

**PROVINCE OF LEYTE
SANGGUNIANG PANLALAWIGAN**

**PROVINCIAL ORDINANCE NO. _____
Series of 2026**

**AN ORDINANCE INSTITUTIONALIZING THE LEYTE PROVINCE-WIDE IMMUNIZATION
PROGRAM, INCLUDING THE COMMUNITY-BASED BAKUNA CHAMPIONS PROGRAM,
PROVIDING FOR IMMUNIZATION GOVERNANCE, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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EXPLANATORY NOTE

Immunization is one of the most effective public health interventions for preventing vaccine-preventable diseases, protecting individuals and communities, and reducing avoidable illness, disability, and death.

The Province of Leyte, through the Provincial Health Office, component local government units, government health facilities, and partner institutions, has been implementing routine immunization, catch-up vaccination, supplemental immunization activities, community engagement, and other initiatives consistent with the National Immunization Program of the Department of Health.

Despite these continuing efforts, geographic barriers, differences in access to health services, population mobility, missed opportunities for vaccination, vaccine hesitancy, misinformation, and other social and service-delivery challenges may result in children and other eligible persons remaining unvaccinated or under-immunized.

There is therefore a need to provide a continuing provincial policy and governance framework that strengthens coordination among the Province, component local government units, health facilities, the Department of Health, communities, and other partners, while supporting and complementing the National Immunization Program.

This Ordinance institutionalizes the existing Leyte Province-Wide Immunization Program and the Community-Based Bakuna Champions Program as continuing components of the Province's health system. It also provides for a Provincial Immunization Coordinating Council under the Provincial Health Board to assist in policy development, strategic planning, coordination, monitoring, and accountability.

The measure seeks to promote an immunization system that is accessible, equitable, safe, quality-assured, evidence-informed, people-centered, resilient, and responsive to the needs of the people of Leyte.

**BE IT ORDAINED BY THE SANGGUNIANG PANLALAWIGAN OF LEYTE, IN SESSION ASSEMBLED,
THAT:**

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Ordinance shall be known as the **“Leyte Bakuna Ordinance of 2026.”**

SECTION 2. DECLARATION OF POLICY.

It is the policy of the Province of Leyte to promote universal and equitable access to safe, effective, quality, and people-centered immunization services as an essential component of primary health care and universal health care.

Towards this end, the Province shall:

- a. Institutionalize and strengthen the Leyte Province-Wide Immunization Program;
- b. Support routine, catch-up, and supplemental immunization activities consistent with national policies and standards;
- c. Strengthen governance, coordination, accountability, and integration of immunization services within the province-wide health system;
- d. Promote vaccine confidence through accurate, understandable, timely, and evidence-informed information and meaningful community engagement;
- e. Institutionalize the Community-Based Bakuna Champions Program as a community engagement and vaccine confidence mechanism;
- f. Promote vaccine safety, appropriate surveillance, information management, and timely response to immunization-related concerns; and
- g. Promote equity, transparency, scientific integrity, intergovernmental cooperation, community participation, and good governance in immunization.

SECTION 3. OBJECTIVES.

This Ordinance shall pursue the following objectives:

- a. Increase and sustain immunization coverage among eligible populations;
- b. Reduce illness, disability, and deaths caused by vaccine-preventable diseases;
- c. Reach zero-dose, under-immunized, geographically isolated, and other underserved populations;
- d. Integrate immunization into primary health care and the province-wide health system;
- e. Strengthen vaccine confidence and community participation;
- f. Improve coordination, monitoring, evaluation, and accountability at all levels;
- g. Strengthen vaccine safety and preparedness for outbreaks, epidemics, and other public health emergencies; and
- h. Promote evidence-informed policy, innovation, research, continuous improvement, sustainability, and resilience of immunization services.

SECTION 4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES.

The implementation of the Program shall be guided by the following principles:

- a. **Equity and Inclusiveness** – ensuring access to immunization, especially for underserved and vulnerable populations;
- b. **Primary Health Care and Universal Health Care** – integrating immunization into accessible and responsive health services;
- c. **Safety and Quality** – ensuring that immunization services comply with national standards and evidence-based practices;
- d. **Scientific Integrity** – basing policies and interventions on reliable evidence and public health standards;
- e. **Community Participation** – engaging communities in promoting immunization and vaccine confidence;
- f. **Transparency and Accountability** – ensuring clear responsibilities, proper monitoring, and responsible use of public resources; and
- g. **Collaboration** – promoting coordination among the Province, component LGUs, national government agencies, health facilities, communities, and other partners within their respective mandates.

