MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR

FIRE SAFETY POLICY

PRESCRIBES THE LIMITATIONS AND PROHIBITIONS ON THE USE OF ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT IN JAILS AND OBSERVANCE OF FIRE SAFETY MEASURES

1.0 REFERENCES

1.1 BJMP Comprehensive Operations Manual Revised 2015;
1.2 Republic Act No. 9514, otherwise known as the "Revised Fire Code of the Philippines of 2008";
1.3 BJMP-DI-SOP-014, Revised List of Authorized Personal Properties of Persons Deprived of Liberty, effective April 05, 2017;
1.4 Rules and Regulations Implementing Presidential Decree 1572, Governs the Accreditation, Among Others, of Electronics, Electrical, Air-conditioning and Refrigeration Service and Repair Enterprises;
1.5 Fire Incidents in BJMP-manned Jails from June to May 2018;
1.6 BJMP-DI-SOP-20, Proper Handling, Custody and Disposition of Seized Nuisance Contraband, effective 26 May 2017;
1.7 Bureau of Fire Protection Operations Manual, 2015; and
1.8 Visayan Electric Company Website.

2.0 BACKGROUND

The safety of Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL) is the Jail Bureau’s primordial consideration. Correlative to this function is the protection of all government property that may come under the Jail Bureau’s care. The safety of the Jail Bureau personnel and all persons gaining entry to jails is also of great importance. Fire is one of the most destructive calamities that could bring about the loss of lives and destruction of properties.

According to the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP), the top three (3) causes of fire in the country are faulty electrical connections, lit cigarette butts, and open flames from unattended stoves.¹ There were fire incidents that occurred in BJMP-manned jails due to electrical overload² and kitchen fire³ from May to June 2018 alone. On another point, fire incidents could also be taken advantage of by PDL to escape or they could intentionally set fire which will give them the opportunity to escape.

It is the policy of the State to ensure public safety and promote economic development through the prevention and suppression of all kinds of destructive fires. (Section 2, RA 9514) While the BFP is the agency of the Government primarily tasked with the prevention and suppression of all kinds of destructive fires, the Jail Bureau needs to initiate preventive actions and adopt

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2 Fire Incidents at Caloocan City Jail, BJMPRO-NCR on 02 May 2018, Bureuen District Jail, BJMPRO-VIII on 25 June 2016 and Fire Incident at Iloilo City District Jail-Female Dorm, BJMPRO-VI on 24 May 2018
3 Fire Incident at Bohol District Jail, BJMPRO-VII on 19 May 2018

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pro-active measures for the safety of its jails against the occurrence of destructive fire. This finds support from the powers and functions of the BJMP to exercise supervision and control over all city and municipal jails. Hence, the adoption of fire safety policy in jails.

3.0 PURPOSES

3.1 To regulate the use of electric equipment in jails.
3.2 To impose certain limitations on the use of electric equipment.
3.3 To protect jails from the occurrence of destructive fires.

4.0 SCOPE/Coverage

This policy shall be implemented in all BJMP-manned jails nationwide.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

For purposes of this Policy:

4.1 Abatement - Any act that would remove or neutralize a fire hazard. (Sec. 3, RA 9514)
4.2 Armory - A place where weapons are made and kept. (BFP Operations Manual, 2015)
4.3 Class A Fire – Fires involving ordinary combustible materials such as wood, cloth, rubber and plastics. (Rule 3, IRR of RA 9514)
4.4 Class B Fire – Fires involving flammable liquids and gases. (ibid.)
4.5 Class C Fire – Fires involving energized electrical equipment. (ibid.)
4.6 Class D Fire – Fires involving combustible materials, such as sodium, magnesium potassium, and other similar materials. (ibid.)
4.7 Class K Fire – Fires in cooking appliances that involve combustible cooking media (vegetable or animal oils and fats). (ibid.)
4.8 Combustible, Flammable or Inflammable - Descriptive of materials that are easily set on fire. (Sec. 3, RA 9514)
4.9 Contraband - any article, item, or thing prohibited by law and/or forbidden by jail rules that would pose as security hazards or endanger the lives of inmates. (Section 12, Rule I, BJMP Comprehensive Operations Manual Revised 2015)
4.10 Detention and Correctional Occupancies - Detention and correctional occupancies shall include those used for purposes such as correctional institutions, detention facilities, community residential centers and substance abuse or rehabilitation centers where occupants are confined or housed under some degree of restraint or security. (Division 11, Section 10.2.11.1, IRR of R.A. 9514)

