Item No.: 12
Date: NOV 25 2026
By:
Date: 11-16-26 Time: 9m

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF LEYTE
Provincial Capitol
Tacloban City

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PROVINCIAL LEGAL OFFICE

Sangguniang Panlalawigan
Province of Leyte
RECEIVED
Date: NOV 17 2026
By:

2nd INDORSEMENT
August 28, 2026

Respectfully returned to the Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Leyte, through SP Secretary, the attached Ordinance No. 2026-18 of the Sangguniang Bayan of Hilongos, Leyte.

REVIEW/RECOMMENDATION/LEGAL OPINION:

This office is of the opinion that the subject Ordinance is generally in accordance to its power under Section 447[1] of the Local Government Code of 1991 (R.A 7160) in consonance with Section 447(5)(xiv)[2] of the same. Hence, recommending for the declaration of its validity.

We hope to have assisted you with this request. Please note that the opinion rendered by this Office are based on facts available and may vary or change when additional facts and documents are presented or changed. This opinion is likewise without prejudice to the opinions rendered by higher and competent authorities and/or the courts.

ATTY. JOSE RAYMUND A. ACOL
Provincial Legal Officer

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[1] *;The sangguniang bayan, as the legislative body of the municipality, shall enact ordinances, approve resolutions and appropriate funds for the general welfare of the municipality and its inhabitants pursuant to Section 16 of this Code and in the proper exercise of the corporate powers of the municipality as provided for under Section 22 of this Code*

[2] *subject to availability of funds, establish and provide for the operation of centers and facilities for said needy and disadvantaged persons affected by human rights violations.*

0Republic of the Philippines
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Palo, Leyte
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OFFICE OF THE SANGGUNIANG PANLALAWIGAN

PROVINCE OF LEYTE
LEGAL OFFICE
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By:
Date: 9.1.26 Time: 9:24

1ST INDORSEMENT
28 August 2026

The Provincial Legal Office is respectfully requested to review and submit recommendations on the herein enclosed **Municipal Ordinance No. 2026-18** of the **Municipality** of **Hilongos, Leyte,** entitled: **An Ordinance institutionalizing a Human Rights-Based Approach to Local Governance, establishing the Hilongos Human Rights Action Center(HHRAC), operationalizing the Barangay Human Rights Action Centers (BHRACs), strengthening access to justice through Community Legal Assistance, and providing funds therefor.**

FLORINDA JILL S. UYVICO
Secretary to the Sanggunian

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Leyte
Municipality of Hilongos

OFFICE OF THE SANGGUNIANG BAYAN

Sangguniang Panlalawigan
Province of Leyte
RECEIVED
Date: AUG 28 2026
By:

MUNICIPAL ORDINANCE NO. 2026-18

AN ORDINANCE INSTITUTIONALIZING A HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH TO LOCAL GOVERNANCE, ESTABLISHING THE HILONGOS HUMAN RIGHTS ACTION CENTER (HHRAC), OPERATIONALIZING THE BARANGAY HUMAN RIGHTS ACTION CENTERS (BHRACs), STRENGTHENING ACCESS TO JUSTICE THROUGH COMMUNITY LEGAL ASSISTANCE, AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR

Authored by: **HON. JOSEPH F. FULACHE**
Chairperson, Committee on Laws, Rules and Privileges, Appointment, Good Governance and Human Rights

Co-authored by:
HON. MANUEL M. GABISAN
HON. RICHARD BENEDICT V. OGARIO
HON. FRANCISCO M. ORTEGA
HON. MANUEL V. LORA

PREFATORY STATEMENT

WHEREAS, Article II, Section 11, and Article XIII of the 1987 Constitution recognize the dignity of every human person, guarantee full respect for human rights, and mandate the State to protect and promote the same through appropriate measures;

WHEREAS, the Constitution created the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) as an independent constitutional body tasked to protect and promote human rights through investigation, legal measures, education, and advocacy;

WHEREAS, the Local Government Code of 1991 empowers local government units to promote the general welfare and adopt measures that protect the rights, dignity, safety, and well-being of their constituents;