SECTION 5. RIGHTS OF PERSONS RECEIVING IMMUNIZATION SERVICES.

Persons receiving immunization services shall have the right to:

- a. Safe, quality, and evidence-based immunization services;
- b. Vaccines authorized or otherwise recognized for use under applicable national policies and standards;
- c. Accurate and understandable information regarding recommended immunization;
- d. Respectful, nondiscriminatory, and people-centered services;
- e. Appropriate privacy and confidentiality in accordance with law; and
- f. Appropriate referral, follow-up, and management of adverse events following immunization.

Nothing in this Ordinance shall diminish or modify the authority of the Department of Health under existing laws, or applicable mandatory immunization requirements.

SECTION 6. DEFINITION OF TERMS.

For purposes of this Ordinance:

- a. **Adverse Event Following Immunization (AEFI)** refers to any untoward medical occurrence following immunization, whether or not causally related to the vaccine or vaccination, subject to reporting, assessment, monitoring, and management under applicable Department of Health policies and standards.

b. **Bakuna Champions** refer to trained community volunteers, advocates, leaders, or partner organizations recognized under the Program to support vaccine confidence, health education, community engagement, and referral.

c. **Catch-up Immunization** refers to vaccination provided to an eligible person who has missed or delayed one or more recommended vaccine doses.

d. **Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas (GIDAs)** refer to communities identified as having limited access to health services due to geographic, economic, environmental, social, or other barriers, consistent with applicable national standards.

e. **National Immunization Program (NIP)** refers to the national immunization program of the Department of Health.

f. **Program** refers to the Leyte Province-Wide Immunization Program institutionalized under this Ordinance, including its policies, services, activities, coordination mechanisms, and other measures intended to improve immunization coverage and prevent vaccine-preventable diseases.

g. **Province-Wide Health System (PHS)** refers to the integrated health system of the Province and its component LGUs pursuant to Republic Act No. 11223 and its implementing rules and regulations.

h. **Supplemental Immunization Activity (SIA)** refers to vaccination provided in addition to routine immunization to increase protection against vaccine-preventable diseases, as authorized or recognized by the Department of Health.

i. **Vaccine Confidence** refers to trust in the safety, effectiveness, quality, and importance of vaccines and in the health system and health personnel providing immunization services.

j. **Vaccine-Preventable Disease (VPD)** refers to a disease for which vaccination is available or recommended under the National Immunization Program or other programs recognized by the Department of Health.

k. **Zero-Dose Child** refers to a child who has not received any routine vaccine dose under the National Immunization Program.

Terms not defined herein shall be construed in accordance with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and Department of Health issuances.

SECTION 7. SCOPE AND COVERAGE.

This Ordinance shall apply throughout the Province of Leyte, including the Provincial Government, component municipalities and component city, barangays, government health facilities, and participating private health facilities, institutions, organizations, service providers, and other stakeholders involved in immunization.

Nothing herein shall be construed as diminishing the powers, functions, and authority of national government agencies, component LGUs, or other government entities under existing laws.

SECTION 8. INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE LEYTE PROVINCE-WIDE IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM.

The existing and continuing provincial immunization initiatives of the Province are hereby **institutionalized as the Leyte Province-Wide Immunization Program.**

The Program shall provide a continuing framework for provincial immunization planning, coordination, implementation support, monitoring and evaluation, financing, community engagement, and continuous improvement.

The Program shall form an integral part of the Province-Wide Health System and shall complement and support the National Immunization Program.

Existing immunization initiatives, projects, partnerships, and coordination mechanisms may be harmonized and integrated under the Program, without creating a parallel immunization system.

SECTION 9. IMMUNIZATION GOVERNANCE.

The Province shall provide overall policy and strategic leadership for the Program through the Provincial Health Board and other appropriate provincial mechanisms.

The Provincial Health Office shall provide technical leadership and implementation support, subject to the policy direction of the Provincial Health Board and applicable national policies.

