



Republika ng Pilipinas
Kagawaran ng Katarungan
Tanggapan ng ManananggolPambayan
(PUBLIC ATTORNEY'S OFFICE)

DOJ Agencies Building, NIA Rd. cor. East Ave. 1104 Diliman, Quezon City
Telephone Nos. 929-90-10/929-94-36; FAX Nos. 927-68-10/ 926-28-78

**ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT
OF THE PUBLIC ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
FOR THE YEAR 2020**

Executive Summary

❖ **Clients Assisted and Cases Handled**

- Total No. of Clients Assisted 6,687,630
- Total No. of Cases Handled 752,196
- Average No. of Clients Assisted by Each Lawyer 2,924
- Average No. of Cases Handled by Each Lawyer 329

❖ **Organizational Outcome: Accessible, efficient, high quality, and effective legal service to indigents and other qualified persons assured.**

PUBLIC LEGAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM	FY 2020 TARGETS	FY 2020 ACCOMPLISHMENTS
A. Outcome Indicators:		
1. Number of available lawyer's time spent for each service	24 hours	24 hours
2. Percentage of cases, including the appealed cases, that were favorably disposed	81.34%	84.62% (241,763/285,697)
3. Public attorney to court ratio	1:1	1:2 ¹

¹ There are only 2,427 authorized positions for public attorney *vis-a-vis* 2,465 organized courts reported by the Court Management Office of the Supreme Court as of 30 November 2020. Note further that there are public attorneys assigned to handle appeals before appellate courts, cases before quasi-judicial agencies, and criminal cases before the Sandiganbayan, and appear in special interest cases; for instance, the ones assigned at the Executive Support Staff (ESS), Legal Research Service (LRS), Field Operations and Statistics Service (FOSS), and Special and Appealed Cases Service (SACS) at the PAO Central Office, as well as those assigned at the Regional Special and Appealed Cases Units (RSACU) in Cebu City and Cagayan de Oro City. Those handling appeals are the counterparts of the solicitors from the Office of the Solicitor General, and those appearing before the Sandiganbayan are counterparts of the Office of the Ombudsman prosecutors.

The courts and quasi-judicial agencies to which said public attorneys are assigned are not included in the number of organized courts currently being used to check compliance with the 1:1 ratio. Hence, additional plantilla positions are needed in order to realize the intent behind the 1:1 ratio of public attorney to an organized sala as prescribed by the PAO Law.

B. Output Indicators:		
1. Percentage of hearings for which no postponement is sought by the PAO legal representative	100%	100% (494,094/494,094)
2. Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) success rate	92.75%	90.38% (74,658/82,605)
3. Percentage of request for non-judicial assistance acted upon within two hours	100%	100% (2,442,919/2,442,919)

❖ Total No. of Winning Appealed Criminal Cases <i>(For Court of Appeals and Supreme Court only)</i>	1,107
• Acquittals from Reclusion Temporal	241
• Acquittals from Reclusion Perpetua	749
• Other Favorable Dispositions	117

❖ Total No. of Winning Appealed Civil and Special Cases <i>(For Court of Appeals and Supreme Court only)</i>	505
--	------------

❖ Acquittals and Other Favorable Dispositions <i>(RTC & MCTC/MeTC)</i>	211,054
--	----------------

No. of Cases with:

A. Acquittal	12,720
B. Dismissal with Prejudice	28,965
C. Granted Motion to Quash	1,476
D. Granted Demurrer to Evidence	3,230
E. Provisional Dismissal	32,308
F. Conviction to Lesser Offense	108,178
G. Granted Probation	15,453
H. Won	17
I. Granted Lesser Award	66
J. Dismissal based on Compromise Agreement	68
K. Criminal Cases for Preliminary Investigation:	
K.1. Case filed in court (Complainant)	1,805
K.2. Dismissed (Respondent)	361
L. Pre-trial Releases and Other Favorable Dispositions:	
L.1. Released on Bail (Non-bailable offense)	743
L.2. Released on Recognizance	2,725
L.3. Diversion Proceedings/Intervention	602
L.4. Suspended Sentence	738
L.5. Maximum Imposable Penalty Served	1,599