WHEREAS, the Commission on Human Rights and the Department of the Interior and Local Government, through relevant issuances, including CHR Memorandum Circular No. 94-194, DILG Memorandum Circular No. 2006-45, and Joint Memorandum Circular No. 1, Series of 2014, encourage local government units to institutionalize Human Rights Action Centers and mainstream human rights, the rule of law, and access to justice in local governance;

WHEREAS, the Municipality of Hilongos recognizes that the promotion and protection of human rights require a coordinated, community-based approach involving government agencies, barangays, civil society, educational institutions, the legal profession, and other stakeholders;

WHEREAS, the Municipality further recognizes the unique opportunity to strengthen access to justice by mobilizing volunteer lawyers and other professionals to provide legal assistance, human rights education, and community outreach for the benefit of every Hilongosnon;

WHEREAS, the Sangguniang Bayan deems it necessary to institutionalize the Hilongos Human Rights Action Center as the Municipality's mechanism for promoting

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human rights, strengthening access to justice, enhancing community participation, and mainstreaming a human rights-based approach to local governance;

NOW THEREFORE, on motion of Hon. Joseph F. Fulache as seconded by Hon. Cris Antonio B. Ong and Hon. Bernadeth M. Nerves;

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE Seventeenth Sangguniang Bayan of the Municipality of Hilongos in a regular session assembled that:

CHAPTER I
GENERAL PROVISIONS

SECTION 1. TITLE – This Ordinance shall be known as the ***"Hilongos Human Rights Governance Ordinance of 2026."***

SECTION 2. DECLARATION OF POLICY – It is hereby declared the policy of the Municipality of Hilongos to uphold, respect, protect, promote, and fulfill the human rights and fundamental freedoms of every person without discrimination, consistent with the Constitution, existing laws, and applicable national policies.

SECTION 3. OBJECTIVES – This Ordinance aims to institutionalize a human rights-based approach to local governance by establishing and strengthening the Hilongos Human Rights Action Center (HHRAC) and the Barangay Human Rights Action Centers (BHRACs); promoting human rights education, awareness, and community participation; improving access to justice through legal assistance, referrals, and strategic partnerships with government agencies, the legal profession, civil society, and other stakeholders; encouraging volunteerism and professional service in advancing human rights; establishing effective mechanisms for the documentation, monitoring, and referral of human rights concerns; and fostering a culture of respect for human dignity, equality, accountability, non-discrimination, transparency, and the rule of law in the Municipality of Hilongos.

SECTION 4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES – The implementation of this Ordinance shall be guided by the principles of respect for human dignity, equality and non-discrimination, participation, accountability, transparency, accessibility, inclusivity, gender responsiveness, protection of vulnerable sectors, confidentiality, and the rule of law. All offices, departments, barangays, and stakeholders involved in the implementation of this Ordinance shall ensure that these principles are integrated into the planning, delivery, monitoring, and evaluation of programs, projects, and services affecting the rights and welfare of the people.

SECTION 5. DEFINITION OF TERMS – For purposes of this Ordinance, the following terms shall be construed as follows:

a) **Access to Justice** – refers to the ability of every person, regardless of economic or social status, to obtain timely, effective, and affordable legal information, assistance, remedies, and redress through appropriate government agencies, institutions, and other lawful mechanisms.

b) **Barangay Human Rights Action Center (BHRAC)** – refers to the community-based human rights mechanism established in every

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barangay to promote human rights awareness, facilitate community education, receive and document human rights concerns, and coordinate with the Hilongos Human Rights Action Center and appropriate government agencies.

c) **Barangay Human Rights Action Officer (BHRAO)** – refers to the barangay official or duly designated person responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the programs and activities of the Barangay Human Rights Action Center.

d) **Human Rights** – refer to the fundamental rights and freedoms inherent to every person by virtue of human dignity, as recognized under the Constitution, existing laws, and applicable international human rights instruments to which the Philippines is a State Party.

e) **Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA)** – refers to an approach to governance that integrates human rights principles, including participation, accountability, non-discrimination, transparency, human dignity, empowerment, accessibility, and the rule of law, in the formulation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies, programs, projects, and services.

