall deliberate on the disqualification of the applicant based on the existing policy on tattoo; and
- f) The PMDE Board, within the same period of three days after the conclusion of its deliberation, shall formally endorse to PRSS its results or findings.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES:

a. DPRM

- 1) Act as OPR for this MC;
- 2) Ensure that the provisions of this MC are properly implemented; and
- 3) Perform other tasks as directed.

b. DIDM

- 1) Act on the recommendation of PNP offices/units pertaining to the implementation of this policy;
- 2) Conduct investigation, if necessary, based on the endorsement of offices/units concerned; and
- 3) Perform other tasks as directed.

c. DHRDD

- 1) Submit copy of the approved MC to the UP Law Center as required under the rules;
- 2) Keep a copy of the MC in the PNP file; and
- 3) Perform other tasks as directed.



d. PRSS

- 1) Supervise the proper implementation of this MC in connection with its recruitment functions;
- 2) Ensure proper dissemination of this MC, particularly the prohibition on bearing and/or sporting of tattoos in applicants, through the quad-media (TV, radio, newspapers, and social media); and
- 3) Perform other tasks as directed.

e. HS

- 1) Ensure strict screening of all civilian and in-service applicants during the physical examination;
- 2) Submit appropriate recommendations based on this MC; and
- 3) Maintain submission of report to PRSS.

f. APCs/NSUs/PROs

- 1) Ensure the implementation of this MC in respective AOR; and
- 2) Perform other tasks necessary to implement this policy.

8. ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS:

PNP uniformed personnel who are found to have violated the provisions of this MC shall be held administratively liable in accordance with NMC No. 2016-002 and other applicable administrative issuances. NUP who are found to have violated this MC shall be charged pursuant to 2017 Rules on Administrative Cases in the Civil Service.

9. REPEALING CLAUSE:

All previous PNP issuances and/or circulars inconsistent with the provisions of this MC are hereby rescinded or modified accordingly.

10. EFFECTIVITY:

This MC shall take effect after 15 days from filing a copy thereof at the UP Law Center in consonance with Section 3, Chapter 2, Book VII of Executive Order No. 292 otherwise known as the "Revised Administrative Code of 1987," as amended.



[Signature]
BENJAMIN C ACORDA, JR
 Police General
 Chief, PNP



Distribution:

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**AFFIDAVIT OF UNDERTAKING
(WITH DECLARATION OF TATTOOS)**

I, _____, of legal age, Filipino, and presently assigned at _____ after having been sworn to in accordance with law, do hereby depose and state that:

1. I have read the PNP Memorandum Circular (MC) No. _____ on PNP Regulations on Bearing and/or Sporting of Tattoos and I understand fully the limitations/regulations imposed by the PNP on bearing and sporting of tattoos;
2. At present the following are the existing tattoos on my body:

No. of Tattoos	Exact Location in the Body	Design	Approximate Size (in cm)

Or, At present I do not have any existing tattoos on my body;

3. I undertake not to violate the provisions of the PNP MC No. _____;
4. I am aware that I may be administratively liable for any false statement or representation made in this Affidavit; and
5. I am executing this Affidavit to attest to the truthfulness, veracity and due execution of the foregoing statements hereof.

FURTHER AFFIANT SAYETH NAUGHT.

Affiant

PNP ID No. _____
Issued on: _____
Issued at: _____

Administering Officer