



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Migrant Workers

Blas F. Ople Building, Ortigas Avenue cor. EDSA, Mandaluyong City 1550

Website: www.dmw.gov.ph | Email: feedback@dmw.gov.ph | Hotlines: 8722 1152, 8722 1155, 8822 1159, 8724 3665



LABOR ADVISORY NO. 01

Series of 2025

**REITERATION OF POLICY ON PASSPORT POSSESSION
OF OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS (OFWs)**

Pursuant to the Department of Migrant Workers' mandate to protect the rights and welfare of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs), this Advisory reiterates the long-standing policy that the passport is the personal property of the Philippine Government and should remain in the possession at all times, including the OFWs, particularly prior to departure and during the period of deployment.

I. Legal Basis

Section 13 of Republic Act No. 11983, otherwise known as the Philippine Passport Act of 1996, provides that:

"Section 13. *Ownership of Passports.* - A Philippine passport remains at all times the property of the government and the same **may not be confiscated by any entity or person other than the DFA.** Any other government agency, official or employee who confiscates a passport or travel document shall promptly turn over the same to the DFA.

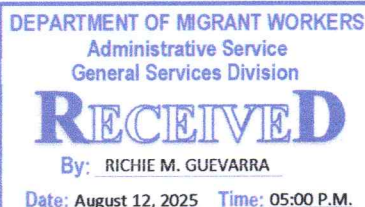
Persons who confiscate or otherwise withhold a passport without authority therefor shall be punished in accordance with Section 22(a) of this Act."

II. General Policy

All Licensed Recruitment and Manning Agencies, including their Foreign Principals and Employers, are reminded that OFWs shall retain custody of their passports at all times.

The passport must not be withheld, confiscated, or surrendered to the agency, employer, or any third party as a condition for deployment, employment, or accommodation, except under the following limited and justified circumstances:

- a. For visa stamping and embassy-required documentation; and
- b. For immigration-related processing, where temporary surrender is required by official procedures.





TAHANAN NG OFW

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BAGONG PILIPINAS

III. Responsibilities of Licensed Agencies and Employers

Licensed Recruitment Agencies (LRAs) shall ensure that passports temporarily collected for visa or documentation purposes shall be returned immediately to the OFW upon completion of the specific transaction.

LRAs or foreign principals who impose passport withholding as a policy or practice may be subject to disciplinary action, including disqualification, suspension, or cancellation of accreditation.

IV. Call for Vigilance

OFWs are encouraged to report any unauthorized withholding of passports or coercive practices to the DMW Hotline or through the Migrant Workers Resource Centers (MWRC) in Migrant Workers Offices (MWOs).

This Advisory shall take effect immediately.

Issued this 08th day of August, 2025, in Mandaluyong City, Philippines.


HANS LEO J. CACDAC
Secretary

CONTROLLED AND DISSEMINATED

By: DMW General Services Division on August 12, 2025