Component LGUs shall integrate and implement immunization priorities and complementary measures within their respective health systems and mandates.

Barangays and other stakeholders shall be encouraged to support community mobilization, health promotion, vaccine confidence, identification and referral of eligible persons, and improved access to services.

All concerned offices, agencies, and institutions shall perform their respective roles consistent with existing laws, national policies, and their mandates.

SECTION 10. PROVINCIAL IMMUNIZATION COORDINATING COUNCIL.

There is hereby created a **Provincial Immunization Coordinating Council (PICC)** under the Provincial Health Board.

The PICC shall serve as a policy advisory and coordinating body to assist the Provincial Health Board in immunization policy formulation, strategic planning, intergovernmental coordination, monitoring and evaluation, and other related matters.

The PICC shall operate under the policy direction of the Provincial Health Board and shall not supersede the authority and functions of the Provincial Health Board, Provincial Health Office, Department of Health, component LGUs, health facilities, or other government entities under existing laws.

SECTION 11. Composition of the Provincial Immunization Coordinating Council.

The PICC shall be composed of the following:

Chairperson:

Provincial Governor

ViceChairperson:

Provincial Health Officer

Members:

- a. Chairperson, Sangguniang Panlalawigan Committee on Health and Sanitation;
- b. Provincial Planning and Development Coordinator;
- c. Provincial Budget Officer;
- d. Provincial Treasurer;
- e. Representative of the Department of Health Center for Health Development – Eastern Visayas;
- f. Representative of the Municipal and City Health Officers of Leyte;
- g. Representative of the Chiefs of Provincial Hospitals;
- h. President, League of Municipalities of the Philippines – Leyte Chapter; and
- i. President, Liga ng mga Barangay – Leyte Chapter.

The **Provincial Health Office** shall serve as the Secretariat of the PICC.

The PICC may invite representatives of other government agencies, health facilities and providers, professional organizations, civil society organizations, academe, development partners, communities, and other stakeholders to serve as resource persons or technical advisers when their expertise or participation is necessary.

SECTION 12. FUNCTIONS OF THE PROVINCIAL IMMUNIZATION COORDINATING COUNCIL.

The PICC shall:

- a. Recommend to the Provincial Health Board policies and strategic measures for the effective implementation and strengthening of the Program;
- b. Review and recommend the Provincial Immunization Plan and other strategic frameworks;
- c. Promote coordination among the Province, component LGUs, Department of Health, health facilities, and other stakeholders;
- d. Recommend strategies to improve immunization coverage, equity, vaccine confidence, and community participation;

- e. Review Program performance and recommend appropriate policy interventions;
- f. Recommend financing and resource mobilization priorities for the Program;
- g. Facilitate appropriate stakeholder consultation and participation;
- h. Promote evidence-informed decision-making, research, innovation, and continuous improvement; and
- i. Perform such other advisory and coordinating functions as may be assigned by the Provincial Health Board, consistent with law.

SECTION 13. MEETINGS AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT.

The PICC shall meet as necessary to perform its functions.

The Council may organize technical working groups and seek technical assistance when necessary.

The Provincial Health Office shall provide the Secretariat and technical support.

The rules on meetings, quorum, voting, technical working groups, documentation, and other operational matters shall be provided in the Implementing Rules and Regulations.

SECTION 14. ROLE OF THE PROVINCIAL HEALTH OFFICE.

The Provincial Health Office shall serve as the lead implementing office for the Program and shall provide technical leadership and coordination, subject to the policy direction of the Provincial Health Board.

It shall:

- a. Implement policies and strategic directions approved by the Provincial Health Board;
- b. Prepare and implement the Provincial Immunization Plan;
- c. Provide technical assistance to component LGUs, health facilities, and partners;
- d. Coordinate with the Department of Health and other relevant agencies and partners;
- e. Maintain and support appropriate immunization information and reporting systems;
- f. Monitor and evaluate Program implementation and performance;
- g. Support vaccine safety surveillance, including appropriate AEFI reporting and response;
- h. Lead or support vaccine confidence, health promotion, risk communication, and community engagement activities; and
- i. Perform other functions necessary to carry out the purposes of this Ordinance.

SECTION 15. RESPONSIBILITIES OF COMPONENT LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS.