f) **Human Rights Concern** – refers to any allegation, complaint, request for assistance, or situation involving the possible violation, denial, deprivation, or impairment of a person's human rights or fundamental freedoms requiring appropriate assessment, intervention, referral, or coordination by the Human Rights Action Center.

g) **Hilongos Human Rights Action Center (HHRAC)** – refers to the municipal mechanism established under this Ordinance to coordinate programs, promote human rights education, facilitate access to justice, receive and refer human rights concerns, strengthen institutional partnerships, and oversee the implementation of this Ordinance.

h) **Hilongos Human Rights Action Team (HHRAT)** – refers to the inter-agency body created under this Ordinance to formulate policies, coordinate programs, monitor implementation, and provide strategic direction for the Municipality's human rights initiatives.

i) **Legal Assistance** – refers to the provision of legal information, legal advice, legal consultation, referrals, or other appropriate legal support consistent with law and the applicable rules governing the practice of law.

j) **Referral** – refers to the endorsement or transmission of a human rights concern to the appropriate government agency, office, institution, or organization having the legal authority or competence to take appropriate action.

k) **Vulnerable Sectors** – refer to individuals or groups who, because of age, gender, disability, economic status, health condition, displacement, social circumstances, or other similar factors, may require greater protection or assistance in the enjoyment and exercise of their rights.

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l) **Volunteer Lawyer** – refers to a member in good standing of the Philippine Bar who voluntarily renders legal consultations, legal education, referral assistance, or other pro bono legal services through the Human Rights Action Center, subject to applicable laws, ethical rules, and the lawyer's voluntary undertaking.

CHAPTER II
THE HILONGOS HUMAN RIGHTS ACTION CENTER

SECTION 6. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE HILONGOS HUMAN RIGHTS ACTION CENTER (HHRAC) – There is hereby established the Hilongos Human Rights Action Center (HHRAC), which shall serve as the Municipality's primary mechanism for the promotion and protection of human rights, advancement of access to justice, human rights education, community engagement, inter-agency coordination, and referral of human rights concerns to the appropriate government agencies and institutions.

The HHRAC shall be housed under the Office of the Municipal Legal Officer and shall serve as the central coordinating office for the implementation of this Ordinance. It shall work in close coordination with the Commission on Human Rights, the Department of the Interior and Local Government, barangays, national government agencies, civil society organizations, educational institutions, professional organizations, and other stakeholders in advancing a human rights-based approach to local governance.

SECTION 7. POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF THE HILONGOS HUMAN RIGHTS ACTION CENTER (HHRAC) – The HHRAC shall have the following powers and functions:

a) Serve as the Municipality's primary coordinating mechanism for the implementation of this Ordinance and the promotion of a human rights-based approach to local governance;
b) Develop, implement, monitor, and evaluate municipal human rights programs, projects, and activities in coordination with concerned government agencies, barangays, civil society organizations, educational institutions, and other stakeholders;
c) Promote human rights awareness through continuing education, information campaigns, trainings, seminars, community dialogues, and other advocacy activities;
d) Receive, document, assess, and maintain records of human rights concerns brought before the Center and facilitate their referral to the appropriate government agencies or institutions having jurisdiction or authority to act thereon;
e) Establish and maintain a Human Rights Information and Referral System to facilitate timely coordination among concerned agencies and ensure appropriate assistance to persons seeking access to justice;
f) Establish and administer the Human Rights Legal Assistance Clinic and the Volunteer Lawyers Program under this Ordinance, and coordinate with volunteer lawyers, the Public Attorney's Office, the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, law schools, and other legal service providers in expanding access to justice;
g) Provide legal information and appropriate referrals to individuals seeking assistance, without prejudice to the jurisdiction and mandates of

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the Commission on Human Rights, the Public Attorney's Office, the courts, and other competent authorities;

h) Coordinate with the Barangay Human Rights Action Centers (BHRACs) and provide technical assistance, capacity-building, and operational support to Barangay Human Rights Action Officers (BHRAOs);
i) Establish and maintain partnerships with national government agencies, local government offices, civil society organizations, faith-based organizations, professional associations, academic institutions, and development partners in furtherance of the objectives of this Ordinance;
j) Prepare and submit an Annual Human Rights Situation Report and such other reports as may be required by the Municipal Mayor or the Sangguniang Bayan; and
k) Perform such other functions as may be necessary or incidental to effectively carry out the purposes and objectives of this Ordinance, consistent with existing laws, rules, and regulations.

