



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

September 22, 2020

DEPARTMENT CIRCULAR
No. 2020- 0327

TO: BANGSAMORO AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO (BARMM) MINISTER OF HEALTH, ALL DIRECTORS OF CENTERS FOR HEALTH DEVELOPMENT (CHD), CHIEFS OF MEDICAL CENTERS AND HOSPITALS, AND OTHERS CONCERNED

SUBJECT: Requirement for DOH-Licensed COVID-19 Laboratories to have Medical Technologists or Analysts Certified on Hands-on PCR Training

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, molecular detection assays such as Reverse Transcriptase Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR) has been sparingly used as a diagnostic test in the Philippines. With the increasing demand for detecting COVID-19 and the high technical skills required for this assay, there is a need to train and capacitate the medical technologists to conduct efficient, accurate and safe RT-PCR testing. In addition, based on Administrative Order No. 2020-0014-B, attendance of the analysts to the Hands-on PCR Training is one of the requirements to secure a License to Operate (LTO) as a COVID-19 Testing Laboratory.

With these objectives in mind, all DOH-Licensed COVID-19 Laboratories for RT-PCR testing are hereby required to have a **minimum of three (3) certified medical technologists/analysts wherein at least one (1) of the certified medical technologists/analysts is present per shift.**

The Research Institute for Tropical Medicine (RITM), several sub-national laboratories and external partner laboratories are providing hands-on PCR training, based on the Department Circular No. 2020-0205-A entitled "Amendment to Department Circular No. 2020-0205 dated May 07, 2020 entitled "Recognizing Sub-National Laboratories as Training Providers for Hands-on PCR Training"".

Dissemination of the information to all concerned is requested.

By Authority of the Secretary of Health:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Nestor F. Santiago Jr.", is written over a circular stamp or mark.

NESTOR F. SANTIAGO JR, MD, MPHC, MHSA CESO II
Assistant Secretary of Health
Public Health Services Team