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4.11 **Electrical Equipment** - refers to electric fans and ventilators, water heaters, washing machines, electric clothes dryers and ironers; water pumps and its accessories; electric or electronic ovens and ranges; fan motors, electric motors, generators; transformers, starters and controls. (Sec. 1, l, Rules and Regulations Implementing P.D. 1572)

4.12 **Fire** - The active principle of burning, characterized by the heat and light of combustion. (Sec. 3, RA 9514)

4.13 **Fire Alarm** - Any visual or audible signal produced by a device or system to warn the occupants of the building or fire fighting elements of the presence or danger of fire to enable them to undertake immediate action to save life and property and to suppress the fire. (ibid.)

4.14 **Fire Hazard** - Any condition or act which increases or may cause an increase in the probability of the occurrence of fire, or which may obstruct, delay, hinder or interfere with fire fighting operations and the safeguarding of life and property. (ibid.)

4.15 **Fire Protective and Fire Safety Device** - Any device intended for the protection of buildings or persons to include but not limited to built-in protection system such as sprinklers and other automatic extinguishing system, detectors for heat, smoke and combustion products and other warning system components, personal protective equipment such as fire blankets, helmets, fire suits, gloves and other garments that may be put on or worn by persons to protect themselves during fire. (ibid.)

4.16 **Fire Trap** - A building unsafe in case of fire because it will burn easily or because it lacks adequate exits or fire escape(s). (ibid.)

4.17 **Hazardous Operation/Process** - Any act of manufacturing, fabrication, conversion, etc., that uses or produces materials which are likely to cause fires or explosions. (ibid.)

4.18 **Overloading** - The use of one or more electrical appliances or devices which draw or consume electrical current beyond the designed capacity of the existing electrical system. (ibid.)

4.19 **Nuisance Contraband** - are those that may not be classified as illegal under the Philippine laws but are forbidden by jail rules i.e. cellphone, money or other commodities of exchange such as jewelry, appliances and gadgets, excessive wearing apparels and sleeping paraphernalia, intoxicating liquors, cigarettes, pornographic materials, gambling paraphernalia and other products that are considered as instruments for vices since they threaten the security, fire safety, sanitation of the facility, and the orderly activities of the jail. (Section 12, Rule I, BJMP Comprehensive Operations Manual Revised 2019)

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4.20 **Jail Fire Safety Committee (JFSC)** – A committee tasked to implement the provisions of this policy and all related laws and issuances of the government pertaining to fire safety in BJMP jails.

4.21 **Portable Fire Extinguisher** - A portable fire extinguisher is a handy, first aid firefighting equipment used to control small fires in emergency situations. [www.bps.dlt.gov.ph, Retrieved, 19 June 2018]

4.22 **Regional Fire Safety Committee (RSFC)** – A committee in the BJMP Regional Office tasked to supervise and monitor the implementation of this policy by the JFSC.

4.23 **National Fire Safety Committee (NFSC)** – A committee in the BJMP National Headquarters vested with the power of the Chief, BJMP, on matters relative to the implementation of this policy and to supervise and monitor the RFSC and JFSC.