SECTION 8. SECRETARIAT AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE HILONGOS HUMAN RIGHTS ACTION CENTER – The Office of the Municipal Legal Officer shall serve as the Secretariat of the Hilongos Human Rights Action Center (HHRAC) and shall provide administrative, technical, and operational support necessary for the effective implementation of this Ordinance.

The Secretariat shall, among others:

a) Receive, record, and maintain confidential records of human rights concerns and referrals;
b) Coordinate meetings, programs, trainings, and other activities of the HHRAC and the Hilongos Human Rights Council;
c) Maintain the Human Rights Information and Referral System and other records necessary for the implementation of this Ordinance;
d) Prepare reports, resolutions, correspondence, and other official documents of the HHRAC;
e) Coordinate with Barangay Human Rights Action Centers, government agencies, civil society organizations, volunteer lawyers, and other partners; and
f) Perform such other administrative and technical functions as may be necessary to carry out the objectives of this Ordinance.

SECTION 9. HILONGOS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL – There is hereby created the Hilongos Human Rights Council (HHRC) which shall serve as the policy-making, coordinating, and oversight body for the implementation of this Ordinance.

The Council shall be composed of the following:

Chairperson: Municipal Mayor
Vice Chairperson: Sangguniang Bayan Member, Chairperson on Human Rights, Justice, and Good Governance, or its equivalent committee

Members:
a) Municipal Legal Officer;
b) Municipal Social Welfare and Development Officer;
c) Municipal Health Officer;
d) Municipal Planning and Development Coordinator;

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e) Municipal Local Government Operations Officer or duly authorized representative;
f) Chief of Police or the designated Human Rights Affairs Officer;
g) President, Liga ng mga Barangay;
h) District Representative of the Department of Education;
i) A representative from the Commission on Human Rights, whenever practicable;
j) A representative from the Integrated Bar of the Philippines or, in the absence thereof, a lawyer residing or practicing in the Municipality designated by the Municipal Mayor from among the volunteer lawyers;
k) One (1) representative each from an accredited civil society organization and a faith-based organization actively engaged in human rights, social justice, or community development; and
l) Such other representatives from government agencies or the private sector as the Council may invite whenever necessary.

The Municipal Legal Officer shall serve as the Council's Secretariat without additional compensation.

SECTION 10. POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF THE HILONGOS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL – The Hilongos Human Rights Council shall have the following powers and functions:

a) Formulate policies, strategies, and programs to promote and protect human rights and mainstream a human rights-based approach to local governance;
b) Provide policy direction and oversight over the implementation of this Ordinance and the programs of the Hilongos Human Rights Action Center (HHRAC);
c) Approve the Municipal Human Rights Action Plan and monitor its implementation;
d) Strengthen coordination among municipal offices, barangays, national government agencies, civil society organizations, educational institutions, professional organizations, and other stakeholders in advancing human rights and access to justice;
e) Recommend measures, policies, and ordinances to the Sangguniang Bayan for the promotion and protection of human rights;
f) Encourage and support the establishment and effective operation of Barangay Human Rights Action Centers (BHRACs) in all barangays of the Municipality;
g) Mobilize volunteer lawyers, professionals, civil society organizations, and community partners in the implementation of human rights programs and legal assistance initiatives;
h) Review the Annual Human Rights Situation Report and recommend appropriate interventions to address emerging human rights concerns within the Municipality; and
i) Perform such other functions as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this Ordinance and those consistent with existing laws, rules, and regulations.

SECTION 11. HUMAN RIGHTS LEGAL ASSISTANCE CLINIC AND VOLUNTEER LAWYERS PROGRAM – To strengthen access to justice and bring legal services closer to the people, the HHRAC shall establish and administer a Human Rights Legal Assistance Clinic through a Volunteer Lawyers Program.