Component LGUs shall, consistent with their respective mandates and available resources:

- a. Integrate immunization priorities into appropriate local health, development, and investment plans;
- b. Implement national and provincial immunization policies and strategies;
- c. Strengthen local health governance and integration of immunization services;
- d. Coordinate with the Provincial Health Office on immunization planning, implementation, monitoring, and response;
- e. Promote vaccine confidence and community participation; and
- f. Allocate appropriate resources for immunization activities, subject to applicable laws, rules, regulations, and budgetary processes.

SECTION 16. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION.

Barangays shall serve as primary community partners in supporting immunization through community mobilization, health promotion, vaccine confidence, identification and referral of eligible persons, and facilitation of access to services.

Government agencies, private institutions, health providers, professional organizations, civil society organizations, faith-based organizations, indigenous peoples' organizations, academic institutions, development partners, businesses, and other stakeholders may participate in advocacy, community engagement, technical assistance, research, capacity development, and other lawful activities supporting the Program.

SECTION 17. COMMUNITY-BASED BAKUNA CHAMPIONS PROGRAM.

The existing and continuing **Community-Based Bakuna Champions Program** is hereby institutionalized as a component of the Leyte Province-Wide Immunization Program.

The Bakuna Champions Program shall serve as a community engagement and vaccine confidence mechanism through trained volunteers, community leaders, advocates, and partners who may support:

- a. Health promotion and immunization literacy;
- b. Community mobilization;
- c. Dissemination of accurate and evidence-informed information;
- d. Community dialogue and engagement; and
- e. Referral of persons to appropriate health services.

Participation as a Bakuna Champion shall be voluntary and shall not create an employer-employee relationship with the Provincial Government or any LGU.

Bakuna Champions shall not perform functions reserved by law for licensed or duly authorized health professionals.

The qualifications, training, accreditation or recognition, code of conduct, support mechanisms, and other operational matters shall be provided in the Implementing Rules and Regulations.

SECTION 18. PROVINCIAL IMMUNIZATION PLAN.

The Provincial Health Office shall prepare a **Provincial Immunization Plan**, subject to review and recommendation by the PICC and approval by the Provincial Health Board.

The Plan shall be aligned with the Province-Wide Health System, Provincial Health Plan, Local Investment Plan for Health, Annual Investment Program, National Immunization Program, and applicable national policies and plans.

It shall establish strategic priorities, targets, indicators, resource requirements, and monitoring and evaluation measures appropriate to the needs of the Province.

The Plan shall be periodically reviewed and updated.

SECTION 19. VACCINE SAFETY AND SUPPLY GOVERNANCE.

The Province shall support a comprehensive vaccine safety and supply management system consistent with national policies and standards.

The Provincial Health Office shall support appropriate systems for vaccine safety surveillance and AEFI response, cold chain management, forecasting, inventory and stock monitoring, distribution, and other measures necessary to promote the quality, availability, and safe use of vaccines.

Operational procedures shall be provided in the Implementing Rules and Regulations.

Nothing herein shall diminish the authority of the Department of Health over national vaccine policies, standards, procurement, regulation, or other matters within its mandate.

SECTION 20. INFORMATION MANAGEMENT, RESEARCH, AND INNOVATION.

The Province shall promote appropriate health information management, research, innovation, digital solutions, and knowledge management to improve immunization services and decision-making.

The Provincial Health Office shall maintain an appropriate Provincial Immunization Information System and, where practicable, ensure interoperability with applicable national systems.

All collection, processing, storage, sharing, and use of personal and health information shall comply with Republic Act No. 10173, applicable health information policies, ethical standards, and other relevant laws.

Research and innovation activities shall comply with applicable ethical, legal, and data protection requirements.

SECTION 21. EMERGENCY IMMUNIZATION RESPONSE.

During outbreaks, epidemics, public health emergencies, disasters, or other situations requiring an accelerated immunization response, the Provincial Health Office shall coordinate with the Department of Health, component LGUs, health facilities, and other concerned agencies for a timely, coordinated, and evidence-informed response.

Such response may include supplemental or catch-up immunization, enhanced surveillance, risk communication, mobile and outreach services, and other appropriate interventions consistent with national policies.

SECTION 22. MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND REPORTING.

The Provincial Health Office shall establish and maintain a monitoring and evaluation system for the Program using appropriate national and provincial indicators.