❖ Limited Services	275,123
Arraignment	74,125
Pre-trial	47,423
Promulgation of judgment	13,854
Others (as <i>counsel de officio</i> , direct or cross examination during trial in the absence of private counsel, motion for bail, etc.)	139,721
 ❖ Special Legal Services	 4,670
(Pursuant to Sec. 14-A of R.A. 9406 and MOAs)	
 ❖ Rendition of Quasi-Judicial Services	 107,180
Mediation and Conciliation	107,133
Investigation (R.A. 9745 or Anti-Torture Law)	47
 ❖ Instant Services	 4,823,775
Legal Documentation	764,590
Oaths Administered	1,478,891
Clients Counseled	2,580,294
 ❖ Outreach Activities	 153,624
1. Inquest Investigation & Custodial Interrogation	
• Total No. of Clients Assisted	90,691
2. Barangay Legal Outreach Activities	
• Total No. of Beneficiaries	62,933
 ❖ Nationwide Monthly Jail Visitation of District Offices	 547,326
No. of Detainees/Inmates who were:	
A. Interviewed and Assisted	246,901
B. Provided Legal Representation in Court	250,710
C. Acquitted:	
C.1. After Trial	5,504
C.2. On Appeal	721
D. Released on:	
D.1. Pardon/Executive Clemency/ Probation	5,361
D.2. Motion to Dismiss/Motion to Quash	4,019
D.3. Inquest Assistance/Representation	1,735
D.4. Bail/Recognizance	15,440
D.5. After Serving the Possible Maximum Prison Term	6,464

D.6. Released on Other Grounds (i.e. Motion for Judicial Determination of Probable Cause and Others)

10,471

❖ **Legal/Inquest Proceedings Assistance**

On their scheduled duties, public attorneys and staff of the PAO-Central Office have been providing legal and inquest proceedings assistance even during night time, weekends, and holidays since October 2009. For this purpose, the PAO hotline (02) 8929-9436 (*local 106 or 107 during office hours and local 159 after office hours*) is open to the public 24/7.

In September 2010, the coverage of this program was expanded to serve the clients assisted by the regional and district offices of the PAO nationwide. Since then, the said offices have been rendering *legal assistance* (e.g. giving legal advice and attending to the legal needs of suspects in the police stations within the territorial jurisdiction of the concerned PAO regional/district offices) up to *10:00 P.M.* every day (including weekends and holidays). Further, the assigned PAO inquest public attorneys and staff therein remain on call, even beyond *10:00 P.M.*, to attend to inquest calls in police stations nationwide. Even during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, public attorneys and staff were directed to remain on call and ready to respond to urgent requests for legal assistance.

• **Clients Served** **90,691**

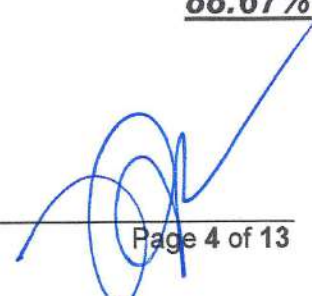
❖ **Training Sessions and Seminars Attended** **29**

• Training Participants *Lawyers* 794
Support Personnel 133

❖ **Case Load**

Out of **241,500 terminated criminal cases**, there were **214,138** or about **88.67% favorable dispositions** obtained by the public attorneys from representing indigent clients.

• Total No. of Criminal Cases Handled 586,438
• Total No. of Cases Terminated 241,500
• Terminated Cases Favorable to Clients 214,138
• Total Percentage of Winning Criminal Cases **88.67%**



Out of **8,830 terminated civil cases**, there were **6,538** or about **74.04% favorable dispositions** obtained by the public attorneys from representing indigent clients.

- Total No. of Civil Cases Handled 34,570
- Total No. of Cases Terminated 8,830
- Terminated Cases Favorable to Clients 6,538
- Total Percentage of Winning Civil Cases 74.04%

Out of **3,064 terminated administrative cases proper**, there were **2,412** or about **78.72% favorable dispositions** obtained by the public attorneys from representing indigent clients.

- Total No. of Administrative Cases Proper Handled 13,846
- Total No. of Cases Terminated 3,064
- Terminated Cases Favorable to Clients 2,412
- Total Percentage of Winning Administrative Cases 78.72%

Out of **51,369 cases handled at the prosecutor's level**, **21,356** were terminated.

- Total No. of Prosecutor's Office Cases 51,369
- Total No. of Cases Terminated 21,356

Out of **3,240 terminated labor cases**, there were **2,629** or about **81.14% favorable dispositions** obtained by the public attorneys from representing indigent clients.