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Lawyers residing or practicing in the Municipality of Hilongos may voluntarily enroll in the Program and render pro bono legal consultations, legal education, rights awareness, mediation support, document assistance, referral services, and other lawful legal services within the scope of their professional responsibilities and in accordance with the Code of Professional Responsibility and Accountability.

The HHRAC shall prepare a schedule of regular legal assistance clinics, which may include a designated Human Rights Volunteer Lawyer Day, and shall coordinate with the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, the Public Attorney's Office, the Commission on Human Rights, law schools, and other legal service providers to expand access to justice.

Participation in the Volunteer Lawyers Program shall be voluntary and shall not create an employer-employee relationship with the Municipality nor require a participating lawyer to accept legal representation beyond the services voluntarily undertaken.

SECTION 12. MEETINGS OF THE HILONGOS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL – The Hilongos Human Rights Council shall meet at least once every quarter, or as often as may be necessary upon the call of the Chairperson or upon the written request of at least one-third (1/3) of its members.

A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. The Council may invite representatives from government agencies, civil society organizations, professional organizations, educational institutions, development partners, and other stakeholders to participate in its meetings whenever their expertise or participation is necessary to achieve the objectives of this Ordinance.

CHAPTER III
HUMAN RIGHTS PLANNING, MONITORING, AND COORDINATION

SECTION 13. MUNICIPAL HUMAN RIGHTS ACTION PLAN – Within one hundred twenty (120) days from the effectivity of this Ordinance, and every three (3) years thereafter, the Hilongos Human Rights Council shall formulate, adopt, and periodically update a Municipal Human Rights Action Plan consistent with national laws, policies, and local development priorities.

The Action Plan shall identify the Municipality's human rights priorities, strategic objectives, programs, activities, performance indicators, responsible offices, and mechanisms for implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. It shall likewise ensure the integration of human rights principles into local governance, public service delivery, access to justice, protection of vulnerable sectors, disaster preparedness and response, environmental governance, education, peace and order, and other relevant municipal programs.

SECTION 14. ANNUAL HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION REPORT – The Hilongos Human Rights Action Center (HHRAC), through its Secretariat, shall prepare and submit to the Municipal Mayor and the Sangguniang Bayan, on or before the thirty-first (31st) day of March of every year, an Annual Human Rights Situation Report covering the preceding calendar year.

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The Report shall include, among others, the status of the implementation of the Municipal Human Rights Action Plan, statistical data on human rights concerns received and referred, programs and activities undertaken, legal assistance and referral services rendered, accomplishments of the Barangay Human Rights Action Centers (BHRACs), emerging human rights issues affecting the Municipality, and such policy or legislative recommendations as may be necessary to strengthen the promotion, protection, and fulfillment of human rights.

The Annual Human Rights Situation Report shall serve as a reference in policy formulation, local planning, budgeting, and the development of programs and interventions, subject to applicable laws on confidentiality and data privacy.

SECTION 15. HUMAN RIGHTS INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SYSTEM – The HHRAC shall establish and maintain a Human Rights Information and Referral System to facilitate the proper documentation, monitoring, coordination, and referral of human rights concerns within the Municipality.

The System shall include a directory of government agencies, legal service providers, civil society organizations, and other institutions providing assistance on human rights and access to justice; maintain records of referrals and actions taken thereon; and ensure timely coordination among concerned offices.

All records and information obtained under this Section shall be treated with strict confidentiality and processed in accordance with applicable laws, including the Data Privacy Act of 2012, and shall be used solely for legitimate governmental purposes consistent with this Ordinance.

SECTION 16. ESTABLISHMENT OF BARANGAY HUMAN RIGHTS ACTION CENTERS (BHRACs) – There shall be established in every barangay of the Municipality of Hilongos a Barangay Human Rights Action Center (BHRAC), which shall serve as the primary community-based mechanism for promoting and protecting human rights, facilitating access to justice, conducting human rights education, receiving and documenting human rights concerns, and coordinating with the Hilongos Human Rights Action Center (HHRAC) and appropriate government agencies. The BHRAC shall complement, and not supplant or diminish, the powers and functions of existing barangay mechanisms and other government agencies created under existing laws.

