

Guevarra: Provision on vaccine cards as requirement for education, employment being studied

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The provision in the COVID-19 Vaccination Program Act of 2021, which indicates that vaccine cards are not required in employment purposes, is being studied, according to Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra on Thursday.

Guevarra was asked if the non-hiring of applicants based on their vaccine status could be considered illegal or discriminatory.

"Please note that under Section 12 of the COVID-19 Vaccination Program Act of 2021, vaccine cards shall not be considered as an additional mandatory requirement for educational, employment and other similar government transaction purposes," Guevarra told GMA News Online.

"We are presently studying if this provision was intended by the Congress to be absolute, all-encompassing, or unqualified," he added.

Section 12 of Republic Act 115251 states that:

"The issuance of a vaccine card is intended to be digital, but shall remain accessible through other means such as printed cards. The DOH, through the Department of Information and Communications Technology, shall develop the LGU-based digital systems and applications that will meet the objectives of the COVID-19 Vaccination Program while maintaining quality, safety, ease of use, and accessibility for all Filipinos: Provided, That the DOH shall maintain a central database of vaccinations, and mandate a uniform format for the vaccine card, the contents of which shall be updated accordingly to always conform with globally-accepted standards: Provided, further, That the vaccine cards shall not be considered as an additional mandatory requirement for educational, employment and other similar government transaction purposes."

In a separate text message, Department of Labor and Employment Secretary Silvestre Bello III said the practice is not illegal.

The issue on vaccine requirement stemmed after Associated Labor Unions-Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (ALU-TUCP) spokesperson Alan Tanjusay had revealed the "no vaccine, no salary" policy after a group of employees of a certain company in Metro Manila informed them about it.

Several lawmakers have denounced the reported practice saying that it is illegal and employers must instead incentivize their employees to encourage them to get inoculated against COVID-19.

Malacañang has said a [law is needed to make vaccination against COVID-19 a requirement for employees](#). — **RSJ, GMA News**