



P R E S S R E L E A S E

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**Philippine National Statistician Lisa Bersales Updates Fil-Am Community in US
Northeast on Civil Registration and PhilSys ID**



National Statistician and Civil Registrar General Dr. Lisa Grace Bernales (3rd from left) is flanked by PSA Director Rosalinda Bautista, Consul General Claro S. Cristobal and Atty. Lourdines Dela Cruz of PhilSys Registry Office during a Forum on Civil Registration at the Philippine Center New York. (Photo by Lambert Parong)

13 March 2019, New York – National Statistician and Civil Registrar General Dr. Lisa Grace S. Bersales apprised the Filipino-American community in the US northeast about the recent updates on civil registration in the Philippines and the national ID system during a Forum on Civil Registration organized by the Philippine Consulate General in New York on 8 March 2019.

Dr. Bersales gave an overview of the works of the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), including its mandate to conduct statistical surveys relating to the country's economic, social, and demographic profile, administer civil registration functions, and now, the rolling out of the Philippine Identification System (PhilSys ID) within the year.

During the open forum, lawyers in the audience raised some of the issues they encounter when submitting their Filipino clients' Philippine civil registry documents to US immigration agency. Among these common problems were the discrepancy in the names, unreadable or blurred entries in the birth or marriage certificates, change of

name particularly those who changed their names when they became naturalized US citizens, difference in the naming conventions in the Philippines and US, as well as the lengthy and laborious process of correcting some entries on the civil registry documents.

Dr. Bersales explained that solutions to these common problems have to originate from the municipal or local civil registrar where the life event took place. As PSA is the central repository of all civil registry documents, it can only authenticate those documents submitted by the local civil registrar. She emphasized that although the process is circuitous, the ultimate goal is to ensure the integrity of the documents.

Responding to questions about the PhilSys ID, Dr. Bersales confirmed that PSA is the lead agency that will implement the PhilSys ID. She indicated that the national ID would eventually replace in a span of 5 years the numerous IDs such as, postal, voter's, BIR, PAGIBIG, and SSS IDs. She clarified, however, that it will not replace the passport, driver's license, and PRC license.

Dr. Bersales indicated that the PSA is in the process of procuring a printing agency, saying that PSA is currently in talks with the *Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas* (BSP) and the APO Production Unit, Inc., both recognized government printers. She revealed that PSA is also considering the possibility of procuring private printing companies, with the assurance that these printers would adhere to the Data Privacy Act since the information to be gathered will include biometrics, full name, sex, date of birth, place of birth, blood type, address, and if one is a Filipino or a resident alien.

When asked if Filipinos overseas can apply for the new ID at any Philippine Embassy or Consulate, Dr. Bersales said that PSA plans to conduct mobile registrations at the Philippine Embassy or Consulate possibly in the next two years. She emphasized that during the initial implementation of the new ID system, PSA would prioritize indigents, people with disabilities (PWD), senior citizens, and government workers in several key areas all over the Philippines.

Atty. Lourdines Dela Cruz, OIC-Deputy National Statistician for PhilSys Registry Office, and Director Rosalinda Bautista, OIC-Deputy National Statistician for Sectoral Statistics Office, were also present and responded to some of questions raised during the open forum.

Consul General Claro S. Cristobal who moderated the Forum, encouraged the members of the Fil-Am community to reach out to the Philippine Consulate on any concern about civil registration. He said that the Philippine Consulate looks forward to receiving the PSA when it holds its PhilSys mobile registration for Filipinos in the US northeast in the next two years.– END

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Member of the Filipino-American community and Philippine Consulate Officers and Staff raise common civil registry problems with PSA Officials led by Dr. Lisa Bersales during a Forum on Civil Registration. (Photo by Lambert Parong)



Members of the Filipino-American community and Philippine Consulate Officers and Staff with PSA Officials led by Dr. Lisa Bersales during a Forum on Civil Registration. (Photo by Lambert Parong)

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