SECTION 17. BARANGAY HUMAN RIGHTS ACTION OFFICER (BHRAO) – Every Barangay Human Rights Action Center shall be headed by a Barangay Human Rights Action Officer (BHRAO), who shall be designated by the Punong Barangay from among the members of the Sangguniang Barangay or qualified barangay officials or personnel, subject to the concurrence of the Sangguniang Barangay. The BHRAO shall possess integrity, commitment to public service, and willingness to undergo human rights education and capacity-building programs. The BHRAO shall serve as the barangay's focal person on human rights and shall coordinate closely with the HHRAC in the implementation of this Ordinance.

SECTION 18. POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF THE BARANGAY HUMAN RIGHTS ACTION OFFICER (BHRAO) – The BHRAO shall:

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a) Promote human rights awareness and conduct community education activities within the barangay;
b) Receive, document, and facilitate the referral of human rights concerns to the HHRAC or other appropriate government agencies, without prejudice to the jurisdiction of competent authorities;
c) Assist individuals in accessing appropriate legal, medical, psychosocial, and other government services;
d) Coordinate with the Lupon Tagapamayapa, Barangay Violence Against Women (VAW) Desk, Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC), Barangay Anti-Drug Abuse Council (BADAC), and other existing barangay mechanisms, whenever appropriate;
e) Assist the HHRAC in the implementation of municipal human rights programs, legal assistance clinics, and community outreach activities;
f) Maintain records of human rights activities and referrals, subject to applicable laws on confidentiality and data privacy;
g) Submit periodic reports to the HHRAC on the implementation of barangay human rights programs and emerging human rights concerns; and
h) Perform such other functions as may be necessary to carry out the objectives of this Ordinance.

SECTION 19. HUMAN RIGHTS COMPLAINTS, ASSISTANCE, AND REFERRAL MECHANISM – The HHRAC and the Barangay Human Rights Action Centers (BHRACs) shall establish a coordinated mechanism for receiving, documenting, assisting, and referring human rights concerns to the appropriate government agencies or institutions having jurisdiction over the matter.

Upon receipt of a human rights concern, the HHRAC or BHRAO shall, as may be appropriate:

a) Receive and document the complaint or request for assistance;
b) Provide available information on the complainant's rights and the appropriate remedies under existing laws;
c) Refer or endorse the matter to the appropriate government agency or institution for investigation, intervention, or other appropriate action;
d) Coordinate with the concerned office, when necessary, to facilitate access to available services; and
e) Monitor the status of referrals for documentation and coordination purposes, without prejudice to the authority and jurisdiction of the agency or office handling the case.

Nothing in this Ordinance shall be construed as conferring upon the HHRAC or the BHRACs any investigative, prosecutorial, quasi-judicial, or adjudicatory powers vested by law in the Commission on Human Rights, the courts, or other competent government agencies.

SECTION 20. PARTNERSHIPS, VOLUNTEERISM, AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION – The Municipality shall encourage and strengthen partnerships with the Commission on Human Rights, the Department of the Interior and Local Government, the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, the Public Attorney's Office, educational institutions, civil society organizations, faith-based organizations, professional associations, business groups, development partners, and other stakeholders in the implementation of this Ordinance.

CATHERINE A. FABULAR, J.D.
Secretary to the Sanggunian

RICHARD BENEDICT V. OGARIO
Ex-Officio Member / President, Liga ng mga Barangay

CECILLE ANTONIETTE C. SABRIDO
Ex-Officio Member / President, Pambayang Pederasyon ng Sangguniang Kabaaan

FRANCISCO M. ORTEGA
SB Member

MANUEL M. GABISAN
SB Member
(on leave)

TRINIDAD V. ZARATE
SB Member

CRIS ANTONIO B. ONG
SB Member

ALINE B. REOMA
SB Member
(on vacation leave)

MANUEL V. LORA
SB Member

MANUEL R. VILLAHERMOSA
Municipal Mayor

BERNADETH M. NERVES
SB Member

JOSEPH F. FULACHE
SB Member

ALBERT R. VILLAHERMOSA
Municipal Vice-Mayor

The HHRAC may organize and maintain a roster of volunteer lawyers, medical and mental health professionals, social workers, educators, youth leaders, and other qualified individuals who may assist in human rights education, legal assistance, capacity-building, community outreach, mediation support, psychosocial services, and other lawful activities consistent with the objectives of this Ordinance.

