



Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM
PHILIPPINE COMMISSION ON SPORTS SCUBA DIVING



ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 2020 – 001

**GUIDELINES ON THE OPERATIONS OF DIVE ESTABLISHMENTS
UNDER A COMMUNITY QUARANTINE**

WHEREAS, on 08 October 2020, the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) issued Resolution No. 78 amending Paragraph 13, Section 4 of the Omnibus Guidelines for the Implementation of Community Quarantine in the Philippines (the “IATF-EID Omnibus Guidelines”) to include diving as an individual non-contact sport allowed under a General Community Quarantine (GCQ);

WHEREAS, the same resolution provides that in specific areas under GCQ and MGCQ, dive establishments and resorts may accept guests coming from either GCQ or MGCQ areas for purposes of recreational diving;

WHEREAS, IATF-EID Resolution No. 78 likewise provides that the DOT shall determine the destinations where recreational diving may be allowed, taking into consideration the general preparedness of the area and its impact on the tourism industry, and shall issue the necessary guidelines therefor, which shall include a Test-Before-Travel requirement;

WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 9593 or the *Tourism Act of 2009* mandates the Philippine Commission on Sports Scuba Diving (PCSSD) to provide the standard basic dive rules to all levels or kinds of divers, regulate scuba sports and technical diving in the country and ensure the safety of the sport through the formulation of policies;

NOW, THEREFORE, based on the foregoing, and pursuant to PCSSD Resolution No. 2020-005 adopted on 09 October 2020, these Guidelines on the Operations of Dive Establishments Under a Community Quarantine are hereby issued:

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 1. Short Title. – This Order shall be known as the “*Community Quarantine Guidelines for Dive Establishments*”

Section 2. Definition of Terms. – For purposes of these Guidelines, the term:

- (a) “Accommodation Establishments” shall refer to establishments operating primarily for accommodation purposes including, but not limited to, hotels, resorts, apartment hotels, mabuhay accommodation establishments (e.g. tourist inns, motels, pension houses, bed and breakfast, and vacation homes) and homestays.
- (b) “Certificate of Authority to Operate” refers to a certification issued by the DOT that an Accommodation Establishment in an area placed under a Community Quarantine has fulfilled all requirements for accreditation may commence operations.
- (c) “Community Quarantine” refers to the restriction of movement within, into, or out of the area of quarantine of individuals, large groups of people, or communities designed to reduce the likelihood of transmission of COVID-19 among persons in and to persons outside the affected area (*IATF-EID Omnibus Guidelines*).
- (d) “Dive Center” refers to any establishment engaged in all of the following activities:
 1. Importation and/or wholesale of major diving equipment;



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2. Renting out of scuba diving equipment;
 3. Provision of air-filling service;
 4. Service and repair of scuba diving equipment;
 5. Conduct of scuba diving courses; and
 6. Conduct of dive tours.
- (e) “Dive Establishments” refer to facilities involved in SCUBA diving, such as, but not limited to, Dive Centers, Dive Shop/Facility, or any business establishment licensed by the Local Government Unit (LGU) engaged in the conduct of sports scuba diving activities in the Philippines, whether or not for a fee.
- (f) “Dive Shop” refers to any establishment engaged in any one or more of the following:
1. Sale or retail of scuba diving equipment and accessories;
 2. Renting out of scuba diving equipment;
 3. Provision of air-filling service;
 4. Service and repair of scuba diving equipment;
 5. Conduct of scuba diving courses; or
 6. Conduct of dive tours.
- (g) “General Community Quarantine” or GCQ refers to the implementation of temporary measures limiting movement and transportation, regulation of operating industries, and presence of uniformed personnel to enforce community quarantine protocols (*IATF-EID Omnibus Guidelines*).
- (h) “Minimum Public Health Standards” refers to guidelines set by the Department of Health (DOH), as well as sector-relevant guidelines to aid all sectors in all settings to implement non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPI), which refer to public health measures that do not involve vaccines, medications, or other pharmaceutical interventions, which individuals and communities can carry out in order to reduce transmission rates, contact rates, and the duration of infectiousness of individuals in the population to mitigate COVID-19 (*IATF-EID Omnibus Guidelines*)
- (i) “Modified Enhanced Community Quarantine” or MECQ refers to the transition phase between ECQ and GCQ, when these temporary measures are relaxed: stringent limiting movement and transportation of people, strict regulation of operating industries, provision of food and essential services, and heightened presence of uniformed personnel to enforce community quarantine protocols become less necessary (*IATF-EID Omnibus Guidelines*).
- (j) “Modified General Community Quarantine” or MGCQ refers to the transition phase between General Community Quarantine (GCQ) and the New Normal when the following temporary measures are relaxed and become less necessary: limiting movement and transportation, the regulation of operating industries, and the presence of uniformed personnel to enforce community quarantine protocols. (*IATF-EID Omnibus Guidelines*)
- (k) “Operational Capacity” refers to such a number of employees or workers who can be permitted or required to physically report to work on-site in a particular office or establishment. (*IATF-EID Omnibus Guidelines*)
- (l) “Recreational Diving” or sports diving is the kind of diving conducted for enjoyment or leisure, and conducted using SCUBA equipment.



