

ASSA 2020 RECOGNITION AWARD		
CATEGORY	:	Customer Service Recognition Award ¹
ORGANISATION	:	Employees' Compensation Commission (ECC)
CONTACT PERSON	:	Stella Zipagan-Banawis Executive Director
NAME OF PROJECT	:	ECC Policy Response to Pandemics, Calamities, and Other Fortuitous Events
OBJECTIVE AND NATURE OF PROJECT	:	To provide meaningful protection to members of the employees' compensation (EC) program who are considered vulnerable workers and individuals through responsive policies to reduce the impact brought about by pandemics, calamities and other fortuitous events.
WHY IT SHOULD BE RECOGNIZED	:	Humanitarian crises such as pandemics expose vulnerable workers and EC members to relatively more suffering, loss, and risks to their lives. To respond to this, it is imperative for ECC to be innovative in responding to the need for employees' compensation and services through policies approved by the Employees' Compensation Commission.
SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT	:	The ECC by virtue of its mandate to formulate policies and guidelines for the effective implementation of the Employees' Compensation Program (ECP) has purposely looked into the provision of innovative EC benefits to workers who become victims of work-related contingencies resulting from pandemics or affected by calamities. Thus, it has issued the following policies in 2020:

¹ Organizations that have implemented successful customer service strategies which are able to meet customers' expectations in terms of delivery and quality of service

	1. Automatic grant of advance pension for EC pensioners in both the public and private sector whose areas were declared under a State of Calamity. The ECC understands the need to provide immediate financial assistance to EC pensioners by prescribing the automatic grant of three-month advance EC pension for EC pensioners in the public and private sectors whose areas were declared under the state of calamity by the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council or by Presidential Declaration.
	2. Granting a one-time financial assistance of ₱20,000 to all EC permanent partial disability, EC permanent total disability and survivorship pensioners in the private sector. To ease the burden brought about by the COVID-19 pandemics to 18,721 EC pensioners, this financial assistance to EC pensioners in the private sector is imperative since they are subjected to relatively more undue financial hardships because of their vulnerabilities.
	3. Granting of EC funeral benefits to the beneficiaries of covered members despite the absence of proof of expenses for funeral services. During the present COVID-19 pandemic, cremation as a funeral arrangement handled by local government units has been availed for safety and health considerations. Having no proof of expenses for funeral services does not prejudice dependents from claiming for EC funeral benefits.
	4. Prescribing guidelines on the interruption of the prescriptive period for the filing Employees' Compensation (EC) claims during pandemic and other fortuitous events The ECC recognizes that there is a need for an automatic suspension of prescriptive period for the filing of EC claims during pandemic or other fortuitous events. The running of the prescriptive period in the filing of EC claims shall be deemed interrupted or suspended in the event of any pandemic or other fortuitous events which would prevent claimants from enforcing their right to file EC claims.

	5. Expediting the processing of EC claims of workers for diseases acquired in line of duty during outbreaks, epidemics and pandemics. To mitigate risks or minimize vulnerability, the ECC recognized the need to effect a facilitative processing of the EC benefits for workers who acquired disease in line of duty during outbreaks, epidemics and pandemics.
	6. Extending the payment deadline for remittance of EC contributions by employers in view of the declaration of a State of Public Health Emergency and State of Calamity throughout the Philippines due to Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) The ECC deems the need to extend the payment deadline for remittance of EC contributions by employers and shall follow the same deadline that Social Security System (SSS) and Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) implements for the payment of the contribution for their program as the collection of EC contributions from employers is vested upon the SSS for private sector employees and the GSIS for government employees.