The Municipality shall likewise encourage the active participation of the public in promoting respect for human rights, strengthening access to justice, and fostering a culture of volunteerism, civic responsibility, and shared accountability in the protection of human dignity.

SECTION 21. APPROPRIATIONS – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Ordinance shall be charged against available appropriations of the Municipality, subject to existing budgeting, accounting, and auditing laws, rules, and regulations.

Thereafter, the Municipal Government shall include in its annual/ supplemental budget such amounts as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Ordinance. The Municipality may likewise receive grants, donations, contributions, and technical or financial assistance from lawful sources, subject to existing laws, rules, and regulations.

The Sangguniang Barangay of each barangay is likewise encouraged to appropriate funds necessary for the effective establishment and operation of its Barangay Human Rights Action Center (BHRAC), subject to existing budgeting, accounting, and auditing laws, rules, and regulations.

SECTION 22. IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Ordinance, the Hilongos Human Rights Council, through the Hilongos Human Rights Action Center (HHRAC), and in consultation with the Commission on Human Rights, the Department of the Interior and Local Government, and other concerned stakeholders, shall formulate and adopt the necessary Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) for the effective implementation of this Ordinance.

SECTION 23. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE – If any provision of this Ordinance is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 24. REPEALING CLAUSE – All ordinances, resolutions, executive issuances, rules, regulations, or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SECTION 25. EFFECTIVITY – This Ordinance shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in a newspaper of local circulation, after its posting for not less than fifteen (15) days in at least three (3) conspicuous places in the Municipality of Hilongos, in accordance with applicable laws.

ENACTED this 10th day of August, 2026 during the Thirty-Second Regular Session for CY 2026 of the Seventeenth Sangguniang Bayan of Hilongos.

CATHERINE A. FABULAR, J.D.
Secretary to the Sanggunian

RICHARD BENEDICT V. OCARIO
Ex-Officio Member/President, Liga ng mga Barangay

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Municipal Mayor

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SB Member

JOSEPH F. FULACHE
SB Member

ALBERT R. VILLAHERMOSA
Municipal Vice-Mayor

MANUEL M. GABISAN
Sangguniang Bayan Member *(on leave)*

JOSEPH F. FULACHE
SB Member

CRIS ANTONIO B. ONG
SB Member

MANUEL V. LORA
SB Member

BERNADETH M. NERVES
SB Member

ALINE B. REOMA
SB Member *(on vacation leave)*

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SB Member

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SB Member

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Ex-Officio Member/President, Liga ng mga Barangay

CECILLE ANTONIETTE C. SABRIDO
Ex-Officio Member/President, Pambayang Pederasyon ng Sangguniang Kabataan

I HEREBY CERTIFY to the correctness of the foregoing ordinance.

CATHERINE A. FABULAR, J.D.
Secretary to the Sanggunian

ATTESTED:

ALBERT R. VILLAHERMOSA
Municipal Vice Mayor / Presiding Officer

APPROVED:

MANUEL R. VILLAHERMOSA
Municipal Mayor
Date: August 26, 2026

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Leyte
Municipality of Hilongos

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY TO THE SANGGUNIANG BAYAN

CERTIFICATION

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to certify that a copy of **Municipal Ordinance No. 2026-18: An Ordinance Institutionalizing A Human Rights-Based Approach To Local Governance Establishing The Hilongos Human Rights Action Center (HHRAC), Operationalizing the Barangay Human Rights Action Centers (BHRACs), Strengthening Access to Justice Through Community Legal Assistance and Providing Funds Therefor** was posted in three (3) conspicuous places within the Municipality of Hilongos pursuant to paragraph (a) of Article 114 of RA 7160 also known as the Local Government Code of 1991.

FURTHER, this certify that the undersigned has duly complied the said provision from August 14, 2026 up to August 24, 2026.

ISSUED this 27th day of August, 2026 in Hilongos, Leyte, Philippines.

CATHERINE A. FABULAR, J.D.
Secretary to the Sanggunian