- Total No. of Labor Cases Handled 15,393
- Total No. of Cases Terminated 3,240
- Terminated Cases Favorable to Clients 2,629
- Total Percentage of Winning Labor Cases 81.14%

With respect to cases involving violation of **Republic Act No. 9262 (Anti-Violence Against Women and their Children Act)**, **5,175 cases were handled by PAO**, among which **3,063 cases** were duly terminated.

- Total No. of Cases Involving Women Victims of Violation of R.A. 9262 5,175
- Total No. of Cases Terminated 3,063

On the other hand, with respect to cases involving **children in conflict with the law** as defined under R.A. No. 9344, **19,495 cases** were handled by the PAO, among which **7,842** were duly terminated.

- Total No. of Cases Involving Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) 19,495
- Total No. of Cases Terminated 7,842

❖ **Comparative of Actual vs. Target**

Overall, the PAO achieved **84.62%** favorable disposition rate for the cases it handled for the calendar year 2020, which is equivalent to **241,763 favorable dispositions** out of **285,697** terminated cases. This feat surpassed the target favorable disposition rate of 81.34% (based on the GAA of 2020) by **3.28%**, translating to **9,370** cases with favorable disposition above the target. The 2020 disposition rate also exceeded last year's (2019) actual disposition rate of 82.77% by **1.85%**.

The **241,763** cases with favorable disposition for the calendar year 2020 is broken down as follows: **214,138** criminal cases = **88%**; **6,538** civil cases = **3%**; **2,412** administrative cases = **1%**; **10,459** prosecutor's office cases = **4%**; **2,629** labor cases = **1%**; **3,975** special legal services = **2%**; and **1,612** = **1%** appealed cases.

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly reduced the number of terminated cases for the present year, as expected given the lengthy community lockdown, intermittent lockdown of offices and courts, and fewer court hearings. Nonetheless, the Office was able to achieve its favorable disposition rate, due in part to its enhanced jail visitation program with focus on allowing the release of its PDL clients, which was complemented by the Judiciary's admirable effort to decongest jails and other detention centers.

With respect to performance in ADR for the calendar year 2020, the Office garnered a **90.38%** ADR success rate, which is equivalent to **74,658 cases successfully terminated through ADR** out of **82,605** terminated cases for ADR. This number is 2.37% short of the 92.75% target success rate (based on the GAA of 2020) and 2.54% short of last year's (2019) actual success rate of 92.92%. The decrease was mainly due to the Office's strict adherence to the rule on social distancing. Given that mediation / conciliation entails face-to-face encounter, this remedy was availed only in instances where the risk of exposure to COVID-19 virus was relatively low. In contrast, majority of PAO cases are set for mediation in the past years to give the parties ample opportunity to amicably settle their dispute.

❖ **Total No. of Clients Assisted by the PAO-National Labor Relations Commission (NLRC) Sub-Station** Located in Banawe, Quezon City **5,410**

❖ **Total No. of Research Work and Legal Opinions** for Queries from the Public that were Directly Addressed or otherwise Referred to the PAO **3,931**

❖ **Library Services**

- No. of News Releases from various Broadsheets and Tabloids concerning the Office, its cases, and various programs and projects **282**

❖ **PAO Equipment**

For the period covering January to December, 2020, the PAO purchased and distributed² the following office equipment and semi-expendable properties, to wit:

• Air Conditioner	56 units
• Biometric Time Recorder	27 units
• Water Dispenser	2 units
• Desktop Computer	514 units
• Computer Printer	472 units
• Universal Power Supply (UPS)	178 units
• Projector	25 units
• Scanner	9 units
• Fax Machine	1 unit
• Wall Fan	1 unit
• Filing Cabinet	51 units
• Office Chair	113 units
• Office Table	46 units
• Monoblock Chair	126 units
• Gang Chair	9 units
• Gorilla Shelves	9 units
• Safety Vault	1 unit

For its HRMIS Project, the PAO purchased the following equipment and softwares:

² Excluding the lease of 30 copier machines for the year 2020

• Camera for DTR Capturing	357 units
• Fingerprint Scanner	357 units
• Desktop computer	95 units
• UPS	95 units
• Office Productivity Software	95 units
• Anti-virus software	1400 units
• External Hard Drive	1 unit

The Office of the Chief Public Attorney

- ❖ The Office of the Chief Public Attorney **received/answered 27,408 communications** from January to December, 2020;
- ❖ The Office of the Chief Public Attorney actually served a total of **35,383 clients and other persons** during this period;
- ❖ The Chief Public Attorney, together with the PAO Special Panel of Public Attorneys, **personally handled and/or led** the following cases, **and/or rendered legal assistance** to the following individuals, *inter alia*, to wit:

