

[MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 72, November 15, 2019]

STRENGTHENING THE STANDARDS OF COMPLETE STAFF WORK AS A REQUIREMENT FOR THE PROCESSING AND EVALUATION OF REQUESTS FOR PRESIDENTIAL ISSUANCES, AUTHORIZATIONS AND OTHER APPROVALS

WHEREAS, prompt, efficient and effective delivery of services and programs to the Filipino people largely rests on evidence-based, inclusive and holistic government policies which are implemented through issuances, authorizations and approvals of the President;

WHEREAS, Memorandum Circular (MC) No. 68 (s. 2004), as amended, directs all heads of government entities to, among others, conduct a complete staff work (CSW) before they submit any request for presidential issuance and/or approval;

WHEREAS, it has been observed that numerous requests for presidential issuances, authorizations and approvals are either submitted near the target date of promulgation and/or without the necessary staff work having been accomplished by the requesting department, bureau or office of government; and

WHEREAS, there is an urgent need to strengthen the existing standards of CSW and strictly enforce the same with the end view of efficiently and effectively delivering crucial government programs;

NOW, THEREFORE, in the interest of efficiency in the processing of requests for presidential issuances, authorizations and other approvals, the following are hereby ordered:

Section 1. Coverage. Unless specifically covered by a law or issuance providing appropriate guidelines, this Circular shall apply to all proposed Presidential issuances, whether in the form of Executive Orders, Administrative Orders, Memorandum Orders, Memorandum Circulars, Proclamations or other documents, as well as requests for authorizations and approvals, to be signed by the President or the Executive Secretary "by authority of the President," submitted by government departments, bureaus, agencies and offices, including government-owned or -controlled corporations, government financial institutions, state universities and colleges, and local government units. This Circular shall also cover, to the extent applicable, similar requests from private and non-government entities.

Section 2. General Principles. CSW is the recommendation of a single and coordinated best course of action by a proponent in such form and substance that would enable the Office of the President (OP) to adequately assess and indicate its approval or disapproval of the proposal.

For this purpose, all proposals must exhibit the following characteristics:

a. **Evidence-based.** Proponent must use the best available evidence in making policy recommendations, designing programs and implementing them. Thus, all information, especially statistical data, should be relevant, timely, accurate and validated, and obtainable from verifiable and credible sources such as the government or reputable and recognized organizations. The issue/s should be clearly defined and effect/s identified, with particular emphasis on operational matter or information that is not sourced from generally accessible literature;

b. **Inclusive.** Positions of all concerned government agencies and instrumentalities and other stakeholders must be considered and reported, especially when there are contentious issues involved. The proponent shall be responsible for obtaining the concurrence or comments of concerned government entities, including inputs from experts or affected sectors, whenever applicable. The OP may, however, obtain supplementary comments in the evaluation of proposals; and

c. **Holistic.** The problem must be viewed in a holistic manner, and its proposed solution should adopt a whole-of-government approach. The issue/s must be viewed from a macro-level perspective that takes into account, among others, legal, political, social, economic, technological, security, cultural and environmental standpoints.

Section 3. Cover Memorandum. Proposals or requests for presidential issuance, authorization or approval from the OP should be embodied in a memorandum not exceeding three (3) pages. Such cover memorandum shall contain a concise presentation of the following information, with further details and discussions fleshed out in the attachments, as may be necessary.

a. **Title.** A brief statement of the action requested or issue that needs to be resolved or addressed.

b. **Antecedent.** A brief background/history of the request, including any previous similar or related requests, issuances or action of all concerned government entities.

c. **Recommendation.** A brief description of the recommended course of action embodied in the proposed issuance or request for authorization or approval, and an enumeration of its salient features or significant components, if applicable.

d. **Rationale.** An explanation and discussion of the economic, administrative, technical or other justification for the proposed issuance or action and a discussion of the relevant provisions of law and jurisprudence, as well as executive issuances, providing legal bases for the proposed issuance or action.

The Rationale should include: (i) an enumeration of alternative options weighed according to relevant criteria; (ii) a detailed breakdown of the costs and benefits of each alternative option and the proposed action, as well as their respective strengths and weaknesses; and (iii) an identification of short-term and long-term benefits, outputs and outcomes if the proposal is approved, as well as potential risks, problems and complications, if any.