An Annual Provincial Immunization Report shall be submitted to the Provincial Health Board and the Sangguniang Panlalawigan not later than the end of the first quarter of the succeeding year.

The report shall include, as appropriate, Program performance, immunization coverage, vaccine-preventable disease and vaccine safety information, major accomplishments and challenges, and recommended policy measures.

SECTION 23. CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT.

The Province shall support continuing capacity development for health personnel, Bakuna Champions, and other relevant stakeholders to strengthen immunization service delivery, vaccine confidence, communication, surveillance, safety, data management, and program management.

Capacity development shall be aligned with identified needs and applicable Department of Health standards.

Detailed training and competency requirements shall be provided in the Implementing Rules and Regulations.

SECTION 24. FUNDING AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION.

Funds necessary for the implementation of this Ordinance shall be charged against available appropriations of the Provincial Government, particularly those of the Provincial Health Office, subject to existing budgeting, accounting, auditing, procurement, and other applicable laws, rules, and regulations.

Appropriate funding for the Program shall be considered in succeeding annual budgets, subject to the regular budget process and availability of funds.

The Province may receive grants, donations, technical assistance, equipment, supplies, and other lawful forms of support from government agencies, development partners, private entities, and other organizations, subject to applicable laws, accounting and auditing rules, and safeguards against conflicts of interest.

SECTION 25. RECOGNITION AND INCENTIVES.

The Province may recognize outstanding performance and contributions of component LGUs, barangays, health facilities, health workers, Bakuna Champions, schools, civil society organizations, and other partners that significantly contribute to the objectives of the Program.

The Provincial Health Board may prescribe appropriate recognition mechanisms upon recommendation of the PICC and consistent with applicable laws and regulations.

SECTION 26. CONFLICT OF INTEREST.

Members of the PICC, its technical working groups, and other persons participating in policy or decision-making processes under the Program shall disclose actual or potential conflicts of interest and shall inhibit themselves from matters in which they have a direct or indirect personal or financial interest, when required by law or applicable ethical standards.

Additional safeguards may be prescribed in accordance with laws on public accountability, ethics, procurement, and conflict of interest.

SECTION 27. NON-DIMINUTION AND INTEGRATION OF EXISTING SERVICES.

Nothing in this Ordinance shall be construed to reduce, discontinue, or otherwise diminish existing immunization programs, services, benefits, or protections being provided by the Province, component LGUs, Department of Health, or other authorized entities.

Existing provincial and local immunization programs, projects, partnerships, and coordination mechanisms may be integrated or harmonized with the Program, provided that such integration shall not interrupt or delay the National Immunization Program or ongoing immunization activities.

SECTION 28. IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS.

Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Ordinance, the Provincial Health Office, in coordination with the PICC, Provincial Legal Office, Department of Health, concerned provincial offices, component LGUs, and other appropriate stakeholders, shall formulate the Implementing Rules and Regulations.

The IRR shall provide the necessary operational guidelines for the implementation of this Ordinance, including governance arrangements, the Bakuna Champions Program, vaccine safety and supply management, community engagement, capacity development, information management, monitoring and evaluation, and other implementation matters.

The IRR shall not amend, expand, restrict, or diminish the substantive provisions of this Ordinance.

SECTION 29. PERIODIC REVIEW.

The PICC, through the Provincial Health Office, shall periodically review the implementation of the Program and recommend to the Provincial Health Board and the Sangguniang Panlalawigan appropriate policy, legislative, institutional, or programmatic measures to strengthen its implementation.

SECTION 30. TRANSITORY PROVISION.

Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Ordinance, the Provincial Health Office shall facilitate the organization of the PICC and initiate or update the Provincial Immunization Plan.

Existing immunization programs, technical working groups, partnerships, coordination mechanisms, community engagement activities, personnel, systems, and records may continue to be utilized and harmonized with the Program, subject to applicable laws, rules, and regulations.

SECTION 31. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE.

If any provision of this Ordinance is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 32. REPEALING CLAUSE.

All provincial ordinances, executive orders, administrative issuances, rules, and regulations, or portions thereof, inconsistent with the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

All existing issuances consistent with this Ordinance shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 33. EFFECTIVITY.

This Ordinance shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the Province of Leyte and/or posting in accordance with applicable law.