

News Advisory  
10 April 2015

## **OFWs may now get exit clearance without payment of other government fees -- POEA**

The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, addressing the clamor of some OFWs and workers' organizations to detach the payment of other government fees in the issuance of exit clearance or overseas employment certificate (OEC), said overseas Filipino workers may now secure their OEC even without paying PAG-IBIG and PHILHEALTH membership fees.

In an advisory signed last week, Administrator Hans Leo J. Cacdac said that effective April 1, 2015, the POEA and its processing centers in Metro Manila are issuing OECs to *Balik-manggagawa* or vacationing workers separate from the collection of PAG-IBIG and PHILHEALTH premiums.

"This means that the issuance of OEC will no longer be tied up with the payment to the said agencies but OFWs will still have to pay for OWWA membership," Cacdac said.

Cacdac said the collection scheme has been implemented by processing centers in the regions and in the Philippine Overseas Labor Offices (POLOs).

"For their protection, however, we are encouraging workers to continuously update and pay corresponding contributions to PAG-IBIG and PHILHEALTH which are mandatory under existing laws. OFWs may directly enroll and pay membership fees to these agencies at their respective offices and collection centers," Cacdac added.

He said the same scheme shall be adopted in the case of new hires including agency hired workers starting the same date.

Cacdac enjoined land-based recruitment agencies to coordinate with PAG-IBIG and PHILHEALTH for the enrollment of their hired workers including payment of corresponding fees. /END