REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OPERATIONS OFFICE
Tanggapang Pampanguluhan sa Operasyong Pangkomunikasyon
Malacañang, Manila

Advisory No. 02, s. 2020

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ADVISORY

FOR : **ALL CONCERNED PARTIES**

ALL AGENCIES, DEPARTMENTS, BUREAUS, OFFICES AND INSTRUMENTALITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH, INCLUDING GOVERNMENT-OWNED AND/OR-CONTROLLED CORPORATIONS, STATE UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES, LOCAL WATER DISTRICTS, AND FREEDOM OF INFORMATION - PROJECT MANAGEMENT OFFICE PERSONNEL

SUBJECT : EXTENSION OF THE SUSPENSION OF THE PERIOD TO RESPOND TO FOI REQUEST DUE TO COVID-19

DATE : 08 April 2020

WHEREAS, Section 7 of Article III of the 1987 Constitution provides that the right of the people to information on matters of public concern shall be recognized. Access to official records, and to documents, and papers pertaining to official acts, transactions, or decisions, as well as to government research data used as basis for policy development, shall be afforded the citizen, subject to such limitations as may be provided by law;

WHEREAS, Section 28 of Article II of the 1987 Constitution provides that, subject to reasonable conditions prescribed by law, the State adopts and implements a policy of full public disclosure of all its transactions involving public interest;

WHEREAS, on 23 July 2016, Executive Order (EO) No. 02 series of 2016 was issued by President Rodrigo R. Duterte to operationalize in the Executive Branch the Constitutional mandate of the people's right of access to information;

WHEREAS, Memorandum Order (MO) No. 10 series of 2016 designated the Presidential Communications Operations Office (PCOO) as the lead agency in the implementation of EO No. 2, s. 2016;

WHEREAS, PCOO Department Order No. 018 established the Freedom of Information – Project Management Office (FOI-PMO) which shall, among others, develop policies, rules, procedures, and regulations necessary to strategic direction in implementing the FOI program;

WHEREAS, government offices shall respond to a request as soon as practicable but not exceeding fifteen (15) working days upon receipt thereof, whether to grant or deny access to information requested. Period to respond may be extended for not more than twenty (20) working days in cases provided under EO No. 2, s. 2016, unless exceptional circumstances warrant a longer period;

WHEREAS, due to the extension of the Enhanced Community Quarantine up to 30 April 2020, wherein work from home arrangement and creation of skeletal workforce are being implemented in the Executive branch, period to process an FOI request will be affected;

WHEREAS, health and safety of FOI Officers of different government agencies under the Executive branch may be compromised if they will gather data, release information, physically receive FOI requests via standard mode or process FOI requests;

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the foregoing and pursuant to the functions of the FOI-PMO to develop policies, rules, procedures and regulations necessary to provide the strategic direction in implementing the FOI Program, and strict adherence to the Memorandum of the Executive Secretary for the management of COVID-19 situation, the period to resolve any new FOI Request made from 13 March 2020, which was suspended until 12 April 2020, pursuant to FOI Advisory No. 01, s.2020, is hereby extended until 30 April 2020.

Considering that 01 May 2020 is a national holiday and the succeeding days are weekend, the counting of days within which to resolve a new FOI Request shall resume on 04 May 2020.

Further, the period to resolve pending FOI Requests are likewise suspended and shall resume on 04 May 2020.

This Advisory shall take effect immediately.

For your guidance.

ATTY. KRISTIAN R. ABLAN
Assistant Secretary and FOI Program Director