5.0 **PROCEDURES**

5.1 **Creation Fire Safety Committee in the National, Regional and Jail Level**

5.1.1 **Composition of the National Fire Safety Committee**

- Chairperson - Deputy Chief for Operations of the Jail Bureau
- Vice Chairperson - Director, Directorate for Operations
- Member - Director, Directorate for Logistics
- Member - Director, Directorate for Welfare and Development
- Member - Director, Directorate for Intelligence
- Member - Director, Directorate for Investigation and Prosecution
- Member - Chief, Legal Service Office
- Secretariat - One (1) Jail Officer Rank (JOR) and four (4) Jail Non-Officer Ranks (JNORs) from any of the Directorates or Offices as may be chosen by the Chairperson

5.1.2 **Composition of the Regional Fire Safety Committee**

- Chairperson - Assistant Regional Director for Operations
- Vice Chairperson - Chief, Regional Operations Division
- Member - Chief, Regional Logistics Division
- Member - Chief, Regional Welfare and Development Division
- Member - Chief, Regional Intelligence Division
- Member - Chief, Regional Investigation and Prosecution Division
- Member - Chief, Regional Legal Service Division

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Secretariat - One (1) JOR and Four (4) JNORs from any of the Regional Divisions/OFFices as may be chosen by the Chairperson

5.1.3 Composition Jail Fire Safety Committee

Chairperson - Jail Warden
Vice Chairperson - Assistant Jail Warden
Member - Chief, Custodial Unit
Member - Chief, Investigation Unit
Member - Chief, Operations Unit
Member - Chief, Welfare and Development Unit

Secretariat - Preferably, one (1) JOR and three (3) JNORs to be chosen by the Chairperson

5.2 Powers and Functions of the National Fire Safety Committee

5.2.1 Serve as recommendatory body for the Chief, BJMP on matters of fire safety in BJMP jails and offices nationwide.
5.2.2 Supervise and monitor the RFSC and JFSC.
5.2.3 Initiate the crafting or formulation of policies or programs pertaining to fire safety.
5.2.4 Organize an operating or inspecting team to conduct inspection and/or abatement in BJMP Offices or jails in coordination with the BFP.
5.2.5 Facilitate the budgetary requirements for the procurement of fire safety equipment in all jail facilities.
5.2.6 Perform other functions as may be directed by the Chief, BJMP.

5.3 Powers and Functions of the Regional Fire Safety Committee

5.3.1 Serve as recommendatory body for the Regional Director of the Jail Bureau with respect to fire safety in BJMP jails and offices in the region.
5.3.2 Supervise and monitor the JFSC.
5.3.3 Conduct inspection of jails relative to the implementation of this policy.
5.3.4 Direct the JFSCs to take appropriate action/s to improve fire safety in their respective areas of responsibility.
5.3.5 Perform other functions as may be directed by the Chief, BJMP.

5.4 Powers and Functions of the Jail Fire Safety Committee

5.4.1 Undertake abatement in the jail facility.
5.4.2 Coordinate with the Local Fire Marshall for inspection and guidance on fire safety.
5.4.3 Maintain the serviceability of all fire safety equipment of the jail facility.
5.4.4 Regularly inspect electrical wirings of the jail facility.
5.4.5 Create or update Operational Plan for fire incidents.

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5.4.6 Conduct dry run of Operational Plan for fire incidents at least twice a year.
5.4.7 Conduct fire drills in coordination with the BFP at least twice a year.
5.4.8 Regulate the entry and determine the allowable number of all electrical equipment in jail.
5.4.9 Perform other functions as may be directed by the Regional Director of the Jail Bureau or the Chief, BJMP.

5.5 Personnel Training/Seminar

The Jail Warden shall facilitate the conduct of Fire Safety Seminar/Training in coordination with the nearest City/Municipal Fire Offices. All personnel in jails must have at least eight (8) hours of seminar/training on fire safety, fire fighting, rescue and/or first aid.

To ensure that the knowledge and skill of personnel on fire safety, fire fighting, rescue and first aid will be continually honed, the Jail Warden may require all available personnel under his/her command to participate in the conduct of the month-long celebration of the Fire Prevention Month either by inviting personnel of the BFP to conduct fire drills inside the jail or by participating in the fire olympics conducted by the BFP. Nevertheless, the over-all security of the jail facility shall, at all times, be paramount over other activities in the jail facility.