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(m) “RT- PCR Test” or “Reverse Transcription Polymerase Chain Reaction Test” refers to a PCR test designed to detect, measure and study RNA viruses (*DOH Administrative Order No. 2020-0014*)

Section 3. Scope and Application. – This Order shall apply to all Dive Establishments in the Philippines in areas under Community Quarantine.

II. RECREATIONAL DIVING UNDER DIFFERENT COMMUNITY QUARANTINE CLASSIFICATIONS

Section 4. Dive Operations in Areas Under ECQ and MECQ. Recreational Diving in areas declared to be under ECQ and MECQ shall be strictly prohibited.

Section 5. Dive Operations in Specific Areas Under GCQ. Recreational Diving in specific areas declared to be under GCQ shall be allowed, subject to the following guidelines:

- A. **Limitation to Specific Areas.** Pursuant to IATF-EID Resolution No. 78 which provides that DOT shall determine the specific destinations in GCQ areas where recreational diving may be allowed, and in view of IATF-EID Resolution No. 75-A providing the latest list of areas declared to be under GCQ until 31 October 2020, Dive Establishments in **Batangas Province**, insofar as the area is still under GCQ, are hereby determined to be permitted to accept guests for Recreational Diving, taking into consideration the general preparedness of the area and its impact on the tourism industry; provided, that travel shall be subject to the regulations of the LGU concerned.

The DOT may issue subsequent amendments to this Order to include other GCQ areas where Recreational Diving may be permitted.

- B. **Dive Establishments Permitted to Operate.** Only Dive Establishments with a valid PCSSD Accreditation are permitted to accommodate Recreational Diving under GCQ. In case the Dive Establishment is ancillary to an Accommodation Establishment or a resort, the said Accommodation Establishment or resort must have been issued a DOT Certificate of Authority to Operate.
- C. **Operational Capacity.** Operations shall be at 50% Operational Capacity, or 50% boat capacity in the case of Dive Centers and Dive Shops.
- D. **Permitted Guests.** Individuals of all ages from GCQ and MGCQ areas, except those with comorbidities or are currently pregnant, may engage in Recreational Diving activities in Dive Establishments.
- E. **Test-Before-Travel Requirement.** Guests of Dive Establishments shall be required to present a negative result from an RT-PCR test conducted not earlier than forty-eight (48) hours prior to arrival in the Dive Establishment.

Section 6. Dive Operations in Areas Under MGCQ. Recreational Diving is allowed in all areas declared to be under MGCQ; provided, that only PCSSD-Accredited Dive Establishments, or Dive Establishments in Accommodation Establishments or resorts that have been granted a CAO, may accommodate bookings of guests; provided, further, that operations shall be at 50% Operational Capacity, or 50% boat capacity in the case of Dive Centers and Dive Shops.



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III. OTHER PROVISIONS

Section 7. Suppletory Application of PCSSD Memorandum Circular No. 2020-001. Dive Establishments admitting guests for Recreational Diving shall comply with the protocols and standards under PCSSD Memorandum Circular No. 2020-001 entitled *Health and Safety Guidelines Governing the Operations of Dive Establishments in the New Normal*, which is deemed to apply to this Order by analogy or in suppletory character.

Section 8. Compliance with Other Relevant Issuances. Dive Establishments shall comply with other relevant DOT, Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), or Department of Health (DOH) issuances on health and safety standards for the New Normal, as well as rules and regulations imposed by the LGU having jurisdiction over the Accommodation Establishment.

Section 9. Penalties. Any violation of this Order may subject the Dive Establishment, or the Accommodation Establishment as may be applicable, to the appropriate fines and penalties including revocation of its PCSSD or DOT Accreditation, in accordance with relevant laws, rules, and regulations.

Section 10. Separability Clause. If any portion or provision of this Order is declared null and void or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in force and effect.

Section 11. Effectivity. This Order shall take effect immediately and shall remain effective until otherwise superseded, amended, or repealed accordingly.

Section 12. Repealing Clause. This Order repeals other DOT issuances inconsistent herewith.

For guidance and strict compliance.

09 October 2020.


BERNADETTE ROMULO-PUYAT
Secretary, Department of Tourism
Chairperson, PCSSD 

