

# PRESS RELEASE

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## **BI temporarily suspends transactions in Luzon**

MANILA, Philippines—Bureau of Immigration (BI) Commissioner Jaime Morente announced that they are temporarily suspending several transactions at BI offices in Luzon, except for outbound passengers intending to depart the Philippines, following the memorandum on the Enhanced Community Quarantine and Stringent Social Distancing Measures from Malacanang.

Said transactions include tourist visa extension for foreign nationals stranded in the country during the Enhanced Community Quarantine period.

“We are temporarily suspending several transactions in Luzon and are downgrading our workforce to the barest minimum to ensure compliance to stringent social distancing measures,” said Morente. “This would likewise allow foreign nationals who are unable to go out of their residences to file their applications at a later time due to the quarantine,” he added.

Other transactions suspended are as follows: Filing and hearing of applications for extension or conversion to non-immigrant or immigrant visa, dual citizenship, downgrading of visa status, special work permit or provisional work permit, renewal of ACR I-Cards, and implementation of approved visa applications for extension or conversion.

According to Morente, all aliens whose visas will expire during the duration of the Enhanced Community Quarantine shall be allowed to file their applications for extension sans penalties, provided that they file their applications within thirty days from the lifting of the Enhanced Community Quarantine.

“This is similar to the action we took after Typhoon Yolanda,” said Morente. “These are special times, hence we had to adjust our procedures to ease the burden of those affected,” he added.