A. Forensic & medico-legal examination, and legal assistance rendered to the parents/relatives of the dead Dengvaxia victims

The surviving families of **161 persons** (as of 31 December 2020) who had all been inoculated with *Dengvaxia* vaccine, and died after mass indiscriminate inoculation without screening and blood test, sought the assistance of the PAO for forensic examinations and legal assistance. Their requests were acted accordingly by the PAO and the PAO Forensic Team, pursuant to DOJ Order No. 792 dated 12 December 2017, issued by then Secretary of Justice Vitaliano N. Aguirre II. For the year 2020, **nine dead Dengvaxia vaccinees** were examined by the PAO Forensic Team.

Relative thereto, criminal complaints for Reckless Imprudence Resulting in Homicide, violation of the Anti-Torture Law, violation of the Consumer Act of the Philippines, violation of the Pharmacy Law, and Obstruction of Justice before the DOJ, as well as civil cases for damages before the Regional Trial Court (RTC) of Quezon City, were filed against those responsible, both public servants and private persons, for the deaths of the inoculated victims.

The criminal complaints were filed before the DOJ, which formed special panels of prosecutors (DOJ Panel) to handle the preliminary investigation of the *Dengvaxia* complaints.

On 11 February 2019, the DOJ Panel handling the first batch of *Dengvaxia* cases issued its Resolution and indicted the majority of the respondents for Reckless Imprudence Resulting in Homicide. The NAPROSS filed the cases in the first level courts, and not with the family court, which has jurisdiction over the case. This prompted the complainants to file an Extremely Urgent Petition to Transfer Venue and Consolidate Cases in one Regional Trial Court before the Office of the Court Administrator of the Supreme Court. On 26 August 2020, the First Division of the Supreme Court partially granted the petition and ordered the transfer of venue of the cases to a family court in Quezon City, with further directive to raffle the cases to a single branch for further proceedings.

Meanwhile, the PAO preliminary investigation of the second batch of criminal complaints concluded. On 4 March 2020, the PAO received a copy of the Joint Resolution of the handling DOJ Panel. Similar to the first batch, the DOJ Panel found probable cause to charge the majority of respondents with Reckless Imprudence Resulting in Homicide and violation of the Consumer Act of the Philippines.

As of 31 December 2020, **157** criminal complaints and **51** civil cases were filed against the persons responsible for the death of the inoculated victims composed of minor children, together with two public servants consisting of one police officer, and one medical doctor.

❖ The Chief Public Attorney received the following prestigious **awards** and recognitions, among others, to wit:

A. Hero of the Year Award conferred by the Gawad Filipino Awards during the 15th Gawad Filipino Awards on 27 December 2020 at the Aberdeen Great Eastern Hotel on Quezon Avenue in Quezon City;

B. Special Award in Recognition of Selfless Work During the Time of COVID-19 given by the Aliw Awards Foundation during the 33rd Aliw Awards on 15 December 2020 at the Fiesta Pavilion of the Manila Hotel;

C. Lady of Excellence in Public Service Award given by the 3 Stars Production, in connection with its 2nd Edition of Laguna Excellence Awards, personally conferred to the Chief Public

Attorney on 26 November 2020 at the PAO-Central Office;
and

D. *Most Outstanding Filipino Achiever in 2020 Award* to be conferred by the Golden Globe Awards for Business Excellence and Filipino Achiever on 8 May 2021 at the Manila Hotel. (The ceremony was postponed several times due to the COVID-19 pandemic.)

❖ **Other Significant Accomplishments**

On the Organization and Administration of PAO

A. *Adapting to the New Normal*

From the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Office consistently complied with the rules and regulations issued by the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases. This includes regular disinfection and sanitation of offices, strict observance of physical distancing rules, wearing of face mask and shields, and use of no-contact thermometers. PAO offices nationwide likewise took the initiative to provide hand sanitizers or alcohol bottles for use by both personnel and clients.

Nonetheless, the Office ensured that both its operation and services are both sustained even during the period when the country was placed under enhanced community quarantine (ECQ). During the said period, the Office maintained on-call services in all its regional and district offices, while the Central Office maintained a skeletal work force to attend to vital administrative concerns. Thus, during the said period, the Office was able to provide legal services in the form of: court representation of litigants in urgent and critical cases; filing of necessary motions and pleadings aimed at securing the immediate liberty of PDLs; assistance in inquest proceedings, which mostly involve charges for violation of ECQ protocols, among others; preparation and notarization of affidavits involving claims under the Social Amelioration Program, bail bond undertaking, and other urgent legal matters; jail visitation to identify and assist PDLs who have legal grounds to be immediately released from detention; and legal counselling mostly through text message, phone call and electronic mail (e-mail), including addressing the legal queries of clients through publication.