5.6 Specific Guidelines

5.6.1 Provision of Fire Protective and Fire Safety Devices and Fire Safety Notices

5.6.1.1 All buildings, structures and facilities shall be installed with portable fire extinguishers." (Section 10.2.6.7, B, IRR of RA 9514) Such fire extinguishers must be placed in areas beyond reach of PDL but accessible to personnel. For this purpose, Jail Wardens must coordinate with their respective City/Municipal Fire Marshalls to designate the type and number of fire extinguishers to be installed and maintained in all buildings, structures and facilities." (Ibid.)

5.6.1.2 All installed portable fire extinguishers and other fire safety devices must be regularly inspected to ensure that they are functional at all times and those found to be in bad condition must be immediately replaced.

5.6.1.3 A quarterly inspection and inventory of fire protective and fire safety devices must be conducted by the JFSC.

5.6.1.4 There shall be posted a fire exit plan in each floor of the building showing the routes from each other room to appropriate exits, displayed prominently on the door of such room. There must also be properly marked and lighted exits with provisions for emergency lights to adequately illuminate exit ways in case of power failure.

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5.6.2 Recording and Tagging of All Electrical Equipment

5.6.2.1 There shall be a maintained Official Record of all electrical equipment being used by PDL and the jail unit under the control of the Operations Unit of the Jail.

5.6.2.2 All electrical equipment used by PDL and the jail unit must be entered into an official logbook following the Standard Operating Procedures on logbook entries (e.g. Jail Official Logbook). For guidance and uniformity, such logbook must have the following columns: 1) Entry number; 2) Time and Date; 3) Name of PDL/Dorm or Cell No.; and 4) Kind or description of Electrical Appliance/Equipment and Assigned Number Tag. e.g. 0001-0800H 20 August 2018-Juan Luna/Dorm1-Electric Fan/0001-Name of Personnel who inspected and approved it.

5.6.2.3 All electrical equipment must be registered under the name of the owner in the official record of electrical equipment.

5.6.2.4 All electrical equipment must bear the name of the PDL owner or jail unit property custodian and must be tagged on the base part of such equipment on which the main screw for assembly/disassembly is located to ensure that the same will not be disassembled or opened except upon permission of the JFSC.

5.6.2.5 The tag referred to in the preceding number must be a sticker with a measurement of at least three (3) inches in length and two (2) inches in height (3x2). (ANNEX A)

5.6.2.6 The tagging shall be made by the JFSC on all existing and newly brought-in electrical equipment used by PDL and jail unit.

5.6.2.7 During the conduct of Greyhound Operation, any electrical equipment which is not tagged or the tag of which was removed or destroyed will be considered as contraband and will be confiscated.

5.6.3 Table of Allowable Electrical Equipment for PDL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Wattage</th>
<th>Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Desk Fan</td>
<td>Up to 16&quot;</td>
<td>Up to 74 watts</td>
<td>Personal/Common</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stand Fan</td>
<td>Up to 16&quot;</td>
<td>Up to 80 watts</td>
<td>Personal/Common</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fan Box Type</td>
<td>Up to 16&quot;</td>
<td>Up to 80 watts</td>
<td>Personal/Common</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DVD/CD Player</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Up to 300 watts</td>
<td>Common</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television (TV)</td>
<td>Up to 20&quot;</td>
<td>Up to 110 watts</td>
<td>Common</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio (portable)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Up to 50 watts</td>
<td>Common</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Any electrical equipment, the size or wattage of which exceeds the aforementioned specifications shall not be allowed.

5.6.4 Additional Guidelines and Prohibitions

5.6.4.1 The time for television/radio use shall be from seven o'clock in the morning to ten o'clock in the evening every day. The use of the same may further be limited at the sound discretion of the Jail Warden.

