Gov't plans P2P transport for health workers

By GENIVAL O. KABILING

The government is planning to establish a "point-to-point" transportation service for health workers while Luzon remains in enhanced community quarantine.

The inter-agency task force on the management of emerging infectious diseases has directed transport authorities to coordinate with the local government units on the proposed transport service for workers in public and private hospitals as well as other similar health facilities.

The latest decision came after many commuters, including health workers, had difficulty getting rides after public transportation was suspended as part of the Luzon-wide quarantine.

"The Department of Transportation in cooperation with local government units and upon consultation with the Department of Health shall develop a system of point-to-point transport services for all aforementioned health workers," Cabinet Secretary Karlo Nograles said during a Palace press conference late Tuesday night where he released the operational guidelines of the Luzon quarantine.

The task force has also identified the health and emergency front-line workers as public health workers, or all employees of Department of Health, DOH-hospitals, hospitals of local government units, and provincial city and rural health units; private health workers such as medical professionals, hospital administrative staff and aides from private health facilities and service providers; and health workers and volunteers of the Philippines Red Cross and World Health Organization.

President Duterte has placed Luzon under an enhanced community quarantine to combat the spread of the coronavirus, compelling strict home quarantine, shutting down public transport, and asking companies to observe work from home arrangement, among others.

Among those exempted from the stay-at-home policy are health workers, security forces, workers in essential services such as supermarkets, drug stores and banks, as well as media workers.