With the transition to general community quarantine, the Office implemented alternative work arrangement schemes,

taking special consideration of the vulnerable group, i.e. pregnant personnel and those with underlying medical conditions. Additional protocols were advised such as placing of barriers, use of information technology to render service including *e-dalaw*, online hearing, and legal consultation through e-mail or using virtual meeting application.

The undersigned likewise regularly conducted virtual meetings with key and senior officials of the Office, down to the lawyers and staff of all regional and district offices nationwide. Through this strategy, the concerns of various offices were made known and addressed to ensure the smooth operation of the Office. More importantly, everyone's focus and actions were maintained in line with the overall policy and thrust of the Office; the uninterrupted delivery of competent legal services to its clients with minimal risk to its personnel.

B. Innovating the Human Resource Management System

In line with its policy and commitment to adapt to global changes in information technology systems in order to be more effective and efficient in responding to the dynamic legal needs of its clients, the Office initiated the implementation of its Human Resource Management Information System (HRMIS) Project.

In partnership with the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), the Office adopted the HRMIS Version 1.0 software of the DICT. It is a standard software package which has been specifically designed to automatically execute identified major functions of a human resource unit which include *plantilla* maintenance, 201 maintenance, training maintenance, attendance monitoring, and compensation processing. With the assistance of the DICT, the Office was also able to purchase the complementary ICT equipment to effectively implement the project.

C. PAO, an ISO Certified Office

The Office successfully passed its second ISO surveillance audit with flying colors. ***TUV Nord Philippines, Inc.***, an ISO accredited certification body, conducted the surveillance audit in November 2020 at the Central Office and ISO-certified regional and district offices. Similar to the previous surveillance audit, the auditors did not find any non-conformity, either minor or major, to the established documented processes. Significantly, the auditors found several good practices, including the commendable top management commitment and leadership for the continuous effective implementation of the management

system, and the continued provision of urgently needed services even during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

To recall, PAO was issued a **Quality Management System (QMS) (ISO 9001:2015)** Certification by *TUV Nord Philippines, Inc.* on 27 December 2018 with a validity period of three years.

On the Services Rendered by the Office

D. PDLs Released during the COVID-19 pandemic

The PAO intensified its existing jail decongestion program even before the Supreme Court issued pertinent circulars aimed at decongesting jail and other detention facilities. Thus, from the beginning of ECQ on 16 March 2020 to 31 December 2020, the PAO was able to secure the release of **57,002 PDLs** for various legal reasons. Some of the notable legal bases for release include release on recognizance after service of minimum sentence, release due to imprisonment equal to maximum imposable penalty or complete service of sentence, allowance and posting of bail / reduced bail, plea bargaining, grant of demurrer, dismissal with prejudice, and grant of probation.

E. Continuing Assistance to PDLs in Consonance with Republic Act No. 10951

As of 31 December 2020, public attorneys nationwide have already assisted a total of **9,323 PDLs** by assessing their respective cases and pursuing the necessary legal remedy, if applicable. Of this number, **1,124 PDLs have been released** or are pending release by virtue of a granted petition, while **620 PDLs had their sentence reduced**. The rest are either awaiting the resolution of their petition, in the process of filing their petition, or the petition of the PAO is not applicable (e.g. application is not favorable, PDL has a private counsel, etc.).

F. PAO Cares – Voluntary Humanitarian Assistance to Communities Affected by Calamities that Hit the Country

Over and above their duties as public servants, PAO officials and personnel of the Central, regional and district offices extended their hand to help alleviate the hardships faced by our fellow Filipinos because of the calamities that struck our country. From the eruption of Taal Volcano in February of 2020, followed by the COVID-19 pandemic, to the typhoons that wrecked havoc and caused widespread flooding, the various offices of the PAO

voluntarily rallied to raise cash and gather food packs, supplies, hygiene kits, protective personnel equipment, school modules, medicine, clothes, and blankets to help those in dire need. In their own little way, they were able to help frontliners such as healthcare professionals, police officers, border guards, grocery attendants and garbage collectors, school children and CICLs, PDLs, local government units, religious organizations, and urban and rural poor members of our society.