5.6.4.2 Televisions brought by PDL relatives/visitors must first be deposited with the duty personnel for initial inspection. A thorough inspection shall be made by the JFSC. For this purpose, and when possible, television or radio units may be opened/disassembled to detect any contraband.

5.6.4.3 No personnel or PDL is allowed to modify, repair, or open any electrical equipment or appliance without the permission of the Jail Warden or in his/her absence, the Assistant Warden or in their absence, any member of the JFSC.

5.6.4.4 Refrigerators or freezers used to store commissary items or food items for the daily meals of PDL shall be closely monitored considering the designed capacity of the existing electrical system of the jail facility.

5.6.4.5 Electrical equipment/appliances of personnel must be separately recorded. The regulation of which shall be the responsibility of the JFSC. Refrigerators brought by personnel shall be for their common use. All rooms or quarters available for personnel shall be devoted to their common use. The Jail Warden and his/her Assistant are allowed to have individual rooms.

5.6.4.6 Operational Plans for fire incidents of every jail must be updated at least once a year.

5.6.4.7 Personnel information and awareness on fire safety and energy conservation shall be the task of the JFSCs for personnel of their respective jails.

5.6.4.8 Subject to inspection by the JFSC, other equipment such as microphones, speakers, electric guitars, electric keyboards, projectors, televisions, etc. for Welfare Development activities shall be allowed inside the jail premises.

5.6.5 Electric Conservation Guidelines

5.6.5.1 All office machines and other equipment shall be switched off during unoccupied times. [http://www.neu.edu/energy-management/energy-conservation-guidelines/]

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5.6.5.2 Lights in offices or buildings must be switched off when not in use. Lights which aid security such as those situated in perimeter fences and gates must be turned on as soon as natural lighting starts dimming and turned off during day time.

5.6.5.3 Use energy-efficient light bulbs or resort to alternative sources of energy such as solar or wind with appropriate electric contraption. Regularly check and replace light bulbs.

5.6.5.4 Regularly defrost refrigerators used in storing food items for PDL.

5.6.5.5 Regularly clean electric fans. For this purpose, the JFSC shall schedule the regular cleaning of all electric fans used by PDL and personnel.

5.6.5.6 Avoid octopus electrical connection.

5.6.6 Monitoring and Supervision

Jail Wardens, through their respective JFSCs shall submit a report on the implementation of this policy once every quarter to the RFSC copy furnished the Regional Logistics Division.

The Regional Operations Division shall consolidate the reports (see Annex B) of all jails within its Area of Responsibility and submit such report to the Directorate for Operations copy furnished the Directorate for Logistics not later than the 20th day of the last month of the of every quarter.

5.6.7 Penalty Clause

The strict observance of this policy is hereby enjoined and non-compliance herewith shall be dealt with accordingly under the BJMP Disciplinary Machinery.

6.0 SEPARABILITY CLAUSE

In the event that any provision or part of this policy is declared invalid by competent authority, all other provisions not affected by such declaration shall remain valid and effective.

7.0 REPEALING CLAUSE

All other existing issuances that are inconsistent with this policy are hereby amended or modified accordingly.

8.0 EFFECTIVITY

This Standard Operating Procedure shall take effect fifteen (15) days from filing thereof with the Office of the National Administrative Register (ONAR), University of the Philippines Law Center (UPLC) in accordance with Sections 3 and 4 of Chapter II, Book VII of Executive Order No. 292 otherwise known as the “Administrative Code of 1987”.

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9.0 ANNEXES

ANNEX A (Tag/sticker)

For Persons Deprived of Liberty

3 inches

Yellow background with black text

(Name of PDL)
Electric Fan-0001
Manila City Jail

2 Inches

For Personnel

3 inches

White background with blue text

(Rank & Name of Personnel)
Custodial/Escort
Electric Fan-P001
Manila City Jail

2 Inches

P= personnel
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U.P. LAW CENTER
OFFICE of the NATIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGISTER
Administrative Rules and Regulations

ANNEX B

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